

Chapter 6

SUCCESS STRATEGIES

'The road leading to success is very crowded, almost all people start the journey for success, but strangely very few are those who reach the far end, called success; rest of them run out of patience, change course or quit and most of them do so when they are near the end, called success'

A natural question is, what is success? It may be different for you and me, is an easy reply to the question. Success is something that differs from person to person; it is a subjective term, having various implications and meanings for different people. Success means doing your very best in all situations, in all places, at all times, and achieving what you are really capable of. It is surpassing the limits that you have set for yourself; it is transcending the ordinary; it is doing something that changes you and takes you where you belong to; it is doing something so well that it makes your existence a gift to the world; it is getting what you want from life and being happy with it; it is giving back to the world more than you hold back for yourself; it is making a significant contribution to the lives of people you meet; it is in living a fulfilling life and overcoming all setbacks, all difficulties and all obstacles and leaving a mark which gives you satisfaction and bliss; it is living a life that can make you proud. That is real success.

Success window

| | SUCCESS | FAILURE |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Full effort | (I) Follow him. | (II) Be happy, be patient. |
| Half-hearted effort | (IV) Wasting ability. | (III) Try harder. |

(I) The one who makes full effort and achieves success is a leader; follow him. He is the one who has many followers. He is the

individual who strives hard and achieves success. He sets the example and benchmark for the others to follow.

- (II) The one who makes full effort but fails need not be disappointed; remember that full effort is full victory. He should be happy with his effort and wait patiently for the result. He should try and channelise his energy in a better way.
- (III) The one who makes less than 100% effort and fails should work harder. He should objectively think and work hard; he should focus on and identify the areas which require his attention and must make full effort.
- (IV) The one who succeeds despite making less than 100% effort is a person who is wasting his talent, for he is supposed to do bigger and better things in life. What he thinks to be success may not be success; he might be capable of much more, given his full effort.

The A to Z of success

- A. The attitude with which you see the things makes the difference.
- B. Emulate the kindest, humblest, happiest and best person you know.
- C. Commitment is the key to unlock success.
- D. Don't fear fire, extinguish it. Face your challenges in life; don't run away from them.
- E. Equip yourself with knowledge and wisdom. Without wisdom knowledge is not useful.
- F. Failure is the route to success.
- G. Goodness in your action, deeds and thoughts paves the way for greatness.
- H. Hard work is important, but hard work in the right direction is more important.
- I. Ignite your mind with good thoughts, that is the way to empower and broaden the mind.
- J. Just believe in your dreams and do all whatever is needed to accomplish them.
- K. Keep in touch with friends.
- L. Look for good everywhere, in every situation, in every person. Be thankful for it.

- M. Money cannot stop you from getting old, it cannot stop you from dying either.
- N. Nothing will last permanently in this impermanent world.
- O. Often the small things in life give a lot of joy but we miss them in looking for the big things.
- P. Perfection, if it is your goal par excellence, will be the result.
- Q. Quitting never made anybody successful.
- R. Right effort at the right time and in the right direction gives success.
- S. Success often brings more success, but it is also a catalyst for failure; success can lead to failure if not handled properly.
- T. Today will never come again, make the most of it.
- U. Understand yourself fully, then you will understand everybody.
- V. Victory is certain for one who has faith and will to continue working even in difficulties and remain focused on his objective despite distractions.
- W. Winning is not crucial as long as you do your best.
- X. X-ray your thoughts, for they provide the way to success.
- Y. Your thoughts change your world. Why not change your thoughts?
- Z. Zeal is the essence of all great things and achievements; without zeal everything would be rather ordinary.

What makes one successful, while others fail? What makes one achieve great things while others remain mediocre. What makes a person great while the others don't? What make a person revered for ages while others go into obscurity as if they never existed? Following are some of the things that can take you from one level to a higher level; they can help you immensely. They are the principles on which success is based. If you read them, you will know something, but if you follow them, you will do something great.

Success strategies

1. The world is won by those who let it go

'Success is all about moving in the direction of your goals. If you think too much about the end, you may stumble and not achieve success, but if you pay attention

***to each step, then the journey becomes easy and
success comes even without your noticing it'***

When you think too much of the consequences you become anxious. Anxiety leads to pressure and pressure leads to restlessness of the mind. And finally the restlessness of the mind does not allow it to remain focused on success and when the mind is not focused it leads to failure. Focus the mind on the process and do not let the process be vitiated; the results will come once you do the process well. Success comes to him who remains focused on it and does the process well; it depends on execution of the task in hand in the best way.

