

CHAPTER 3

Success is Not an Accident

I would like you to think for a moment about some of the people that you admire. Get a good mental picture in your head about some people that you consider to be highly successful in their field of choice. In sports we think of people like Michael Jordan and Muhammad Ali. In business we think of people like Bill Gates and Jack Welch. The list goes on and on of successful people that are around us. These people have surpassed what the majority of society has achieved in their respective fields.

Today with the availability of media resources, we have lots of access to small facets of these people's lives. Many times biographies and television shows chronicle these people's lives and even show their homes. We see the kinds of cars they drive and acreage that surrounds their home.

What many of us forget is that we are seeing these people at one short period of time in their lives. It is literally like a snap shot in a photo album. Many of these depictions appear to be very intimate and revealing and at times can give us the false sense that we really know these people. Seeing people for very short bursts of time never really gives you an appreciation for what they have been through and what it took for them to get to where they stand now.

The snapshots don't show how much effort and time it really took to achieve such high levels of success. We see Tiger Woods hit a ball with great accuracy, precision and power. What we don't see is how many practice hours it took for him to be able to do what he does. We don't know how many parties and ball games he had to forgo with his friends because he had to practice. All we see is the result.

What is the result? The result is that he has achieved financial security and if he so chooses, his finance and influence can make changes in many people's lives. He has achieved the highest level of success in his field.

Because of his preparation, he is no longer the borrower, but he can now become the lender. When he goes to the car dealer he isn't begging for a lower interest rate. They are rolling out the red carpet and getting him whatever he wants. And don't sit there and say that this could never be you. Get that defeated mentality out of your mind. Start to expect greatness for yourself.

His dedication to his goal and his level of success has given him more control over his life than most of us will ever enjoy. Many of us have the false sense of security that a job title, salary and benefits gives us. This makes many of us feel that we are very much in control. Many of us have not come to the understanding that without independence and financial security, at any given moment our small world can come crumbling down.

You give the best years of your life and the prime period of your health to a company, yet you can't even afford to take a leave of absence for a significant period of time. That's not being in control, that is servitude. Then we retire when we are old but soon after that the health problems start, and we are unable to fully enjoy the golden years of our lives.

People do not make it to financial freedom and independence by the luck of the draw. I do not believe in luck. If you plant apple seeds, an apple tree will grow. We get to high levels of success by calculated actions and dedication to a formulated plan.

Other people's success and achievements sound good and look good but when we find out what the requirements are to get to the same level we often times give up and shy away.

During my freshman year in college many people were pre-med or pre-law students. As the years went on, many of these students dropped off one by one. The glamour and appeal of something often greatly overshadows the hard work it takes to achieve that goal.

Wealth is not accidental. If you think your financial security will come from a lottery ticket, then write me and I'll send you one of mine. I'll make one up just for you.

Wealth is not accidental nor is success. In fact, it is quite the opposite. It is calculated and planned. Tiger does not hit the ball the way that he does because he showed up on a golf course when he was eighteen years old and decided to start playing. That was just the age that many of us saw him for the first time. He planned to hit that ball the way he does before we even knew who he was.

I do hundreds of operations a year. The fact that I can perform certain operations is not because of what I have done the day that I meet the patient, but what I did years before I ever met the patient. Before the patient ever knew who I was, I planted seeds in this area. The skills I obtained to perform operations were intentionally achieved, not just stumbled upon. It took me countless hours of study to be able help people in this capacity.

Many of us are filled with dreams and desires. Many of us have tons of goals that we would like to achieve. Few of us have a specific plan written down, step by step on how to achieve it. I did not say in your head, but written down on paper to see and review and adjust as needed. Just like mowing the lawn and doing laundry, many things that we put in our mental to-do box get shoved aside until there is a time that is more convenient for us.

You cannot approach your success as a convenience but you must approach it as a requirement. In fact I suggest to you that if your preparation is great enough, your success will become second nature instead of a hopeful accomplishment.

