

The 7 Secrets of Highly Successful People

Exactly what is success? Some people say success is about making money. Others say it's about being a great parent or a great leader. The meaning of success is highly unique to each person. We all have different needs, different talents, different dreams. However, one thing all successful people have in common is goals. People with goals succeed because they know where they are going.

So, how do successful people know how to get where they are going? Below are 7 secrets of how highly successful people achieve their goals (Brooks & Brooks, 1997).

Secret 1: Successful people realize the importance of a mentor or coach.

Research shows mentoring is one factor in success if not the most important factor! Without someone helping and guiding you along your chances of success are quite slim. What is it in your organization that gets people noticed? Seek those who can help you practice those skills. Let a mentor's hindsight become your foresight.

Secret 2: Successful people know how to increase their visibility.

There are many situations in which you can increase your visibility, but you have to be willing to take a risk to stand out. Look for opportunities to be seen. Take advantage of teams and committees and volunteer for projects, especially if the project is endorsed by senior management.

Secret 3: Successful people know how to develop an effective network.

Relationship-based networks are more important now than ever, since in the changing workplace your next job or promotion will probably be through your network. Remember the old adage, "It's not what you know, but who you know." Develop a network for yourself and use it!

Secret 4: Successful people have learned to communicate effectively.

There is no one perfect way to communicate. It depends on the individual, the organization, the situation, the goal. It's important to realize, however, that what you're saying and how you're saying it might be quite different from how someone understands it. We must first seek to understand and then to be understood.

Secret 5: Successful people can balance home and work.

It's important to build leisure time into your schedule. If you don't, it probably won't happen. Take time to recharge yourself and try something new. Think about some things that you could delegate or let go in the interest of having a little more free time, especially if this free time allows you to work on achieving your real goal or passion in life.

Secret 6: Successful people know when to take smart risks.

Most people hesitate to take risks out of fear. They want a guarantee it will all work out. However, there are no guarantees in life and most successful people will tell you their success came as a result of a willingness to take a chance. A willingness to roll the dice on the unknown. There is no reward without risk!

Secret 7: Successful people understand the politics of the organization.

Learn about the politics of your organization. Know who the decision makers are, who has the power, who knows what is really going on. Mentors are often valuable sources of information regarding office politics. They are well-connected people and have the inside scoop on what it takes to succeed in the organization.

So, do you possess these skills to be successful? If not, you can learn them. Look for opportunities to develop and practice them in your own career and life. Remember, success begins and ends with you! You're the real secret to achieving your goals!

-Dr. Hope Zoeller Stith

