

SUCCESS IS EASY

**SHAMELESS
NO-NONSENSE
STRATEGIES TO WIN
IN BUSINESS**

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**Entrepreneur
PRESS®**

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Thank you for your interest and support to help more people discover that success actually can be easy. — Debbie Allen

BOOK INTRODUCTION

Do we really need another book on success? Thousands of books on success and goal setting sit on bookshelves around the world. What is missing in previous books is a real-world, say-it-like-it is focus on no-nonsense proven principles and shameless strategies about achieving success. There is a huge gap of missing information, which is probably why most people still think of success as hard or unreachable.

There are a ton of unsuccessful people who believe success is hard. This mindset is instilled in most people at a very young age.

But this belief is simply not true!

If I believed success was hard I would have failed or struggled with money my entire life. I got poor grades in school and barely graduated from high school. I never attended a day of college in my life to learn about business and success. I never even applied for a J.O.B. Based on popular belief, with my background, I'm broke or live paycheck-to-paycheck just to survive. I'm not. Somehow I built and sold multiple million-dollar companies in diverse industries since the young age of 19.

I was a winner many more times than I was a failure simply because I believed in winning. My goal in life is to achieve success. To do whatever it takes to never have to work for anyone else, but myself, for the rest of my life.

I am an independent thinker and know how to break the rules.

Much of what I learned in business was taught from "The School of Hard-Knocks." I believe I can be successful at anything I set my mind to even when I am clueless about how to do something.

There is nothing special about the way I think about business, except for the fact that I always believe I can because *Success Is EASY*.

**Success is Easy is a mindset of wanting it bad enough and
remain committed to making it happen.**

The good news: We don't have to know how to be successful. Success is taught in almost any business venture. With clarity, focus, and commitment we can easily learn proven business skills from already successful people to gain the knowledge required to build, grow, and prosper in business.

Taking action is critically important in achieving success, but actions fail until we master the deeply personal aspects driving success. The hard truth is success isn't a series of actions. It is an attitude, a belief, and a hard-wired commitment.

Success is Not Just Possible — It's Easy!

Success is Easy is a guide to what is possible. There are no punches pulled in unveiling the truth about how easy it is to build a successful business. This book is designed to demystify success by introducing reality stretching principles that work in any type of business.

Success is Turning Fearful into Fearless

Success is Easy represents a no excuses approach to turn timid, fearful, unclear, or stuck business people into fearless, shameless, and powerful influencers who are willing to do whatever it takes to achieve success.

Discover how anyone can transform from lazy, broke, and clueless to highly successful if we get out of our own way.

This empowering book encourages those who have failed in the past to step up and become winners. It will help to turn negative complainers with “lack of” consciousness into positive abundant manifestos of success!

Success is Visible, so Pay Attention to Opportunities

The key points in this book are written to encourage us to visualize our own success. To pay close attention to the amazing opportunities surrounding us every day. And to also know when to say “No” to opportunities that don’t serve and support our goals. The thought provoking, reality gripping ideas, case studies, and shameless business strategies shared will inspire readers to, not only take more action, but to jump into bold shameless action!

Success is Defined Differently for Every Person

Success is defined differently for each person at different times in life. We are asked to define our own success in great detail in order to begin to feel it. This allows a deeper understanding of our “what” and “why” to give meaning and a sense of accomplishment once we’ve arrived at success. Then it’s a matter of learning how to set a new benchmark to keep rising to a higher level.

Success is a Road Paved with Obstacles to Teach Lessons

Although it is an easy road to success, our journey is paved with hurdles and obstacles to test us along the way. True desires and commitments are tested for a good reason. These obstacles are placed in front of us so we learn lessons, improve, grow, and feel the satisfaction of achieving. Think about that for a moment. Haven’t we all overcome challenges and turned them around? Once we overcome an obstacle, do we learn a lesson? And, most importantly, did we have the feeling of satisfaction and achievement? Did it make us feel more confident and more successful?

Most obstacles are caused by negative beliefs that may not even be true. The obstacle may be perceived or assumed, but once these obstacles stick in our mind, it appears insurmountable.

A destructive mindset will block, limit, self-sabotaging, and often destroy chances for success. Yet, we discover crushing any limiting beliefs will lead to seeing more success show up everywhere, almost like magic. Why? Because looking at the opportunities that surround us every day with a more positive mindset leads to success. A more open, positive mindset allows us to see a new world of limitless success.

Success Means Facing Mistakes in Business

In business, it really isn't a question of "if" something will go wrong. Rather it's a matter of "when" something does, how do we respond, make adjustments, and move forward, which is what will determine our level of success.

The only thing turning mistakes into failures is when a person does not learn from the mistakes. Lessons are gifts of success in disguise. These

lessons are placed on us to expand our thinking and to offer us a challenge for positive change.

The common-sense business advice and shameless strategies in this book will challenge us to roll up our sleeves and get to work when mistakes or obstacles appear. But only if we are serious about wanting more success in our business and our life.

I wrote this book to share my life's work. In the process, I've learned to expand my own thinking and beliefs around the concepts of success. There is not a day that goes by that I don't observe the reaction, beliefs, and mindset of others around the concept of success and money.

The goal of this book is to get us "fired up" to become our best version. It doesn't matter if our idea of success is running a small business, growing a franchise, or becoming an independent, financially free entrepreneur "on our own terms." The main objective of this book is to raise existing standards and move us toward achieving our limitless success potential.

No magic pill for achieving success exists. Yet, this book will put us on the right path toward achieving more with drive and determination. Much more success than currently possessed.

Reading *Success is Easy* strategies and taking action is easy, too.

This book provides bit-sized chunks of easy to swallow business wisdom to create abundance and success.

At the end of each chapter in this book, there is a summary with highlights of the chapter to help us stay on track of our goals with *Shameless No-Non-sense Action Steps* and a *Success is Easy Affirmation*.

SECTION 1

REALITY STRETCHING

SUCCESS SECRETS

CHAPTER 1

Success Is EASY...With a New Reality

Most of us are taught to believe success is challenging. It is a huge disappointment to grow up and realize most of what we are taught about how to achieve success in business is simply bad advice.

Creating a Success-Driven Mindset

Some people were taught that if we just work hard, we'll succeed. But that's just not true! Why the hell are we lied to?

Working hard for someone else might get us a pay-check, but there's absolutely no guarantee that working hard for someone else will pay off when it comes to developing our successful future. Working hard for a company will not necessarily get us promoted. There is much more to success than simply working hard because if that was the case, millions of people around the world would be a lot more successful!

Hard work doesn't always pay off when we work for ourselves either. I see too many small business owners working hard just to tread water versus focusing on developing a more successful business.

I know this first hand myself, because as a new retail store owner I thought working long hours would help me get ahead, too. But working harder simply made me more frustrated when success didn't come easily. When I worked hard I got exhausted and burnt out. Working hard made me less pro-

ductive in growing business success. Hard work gets things done, success requires innovation, creativity, and new insight.

Too many people believe it's hard to succeed in life. That it's too difficult to push through and achieve goals and attain all the things desired. But that's completely false!

I should have failed to succeed many times in life, but it was my mindset and my drive to succeed that pushed me through the most challenging obstacles that stood in my way. In fact, I'm proof that *Success is Easy* because I ...

... started every new business with little or no experience.

... survived despite doom-sayers all around telling me I was crazy.

... was a less than average student with very limited education.

... started with very little knowledge of every industry I launched into.

... had limited funds for investing into each of my new startups.

... lost everything a couple of times in my life and started back up from ground zero to succeed all over again.

Yet, despite many obstacles, success kept finding me time and time again.

Why? My passion, determination, and commitment to succeed was stronger than accepting failure. This pushed me to climb over, push down,

and tackle any barrier placed in front of me. I was determined to move far beyond the norm with 100 percent commitment to succeed!

Now, I'm not saying to follow my business plan with no experience, no knowledge, or no money. That's not the easy path to follow and I'm sure some readers are thinking, "That's not a good business model to start with." It still proves that even with obstacles piling up around us, we can still succeed with a strong commitment.

It doesn't matter where our commitment comes from, it only matters that we embrace it and create a success-driven mindset! I'm not sure where my personal commitment and my passion to succeed comes from.

I didn't grow up learning this was the way of life.

There is something inside of me that is independent, shameless, sassy, and strong enough to fight for it. I want more out of life than the status quo and I know I never want to work for someone else.

During the process of success building it's possible to experience what I have experienced: More happiness, more opportunities, and more money than I ever imagined possible. Once a person tastes success like this, having more of it in life is fun, and it gets easier.

