

# **The Courage to Succeed**

**By**

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You've read all the books, listened to the tapes, and attended the seminars. You most likely already know what steps you have to take to ensure your success and achieve your goals. Knowing the right steps to take is a good beginning, but it's not enough. To ensure your success, you'll need to simply do those things that others, who are less successful, just don't, won't, or can't do.

Roosevelt once said, "Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy 'nore suffer much because they live in that grey twilight that knows neither victory 'nore defeat."

What does it take to "dare mighty things"? And make no mistake about it, setting and achieving goals is not for the weak at heart. I think its courage; the courage to fail, to strive, to grow, to be successful, even just the courage to be human. I'm reminded that courage is not the absence of fear, but rather, courage is the conquest of fear.

In W. Clement Stone's book, *The Success System That Never Fails*, he used the phrase, "Little hinges swing big doors". I can close my eyes and picture it, can't you? It's a powerful image, isn't it? In other words, it is the little things that can and absolutely do make a very big difference in our ability to achieve what we desire. What follows isn't anything new, but I hope that it will provide you with a B.G.O.-blinding glimpse of the obvious. Rate yourself on how you're doing in area. Be critical, but not overly so. Then, write down one or two actions that you will take in each area to move closer to achieving the success you desire. Let's take a closer look at how COURAGE can help you to succeed this year and beyond.

- C = Commitment--Commitment to yourself, your family, your organization, your spirituality, commitment to your goals, and to be the best that you can be. Commitment requires action and action requires both a written plan and a tracking system. Just keeping track of what you commit to in your head isn't enough. Write down your commitments. Verbalize them to those people you trust and respect and who will help to keep you on track. Check your progress regularly and make the necessary course corrections as required.
- O = Organization--Be organized. Plan your work and work your plan. Remember that being organized is only half of the equation. Peter Drucker has the other half, he says that: "Efficiency is doing things right, effectiveness is doing the right things right." Why not plan on being effective? There are many tools on the market today to help keep you organized. I have my favorites and I'm sure you do too. Are you using those tools to obtain maximum results? I find that from time to time my use of the system deteriorates into nothing more than a glorified to-do list. A plain sheet of paper can do that! Once every month or two, check to see that whatever system you are using is keeping you focused on tying in your goals, values, and commitments to your daily actions.
- U = Understanding--Make it a daily habit of increasing your understanding of yourself, your clients, your family, and the people with whom you have daily contact. Books have been written about this subject. Sometimes it's easy to forget that behind every customer, client or sale is a person. The topics and solutions you present to your prospects and clients may not be new to you, but may represent new thinking or revelations to them. A wise associate gave me some sales and career advice early on in my career. He said that, "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care". Remember to listen with your ears, but hear with your heart.
- R = Responsibility--You and only you are responsible for your own success. It can be easy to complain about not having the right tools or training or systems in place to help you to be successful, but the bottom-line is that only you have the control to do what is necessary to guarantee your own success. Become a student of your business or profession. Not just the nuts and bolts about the products or services

your offer, but also, the business of running a business. Embrace the lifelong learning philosophy.

- A = Activity and Attitude—It's been said that you control only two things in your career; your attitude and your activity. Skill is rarely the element that distinguishes productivity. Fortunately, we have many commercial and company specific tools to help to keep us on track in these important areas. I heard the motivational speaker Zig Ziegler present at a conference several years ago; he asked the group two questions that I'll never forget. They were, "When was the last time you had a check-up from the neck-up", and "Do you suffer from hardening of the attitudes?" Two simple questions, yet they are very profound. Activity is the other key to productivity and success. Develop a bias for activity. Don't have too many good ideas and not enough people to share them with. The old axiom, "Talent without action ceases to exist" is certainly as true today as ever. In addition, develop the capacity to relive your successes. Why do most people dwell on the few times something didn't work out and ignore the majority of times that goals were met and successes achieved?
- G = Goals--Your goals need to be of your own creation and should be meaningful to you. Goals need to be written, have a time frame for completion, be broken down into bite-sized pieces and should be reviewed and worked on everyday. Another important fact to remember about goals is that it's ok to change them. Some people become paralyzed when it comes to setting goals. They feel that they need to get it 100% correct before proceeding. Not true! It's more important to begin the process and then make changes, as you go, then never have begun at all. Remember that achievement is related to the struggle; little struggle-little achievement, big struggle-big achievement.
- E = Excellence-- Strive for excellence in everything you do, but remember that striving for your goals and the pursuit of excellence are important journeys and not destinations. You'll never reach the end of the road and isn't that terrific! Become a student of your business to separate yourself from the pack and remember that school is never out for the professional.