When an archer is shooting for nothing,
He has all his skill.
If he shoots for a brass buckle,
He is already nervous.
If he shoots for a prize of gold,
He goes blank or sees two targets.
He is out of his mind,
His skill has not changed,
But the prize divides him. He cares,
He thinks more of winning
Than of shooting,
And the need to win
Drains him of power.

—A Taoist, *Zhuang Zi*

2. Be yourself

***'If you are not happy with what you are, chances are
that others won't be happy with you either. Better change
yourself than pretending being someone else'***

It is better to be rejected for being yourself rather than being accepted when you pretend to be someone else. Pretence shows lack of self-respect; only a person who does not like himself pretends to be someone else. Honesty is important; you cannot cheat people for long. Realise who you are and be yourself. Don't waste your life living a pretended image. Do not fake being someone else; instead, become the person you want to

be by effort rather than by pretence. If you will be yourself, you will have the strength to succeed.

The man in the mirror

When you get what you want in your struggle for self
And the world makes you king for a day
Then go to the mirror and look at yourself
And see what the mirror has to say.

For, it isn't a man's father, mother or wife
Whose judgment upon him must pass
The fellow whose verdict counts the most in your life
Is the man staring back from the glass.

He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest
For, he's with you clear up to the end
And you've passed your most dangerous, difficult test
If the man in the glass is your friend.

You can fool the whole world down the pathway of years
And get pats on the back as you pass
But your final result will be heartache and tears
If you've cheated the man in the glass.

—*Anonymous*

***'He who does not know can learn. But he who doesn't
know but pretends that he knows stops learning'***

One who admits his fault is far better than one who is trying to hide it. You cannot fool yourself as long as you can look into your eyes and say that you have done your best, which is the test of your commitment. Be true to yourself and analyse what you have done; don't go by what other people expect; if you are happy with what you have done, chances are that you would have done a good job.

3. Follow your convictions

Thomas Edison told Henry Ford that the idea of a motor car was useless. But Ford was defiant; he would accept none of this; he went ahead with

his idea of a motor car; after his persistence, the result was a car, a car without a reverse gear. Finally, they built a car with a reverse gear; even the genius of Thomas Edison is not always right. If you have faith in what you are doing, carry on. There are some people who you can never please. Some people just never see good in others. You are what you are; what other people say about you does not change you, it does not make you different; you will be what you are.

People will always say something

When I was confident, people said you are arrogant.

When I was humble, people said you are timid.

When I took risks, people said you are reckless.

When I was circumspect, people said you are subdued.

When I was caring, people said you had motives.

When I was forgiving, people said you are weak,

When I was silent, people said you are dumb.

When I was decisive, people said you are adamant.

When I was open-minded, people said you are indecisive.

When I was focused on work, people said you are mean.

When I was having fun, people said you are wasting life.

When I was enthusiastic, people said you are over-excited.

When I was calm, people said you are dull.

When I was relaxed, people said you are casual.

When I was looking forward, people said you are anxious.

When I was consistent, people said you are boring.

When I was moody, people said you are complacent.

When I was trying something new, people said you are not aware it cannot be done.

When I was failing, people said you are not good enough.

When I was successful, people said you are lucky.

Finally, I don't listen to what they have to say.

There are some people who will always find fault with you. They have the habit of looking at the negative things; they do not necessarily make constructive criticism but they try to pull you down. Everything will change once you succeed.

Walt Disney's idea of Disneyland was rejected by six major banks before being accepted. They said no one would visit it.

A gramophone record company which had the opportunity to sign the Beatles rejected them. It felt that the electric guitar music was only a passing phase.

About the Wright brothers, the *New York Times* wrote that may be in *1 million to 10 million years* they might be able to make a plane that would fly.

It does not matter what people think about you as long as you do the right thing. If you believe in doing what you are doing, just keep doing it. Their opinion may change after some time, and it does not really matter what others think. The best thing is to do your work in such a manner that people's opinion changes rather than your work.

4. Applied knowledge

If you keep a mirror in a completely dark room you will notice that it does not reflect anything; mirror is rendered useless when kept in a dark room. Similar is the case with knowledge without application. Knowledge without application is useless; knowledge is useful when you apply it in practice. What you learn, you must apply it in your life. Even a diamond does not glow in dark. So even the most advanced knowledge and education serve no purpose unless they are well utilised and applied in practice.

Practice what you learn; make sure that whenever you learn something good, something useful, you commit yourself to practise it in your life. Otherwise all learning in the world is of no use.