Win in Business with Belief Shifts

What is learned in this book will lead to winning in business when the following belief shifts are applied:

We win when we are no longer lost, unclear, or unfocused.

We succeed by defining what success means to us with a clear vision and a focused path to follow.

We win by no longer wallowing in self-doubt and worry.

We succeed with a more positive mindset and belief system.

We win by no longer needing to blame others for our failures.

We succeed by turning our mistakes into valuable lessons.

We win because we stop stressing about the lack of money.

We succeed by becoming financially free.

We win by no longer remaining shackled to working hard for someone else, living pay-check to pay-check.

We succeed because we work smart on our own terms.

We win because we no longer stress over the competition.

We succeed because we position ourselves to stand out far above the competition.

We win because we no longer worry about reaching our goals.

We succeed because we have the courage to take bold and strategic action to achieve

our goals every time.

We win because we are no longer concerned about how to grow and thrive in business.

We succeed because we continually learn new skills and develop the right traits to

“Up Level” our knowledge for growth and expansion.

We win because we no longer allow obstacles and roadblocks to stop us in our tracks.

We succeed by staying committed to our goals and doing whatever it takes to overcome challenges.

We win because we no longer fear shameless self-promotion and put ourselves out there for the world to notice.

We succeed by learning how to promote ourselves and our business effectively in the service of others.

We win because we make the right decisions quickly and effortlessly.

We succeed by learning to trust our intuition and our decisions based on past successes.

We win because we remain open to change and reinvent as needed for growth.

We succeed with each reinvention and understand change is required to expand and grow.

We win because we are a person of influence.

We succeed because we are confident and can influence others to follow our ideas and business concepts.

We win because we do business with integrity and treat others right.

We succeed by giving others more than expected because we care. This allows us to create an abundance of high-valued clients who value our service and refer us to others.

Successful People Make it Look Easy

Ever wondered what makes some people succeed almost effortlessly, while others continuously fail? First of all, successful people think bigger by

raising the bar higher and moving away from accepting low standards. Successful people also have a high internal drive to succeed, which allows persistence to remain.

We could say that what drives someone to succeed is ambition. Yet if ambition is the answer to success we might also ask, “What drives someone to become more ambitious?”

“Is ambition something a person learns or is it something a person is born with?” Anyone can learn to become more ambitious if it’s wanted bad enough. Anyone can create an internal drive that moves us to become more ambitious. Therefore, anyone can also become more passionate and motivated by true desires.

So, what’s the difference?

A person has to want success bad enough to move beyond the here and now to a place of a future own vision, of making it on our own. Someone must desire change bad enough to take different actions to move to a different place with better results.

Successful people make success look effortless and without struggle.

Why? How? Partly because we don't give up, but stay the course, despite obstacles, challenges, and setbacks. Because we want success bad enough to take different action.

Don't See Mistakes, Only Success!

We see successful people as winners who make work appear easy. People who have mastered the profession. Those who are confident, focused, and committed.

What looks easy is the result of specific actions and ongoing dedication toward success. There is a plan to succeed from day one. We do our best and keep moving forward even when making mistakes.

There is no one secret recipe to becoming a successful person. Yet there are a list of strengths and habits that when combined together can greatly attribute toward success.

Seven Strengths and Habits that Successful People Possess

To find and develop success within ourselves can come easily by looking at the strengths and habits of other successful people. The attributes that successful people possess are not developed overnight and didn't just happen by accident or luck.

Successful people continue to work on developing success habits as part of a daily routine. Success becomes a way of life. We have developed certain strengths and personality traits that allow success to continue to flow to us with ease. Seven of the most important strengths and habits successful people possess include the following.

1. A Success-Driven Mindset and the Passion to Achieve

Successful people have a strong will to succeed and achieve in life. We look forward to growth and have the desire to do much more than the average person. This desire is deeply instilled within us. These people take action to make positive changes and move outside of a comfort zone. Even with failed attempts, we quickly see opportunities that surround us. We adjust our efforts when things don't go right and move in a new direction.

Unsuccessful people, on the other hand, feel defeated, throw hands up in the air, and give up too soon.

2. Self-Awareness and Self-Confidence

Successful people face challenges with confidence and have the faith to trust the skills and/or knowledge acquired. Even when we don't have the right skills or knowledge to begin with, we move forward with enthusiasm and commitment to succeed despite the odds. We have a strong sense of self, which allows us to make stronger commitments. We are comfortable speaking our mind. Successful people stand up, speak out, and enjoy sharing ideas and opinions.

Unsuccessful people who lack confidence are often unwilling to open up and speak up, which holds the person back and causes missed success opportunities.

3. Vision Focused and Achievement Oriented

Successful people create a clear vision for goals and take action toward achieving a vision, which does not allow anything to stand in the way. Strong vision serves as a guideline to keep motivated and on track to achieve the

goals. Smaller goals are set first, achieved, and then bigger and bolder benchmarks to hit larger targets are set.

Unsuccessful people are often unclear, unfocused and misguided. Therefore, wasting time and money getting to goals and often missing the targets all together.

4. Value Time Wisely

Successful people are extremely productive. We value and use time wisely and do not allow others to take advantage of us or waste our time. We create barriers around time by adding structure and systems into our business, which is respected by clients and peers. We clearly understand that time is the most valuable asset.

Unsuccessful people waste time doing unproductive things that don't allow growth effectively or give away time too freely to others. Therefore, creating less income-generating opportunities.

5. Own It!

Successful people build a solid business and brand foundation that sets us apart from the competition. We are known as experts and authorities within our industry. This allows more success to come with ease.

Unsuccessful competitors do things like everyone else, do not have a success plan to build on, or do just enough to survive.

6. Think Differently than the Average Person

Successful people think differently. We look one step ahead into the future without eyes wide open to see opportunity everywhere. We think outside-of-the-box and come up with creative and innovative ways of doing business.

Unsuccessful people follow the crowd or wait to copy other people's ideas. Therefore, usually remain one step behind the competition much of the time.

7. Love What We Do

Successful people don't think of work as work. There's pleasure in our business and love for what we do for a living. This gives a sense of achievement and happiness that fulfills our definition of success.

Unsuccessful people focus an attitude toward work as survival and working to make a living. Therefore, the belief that sticks out is work is based on the need to keep working hard just to get paid or to just get by. Most don't enjoy what is done for a living and consider it a J.O.B.

The #1 Problem that Doesn't Guarantee Success

Anyone can create ambition, drive, and determination to succeed. All of these traits will move a person toward success, but don't necessarily guarantee success.

Too many people say we want success, but the reality is we don't really want it because that means working too hard, focusing too much, being coachable and open for success!

Too many people say we want more success and more money, but the reality is we're too lazy to get off our ass and take action!

Others rather complain and make excuses about why it's too hard to achieve success, so why even bother trying. The long list of excuses is never ending. Yet the bottom line is: Talk a good game, but not really want success bad enough to go after it!

An important thing to know about success is we do need to go after it because it's not coming to find us!

Success comes with a certain amount of responsibility that not everyone is willing or able to accept. This stops too many people from going for it.

We just can't stop, quit, or make excuses! Period! Once this is understood and there is a strong commitment to making success happen in our life, it is easily doable!

“When you remain open to success, amazing opportunities will show up for you every day!” - Debbie Allen

The road to success, when paved with the *Success is Easy* trainings can become an exciting, productive path to follow. When we look back six months or a year from now, we'll see just how far we have traveled. And the road will begin to look much easier.

The Word Success Holds Power

We have the fundamental right to become more successful and earn all the money and prosperity in life we desire. But we must own it in our mind first.

Repeat the power word “Success” frequently. Hold all the faith and conviction in the world when saying it. Their subconscious mind will catch up and start believing it, too. And when it does, it will lead us there!

I am successful — I am successful — I am successful!

Words and the language we speak hold power and truth. When we use positive words about ourselves and our abilities to succeed that will start showing up externally. Likewise, if we continually make negative declarations about ourselves or our business that echo hopelessness, incite fear, or create anxiety then those words will shape our reality.

Pay Close Attention to the Words We Speak

Not only do our words affect our success opportunities, but words impact how others perceive and relate to us as well. If we often feel overlooked or undervalued, consider how our language is contributing to our downfall. Instead of framing words into limiting “can not,” turn the words into unlimited words to empower success.

Successful people speak power words to influence others. These words impact others and draw people in like a magnet. This creates more success opportunities automatically.

Decide to Choose from this Day Forward

Power words will continue to help amplify our success-generating opportunities. We are 100 percent in control of the words coming out of our mouth.

