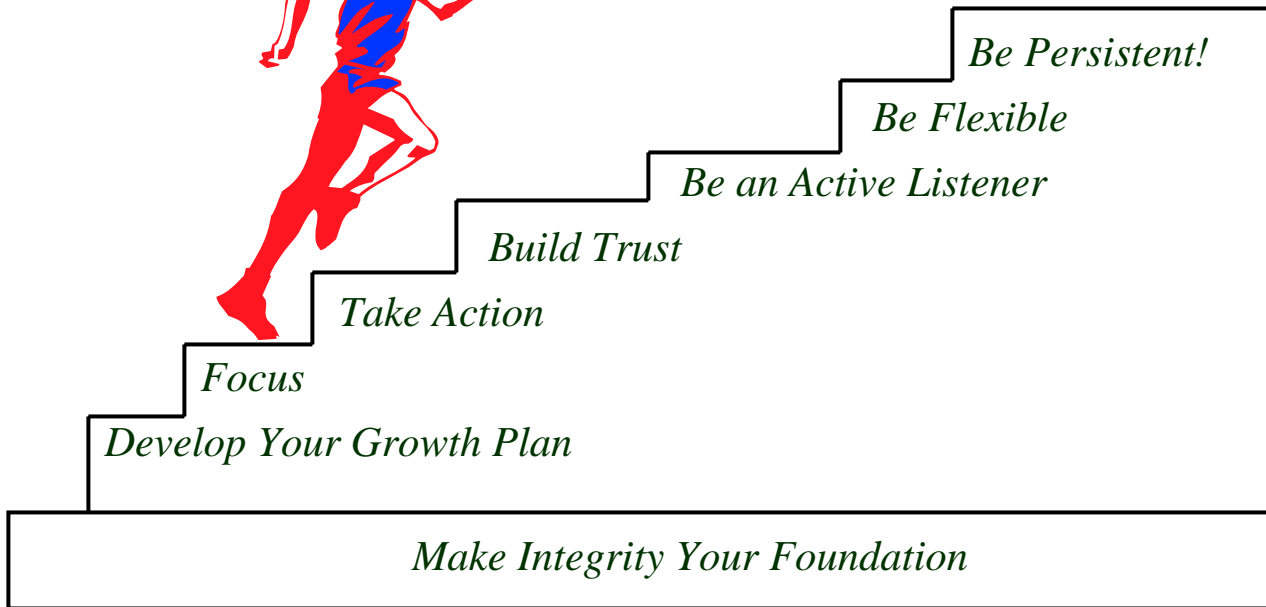


The 8-Step Success Formula

THAT NEVER FAILS



Success is defined as: "The Progressive Realization of a Worthwhile Goal or Idea."

*Prepared & Presented by Rick O'Connor
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THE 8-STEP SUCCESS FORMULA THAT NEVER FAILS

1. Make Integrity Your Foundation.

In building the success we have imagined, we must be true to our beliefs, dare to be ethical and strive to be honorable. *Integrity is the highest ground to which we can aspire.* It is doing the right thing even though no one is watching. A Successful person is responsible for their actions and therefore responsible for where they are in their journey. Adversity is simply preparation for Success

The character elements relating to trustworthiness: honesty, truthfulness, honor, reliability and uprightness most closely define integrity, but all the elements of character are related to one's integrity. When a person is trustworthy, he or she can be relied upon to be honest, truthful, honorable, reliable and upright, which means they have integrity. But it's equally important to be respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and demonstrate good citizenship; otherwise you are still lacking integrity. Good character and integrity are easiest to demonstrate when facing public disapproval, but the true test comes when you can potentially get away with anything because then nothing is at stake but your own conscience.