5. Hard work

'Hard work is the best talent that I know; strangely, it works in all the fields of human endeavour'

What is the difference between top achievers and ordinary people? Here are the major differences which make one extremely successful and the other not quite so. They make a world of change in the life of an individual; following are the differences that are evident after carefully studying the lives of the most successful people.

Top achievers

Pragmatic

Action-oriented

Open-minded

Others

Biased

Avoid action as much as possible

Full with themselves, closed

| | |
|--|---|
| Discuss about useful ideas and positive things | Gossip and discuss negative things |
| Interested in helping others | What is in it for me |
| Change as per needs to improve | Resistant to changes |
| Disciplined | Lack discipline |
| Directional | Lack of direction |
| Have a positive attitude even when things are not going well | Have positive attitude only when things are going well |
| Think big | Always interested in small things |
| Get the best out of every situation | Tend to be mediocre even when the big opportunity presents itself |
| Interested in facts | Interested in opinions |
| Influence the environment in a positive manner | Influenced by negative things in the environment |
| Stay calm and remain centred in success and failures alike | Brood over failures, become excited and complacent by small successes |
| Genuine | Pretend due to lack of self-esteem |
| Ambitious | Not very ambitious |
| Patient | Want quick results |
| Sincere and mean what they say | Cheap flatterers and make empty promises and utter meaningless words |
| Stand on merit | Pull others down |
| Compete with themselves and the best | Compete with the average. |
| Set high targets | Set low targets, at times no targets |
| How can I do better | How can I get rid of it quickly |
| Utilise every bit of time meticulously | Waste time carelessly. |
| Seize the initiative | Wait for things to happen |
| Dynamic and adaptive | Stagnant and non-adaptive. |
| Reflective | Self-pitying |
| High on confidence | Low confidence |
| Daring | Play safe |

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Orderly and organised | Unorganised |
| Assertive | Submissive |
| Productive | Inefficient |
| Detailed approach | Take easier approach |
| Crafty and innovative | Stick to the old approach |

6. Expect the unexpected

Plan and prepare well, anticipating all the worst situations and considering all possible scenarios. Plan with a pessimistic mind and perform in an optimistic way. Plan for the worst situation and the worst circumstance; your performance should be such that even in these conditions you should be well prepared so that you become a winner.

Do whatever it takes to raise your bar higher and higher so that even in your worst performance you are higher than what is required to cross over. That is the level of preparation that must be put in so that you come out victorious. Prepare as if your life depends on it and perform as if you were practising. Don't let pressure get into your head when you are performing.

7. Prepare well

*Everyone is a potential winner.
Some people are disguised as losers.
Don't let appearances fool you.*

—Kenneth Blanchard

There was a kingdom in ancient times where after the ruler had finished ruling for five years, the king was sent to a lonely island where there was nobody and where there was only a forest. So there was a search for the ruler; the person who accepted this condition was made the king. The king was nominated, he enjoyed a kingly life in the kingdom; he met everyone and lived a lavish life; he enjoyed all the glories of the palace for the first three years; from the fourth year onwards he started thinking about the fact that he had to go to the lonely island but indulged in the pleasures again and lived as if he would stay in the kingdom for ever. Finally the last year came, he was now under a lot of stress as he realised that it was not long before he would be sent to the island; he was constantly worried which made him sick; he remained bedridden for most part of his last year in the palace; finally the dreaded day came and he was carried on a boat to that lonely island. He was shivering with fear;

the boatman rowed the boat and the island came closer and closer; the king was hoping against hope that something would happen; they reached the island; the boatman came back. The boatman had seen it all; he used to carry the king on his final journey for ages.

Again the search for the king began. Nobody wanted to be king, but after a long time a young man came forward and accepted the challenge. This young man became the king. He started ruling in a peculiar fashion; he met nobody and did not go out with people as the other kings had done; he was always doing something, instructing some of the guards. This routine continued for the first few years; three years passed; now the king started moving out of the palace and met people. The final year began; he enjoyed the life of the palace, the life of being a king. Contrary to what the other kings had done in the past in the last year of their rule, he enjoyed every moment of that year as the king, but finally the D-day came and he was taken to the island; the old boatman was called; the king sat on the boat as the boatman rowed towards the island. On the way the boatman was surprised to see a very tranquil and calm king. The boatman said to the king, 'I have never seen such a calm and composed person in the face of death. Are you not afraid? You are going to a lonely place where there is only a wild forest.' The king just smiled and did not say anything. At last they reached the island; the boatman was stupefied to see the island. A huge palace was in place and some people were waiting to welcome the king. The king told the boatman that during the last five years he had been working day and night to move his kingdom to the island and that was the reason for his being calm. The boatman and all the people in the kingdom were stunned by the intelligence of the young king.