When we realize just how capable we are, when we are more aware of the words used every day, we can decide what words hold power and which words will greatly impact our success.

Choose to:

- . Make words negative or positive.
- . Use words that limit or move us forward.
- . Focus words on excuses or on opportunities.
- . Use words to repel or attract others.
- . Select words to create problems or provide solutions.
- . Apologize for limited beliefs or remain coachable to new ideas.
- . Limit labels or reinforce positive change.

Choose Success or Failure

Hopefully everyone is learning and understanding how important it is to think and act differently to achieve more. Some people may be thinking, “If the power is already inside of me to control my destiny and achieve my success easily, why the heck haven’t I reached all the success and money I want yet?”

There are concrete reasons we haven’t achieved the level of success we truly desire. Therefore, it’s important to be aware of misguided beliefs and bad habits around success causing some pitfalls and failures perceived as beyond our control until now!

Although most of us are told lies about success, which frankly are just not true, there are a number of timeless universal principles that are known to guide a person toward success. These timeless success principles include: determination, a clear vision, positive self-belief, and learning from failures.

Some Timeless Success Principles Backfired

Most of the time success principles backfire because of the walls used to block the principles out. These invisible walls are built from our own limiting beliefs. To make a shift, first become aware of the existing belief and observe patterns more positively.

Success principles can backfire if we have a black and white approach to beliefs about success. For example, many people believe there is either success or failure, and we can't do both. The reality is that success is a bit fuzzy at times. The reason is that to become more successful at anything, we must also fail as we learn from mistakes.

“Failure is simply part of the process of learning to become more successful in business and in life.” - Debbie Allen

The problem is unsuccessful people see failure, freak out, and give up too soon, before having a chance to succeed. This behavior causes sabotage to opportunities placed in front of us. We get in our own way, make excuses, and stop taking action. Worst of all is buying into limiting beliefs that cause the failure in the first place.

For example: I have witnessed hundreds of people give up on success in a matter of minutes. After I speak at events I often have a table set up at the back of the meeting room to talk with audience members once I come off stage. Some attendees will wait in line for up to two hours to speak to me for two minutes.

I can tune into people. I'm extremely intuitive about reading people. Often I can uncover if someone will choose either success or failure in just a couple of minutes. This is clearly revealed by the body language and the words used to describe goals and the businesses. The majority seem to truly want success and value my advice. Yet far too many still choose failure.

Those who choose failure over success wait to talk with me only to share excuses, problems, or even worse just to tell me about being, "Broke."

Yikes, I cringe when I hear that word. It's one of the most negative and limiting words anyone can use when it comes to personal success sabotage.

It amazes me what people will reveal when wanting us to buy into stories of misery and failure. Often the people just want to remain stuck in the story. Sorry, but that doesn't work for me. I have no tolerance for self-limiting-pity-parties. It's a complete waste of time because what I have learned is these people who choose failure over success are not open and coachable and are not ready to hear positive reinforcement, innovative ideas, or successful advice!

I care about helping others succeed, but I can only help those who are ready to listen, learn, and take action. If this sounds good, keep reading. I'm here to help!

Success is Easy Reality Check

What was taught about success growing up was probably not the truth if it was taught by someone who never actually achieved it. Often times, we have to fail our way into learning to be successful on our own.

Limiting beliefs around success may get in our way for far too long. It's time to take 100 percent responsibility for our success and make a strong commitment to making things happen in a big way!

We can choose winning over losing. Choose to succeed even when we fail by learning from the experience. Choose to learn from our mistakes and continue to move on. We can choose to win by grabbing ahold of success from this day forward and never letting go.

We should always be true to the best within ourselves!

“Success is easy, unless you chose to make it hard!” - — Debbie Allen

CHAPTER 2

Success Is EASY... With Definition

Here's a little secret: We can have whatever we want in life as long as we are willing to plan, focus, and execute it. It's that easy!

When we are born, we explore, reach out, believe in things without explanation or proof, and we are curious. We felt like we could do anything, go anywhere, be whoever we want when we grow up.

We are born to be winners!

We are born fearless!

We are born to be whatever we want to be!

Success is waiting for us!

As many of us grow up, we are taught that we are not supposed to “speak up” or “stand out.” We are told to “stop dreaming,” to be “reasonable,” and “not to set our expectations too high.”

What?

Does any of this crazy nonsense sound familiar? These are false limitations fed into our belief system by others who were fed these same ideas, too, without stopping to realize we are all born winners. It's time to stop this madness. As an adult with our own life, choices, and beliefs, limiting, negative and false beliefs do not serve us and will sabotage success opportunities.

For example, limiting beliefs can cause smart people to say really dumb things. Ever heard someone say, "I really don't care about being successful, I just need enough money to get by." "I'm broke." "I'm just trying to keep my head above water."

Again, that's nonsense! Why would someone limit themselves to such low standards? Doing so bankrupts any dreams of success.

Many children grew up with parents and teachers who most likely didn't realize the words spoken could limit chances for success.

And if we are not able to create our own strong belief system about success, we may have continued to believe this nonsense!

Get Back into the Winner's Circle

If fear or doubt stops us from being the winner we are born to be, it's up to us to turn it around and get back into the winner's circle where we belong. Over time, whether we realize it or not, fear and doubt can steal success. We must fight to get back into the winner's circle and stay there.

Fear does not provide protection. Instead fear makes a person who can't act or take risks due to feelings of uncertainty or doubt. Fear holds us back from being a high performer. It makes us feel inadequate and may even make us think we are not good enough to be successful. Fears do not serve or protect us. Fears are false.

Do not tolerate for one minute the idea that we are prohibited from any achievement by the absence of in-born talent or ability. Never let fear win over the reality that we are born as winners!

Prepare to Win!

Success is a birthright. We are put on this planet to be successful and that requires no apology. A person who is 100 percent committed to success cannot fail.

My belief is everyone arrives here on earth with a mission. And once we discover the truth about who we are and what we truly want out of life, there is nothing to stop us. Hold on to the belief that we can achieve whatever we put our mind to. There is no way anyone can stop us unless we allow that to happen.

The Time is NOW!

Most people don't realize we already have the ability to accomplish almost anything we set our mind to. This ability resides within each of us and is just waiting to get released.

But don't wait. If we wait, we may miss the momentum and the opportunities waiting around the corner. Don't worry about gathering all of the infor-

mation and details before beginning. We don't need all the answers and don't need to know the how right now.

It's time to move forward. It's time to begin acting as if we have already achieved the success we desire.

Define What Success Means

The number one reason most people don't succeed is not taking the time to define what is wanted. One of the most important things for each of us is to know exactly what we want. What does success look like or feel like? If we don't know, we attract confusion.

Success is not what others tell us it is. It's what each of us say it is for us!

If we go with the belief that success is what everyone else says it is, we'll always miss the target. And when or if we do achieve someone else's version of success it won't mean as much to us.

To become successful requires giving up other people's beliefs around success. Forget about what other people think about success and stop comparing ourselves to others. Some people think success is defined as having tons of money, fame, and fortune.

The reality is success is defined in many ways, but it must come from within to create or motivate true success on our terms.

By truly understanding and valuing who we are and why we desire success, it's easier to tap into our true value by becoming more aware of our strengths, skills, and existing knowledge. Some valuable qualities may have come to us as naturally born talent and these are called gifts. Skills are learned and developed over time with effort and experience.

To help figure out our value, think of a time when we were completely “dialed-in.” Consider a time where we felt as if we were completely in our element or in “The zone.”

How did it feel in that moment?

What strengths, skills, and knowledge come easily?

Learn to listen to the inner promptings for hints of the kind of success desired. This allows us to start out feeling challenged in the best way possible. Chances are, when we take stock of our strengths and consider all possibilities for success, we will discover there is more than one path to getting there. We may also discover there is something else we want more, or one area that

is a stronger market or higher chance of success. This turns into the ability to stop wasting time on opportunities that aren't right for us.

Success on Our Own Terms

Defining our own success means knowing why we want it. For example, when we say, "I want success!" What are we really saying we want?

Taking ownership of our success means taking full responsibility for our direction. If we are going to spend the rest of our life doing something, it might as well be something we really want to do.

Successful high-performance people look at what we want and move forward until it is achieved. The main goal is to live a life we're proud of and to achieve a level of success that's worth fighting for.

It doesn't matter where each of us starts from, it only matters that we want it bad enough to fight for it when challenged. Only we know what we're willing to fight for.

Our success is not defined by others, it's defined by each of us for ourselves!