Integrity is one of those words which many people keep in that desk drawer labeled "too hard." It's not a topic for the dinner table or the cocktail party. You can't buy or sell it. When supported with education, a person's integrity can give him something to rely on when his perspective seems to blur when rules and principles seem to waver, and when he's faced with hard choices of right or wrong. Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale, USN

According to *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, integrity is "an uncompromising adherence to a code of moral, creative, or other values: utter sincerity, honesty, and candor: avoidance of deception, expediency, artificiality, or shallowness of any kind . . . the quality or state of being complete or undivided." The words "utter sincerity, honesty, and candor" imply that a person of integrity is truthful in all things, that he can be trusted, and that his word is his bond. Integrity is the very essence of one's life. Major General Henry F. Meade stated that "integrity is the state of my whole life, the total quality of my character." Thus, integrity is the foundation of the successful person's character: it determines all that he is or ever can be. Having integrity requires ethical behavior and correct actions.

Courage—physical and mental—is also an important element of integrity. A person of integrity insists on doing what is right at all times, not only when he knows that a superior or subordinate is watching him. It is the courage to complete a bombing run when one knows full well that the chance for survival is poor or nonexistent or the courage to admit failure rather than falsify a report. It is the determination to take the proper course of action at all times, not merely when it is expedient. Lieutenant General John P. Flynn, whose personal integrity under extreme pressure was proved as prisoner of war in North Vietnam, defines it in these terms:

Integrity is complete honesty in any situation. We must determine what is really right and really wrong. Right even transcends the violation of regulations. You must oppose what is wrong and support what is right even if it costs you your life or your career.

In other words, integrity means more than the dictionary definition. It means honesty, truthfulness, reliability, impartiality, sincerity, open mindedness, trustworthiness, and courage. It means totally ethical behavior at all times and in all situations, regardless of the consequences. It cannot be turned on and off as desired; it is the focus of the person's life.

2. Develop Your Growth Plan:

Know the Results you Seek: You can't hit a target you don't have. Therefore, the first step towards the success you desire is to be very specific about what your target is. There is much Power in Clarity. *A static sales strategy does not work in a dynamic sales environment. You should be more Growth Focused than Goal Focused.*

As you work on you growth and performance remember that you must understand yourself. If you look at your weaknesses and work on them, the best you will do is some improvement to become average. You should analyze your strengths and work on them. When you build on your strengths you will become outstanding in that area and that leads to success.

Traditional sales people generally use the shotgun approach to prospecting. This system is very inefficient in the long run. If you ask 100 people what their purpose in life is and how they plan on attaining it, 98 will say they want to make a good living and become a success. As these people drift through life they will not get anything out of it except the leftovers of truly successful people who have a definite purpose and plan for attaining that purpose. A key to success will be to anticipate the future. Today's success can lead to tomorrow's failure because most of us find ourselves managing the day-to-day of our business and not planning for the future.

The successful people have some sense in their minds of the steps they're going to take in life" They Focus on the plan ahead. Here's an example: Researchers surveyed the Yale class of 1953, and found that 3 percent had written down financial goals for their futures at their college graduation. When the group reconvened in 1973, this 3 percent of the class that had started their careers with some kind of plan controlled more combined net worth than the other 97 percent combined.

"No one drifts to success".

3. Focus:

***Become internally directed, not externally driven!
Focus on you goals, vision, and priorities.***

"Do not let your environment control you. You must be in control of your own destiny. You must become internally motivated and driven."

The Law of Focus

Find your niche and narrow your focus to succeed within it. What you focus on; expands.

The ability to focus is crucial to achieving success in any endeavor. Focus on what is really important for success and you will manifest success. It's not necessarily that we do not know what to do ... it's that we're not doing what we know. You may know it is important to FOCUS on following up with prospects in a timely way, but you didn't do it.

The problem is that focus is usually not conscious focus, its automatic focus. We unconsciously focus on something we don't want, and then when we get it we feel like a victim and don't even stop to think that we created it in the first place. And what is more, we don't realize we could choose to create something completely different if we could only get out of the cycle of unconsciously focusing on something other than what we want.

The most successful people focus on the process not the product. The product is a natural outcome of doing the process well. The process repeated daily truly separates the producers from the non-producers. The process needs to be broken down to what they need to do each and every day to get the product they desire.

The way to be successful is to work on your strengths;

"The way to be average is to work on your weaknesses" Determine Strengths and Build on Them!