Preparation and effort can resolve the biggest problems

We are all like the king in that kingdom; we all will be taken to a different place, not at the end of five years but at the end of our life. Prepare well for that.

Farsightedness in the long run always pays rich dividends. Short-sightedness is a bane.

To get extraordinary things in life, you have to rise above ordinary things.

8. The Power of sublimation

According to the Hindu scriptures Maharishi Vyas was the person who dictated the great epic, *Mahabharata*; it was Lord Ganeshsa who went on

taking down the dictation, scripting the great epic. The deal was that Ganesha would write whole of the *Mahabharata* in one go without stopping even once. The Maharishi was amazed to see how Ganesha could take down *shloka* after *shloka* without any sign of tiredness even after taking down the dictation for a long time. Finally, the great sage asked him the secret of his energy. Lord Ganesha replied, 'O revered Maharishi, energy comes from self-control. I observed complete silence and harnessed my energy in writing this epic.'

Observing silence is considered a very important practice in the scriptures as it conserves energy. It also makes the mind focused on one's aim. Thus it is important to observe silence as much as possible; talking about useless things does not help; conserve energy, avoid gossiping, useless arguments, etc. Socrates instructed his disciples, to say things which passed the triple filter of truth, goodness and usefulness. If at least one of the criteria was met only then he would listen or speak. Sometimes we do not even notice the amount of time and energy that we waste in talking and discussing about useless things.

All great things are the result of a great deal of self-control. Self-control is an art by which you can be a true master of yourself. It has to be practised as a matter of daily routine, at all times and places. Conquer your low nature and vices like anger, greed and selfishness, etc., and you will get a glorious success in life.

Freedom does not when you hold on to something, it comes when you let things go; let your vices go and become free from them. When you do that, you become absolutely free. That is real freedom, everything else is mere bondage that binds you to pleasure that is nonexistent, but entices you as if it was real. To become free from all the vices is the foremost step for getting real success in life, success that makes you reach places to which you truly belong.

The great Einstein formula for success

$$A = X+Y+Z$$

A → Success

X → Work

Y → Hard work

Z → Keep your mouth shut

9. Focus on the present

'Yesterday never comes'

Tomorrow may come but yesterday will not. Past cannot be future, past cannot be present. Why delve on it? Being consistent requires you to

focus on your actions day in and day out. What you do today is more important than what you did yesterday. Focussing on the present action is the hallmark of consistent performers. If you think too much about yesterday, today your action may be affected. The most successful people in the world have got the uncanny knack of doing their best with great regularity, that is what makes them successful. A sportsman is a good example; everyday is a new day for him. You might have created a world record the day before, but it counts for nothing today. You have to start all over again. You just cannot take anything for granted. You cannot expect a salary on the basis of what you did yesterday, last week or last month. You have to make every day count. Don't feel sad or glad for yesterday; instead focus on today's job and that is the most important thing to do.

10. Be consistent

***'Consistent people are never complacent
and complacent people are never consistent'***

People often forget your capabilities, they forget the past. The best way to remind everyone how good you are consistency of performance. Just look how great athletes prepare and practise for competitions. They put in the effort continuously and regularly. They train and toil for hours. Slowly they build up their stamina and by constant practice develop and enhance their skills for the big occasion. For a single medal and a single event they train for years, regularly. After years of continuous practice they get medals. Consistency shows your state of mind; it shows that you are unfazed by distractions. Such people are those who focus harder on work after success and complacent people are those who relax and do not focus on work after getting success. Regular effort and consistency are like the two faces of a coin; they are always together.

11. How you view things makes the difference

***'There may be many views but yours is the most
important because it decides whether
you are headed for success or failure'***

Once Thomas Edison's lab caught fire and it was reduced to ashes. Thomas Edison was in his sixties at that time. Several people said that it was really difficult for a man at his age to come back, that everything was burnt, and that he would have to do everything again. A lesser mortal would have been totally dismayed after the incident and would have blamed his luck. But when Edison saw his lab on fire, he said, 'All

mistakes are burnt up, thank God we can start afresh.' He came up with another invention just six months after this incident. Ultimately, it all depends on you. Everything has positive aspects. Look for the best in every situation and you will be surprised to find how often works out in your favour. Success lies in seeing what everybody misses and making it work for you.