Success is Not One Size Fits All

We may believe success is defined by the outcome of money, fame, happiness, material items, etc. But success does not come with a one-size-fits-all label. Success must get defined by our own labels of success.

Success is not defined by another person or by society. The meaning of success is different for each person and is only defined by that person. We may not fit into other people's definition of success, but we can give ourselves permission to be okay with that. Success is an individual concept. I cannot define success for anyone else. I can only define it for myself. But here's the exciting part, each get to define and design our own "Success Blueprint," which means we get to follow our own rules.

When writing this book, I asked hundreds of people to define what the word "success" meant. Almost every person asked gave me a different definition of the word simply because I asked for each one to define it on individual terms. Very insightful!

We are Now in Full Control

Remember being asked as a child, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” As children we are allowed to dream and define our own success story any way we want to. So, why do we stop asking ourselves that question?

It’s extremely challenging to manage our actions toward success if we haven’t identified and defined it first. We can actually feel like a failure when we are highly successful if we are not clear on defining what success means to us.

For example, if we only measure success in dollars, we may always be looking for that bigger pot-of-gold at the end of a new rainbow. Working harder, working faster, and doing more are not necessarily the keys to achieving personal satisfaction and success. Or, we may even measure success by comparing ourselves to others.

Even with a hefty bank account and a financially-free lifestyle, we may still feel like a failure when everyone around us sees us as successful. This definition of success is dangerous because we set ourselves up for false fail-

ure based on comparisons and personal judgments that are completely unfair and unwarranted.

Three Steps to Defining Success

Although the definitions of success are subjective. What is most important when it comes to defining and directing the steps taken to get there, these are objective.

First, begin by clearly defining what we want so that we can see the final outcome. Here are three steps to directing success.

Step 1: Discover Why Success is Important to Us

To discover why success is important to us ask ourselves these important questions. Take out a piece of paper and begin to journal answers to the following questions in as much detail as possible.

Is success defined with professional achievements, personal happiness, and/or financial freedom?

How will achieving more success feel? (For example: more confident, more empowered, fearless, etc.)

After achieving more success, how will life be different than it is right now?

Step 2: Uncover the Drive to Move Past Obstacles

To achieve more success requires us to get more driven and persistent when challenges and obstacles get in the way. The journey is challenging as we learn, grow, and experience more. As obstacles get in the way we're required to take full responsibility to stay on course.

What obstacles stand in the way from achieving success?

How will removing these obstacles help to move forward to achieving a higher level of success?

How can we then hold ourselves accountable for staying on course to achieving the level of success desired?

How has failure held us back in the past and what action can we take to move beyond failure going forward?

Step 3: Start by Taking the First Step

Too many people wish to start a business, but postpone the decision to do so while looking for a perfect business idea that will make millions. Often the

only reason why many don't take action on planned goals and dreams is lack of confidence in abilities. The only solution to this problem is to start. Self-confidence won't build itself. *Success is Easy* only if we start.

It doesn't matter if we know how to be successful at something or how to achieve goals. We don't need to figure it all out before we start. Not knowing how to do something has never stopped me from starting a new business venture or for reaching success before I knew how. I simply started. I took the first step and kept on going.

I'm a strong believer that anyone can become successful at just about anything when we set our mind to it and get started. Even if we take the wrong step, readjust, step in a new direction, and start again. Consider the following questions.

What can we start doing tomorrow if we know we can't fail?

If the lack of knowledge is not holding us back, what will we step into tomorrow?

If there is no fear or doubt holding us back, what bold action steps can we take to achieve more success?

If we are told we could not stop until we achieved our goal, what big goal would we reach for?

Success Should Not Feel Hard

If our goal is for something as vague as “success” or “money,” we will have a challenging time trying to harness it. This will make us feel as if success is hard, but success should not be hard. If it feels like success is hard, we are doing it wrong.

The no-nonsense bottom line: If what we are doing is not working, we must be open and coachable to a new way of doing things. This is simply good common business sense.

Listen up: If success feels hard and challenging, wake up and walk away from what is not working, shift actions and rethink the situation all together. Set aside any personal emotions that may cloud judgement on why things may not be working right now.

Remove anything else that may influence false perceptions around our own level of success. In other words, start by getting out of our own way.

Step outside of our wants and get to the results we are looking for. This is the best way for us to get the true essence of our own personal success definition. Focus on the final outcome we are trying to achieve.

Success is Different for Every Person

To become truly successful, we must start out by defining what success means to us. No one else's version of success is the same as ours, therefore never compare ourselves to others.

Ask the right questions to define the true meaning of success. Success is not only different for every person, it's defined differently at different times of our lives and our careers.

CHAPTER 3

Success Is EASY...With the Right Mindset

Too many people say we want success, yet in reality don't act like it. Why? Because we don't want to do the things necessary to create success. For example, many want the results of success, but not the responsibility that goes along with achieving it.

The no-nonsense truth about success is: Success is easier than failure! With all the knowledge education and training available today it's actually harder to fail than to succeed.

Why settle for failure? Because success scares most people who settle because of a subconscious fear of success. When negative or false beliefs are fed into someone's subconscious mind it turns into self-sabotage. This often happens when someone is creating change or moving forward in life. Fear to some people feels real because the future is real. Yet to create and sustain success is critical to release the fear of success all together. If the fear of success is not released it will begin to control us.

F.E.A.R. (False Evidence Appearing Real) comes from the root of false beliefs and myths around the meaning of success. Yet all fear can go away once someone takes back the power of owning our beliefs and the real truth about success. Once we've defined our success with new beliefs there is nothing to fear.

Let's get real about some false beliefs and myths that contribute to fear and sabotage leading to failure.

False Belief #1: Success is all about power, wealth, and fame.

People who measure success in terms of power, wealth, and fame are looking in the wrong place. When someone's belief is we must measure up to such high standards, we may not even want to try.

Reality: Success is about feeling confidence, empowered, and committed to our core values. Our values are part of the overall success equation. Successful people stay connected to our best self by tapping into what we value most about ourselves and our business.

False Belief #2: Success is hard work and takes forever to achieve.

People who believe that it takes too long to achieve success or that it's too hard will lose motivation and commitment to take action.

If success appears to be too far out into the future or unattainable some people will make up excuses why it won't work.

Reality: Working hard for a long period of time does not guarantee success. In fact, success can happen quickly and easily. For example, if we have the right skills or talent, we can succeed with minimum effort. We can experience success easily every day through small achievements, accomplishments and personal growth.

False Belief #3: Successful people are selfish and self-centered.

People who believe successful people are selfish or self-centered usually feel uncomfortable standing out in a crowd and may also fear self-promotion. A person who believes this often feels that putting ourselves out there will cause others to judge us as rude, pushy, or intrusive.

Reality: We won't find truly successful people focusing internally. We know how to self-promote effectively in the service of others. The only way

to truly be successful is to get comfortable standing out and promoting our value, services, and ideas.

False Belief #4: We need a formal education to become successful.

Some people believe getting a college degree or another diploma will make us successful. Some actually work hard at becoming professional students, while piling up student debt. Others use the excuse that it's critically important to learn more before stepping out into the world and taking action. In the meantime, some people will hold back from going after success until feeling "ready."

Reality: We don't need a formal education to be ready for success. It can sometimes be the slower route. A formal education will only take us so far in life. The most expensive university will only give us the tools to help us learn and grow. It's still up to us to come up with a plan and execute it. Education comes in many forms and can be gained in a variety of ways. The key to education is to absorb knowledge and gain life experiences that will teach us how to apply our wisdom.

False Belief #5: Negative thinking cannot be changed

People who think negatively dwell on unhappy and unproductive thoughts that continue to sabotage success. When someone is engaged in habitual negative thinking, positive thoughts will not come natural or easy until we make the choice to change the thoughts.

Reality: All thinking patterns can be changed, even negative ones. Negative thoughts can get shifted into more positive thoughts. Once negative thinking turns to more positive thoughts it creates a greater sense of success. The more someone trains the brain to think in positive ways, the more it's expected, acted on, and achieved.

Quit Stopping the Flow of Success

Let me ask this, "Do you want me to tell you what you want to hear or what you need to hear?" If a person is ready to listen I'll be upfront and honest. We all stop success from flowing to us at some level. The only thing standing between us and more success is our self!

Therefore, ask these questions, journal the answers, and keep the responses at top of mind.

Has fear held us back from the success we deserve in any way?

Have we crushed our own dreams of success in the past?

Have we destroyed advantages for success opportunities?