## **Living in Congruence**

Having the COURAGE to succeed is an excellent first step. What else can you do to help yourself to achieve your goals and dreams? First, it's important to understand that the desire to succeed comes from within you and not from any external source. Ron Willingham, in his Managing Goal Achievement™ Program, defines this concept as Achievement Drive. He states that, "Achievement drive is the ability to release strong commitment, energy and persistence toward the attainment of goals. Achievement drive is born out of desire. It's released from within, rather than poured in from without". Achievement drive is released when you have clear goals and/or outcomes, along with measurable and identifiable activities that will take you closer to what you want to achieve. It is also critical that you internally believe that these goals, objectives, and activities are within your ability to attain them. Little to no achievement drive is released unless you perceive your goals to be within your "possibilities". What then, stands in the way of you releasing your achievement drive to help you reach your business and personal goals and objectives?

Let me again turn to Ron Willingham for the answer. Mr. Willingham has created the Goal Achievement Congruence Model. The Congruence Model™ consists of five dimensions; Goal Clarity, Values, Supportive Environment, View of Possibilities, and Achievement Drive. His premise is that to the extent all five dimensions are in congruence is the extent to which achievement drive can and will be released. If any of the dimensions are in conflict with each other, achievement drive will be diminished, thereby reducing performance. For example, what impact do you think the following statements will have on your performance?

- "I've always been an average performer."
- "My spouse always complains about my long hours."
- "I don't have to write down my goals in order to achieve them."
- "Most people who sell services are less than honest."
- "The goals my manager has set for me are too high for me to achieve."
- "I could do better if my company provided better support."

If you are serious about improving your performance, your job is to understand and define what each dimension means to you, and then, discover what conflicts may exist

between the dimensions and how to resolve any conflicts which may exist between the dimensions. Here's an exercise that will help you to understand this concept. After completing it on yourself, give the exercise to one or more people who you trust and who know you well enough to complete it as an objective observer (here's where having a coach can help). Circle the number which best describes the extent to which you demonstrate that dimension. Once completed, set aside some uninterrupted time to self evaluate your score first, before you review the results from your trusted friends.

**GOAL CLARITY**; This is having a clear and specific written statement of what you want to have, gain, possess or become.

**VIEW OF POSSIBILITIES**; Unconsciously feeling worthy of reaching your written goals and believing them to be possible for you to achieve. This is a critical dimension. You will only be able to achieve that which you have a mental internal picture of yourself achieving

**VALUES**; Possessing a high degree of internal sincerity, conscientiousness, and honesty that drives your behaviors.

**ACHIEVEMENT DRIVE**; Having an unusually strong passion and desire that releases new levels of energy and motivates you to take action to achieve your written goals.

**SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT**; Being surrounded by positive, supportive people, places and things from whom you receive encouragement and reinforcement.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Low</b>									<b>High</b>
<b>Goal Clarity</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>View of Possibilities</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Values</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Achievement Drive</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Supportive Environment</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Ask yourself, in which area(s) is there room for improvement? How has this dimension(s) inhibited your ability or desire to achieve a particular goal or goals? What action steps can you take to bring that dimension(s) into congruence? Complete this exercise periodically to track your progress in each area. You'll be pleasantly surprised to see how by reducing conflicts between dimensions, you will be releasing achievement drive and achieving more of your goals.

### **Conclusion**

Only by taking the time to either do a self-analysis or work with a trusted advisor or coach, will you be able to determine what is the root cause of any lack of performance you are experiencing. You will then be able to eliminate the cause of the problem and release the achievement drive necessary to achieve the results you desire. Most of the time, it's a combination of factors that are producing the current results. By paying attention to the personal dimensions, you will better understand what the real roadblocks are that may be standing in your way of achieving your goals. Good luck on your journey to success. Have the COURAGE to succeed this year and beyond and you will achieve all that you set out to accomplish.

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