12. Expect success

***'You may not know when you will get success,
but believe you will get it; and continue your efforts,
success will be yours'***

There was a shopkeeper who used to sell pencils, but for three days he sold no pencils. Again next morning he went to his shop, sat there the whole day without any customer even in the vicinity of the shop. It was 8 p.m. and he usually closed his shop at 9 p.m. Suddenly his mobile phone rang and his wife asked him to come home early, as, she said, there was not much chance of anybody coming after 8 p.m. But the shopkeeper said to her that he would not come before nine. Time was running fast and disappointment was writ large on the face of the shopkeeper, but he saw someone coming to his shop for the first time in the last four days; he smiled on the arrival of that person, but the person asked him the address of somebody's house in the vicinity and went away. The shopkeeper started to pack up; it was 8:55 pm now and just when he was closing the shop, there was somebody at his shop, an elderly person wearing torn clothes. The shopkeeper thought that there was not much chance of selling anything. The old man said, 'I want pencils.' Oh, does he have the money to pay me? thought the shopkeeper. The old man said, 'I want 5000 pencils for the Republic Day tomorrow.' He gave him money and took the pencils. The shopkeeper asked the man why he wanted so many pencils. The old man replied, 'I am the chief guest in five schools for the Republic Day celebrations.'

***If you do what you are supposed to, and in the right
direction, success is a matter of time***

Shopkeepers sit in their shops waiting for and anticipating customers. They do not know when customers will come. But they are prepared for them, they follow a routine. They do not close the shop if they do not get customers for a day or two. Success is like a customer, you do not know when it will come, but be prepared for it by sticking to your routine and it will come. Successful people persist, they don't give up. They anticipate and wait for success. They work hard until they get success.

13. List of no's to which you have to say yes

'Big things are won by those who say no to the easy and alluring things in life'

Actions should be intellect-driven, not merely bonded by likes or dislikes. When you are presented with a choice in life, you can choose something that pleases you but is not good for you in the long run or you can choose something which may not be pleasing to you in the short run but will be useful for you in the long run. Success can be achieved by making tough decisions, by saying no to the lucrative things which bind you to the shackles of mediocrity, and make you an ordinary person, and by saying no to the things which lead to failure. Start today making a list of the things to which you will say no. Here are some of the things with which you can start your list.

- No shortcuts
- No excuses
- No dawdling
- No criticism
- No temptations
- No complaining
- No gossiping
- Saying no to things that bring you down
- No backbiting
- No grudges
- No cheating

14. Identify things that make a difference

To get success you have to stay focused on your aim and make sure that your energy is well utilised. If you waste your energy on insignificant and unimportant things it will go waste. Every little thing that you do matters, so ensure that you engage yourself in fruitful activities which may speed up your journey to success.

Things that matter

- It does not matter what has happened
- What matters is how I view what has happened.

It does not matter how much money I have
What matters is how I spend it.
It does not matter that I lost
What matters is I did my best.
It does not matter how many people I know
What matters is whether I know myself.
It does not matter what my circumstances, situations and environments are.
What matters is the attitude that I adopt in dealing with them.
It does not matter that I don't play well
What matters is that I am always improving.
It does not matter what I wear
What matters is, the knowledge I have.
It does not matter what I have
What matters is that I am happy.
It does not matter what others are doing
What matters is what I am doing.
It does not matter what I want.
What matters is what I need.
It does not matter that I am not perfect
What matters is that I am persistent.

15. Opportunity

Creating opportunities

Someone once asked Alexander the Great, 'Would you like to capture the next city if you had the opportunity to do so?' The emperor replied in an emphatic way, saying, 'Opportunity! Why, I don't wait for opportunities, I create opportunities.' To be successful you don't have to wait for opportunities, you must create them, and you have to make it happen.

Everybody has equal opportunities; some people don't ever see them, whereas others are always on the look-out for them, which makes a huge difference. The one who is on the look-out seizes the opportunities and achieves success. Success lies in seizing the existing opportunities and sometimes creating them.

Failure is an opportunity to pass on to bigger things.

Adversity provides an opportunity to rise to levels of greatness.

Poverty is an opportunity to create great wealth.

Fear is an opportunity to be courageous.

Patience is an opportunity to learn precision.

Success is an opportunity to be humble.

Life is an opportunity to be immortal.

Ignorance is an opportunity to learn.

Imperfection is an opportunity to improve.

Suffering is an opportunity to serve.

Death is an opportunity to seek the essence of life.

Today is the biggest opportunity, seize it without fail everyday in your life and succeed.