If failure crushes our spirit, it makes us play a smaller game in business and in life.

Unfortunately, the majority of people all over the world feel stuck. We see people giving up, believing it's necessary to take from others in order to own anything. Yet to achieve success we need to make success on our own. We are responsible for everything that happens. That may be a hard pill to swallow, but unless we accept it we cannot change things for the better.

The biggest enemy is the person we see in the mirror. It's not our lack of education, financial situation, or the bad decisions we've made in the past that are holding us back. It's our self!

Controlling Thoughts Around Success

Controlling our thoughts is the hardest part of struggling toward success. It's a big challenge. We must become mentally tough!

If we allow fear to drive our thoughts, we'll never do the challenging things leading to success. We must learn how to use fear to push us toward positive activity, toward more creativity, more passion, and more purpose.

We must learn to change self-sabotaging thoughts and habits. And wipe out excuses that keep us stuck or unproductive. If we dwell on negative thoughts for too long those thoughts will control us. In fact, our thoughts are powerful and can determine the level of success we achieve more than the actual doing.

Negative thoughts can cause self-defeat regardless of how hard we try. Once someone has accepted a false belief as if it were fact, all good intentioned efforts and willpower are to no avail against the powerful false belief held onto instead of accepting the truth.

Keep the Attitude in Check

Attitudes are extremely important in determining the difference between success and failure. Attitudes either support us or keep us from positive change depending on how we use these attitudes. Experiences lead us to believe certain things about ourselves whether these beliefs and attitudes are

true or not really doesn't matter. If we accept these as truth, then these false beliefs are true for us. There is nothing we can do except to change our thinking.

Move Outside the Limitation Zone

Plant a seed and it is going to grow. Unfortunately, negative attitudes and beliefs can grow to the point of becoming limitations. The sad thing is that even though we know our lives aren't working in certain areas we may still be afraid to change. We can become locked into an “uncomfortable” comfort zone. I refer to this comfort zone as a “Limitation Zone.” The only way to get out of this zone is to free ourselves of the limitations that hold us there.

To move outside the limitation zone, we must stop lying to ourselves about what's not working, stop blaming others, and stop avoiding unpleasant decisions that stop action. To step outside to a better life, we must begin to face the truth that we have accepted unworkable beliefs that are the direct cause for the challenges in our lives.

Moving outside of a “Limitation Zone” is a matter of moving toward right thinking, in other words more positive and productive thinking. Moving toward knowing the absolute truth about who we are.

Be on High-Alert for the Lame Excuse Zone

Negative self-talk kills opportunities for success. We must remain on high alert for damaging self-talk causing the creation of extreme limitations that throw us into the “Lame Excuse Zone.” This zone is where no-one takes responsibility for success. Ever heard these lame excuses?

“If it wasn’t for bad luck, I wouldn’t have any luck at all.”

“I feel like a total failure.”

“I’ll try to figure it out, but I’m so bad at”

“I don’t need to make much money.”

Or even worse: “I’m broke!”

Stop Bitching and Complaining and Be the Change!

Limiting words such as these can leave anyone feeling hopeless.

Shut up! These are simply lame excuses for playing small.

Watch out! When we find ourselves in the “Lame Excuse Zone” we are playing small. Using similar words will cause us to unconsciously sabotage our success. When we find ourselves stuck in negative and limiting story-

telling we hold ourselves back from success and alienate ourselves from others. Let it go! Drop it! No one wants to hear our lame B.S. Poor-Me stories anyway. This may sound harsh, but my intent is to show the tremendous power words have when it comes down to choosing success over failure.

Limiting words will become dream-killers and stress-makers. These words imply that we have no choice, no option, no freedom, no control, and that we are victims. We all use limiting words out of habit.

Listen for these words very carefully.

Success has No Tolerance for Excuses!

It's time to remove self-sabotaging excuses that keep us stuck.

Stop making excuses for who and where we are in life. Often that's just an excuse for not taking action or down right being lazy. Lazy is for losers.

Losers don't want to do the work required to become successful.

We have literally attracted everything that has come into our life: good or bad, happy or sad, success or failure. It's time to make it a habit to stop excuses from forming in the first place if we want to change life and attract something different. Successful people consider every situation an opportuni-

ty, even when it appears limiting or hopeless to a negative person. Learn to do the same to attract more success into our life.

Think of it this way. In the amount of time it takes for the mind to invent a lame excuse, it could have created an alternate way of achieving the desired good result rendering excuse-making completely unnecessary. Learn to live “excuse-free” and take full responsibility for every aspect of our life. It’s about creating a future we’re excited and proud of.

It starts with believing we can be amazing regardless of who or where we are in life right now.

Training and managing our own mind is the most important skill we can own in terms of success and happiness. Separate ourselves from negativity and force ourselves to become more positive. A negative person is mentally weak. It takes no mental courage to have negative thoughts. What does take mental effort, and lots of it, is to find the best in every situation and to stop making excuses for what doesn’t go right.

Manifest Success with Words

The words we speak hold immense power to fuel confidence and ambition or the power to shut us down. Power to make a great first impressions or the power to get ignored.

Psychological research finds the subconscious interprets what it hears very literally. There mind and body will follow the direction our words lead. To gain more confidence and success opportunities, begin with what we're projecting to ourselves and others every time we open our mouth.

Words carry energy. An energy that subtly, or not so subtly, changes the meaning of a word from moment-to-moment and day-to-day. No dictionary will ever tell us this. Only our experience and common sense will allow us to discover this for ourselves.

Avoid Negative Thoughts and Emotions Around Money

Someone with a "lack-of mindset" around money is challenged when it comes to achieving success. People without money often feel victimized, but what these people are doing is creating and living a self-fulfilling prophecy

by constantly complaining about and condemning the things each one claims to desire: Success and money. Speaking critically of what we want more of is not creating positive success.

On the other hand, someone with a “prosperity mindset” will attract money and income-generating opportunities like a magnet. This is why the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. It has nothing to do with money. People with winning self-beliefs do things that allow winning. And when we lose at something, we don’t accept it as our fate.

One of the fastest ways to repel money is to criticize anything or anyone who has more than we do. Another way to repel money away from us is to believe we don’t deserve it. When this happens, we will find a way to rid ourselves of money as quickly as possible, even when we say it’s what we want the most. Unfortunately, most people need to learn this the hard way by overspending, making bad financial decisions, or making bad business investments.

Learning Lessons about Success and Money from Our Parents

Limiting beliefs around success and money held my father back from having what he said he wanted most in life: Success! Although my father was obsessed with finding success, he subconsciously sabotaged his success opportunities. He had great success in our family car rental and mini-storage business in the 1970s, but after selling these two businesses he later struggled to find success again. His success obsession continued his entire life.

For decades he made extremely impulsive financial decisions. Money found him many times, but he continued to allow it to slip away instead of investing it wisely for his future. He would invest in any new business venture that came his way, with little time, effort, or research. Dozens of new business start-ups later, he was obsessed with finding success.

My father's belief about money was to finance as much as possible.

He called it: The American Way. His belief was to keep his own money (although he never kept it) and finance as much as he could. He never planned for his future. With every new business he started, he put little time or focus into building it. When he ran into an obstacle he would drop it and

move on to something else. I believe he became so obsessed with finding success that he started to ignore reality.

To this day I continue to learn lessons about success. I ask myself, “Why would someone who wants success so badly continue to sabotage it? Why would someone settle for less, while looking for more in another direction? Why would someone ignore reality time-and-time again?”

Parents are our first teachers in life, success, and money. As adults we choose to either follow the same path or find our own way. But we need to pay very close attention that we don’t take on lessons that don’t serve us well. For example, I didn’t discover my own self-sabotaging money lesson until later in life.

I sold my retail stores and my professional speaking career really took off. A lot of money flowed to me quickly. I started spending it quickly, too. I bought an expensive house and a brand-new luxury sports car, expensive clothing, and did lots of expensive travel. Money was flowing quickly in and out of my bank account. And I was not saving money or making plans for my future.

Then after spending a weekend at a money mindset workshop I started to learn some new lessons about money, success, and myself. I started asking

myself questions that created a new awareness around my money mindset:

“Wait a minute, what are you doing? Why are you allowing money to slip away from you so quickly? Are you not comfortable having so much of it?”

Wow, very insightful questions and then the answers came. I realized I had subconsciously started to self-sabotage the flow of money because I did not feel worthy and comfortable with the level of success and income I had created. Once my conscious mind checked in, I was open to learning new ways of controlling my money flow, which allowed me to “un-learn” lessons taught while growing up and find a new path that served me better to become more financially successful.