4. **Take Action:**

Get Busy: This means Take Action. Don't wait until you have all of your "ducks" in line. Remember, you can't steal second base if you are determined to stay on first. You can't even get to first base if you don't step up to the plate and swing the bat.

Einstein said that everyone in the world has an idea that could change the world, the problem is that they usually do not act on them.

It is not the quality of the ideas that make a genius, it is the action taken on those ideas. Creativity is having ideas that we put into action. The first step to creativity is knowledge. The second step of creativity is the commitment to put that idea into action.

There are always variations, of course, but evidence of a template for a millionaire exists in a "millionaire mindset". One component of this mindset is: **THEY SEIZE THE DAY**. They'll take a mistake-turned-opportunity - or any opportunity -- and step up to the plate. A millionaire in the making is someone who always takes action. "Most people become paralyzed by the thought of taking action. The millionaire mindset is uncomfortable with inaction. Ask a millionaire when it's best to start a new project, and they'll tell you: right now.

Assoc. Professor Murray Ainsworth said that the major handicap people have is "too much preoccupation with talk and too little passion for moving beyond the 'what ifs' into activity that would make a difference." Typically "executive ranks contain an imbalance between those who talk, persuade, plan and convince and those who see 'doing' as the only meaningful contribution." A successful loan officer is the senior executive in their own success. Therefore a **Successful Loan Officer must Take Action** on their ideas and not just plan and talk.

5. **Build Trust:**

Be consistent in your work ethic, your plan, your overall business and personal life and you will begin the formation of trust required to be a success. Of most highly successful originators, when asked; what was the one thing that separates you from everyone else, the answer was consistently TRUST.

"Hope based systems Compromise Consistency" Trust is not automatic; it must be earned. You can't demand it from others; you receive it. But you receive it only when you have three key attributes: integrity, competence and consistency. These three must mesh together for you to build trust and receive trust from the people you are doing business with.

Of course, once you have the trust of your people, you have to maintain it. If you slack off and start thinking only of yourself, you'll betray that trust and your ability to do business will be severely compromised. Fortunately, there are certain steps you can take to keep that from happening. Here are a few:

1. Focus on shared goals more than personal agendas.
Never forget the fact that you are in this for the benefit of all of the people. When it comes to trust, it's not all about you. Get over yourself!
2. Do the right thing regardless of personal risk.
If doing what's right causes you to get hurt, then grit your teeth and take the pain.
3. Follow the Platinum Rule.
Treat people the way they want to be treated. It's that simple. Connect with the people and then sell.
4. Make sure what you say matches what you do.
This is, by far, the best way to earn and maintain trust. On the flip side, the quickest way to betray their trust is to say one thing and do another.

6. *Be an Active Listener:*

"Most people," wrote Ernest Hemmingway, "never listen". Whatever you can do to improve the communication between yourself and proposed client will assist you in your goals.

According to the International Listening Association (www.listen.org) 75% of the time we are supposed to be listening, we are distracted, preoccupied, or forgetful. On top of that we only remember 20% of what we hear. There are some listeners who do not hear anything and others who listen to the words but not the intent. Sometimes a listener can even repeat back the words, but will have missed the message. Typically, a salesperson leaps ahead of the speaker to formulate a response to what they believe is being asked. This is frequently done before the speaker is even finished talking.

The successful loan officer will become the most effective type of listener—the *Active Listener*. The Active Listener refrains from evaluating the message and tries to see the prospect's point of view. The Active Listener's attention is not only on the words spoken, but on the ideas and intentions behind the words. This style of listening will frequently result in more questions by the listener in order to have a complete understanding before a response is made. The listener has the power in almost any conversation simply because he or she can ask questions and guide the conversation.

To be an Active Listener you must concentrate. Get rid of your own personal distractions. Clear your mind and concentrate on the person you are listening to. Make a determined effort to see the speaker's point of view. Never be critical of the speaker's point of view (mentally or verbally). This is called *active listening* because the listener plays an active roll in the process.