16. Turn setbacks into achievements

***'First convince yourself that you can do it,
others will be convinced only when you do it'***

John Bunyan, one of the world's greatest writers and author of the masterpiece in the English literature, called *Pilgrim's Progress*, scripted this masterpiece when he was in jail. He did not wait to get out of prison to write the book. He did not postpone his work because the jailors refused to give him paper to write on. Instead, he sat on the bare floor and wrote on twisted and wrinkled pieces of papers which were used to fasten the milk bottles to the prison.

It was a setback and a difficult situation. John Bunyan did not have the comfort that most of the writers have, in fact he did not even have paper. But the old saying is always right: where there is a will there is a way. He managed to write, on wrinkled pieces of paper, one of the most celebrated novels. He changed a setback into a stepping stone on his path to success by sheer grit and determination which is the hallmark of extraordinary people.

Setbacks are inevitable, they will come, but he who conquers them gets real success.

Success is achieved by turning setbacks into achievements, by finding ways to deal with problems and turn them into fortunes, by being steadfast and committed to your goals without being distracted by,

tragedies and mishaps becoming resolute and more determined when things are not favourable to you. Jesus said, **'If ye have faith, and doubt not ...if ye shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea, it shall see, it shall be done.'** Be free from all doubts, have faith in yourself and believe that you can reverse the situation and you will.

The greater the setback, the greater the opportunity it provides.

17. Excellence is eternal patience

'Patience is doing your best till you get the expected result and sometimes it is surpassing the expected result and doing beyond the best'

Patience is not waiting for things to happen, but making things happen and waiting till they happen. Most of the great men had fought pretty tough battles and suffered numerous defeats, like Abraham Lincoln, Edison or Leonardo da Vinci.

But the most important element on which excellence depends is patience. It is the bedrock of anything sublime. Patience is perhaps the most desirable quality in all acts of creativity in the field of art, music or science. Even when others move ahead great people pursue the work which others think absurd and not worth devoting time to it. But ultimately it is patience which triumphs in the form of Mona Lisa painted by Leonardo da Vinci, a filament bulb made by Edison, the discovery of gravitation by Newton and many other things.

It is interesting to note that Leonardo da Vinci, perhaps one of the most versatile persons who have lived, a great sculptor and artist, spent ten years in studying the anatomy of a person before he made his first statue. He later spent four years in painting the famous portrait of the woman known as Mona Lisa, which is amongst the best paintings of the world. What makes a person give so much time and make so much effort. Others might have done a lot more in their lives but perhaps none could match the kind and quality of work that Leonardo did. Without incredible patience it is impossible to achieve the perfection that he achieved. His impeccable portrait of Mona Lisa is an example of the reward of patience. You may ask you do not have so much time as Leonardo had. Perhaps, right. But have patience and remember it is the great things that require a lot of effort, energy and time. When you do so you may think that you are doing something worthwhile. Patience is the key to glorious achievements. Do not get rattled if things take some time; be patient, wait and do whatever you think right. Results will follow in

course of time. Do not get anxious; instead focus on how you can improve upon what you are doing.

Edison, the great scientist, who is credited with making many great inventions, compared his efforts the sound coming out of the phonograph that he had designed. Edison said, 'From 18 to 20 hours a day for the past seven months I have worked on the word "specia". I said into the phonograph "specia, specia, specia" but the instrument sounded "pecia, pecia, pecia". It was long enough to drive one mad.'

But he persisted relentlessly and finally made his phonograph work and succeeded in inventing the phonograph. He had to make a lot of alterations, a lot of trials and he committed so many errors but he kept probing. This is what you need to do in case things are not working well for you. This is how life is. It rewards you according to your efforts sooner or later. Thus be persistent and stop not till you get the desired result. Keep working.

18. Don't compare yourself with others

'If success is easily achieved, it is failure'

Success is something which stretches you fully, it makes you persevere, it requires a tremendous effort and energy demands. Achieving something without really doing your very best means that you have the potential to do something bigger and better. It means that you can achieve much more than what you have achieved. Getting more than others but less than your worth is defeat. Success means you get what you deserve, what you are capable of. Michelangelo never compared his art with anyone else's art, nor did great Newton or Einstein stop doing their experiments just because they were better than others. They did their best ceaselessly without fail throughout their life and that is why they stand among the tallest men in the annals of human achievements. Achieve what you are capable of by doing your best and working as hard as you can. Don't compare yourself with others but learn from all.