Bad Lessons Can Teach Us Good Things

Much of what I learned about my business roots came from growing up in a family business I invested in when I was 19 years old. My father and mother taught me a lot about business at a young age. And I’m very grateful for those lessons. Some lessons were good and some were bad. Even the bad lessons taught me a lot about what not to do in business. I learned to pay very close attention to what didn’t work as much as what did work.

My mom's biggest lesson for me was to have a strong work ethic. Although she always worked hard, she still didn't have great success on her own. This taught me at an early age that we need more than hard work to be successful.

My dad's biggest lesson was to remain focused. When he focused on one business at a time and kept working on it, the business was successful. When he started a new business putting little focus or energy into it, the business failed every time. This taught me to remain focused in business and to keep putting energy into that business until it's successful. This lesson has paid off for me many times over.

Choose to Stay Stuck in the Past or Move Forward

If we ask the average person about thinking patterns and beliefs, the response may be, "My thoughts and beliefs come from the way I was brought up." This is simply another lame excuse for staying stuck in the past.

What also keeps most people stuck is the conditioning learned from childhood around false concepts, values, and beliefs that prevents us from realizing how truly capable and valuable we are. To change this limited mindset,

uncover new programming to discover true worthiness, if we wish to achieve total self-confidence and fulfill the destiny of success.

Only we can decide to learn from our mistakes and failures. Decide to make good or bad business financial decisions. Decide to have a “lack-of mindset” or a “prosperity mindset.” It’s time to choose wisely.

Doomsayers Kill Dreams

“Believe in yourself and your ideas enough to avoid doomsayers and dream stealers. Remain committed to your passion and pave your own path toward success.” — Debbie Allen

If we shared a big goal with someone only to get told, “What makes you think you can do that?” “You’ll never achieve that.” Or “You’re crazy!” It’s easy to get discouraged with people who shoot down our ideas, dreams, and goals. But we must learn to walk away from negative people whose beliefs don’t matter.

We must ask ourselves, “Why are they telling me this? Have they done it? Do they have experience in it?” If these people don’t have real first-hand ex-

perience that can support us, avoid the clueless ones altogether. The opinion should mean nothing to us, because there's nothing to back it up. Learn to replace "doomsayer's" and "dream stealer's" responses with positive feedback where we can.

The fact is we will always associate with people we feel worthy of being with. This includes friends as well as clients that we're doing business with. We draw to ourselves what we feel worthy of receiving and that includes business relationships. When we associate with successful people it expands our way of thinking, doing, and achieving.

Stop Comparing Ourselves to Others

Comparing ourselves to others sets up failure. This is why it's important to stay focused on what we're doing and forget about comparing ourselves to others. It only matters where we are, and what we're doing. Create goals and stay focused on the goals that's what drives success!

Practice Gratitude and Appreciate What We Have

Practice gratitude for our knowledge, skills, and experiences. When we are grateful for every opportunity placed in front of us, more will appear in the future. True happiness is about loving and respecting ourselves. Success will come as a natural extension of that.

Make an effort to appreciate achievements. Don't just pay attention to what we're doing, appreciate it, and honor each and every one of the accomplishments. And if our friends don't honor our results along with us, it may be time to find some new friends.

Make a decision right now to be open, responsive, and receptive to new ideas and beliefs. Imagine success. Realize actions, feelings, and behaviors are the result of our beliefs.

One of the goals of this book is to get us to think differently and to open up our mind to the possibilities that success really is easy and it's waiting for us just around the next corner. Believe that anything is possible even if it appears to be nearly untouchable. Everything we think about, say, and act on becomes intentionally aligned with our purpose, values, and level of success.

“If you are committed to success, you must have a whatever-it-takes attitude and a positive belief system.” — - Debbie Allen

Remain Committed to Success

When we are committed to change inner awareness, the outer circumstances change, too. We can boil it down to this point: Choose what we want and believe we're going to get it. We can choose to commit to discard our old script and focus on a completely new story. The new script will attract to us the people and the conditions to fulfill our dreams, goals, and desires.

As we practice more positive inner thoughts and beliefs, we also intuitively attract more magic into our life. We see this happen every day in nature. Nature is truly magical. For example, ever watched a bird build a nest? It is not been taught how to do it. It relies solely on intuition to show it how to construct the nest perfectly. We call this instinct in animals and intuition in humans.

The same guiding intuition channeled in our beliefs will show us how to trust ourselves to say the right words and take the right actions.

Once we open up to this idea more receptively, we learn to trust it, and make fewer mistakes, because we are guided to wiser and more intuitive choices. And believe me, we will start to become happier as well: Naturally!

Triumphs are Won in Our Mind First

When we develop a positive mindset around success we instantly begin to break down negative and limiting belief systems. Barriers and obstacles that once limited success begin to move away.

If we are able to remove negative beliefs and affirmations long enough, unlimited opportunities and abundance have a chance to blossom and grow. The idea behind affirmations is through the repetition of positive statements we can improve feelings of self-respect and confidence. When we make progress toward personal growth and away from negative beliefs we become a magnet for success.

Changing our mindset takes time, it doesn't happen overnight. Yet, changing self-limiting and self-sabotaging beliefs into positive action every day will move us toward new skills and a more positive ways of thinking and functioning.

A mindset shift will move us from drifting along, hoping for the best, and having no focus, to feeling enthusiastic, high energy, and with an achievable action plan. This, in turn, attracts more success.

We Can Have Everything We Want

No-nonsense Reality! We can have anything we want, if we give up the belief that we can't have it. Within us is the ability and the power to do whatever we need to do to be happy and successful. Within us right now is the power to do things we never dreamed were possible in the past. This power becomes available as soon as we change negative, limiting beliefs into more empowered beliefs and positive words.

CHAPTER 4

Success Is EASY...When Failures Turn into Lessons

One meaning of success is defined as continuously improving ourselves. As we build self-control and personal strength from the lessons learned and from the failures experienced, we also gain knowledge to try new things. And when we try new things, we will make mistakes and fail at times, too.

Success and Failure Go Hand-in-Hand

Failure teaches lessons to direct movement in a new direction. Yet, the fear of failure can hold some people back from moving forward. Many new business owners who fail at the first attempt become too fearful to try again. When this happens, a person misses opportunities to learn and grow from the mistakes. The sad news is the failure probably was not caused from the inability to manage a business or to generate a good idea. Failure may have

happened because the person simply didn't take the time to figure it out and then gave up when fear set in.

All New Start Ups are Dysfunctional

The reality is all new start-ups are dysfunctional. If we are willing to learn from dysfunction it can teach us a lot about business. For example, dysfunction taught me what actions caused the most failures. From this I learned how to overcome failures to survive in business.

Dysfunction taught me right from wrong. From this I learned how to pay close attention to my mistakes and accept change.

Learn to embrace the knowledge mistakes have to teach. Become resourceful to overcome the dysfunction of any new business venture, because if we are waiting for everything to line up just right before taking action, then we are making a fool-proof excuse for failure.

If we don't learn from our mistakes, we keep repeating the same bad business habits in other business and will have the same challenges.

Don't Dwell on Failure

Failure can weigh heavily on us at times and will try to limit abilities.

When this happens, we must not allow emotions to overpower and cause lack of action. For example, when successful people fail we refocus on what's possible, and continue to go for it despite mistakes or failures that try to get in the way.

To succeed in business, do not dwell on failures! Don't allow failures to define us in any way. Losers focus on the hardship of failure, winners focus on the rewards of success.

Imagine what we could do if we didn't limit ourselves. Stop playing not to lose. Start playing to win from the start, every time, all the time, no matter how much failure tries to limit us. It comes down to knowing this key fact: We want success more than we want failure.

Successful people play the business game to win even when they fail. Unsuccessful people play the game not to lose!

Take Ownership of Our Failures

What's most important is to admit and accept the failure. Lying to ourselves and others about failure will only delay the lessons we need to learn. Taking ownership of failures can free us from mistakes and allow us to continue with new and improved action.

When we are willing to move beyond failure, our life and success will become easier. We must learn not to fear things that appear challenging by sharpening our will power and bridging the gap between where we are and where we want to be. Refocus on a clearer and more direct path to achieving results, which is typically the easiest, smoothest, and most realistic path of least resistance.

Invest in Winning from the Start

Every time I want to learn a new business model I invest in a successful person who is already doing and achieving what I most want to learn. I learn how to do things better, faster, and easier from that person and implement

what is taught. This cut my learning curve down dramatically. It moved me much closer to success sooner.