If you master the art of listening, you will then be able to do the following:

- Identify needs and problems.
- Identify the customer's values so your response builds trust.
- Sell your ability to meet those needs and solve their problems.
- With a better understanding of the customer you will communicate more effectively and be better equipped to build a long term relationship.

Of course, to be successful, active listening must be paired with clear communication on your part. When it is your turn to speak, it is your responsibility to make sure your prospect hears what you mean to say.

7. *Be Flexible:*

This means that you want to stay focused on the results you desire; however, be willing to change your approach if necessary. As you Take Action, be aware of what is working and what is not working. You can either have 10 years of experience in something or 1 year of experience repeated 10 times. Don't get caught in a rut like 97% of our population. They keep doing the same things over and over expecting to get different results. I'm sure you've heard that's the definition of insanity.

There's no use trying to ride a dead horse or drive a parked car. You won't get very far. So be stubborn with your dreams, but not with your approach. Being creative can mean going the extra mile or trying something new. Failures will lead to success as long as you learn from your mistakes, take corrective actions, and keep trying new things. A common thread of all great leaders is their use of failure as a springboard to success. Rather than obstacles, failures become stepping stones for their personal growth. When we take the time to look, we find that every setback has a blessing in disguise. Just as success leaves clues, so does failure. The key is to look beyond the immediate feelings of failure and discover all the possibilities that await. There is no failure, only feedback.

8. *Be persistent with your plan!*

Keep Charging: The Rhino has 2-3 inches of thick skin to help protect it against the arrows that may come their way. The arrows just bounce off and they keep charging. Make this your philosophy when you are hit with emotional, physical, and financial arrows. If you do, you will surely be unstoppable.

“Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; un-rewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.” -Calvin Coolidge

Inspiring words; But they can be deadly because they are only PART of the equation for success. In fact, contends Price Pritchett, "If you stake your hopes for a breakthrough on trying harder than ever, you may kill your chances for success." He reinforces this assertion with the example of a fly "burning out the last of its short life's energies in a futile attempt to fly through the glass of the windowpane." It is persistent, single-minded and determined. But it is also doomed. It will die there on the window sill because its strategy is flawed. And all the while, just a few steps away, the door is open! This kind of persistence, Pritchett points out, is an idea that can kill. Some times "trying harder" is part of the problem!

Once you have determined exactly what it is you want to accomplish, you must take massive action on a consistent, persistent basis in order to succeed. Think of it like building a muscle. If you have never weight trained before, the first time you walk into a gym, chances are you will not be able to bench press 250 lbs. However, if you are persistent, and you consistently go back to the gym, you will find yourself getting stronger and closer to your goal with each and every visit.

One of the things you'll notice on your journey towards your goal, are roadblocks. That is, you will encounter obstacles that seem to jump out of nowhere in an attempt to halt your progress. Count on these obstacles. They are a part of life. Everyone would have every success they ever wanted if there were no obstacles. Your job is to be persistent and work through those obstacles.

If you take the time to study any successful person, you will learn that the vast majority of them have had more 'failures' than they have had 'successes'. This is because successful people are persistent; the more they stumble and fall, the more they get right back up and get going again. On the other hand, people that don't get back up and try again, never reach success. For example, Walt Disney was turned down 302 times before he got financing for his dream of creating the "Happiest Place on Earth". Today, due to his persistence, millions of people have shared 'the joy of Disney'. Colonel Sanders spent two years driving across the United States looking for restaurants to buy his chicken recipe. He was turned down 1,009 times! How successful is Kentucky Fried Chicken today?

Persistence IS vital. But it doesn't always mean sticking with the same strategy. All around us, we see people pursuing flawed "visions" for success and happiness in business, politics, and in their personal lives. And when the strategy proves empty and unfulfilling, unfortunately the response is often simply to "try harder."

You must constantly reevaluate your circumstances and the approach you are using to reach your goal. There is no sense in being persistent at something that you are doing incorrectly! Sometimes you have to modify your approach along the way. Every time you do something you learn from it, and therefore find a better way to do it the next time.

Today is the day to begin your journey, using consistency and persistency, towards tomorrow's successes!