19. Power of persistence

It took Chester Carlson about 20 years to succeed in his effort to make a photocopying machine. He started his quest for a technique for photocopying in 1938 and after making a lot of experiments and doing hard work he became successful in his endeavour. But his idea was rejected by several companies; after several disappointments a small company, Haloid, acquired its patent in 1947. Later Haloid became known as Xerox, which is now one of the most successful companies in the world. The first

machine was launched by the Xerox in 1959. Success comes to the one who persists; persistence makes the difference between a hit and a miss. Success and failure depend on persistence. One who persists longer always succeeds. To overcome problems you have to persist longer than the problems.

Persistence can take you where talent cannot reach; it can take you where charisma cannot lead you. It takes you where patience and effort together take you and makes you achieve the highest goals. It takes you where mediocrity makes way for greatness to greatness. Persistence works like magic, it makes the impossible possible. It makes you enjoy your journey till you reach your destination. Never give up, keep persisting.

20. Take full responsibility for your actions

It was all chaos, the scenes were heart-rending: human bodies in pain and blood and death everywhere, people screaming, running here and there, bogies toppled one upon another; an accident had occurred, a train accident. The person responsible for the mishap was to retire from service the same day when the accident occurred; nobody could find out the cause of the accident and that person went home feeling relieved. When he reached home he started narrating to his wife how he forgot to change the tracks and so the accident occurred; he told her that, as, it was the last day his service he would go scott free, and that nobody would be able to get to the cause of the accident. He was confident that he was safe and was happy that he had no longer go to work; just then the phone started ringing. He picked up the phone; a rescue team member was on the phone; he asked him to immediately come to the spot where the accident had occurred; he reached the station rather reluctantly but when he reached there he was terribly shocked to see the dead body of a young man with a gift for his father—a Father's Day present—the dead man's friend told that he wanted to give a surprise to his father, so he did not even inform his father that he was coming to meet him; the man was shocked and petrified and cried in anguish; the young man who lay there dead was his own son.

Take responsibility for your actions.

You cannot escape, there is no way out, sooner or later you have to pay the price for all your actions.

Never underestimate others, suffering; next time you may be at the receiving end.

It is never over till it is completely over. Every second counts.

Your actions are a reflection of who you are. You cannot escape the results of your actions. Make sure that you take full accountability for

your actions. You leave an impression about yourself through your actions, which no one notices.

21. Enjoy what you do

***‘When work becomes a pain, life becomes a vocation;
when work becomes a pleasure, life becomes a vacation’***

I met a person who was known for his excellence. When I asked him what was his hobby, he replied it was his work. Excellence is a habit, as Aristotle said. To attain excellence you have to do your best and work wholeheartedly. Excellence is what makes work a joy. The happiest people are those who love to do what they do and they do excellent work. It is imperative to enjoy work as the quality of your work increases manifold if you love and enjoy your work. You do not have any other choice, because work is something that occupies most of your life; either you have to find out something you love to do or you have to love what you do. The people who make the greatest success stories, the greatest scientists, engineers and artists all loved their work and that was what made them achieve great things. You cannot escape work; sooner or later you have to realise this and do your best.

Work

The greatest work is not where you can make a million

But the one where you can touch a million.

The greatest work is not where you can create wealth

But the one where you can create a legacy.

22. When the going gets tough the tough gets going

***‘If you want to succeed learn to confront the hurdles; you
just cannot avoid them in the long run; sooner or later
you have to overcome these hurdles to succeed’***

At the age of fourteen, this young boy caught a cold, which later deteriorated into severe rheumatism. Thus he became a cripple for life. He was unable to move about as he used to. He lived for fifty-nine years after he was crippled. The struggle against illness and pain was intense; throughout his life he had to fight against physical disabilities.

The boy could not go to school and college because of his illness. But he refused to surrender meekly; instead, he chose to live with a fighting spirit and optimistically began to teach himself while he was bedridden.

Finally, pain and illness were deflected by the doggness and determination of the boy, who developed interest in astronomy. He later became known as John Flamsteed. He was Britain's first astronomer. He became a prominent astronomer and did an amazing work in improving the theories of astronomy. His paper supplied to Newton useful data for his book.

His work was well appreciated when he entered the Royal Observatory in Greenwich as the first royal astronomer. He made barometers and thermometers at home.

He was knighted by the King of England for his contribution to science which was immensely useful. His services in the field of astronomy were pioneering and laid the foundation for exploring space.

Somebody said it right, **'The highest laurels of life have been won by those who fought the toughest battles.'**

23. Often the difference is very small

Often the difference between victory and defeat is very small; it is a little fraction of a second that decides who is the winner of the race, it is a small difference in the number of marks that decides who wins the gold medal in the exam; often the difference in the persistence of a loser and that of a winner is very small; it is a small difference which decides who gets promoted; it is a very small degree of deviation from the path which decides whether a satellite launched is successful or not; there is a very small difference between a successful and an unsuccessful surgery; it is a very small difference that makes a big difference at the end. Never underestimate small things; carefully pay attention to the small things, the small things get added and make a big difference in the end. Success is the result of a series of small efforts; every little thing that you do, every little effort that you make to succeed makes the difference in the end.