I think that one of our major problems is that we confuse what we want with what we expect. We quickly tell people how we want to be financially secure. We tell people how we want to go back to school. We tell people that we want to own our own business. However, many times wants and desires do not equate with expectations. Do you really expect to be successful or do you just want to be successful?

For some of us our self image is so low that we don't expect better for ourselves. Many of us do not expect more for our race as a whole. We must escape this self destructive thinking. People around you that do not believe in the success and potential of our people can poison your dreams. That is why your environment is so important.

When we get a good idea or opportunity what is one of the first things that we go and do? We go and tell someone. Unfortunately many times we go and tell someone that is doing absolutely nothing positive in their own lives. We confide in people that have produced absolutely nothing at all. So what is their response to our hopes and dreams? You must be crazy, that will never work. Then that idea that you thought was so great suddenly does not sound so great anymore. It is not that the greatness left, but now your expectation is no longer there.

A farmer with bare crops is not the farmer that you want to be giving you advice on how to plant your crops. You want to share your dreams with a successful farmer.

So why do I say that there is a difference between wanting something and expecting something? Many of us want to be successful, but how many of us really expect to be successful? As you build your confidence and self worth so will your expectations rise.

One of the major differences between wanting and expecting is your approach to them. When you want something, there can be a tendency to be complacent and allow things to happen and come to you. When you expect things to happen, many times your participation is one of action with regard to the situation in question. You don't just let the chips fall where they may, you play an active role in where the outcome lies.

I am awful when it comes to landscaping and gardening and maintaining a beautiful looking lawn. Even when I could have used the money for something else, I paid a man to cut our lawn every week.

When we moved into the house, there was a bed of flowers in the front yard. Neither my wife nor I maintained it, so it became overgrown with weeds. I removed the wooden boarder that surrounded the plants and moved the dirt. No grass grew in that spot. I wanted grass to grow in the spot where the plants used to be but it didn't. My only active role in my hope that grass would grow was to remove the old weeds and dig up that old dirt. I really wanted grass to grow, for a whole summer I had a big triangle shape of dirt on my front lawn where I wanted grass to grow.

Now let's add to the situation. Let's say that now I go out and turn over the soil properly, plant some grass seed, add some fertilizer, and then start to water the grass on a regular basis. Because of the actions on my part, I no longer just want the grass to grow, now I expect grass to grow in that bare area on my lawn. Expectation usually involves an entirely different set of actions in comparison to just wanting something.

Success is not an accident, it occurs through constant active intentional intervention on the part of the individual. You don't accidentally become successful, period.

An expecting mother is different from a woman that wants to become pregnant. Take time to nurture and then birth your visions and dreams from within you. An expecting mother has an entirely different routine than a woman that wants to become pregnant.

A woman that wants to become pregnant may still smoke and drink. A pregnant woman that is expecting is willing to change to bring forth what is inside her. Because her mind set has now shifted from just wanting to expecting, she understands and makes efforts to avoid things that may cause harm to that which she expects to bring forth.

The routines of an expecting woman are different than a woman that wants to become pregnant. Most women of child bearing age go to the doctor once a year unless other problems arise. An expecting woman has many more doctor appointments over the same ten-month time frame. Why? Because the doctor wants to chart the progress and make sure that everything is going as expected. People that just want to be successful often sit and daydream of what it would be like. Successful people constantly chart their progress in relation to where they expect to be. What's my net worth? Am I on course to retire when I want to? What is my market share? What was last year's return on my investments? What is my projected revenue over the next five years?

Over half of your success is in your preparation. We usually prepare for things that we expect to happen. If you are expecting company to come over what do most of us do? We get up and clean up the house. Expectation brings a total different mentality. You should expect greatness. Success is not an accident, it is not some random occurrence that falls from the sky. Do not wait for someone to just come up to you and hand you your dreams on a platter. You're in the buffet line man. You better get up and get you some.