I've always believed that if we want to become successful we must invest in ourselves and our success. Hire others who have already achieved the success we desire, who have already figured it out.

How do we think we can figure it out on our own without making mistakes and having some failures? We can't! We will limit failures when we invest in winning from the start.

Failure is Not Taught in School

Schools teach knowledge, but life requires wisdom. Wisdom is knowing what to do when things go right and wrong. Instead of learning critical life skills about how to deal with failure, stress, finances, and business in general, most people are taught to memorize information in school. This is helpful to some extent, but not at the cost of learning critical life skills to allow us to survive in business.

Some people learn life skills from parents, but not all parents are equipped to teach these lessons. Some parents assume the child got enough from school to get by in the world.

Even college claims to be the safe, sure way to find a successful career. But it's not either. We must learn that nobody cares as much about our success potential as we do. Whether or not we went to college, and whether or not we want to work for ourselves or for a company, building skills and experience in a desired field is what brings results. Don't expect schooling to get us anywhere unless we have the work experience and life skills to go with it.

In school we get graded. But those grades can distort our perception of reality. Maybe we got straight A's in school, but in the real world we have no common business sense. And if we don't have good business sense, we can tend to get a lot of F's for failing in business.

Common business sense is not taught in schools, yet it's what has allowed me to thrive in business most of my life. I certainly didn't learn this from school. I learned it by paying attention to what works and what doesn't work first hand in my own businesses. The gift of common business sense allowed me to gain a keen understanding of what to do when it came to dealing with most business situations.

It taught me to pay attention to reality!

School teaches that effort brings a measurable, predictable, and successful result. The real world doesn't work like that. If we get an A for effort in school, we succeed every time. If we get an A for effort in life, we're lucky to succeed after numerous tries.

Many successful entrepreneurs skipped formal schooling because it was not feeding curiosity and it didn't help develop passion and skills. For example, if Mark Zuckerberg stayed in school, he may have never developed Facebook.

Steven King, one of the most successful authors in history, received dozens of failures or F's when being turned down by many book publishers. One of his most successful books, *Carrie*, was rejected by 30 publishers, one of whom told him that his book would never sell. After so many rejections, King threw the manuscript in the trash. Luckily, his wife retrieved it and urged him to give it another try. *Carrie* finally sold and the book and movie received an A+ in the business world.

Colonel Sanders reportedly received 1,009 failures or F's in the form of rejection while trying to sell his franchise-model chicken restaurant before getting his first A. He sold his idea to an existing restaurant, which became

the first Kentucky Fried Chicken. Those “secret spices” tripled the restaurant’s sales the first year.

Walt Disney was fired from a newspaper because his editor gave him an F stating Disney lacked imagination and had no good ideas. He went on to receive many A’s in life by being nominated for 59 Academy Awards as one of the most creative animators of all time.

If school is to prepare people for success, then why is it that it’s absolutely terrible at accomplishing this? In school we’re taught to memorize something to get good grades. Yet, in business how does memorizing something allow us to avoid failure? School doesn’t teach us how to deal with failure. And although failure is never taught, it’s a natural and necessary part the success equation.

Mistakes Allow Us to Grow into Success

We will make mistakes, but don’t get defeated. We can only make mistakes if we are in motion and try new things. When something doesn’t work out we can always course correct and try something else.

Most mistakes will smooth out in time as continued action is taken.

We can learn valuable lessons from mistakes when we pay attention. Some mistakes actually lead to new opportunities. Yet, it's important to understand that if we aim too low, worrying about making mistakes, we will actually make a much bigger mistake in business.

Most people aim low in life because of low self-esteem. As a result, many people don't strive for something bigger due to fear of failure. Once we aim low our level of success is capped, our motivation goes down, and we start thinking and playing small. On the other hand, people who aim high for big goals will always gain more and have more success.

A good example of how someone turned failures into massive success is George Foreman. He left a successful boxing career to become a minister after a personal religious experience. His ministry struggled and within a decade his money was gone. Foreman decided to go back into boxing even though he was laughed at and ridiculed. But he ignored his doomsayers and made his comeback.

At age 45, Foreman became the oldest heavyweight boxing champion in the world when he defeated a 26-year-old boxer. Outside of the boxing ring, Foreman has since become enormously wealthy as an entrepreneur and TV

pitchman for a variety of products, including the hugely popular George Foreman Grill.

Become a Life-Long Learner of Failure

Some people have the idea that all we have to do to succeed is get to the point where we're smart enough to no longer fail. Well, that option is simply non-existent and not realistic. As the business grows we must continue to try new things. As we try new things we won't always succeed the first time around.

Recognize that setbacks happen all the time as part of life and the learning process. The most successful people are able to "fail forward" or fail in such a way as to gain valuable insight to lead to more successful outcomes the next time. We must be able to hold ourselves accountable for the failure, pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and turn things around.

Using this success process can set us up for a continuous cycle of success. When we train our mind to achieve, we make success the norm. When we quit sabotaging success we also:

Quit whining about what's not working.

Quit beating ourselves up when things don't go right.

Quit exaggerating our losses.

Quit taking failures personally.

“Move away from failure by re-evaluating, refocusing,
redirecting your actions!” — Debbie Allen

As I write this chapter, I'm reminded of some real-life stories from business owners. These are stories from successful business people who experienced small failures or a slump in business.

Although the failures were certainly not large enough to put the client out of business, it appeared devastating at the time. One complained to me by saying, “This is the worst year of my life! Business is a disaster!” Yet in reality the business was only down 20 percent.

Once I evaluated the reasons behind the loss, it was clear the lack of implementing new ideas was one of the keys to the company's downturn. Another reason for the income loss was due to stopping the proven marketing efforts that worked in the past to bring in the majority of new clients.

This profit downturn was simply a slump that could be turned around quickly by developing a strategic monthly action plan with a stronger commitment to implementing a few new business strategies. The process began by implementing the easiest strategies first to create quick results in the form of more income from existing customers. I also suggested bringing back proven marketing strategies versus trying new marketing ideas that may take time to develop.

Another successful business owner shared a “slump story” with me by saying, “We are just not on our game and we don’t know why.”

In reality sales were down because the sales offer changed and prices were raised, both at the same time. This worked in the past and became an instant success, yet the outcome changed, not once, but twice. My suggestion was to analyze every move made since the first sales offer was made. Then to go back to a price point that worked in the past to generate more consistent income.

Lesson learned: If it isn’t broken, don’t fix it!

Lessons Learned from One of My Biggest Failures

This reminds me of the biggest failure in my speaking business. My lack of motivation to market my business nearly dried up all opportunities. I quit doing the marketing that had proven successful for years. Why?

At the time I was in a business partnership traveling around the world. Much of the time it was exciting to discover the world together, until the partnership became off balanced. I believed I was doing most of the work and I was getting tired of the heavy travel schedule.

Therefore, I believe now I subconsciously self-sabotaged business income opportunities by not marketing. The business opportunities began to drop off and the partnership failed. In reality, this is exactly what I wanted to happen. Here are the five key lessons I learned from my mistakes in this situation:

1. Don't Put All Our Eggs in One Business Basket

I ignored my existing business and put 100 percent of my focus and energy into a new business. When the partnership failed I had to rebuild, reinvent, and refocus marketing efforts back into my individual business. My income

dropped until I built a new brand and a strong foundation for my company to take off again.

2. Don't Ignore the Obvious

My business partner had the skill of selling from stage. I wanted to learn this skill and believed she was the perfect person to teach me. Therefore, I asked to hire her to teach me sales skills. She responded with, "I would rather go into business with you and partner-up, because you have marketing and business skills I need to learn." The conversation quickly turned from learning skills from one another into a business partnership where we ignored the obvious: We had different core business values.

3. Don't Allow Emotions to Fog Judgement

We both got caught up in the excitement of developing a world speaking tour. Our energies were focused on getting booked to speak versus developing a more strategic business plan. In this case, excitement and emotions overrode logic. Sometimes good ideas can go bad fast. The reality is: Most ideas that crash and burn originate from a positive and genuine place, but

somehow along the way things go awry. To avoid this pitfall, remove emotions when making a big business decision.

4. Balance Workload and Commitment Evenly

Although the business partnership started out with balanced task assignments, the workload balance ended up moving in my direction. At the time it seemed logical since I had stronger marketing and people skills. I was the one who created most of the international connections and got most of the speaking engagements. After a while, I realized I didn't need a partner to just show up after I did the majority of the work developing and marketing the business.