The word 'Kaizen' is derived from two words—kai, which means 'to change,' and zen, which means 'good or for the better.' Thus Kaizen means a process of continuous and gradual improvement. Even small amounts over a period of time contribute a great deal. The difference that each day occurs in our life ultimately results in a big difference.

24. Do your best

The F1 racing car is made of approximately 80,000 components; if it were assembled 99.9% correctly; it would still have 80 components wrong. It needs only one defect for the car not to start. The point is that there is

a huge difference between 100% and 99.9%; every small contribution is needed to make 100%; 99.99% may just be not good enough. Give your 100% to whatever you do. Leave nothing to chance; absolute preparedness and constant practice are what are required for success. Success comes when you give your 100% and do not leave even the smallest space for a failure or a mishap.

25. Finish it off

In a race it is not the person who takes the early lead but the person who finishes first wins. The end is the point of evaluation and not the start. You are rewarded on how you finish and not on how you start. So when you begin doing something you will be known by how well you finished it rather than by how you started it. Make sure that even if you stutter in the beginning or in the middle you finish it rather than leaving it undone.

Always remember

- When you start losing mental focus, that is the time you should strive harder to concentrate.
- It is better to stumble than to stop.
- The easiest thing is to stop, but the best thing is to fight and carry on the flight till the end.
- Medals are not awarded to those who give up the race in the middle.
- If you continue and try, you may succeed, but if you do not continue and try, you will not succeed.

In the 1968 Olympics, in the Mexico Olympic stadium, marathon runners were crossing the finishing line and only a few spectators were left there to witness the incredible feat of a strong-willed and determined man called John Stephen Akhwari.

The man from Tanzania was injured in a fall. Battered and bruised, his leg was bloody and crudely bandaged; in a lot of pain he was finishing the final few laps of the 26-mile contest. The final few laps were very difficult but he continued to run and with great determination finished the long race. He got a standing ovation and huge applause from the crowd as if he was the winner of the race. After he finished the race, he was asked why he kept running despite injury and pain when he could have quit. 'My country did not send me 7,000 miles away to start the race. They sent me to finish it', was his response. His reply shows the spirit of all those who make it big in life. It is not you start, it is important how

you finish. You will fall, you will fail, you will go through pain, but you must not quit. You have to finish off the race.

You need not be a winner to win. Winner is the person who does his best and not the one who wins, just like Akhwari who is a winner.

Success

Success is not for the weak

They don't have the strength to combat the battles for success.

Success is not for the lazy

They don't make the effort required to win.

Success is not for the procrastinators.

They don't do anything, thinking that there is a tomorrow which never comes.

Success is not for the impatient

They don't wait long enough for the game to finish.

Success is not for those who make excuses

They don't accept the responsibility to do anything.

Success is not for the people who are tempted by ordinary things of life

They don't have the ability to rise above the temporary pleasure.

Success is for the fearless, bold, dynamic and ever-patient one.

Success is for the one who dreams with his eyes open.

Success is for those who expect, wait and want it the most.

It is for the one who strives and makes a big effort

Who plans, prepares and executes well the ordained task.

It is for the most persistent who sweats in the scorching sun

And who knows what he wants and tries his very best to win.

'The strongest foundation for success is laid by the merit of your actions, nothing in the world can shake it'

Everyone entertains the thought of becoming great; all want to leave an indelible footprint on the sands of time. Cherishing a dream is one thing and executing it is something different. We must see to it that by the dint of hard work and perseverance that dreams are turned into realities.

Success comes to those who even amidst severe difficulties and hardships carry on whatever they have taken up; when obstacles grow they become tougher and more focused; they are the people who get success. When they are down, when they are hurt, when they are cornered, they do not grieve and lose heart, but become more determined to succeed. They are the people who succeed.

***'H₂O is necessary for life and so also for success,
it being humour, humility and optimism.'***

To see a bright ray of hope in every failure, to be able to laugh about when things are not going well, and to appreciate and acknowledge that you owe your living to this world are rare privileges, which give you power to succeed.

Ultimately, it is not what you know, not what you say, not what you think, not what you promise, not what you can do, not who you know, not what you have done in the past, that matter; what matters is what you do now to achieve success.