

The Fundamentals of Success

While it is fair to state that most people pursue success, it is perhaps the various differences in how we measure success that accounts for the wide range of definitions of what success really is, and by extension who is genuinely successful. This notwithstanding, the path to becoming successful – no matter how we define it – can be enhanced by incorporating in the pursuit a number of fundamentals. These 5 factors are in essence the foundation of success.

Have Integrity

The clearest path to success is to have integrity. People do business with people and each of us has only our reputations to depend on. The inclusion of integrity in the basic characteristic traits you practice and project will go a long way in enhancing how people view you and the work you deliver. This will increase the volume of work you receive and the number of people seeking to interact with you. On top of this, you will do well, while doing good, which is a definition of success that is as broad as possible, and as coveted as can be.

Add Value

The surest path to success is adding value. Companies are interested (rightly so) in what you offer and how what you offer is of greater value than the other options from which they can choose. If you have an offering that communicates and delivers added value you can expect companies to avail themselves of your offering, leading to the success of your effort.

Target Your Broadest Market

One of the least used paths to success is targeting all sides of a market. In many cases companies elect to focus their efforts narrow segments within a market. These is a holdover from the old school marketing practices that taught us that we cannot be all things to all people and that we need to select our markets and then focus exclusively within our space. While focus is certainly a positive attribute, and while in many cases targeting a narrow market is a good idea, in many cases these practices just serve to restrict market activity and minimize the success potential. The transition that has occurred in various markets over the past decades has redefined what constitutes a segment, making them far broader than they ever were. And while it is still true that you cannot be all things to all people, you can, in fact, be what you are to a lot more people than you once were. It is this expanded market that you want to target in order to maximize your success.

Deliver Results

One of the greatest barriers to success is the delivery of results. Many companies know how to communicate value and how to market to the broadest market available to them. Where they fall just a bit short is in the execution of their market promise, either because they did not sufficiently plan for the demand their marketing created or because they made promises there was no way they could keep. In either case, the failure to deliver results leaves the path to success wide open (and a bit emptier) for those companies that know how to make good on delivering the results they promised.

Invest in Relationships

One of the smoothest paths to success is the capitalization on relationships developed and nurtured over time. People do business with people and the ability to leverage relationships in order to advance objectives is a powerful and useful tool. The development of relationships is enhanced by sincerity and reciprocity, meaning that the people you know and hope will help you when you need them should know that you established and maintain the relationship because of your expectation for mutual benefit and that you will be there for them when they need you (even if it is way before you need them or way after they already helped you). Investing in relationships means being a good person, which, it could be said, is in and of itself, a definition of success.

Success is what you make of it. Some people know how to enjoy success, while others are unable to adjust to their good fortune, either seeking further successes until they become compulsive, or losing touch with what first drove them to success. Being successful at being a success is not always as easy as it seems. If you stick with the fundamentals on the way up, however, you're likely to find it more satisfactory once you get there.

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