5. Make Sure the Partnership Works for the Long Haul

In hindsight, I should have taken more time to discuss long-term business strategy. Instead, I jumped in with both feet and started to work without knowing where it would lead. I learned to stop making rash business decisions and not to make demands on someone else who doesn't have the skills to back it up. It was unfair for me to expect my partner to react the same way

I would in business. This set us both up for unrealistic expectations from the start.

In the long run this business failure allowed me to create space and time to redefine a new meaning of success. What I discovered was I wanted to create a new business model with a more independent financially free lifestyle. This space also allowed me to refocus my business back to the United States.

Once I stopped holding on to what wasn't working in business and walked away from that, a new opportunity walked in. As I was going through a challenging time folding up the business partnership, that space created new opportunity for the love of my life to walk in.

My husband Greg was the new partner who could sustain a life-time of love and support beyond what I could have ever dreamed. As I reinvented my business, we also built a new life together. And within two years my business thrived and my income tripled.

Not All Failures are as Dramatic as Some May Appear

My business partnership was successful for a few years, before it ran its course and failed. With every failure learn to take responsibility for the

lessons because along with those lessons comes knowledge, new skills, personal growth, and opportunity.

Not all mistakes need to be considered huge failures. Most people have a tendency to magnify the potential crisis situation that a failure may bring. Others use imagination to make a failure appear larger or more dramatic than it actually was.

Understand that failure usually shows up to create new opportunities for new resources, new information, and new people to flow to us.

Pay close attention to what changes may have caused a failure to happen. Define what has changed to cause the failure or the slump, and then be ready to accept the change.

Journal thoughts every time there is a failure or slump to analyze what happened, so emotions don't fog judgement. Learn how to turn things around by gaining clarity. Here are some questions to help analyze a situation.

Have we stopped trying new ideas or strategies that could create more income-generating results? If so, why?

Have we or our team failed to remain motivated to implement new ideas? If so, why?

Have we changed or eliminated an area of marketing that could bring in new customers? If so, why?

Have we made a change in our sales or service offer that may have slowed down income? If so, why?

Has a business partnership become off-balanced and ineffective? If so, why?

Have we self-sabotaged success opportunities causing a failure in any way? If so, why?

Failure will Continue to Test Us

No matter what level of success we have failures, big or small, will continue to test us. Be aware that we are tested to become stronger, smarter, and more shameless all the time. It's how we choose to deal with failure that makes all the difference in our success.

“You must be willing to make a few mistakes and to suffer a little pain to get what you want. Don't sell yourself short!”

— Debbie Allen

Remember Past Successes and Forget Failures

This is the most important thing to remember, reinforce, and focus on: It doesn't matter how many times we failed in the past, what matters is the successful attempts. Use failures, slumps, and mistakes as a way to learn, then dismiss the negativity. Hold a picture of past successes in mind because everyone has succeeded in something at some time. When beginning a new task, call up the feelings experienced in some past success, however small it was. Choose to focus on the success, not the possibility of failure.

Don't Focus on the Problem, Instead Focus on the Solution

When we focus on a problem it's easy to give up, cut back, stop taking chances, and slow down our energies from trying to figure out why things aren't working. Another reason why it's often easier to see problems instead of solutions is because of not feeling worthy of being, doing, or having what we desire.

The problem is we can only attract what we feel worthy of. The greater our feelings of self-worth, the more we value ourselves, and the more risk we are willing to take to better ourselves and our business.

If We Refuse to be Guided by Lessons, Failure will Guide Us

When I sold my first two retail stores the new owners gained instant access to a very successful company with a loyal following, proven brand, and systems in place, which is the very reason why people buy successful companies or franchises in the first place.

The new owners also gained access to amazing retail mentors who were available through a low-cost monthly meeting. This networking event was held to support one another with innovative marketing strategies and new ideas for business growth. This powerful group had decades of experience in the retail industry and were known as the best-of-the-best retailers in the Chicago area.

These retailers became my mentors and taught me so much about the business. In fact, the advice and guidance helped me grow my first small retail store into multiple locations and a multi-million-dollar business within a

few short years. I give these mentors so much credit for my growth. For this reason, I was extremely excited to share the group with the new owners.

Both new owners stopped attending the monthly mentoring meetings shortly after purchasing the businesses. Each one stopped learning new business ideas and benefitting from mentoring by these highly successful retailers. This completely shocked me. When I asked why, the answers shocked me even more.

One of the new business owners said she feared public speaking. Due to this fear she avoided going to the meetings because she didn't want to speak in front of the small group. When I asked the other new owner why she also stopped attending the meetings she said, "Well, it interferes with my bowling night."

What? How crazy is that?

Bowling is more important than learning how to run a new business that was just invested in?

More bad business decisions followed. The writing was on the wall and failure was not far away from the two new business owners. Within a couple of years, both had failed in business.

Success could have been so easy. It was all planned out, the guides were available to follow, but instead, each one chose to follow a much more challenging path all alone, while making bad mistakes based on poor judgement. Failures along the way caused the doors on the business to close forever.

It was simple common business sense. All that was needed was to work the successful plan already laid out and take action on what was proven to work.

Be Willing to do the Things We Don't Want to do

How we react to obstacles and challenges will define our level of success. The habit of avoidance is a hard habit to break. The more we avoid what we don't feel we are good at or are uncomfortable with, the harder it is to face challenges head on.

To be successful, we must be willing to do things no one else wants to do. The things that frustrate us. Those things we say, "It won't work," "I'm afraid of..." or "I don't have time for...."

Here are seven things to do to avoid failure.

1. Take responsibility for failures and move on.
2. Try again even though everything up to now was a failure.
3. Don't take mistakes and failures personally.
4. Analyze problems, find solutions, and make decisions.
5. Refuse to quit, no matter what obstacles get in the way.
6. Turn mistakes into lessons to shift in a new direction.
7. Deliver results instead of making excuses for what didn't work.

Practice Overcoming Failure with Worst-Case Scenarios

To overcome the fear of failure be willing to face failure before starting an endeavor by asking, "What is the worst that can happen?" Next, prepare mentally for the worst. This begins to build confidence to enable us to meet and handle even the greatest challenges.

The essence of realistic thinking is picturing and examining the worst-case scenario in our mind first. The goal isn't to be negative or assume the worst, but to get ready in case it happens. The majority of the time a worst-case scenario never happens. But when we are prepared for it

in our mind first, we also prepare for how to overcome it if it happens. This way we give ourselves the best chance for possible better results.

When we prepare for the worst and develop contingency plans to meet it, we become more confident and secure. It's reassuring to know that surprises are unlikely.

Disappointment is the difference between expectations and reality. Realistic thinking minimizes the difference between the two. Therefore, if we picture the worst-case scenario and examine it honestly, we experience a reality check for just about anything that can happen. It's as if we are practicing how to deal with failure before it exists.

To perform well in a crisis, learn certain life skills that allow us to react positively when feeling pressure. Learn to react to crisis with a productive mindset to find a solution. If we have played out the worst-case scenarios in our mind first, we are ready to take on anything.

“When you define success on your own terms, build a vision you are proud of, and create your own rules. What could be more fun!”

— Debbie Allen

ABOUT DEBBIE ALLEN THE AUTHOR

Debbie Allen was able to achieve success easily with any business she set her mind to since becoming an entrepreneur at the young age of 19. Since then she has built and sold numerous million-dollar companies in diverse industries. Her extensive business-building wisdom and entrepreneurial insight has allowed her to overcome countless business obstacles and challenges along her journey.

Debbie Allen is an award-winning entrepreneur and the recipient of the Blue Chip Enterprise Award presented by the National Chamber of Commerce for overcoming business obstacles and achieving fast business growth.

After building and selling multiple retail stores, Debbie started her professional speaking and business consultant company, which focuses on helping small business owners and entrepreneurs create fast business growth. Since starting her speaking and writing career, Debbie has inspired and educated thousands of people around the world and has presented in 28 countries.

Debbie is a bestselling author of nine books including: *Confessions of Shameless Self Promoters*, *Skyrocketing Sales*, *The Highly Paid Expert* and *Success Is Easy*.

Debbie also hosts her own live events bringing in thousands of small business owners and entrepreneurs to her workshops, specialty events, and online training each year. She is known and respected worldwide as one of the top business marketing and growth experts. She is a highly sought-after motivational business speaker who has achieved success as a CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) by the National Speakers Association. She has presented before thousands of people in 28 countries around the world.

Learn more about Debbie Allen's *Success Is Easy* online training course at SuccessIsEasyCourse.com and her professional speaking, mentoring, and live events at DebbieAllen.com.