

IT'S YOUR BUSINESS!

START A NEW BUSINESS,
EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS,

or

MOVE UP THE LADDER
STARTING RIGHT NOW!

Larry Robson

To succeed you will need a bit of luck and a lot of skill! This resource will help you create a little luck and a lot of success.

Is something holding you back from achieving all that could be yours? This book will put it all in perspective and within your grasp.

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This book is for Sharon who encouraged me the entire way and for Lisa and Tracy. Always give your best!

This book was edited by D J Chappelle – Wordsmiths of Aurora

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Preface

To have had and lost and won it all back again! This book is dedicated to everyone who strives to go beyond where they find themselves today by exploring who they are and where they need to be tomorrow. Confidence can be either fleeting or solidified. Success can either be elusive or achieved. Dreams can come true!

I once spoke with a man who had it all and then quite suddenly lost everything. When I attempted to console him on his great misfortune he said to me *“they can take all the material things I own and every penny from my accounts, but they can never take away my knowledge and ability to get it back again.”* He was right! This book “cuts to the chase” and will empower those who dare to learn the secrets of success.

Start a new business or plan to expand your business horizons. Develop a personal or professional action plan that will take you to the top. Whatever your goal, this book will help you climb the mountain and establish your flag upon the summit.

Enjoy your success!

Larry Robson

It All Begins Here!

My first title was Beat the Odds. I've always found it interesting that 20% of the population generates 80% of all success. This is a well-known, historically true statistic used to motivate sales people. Another consideration is that 4 out of 5 new businesses never reach their fifth anniversary, and many never reach their first. One out of 5 (success versus failure) is certainly a failing grade. Why? Given the large number of business start-up books and courses available, one might think either the information presented is not effective, or that entrepreneurs fail to utilize it properly. To address these facts, we must first look introspectively. Then we'll look at the process of developing and implementing an action plan.

If I gave an absolutely amazing business plan to ten people and watched the results, I would most likely see 2 successes and 8 failures. Is it the plan that fails 80% of the time or the unprepared person implementing it? If you are true to yourself and your goals, you'll agree that most of the magic must be YOU. That is why I have adopted the process we'll use for this book. First we must take a long deep introspective look. From our look we'll develop an almost idiot-proof plan for you to act on. Then we'll learn how to manage the success you'll find.

What brought you here?

A recent trend has seen companies downsizing. Usually high-priced management professionals are the first to go, followed by middle management. This re-structuring strategy is commonly based on a negative thought process: re-action to a problematic situation instead of pro-action in anticipation. While it is responsible behavior for corporations to maintain financial control, I view this management downsizing strategy as one of retreat. Innovation, sales growth, and focus on profit are better options. The difficulty with these options is that they represent the unknown. It's more comfortable to retreat to a familiar position than to go forward. In some cases retreat is necessary in order to create a stronger foundation from which to generate innovation. More often retreat is a quick fix, an attempt to stop financial bleeding. Quick fixes are rarely lasting fixes. The strategy of downsizing/retreat usually weakens a company's potential to innovate, since key personnel who are most often the innovators (management or otherwise) are gone. In too many cases a company in retreat becomes comfortable having its bottom line back in or close to the black, and forsakes expansion. In our personal lives we tend to manage in the same way.

Are you are a professional who has experienced a lay-off due to downsizing? Are you in a career transition? If so, you are likely struggling with the fact that your past experiences, new fears, and pain are the components you have to work with. This is not a strong base to work from because these components have negative origins. It's NOT your fault! The subconscious mind is well aware of what we need to do to find success. However, our conscious mind actively and consistently attempts to sabotage our efforts. Leading

personal power consultant Anthony Robbins suggests that people instinctively act to avoid pain.

“The fear of loss is greater than the desire for gain.”

Anthony Robbins

This is why we procrastinate. If we don't ask for something, we can't have it. Most of the time we don't ask because asking can be embarrassing, or even painful. These and other factors we'll discuss later contribute to 80% of people not achieving all that is possible.

You may be attempting to establish a new business, grow an existing one, or make a transition into a new career. Perhaps you're struggling to understand yourself or your relationships more clearly. Whatever the case, I'm confident that if you continue reading, the ways in which you plan and seek your goals will become more focussed and effective.

My goal of success was to create a career that allowed me to earn a respectable self-employed living, and become fulfilled by positively influencing others. In boardrooms of the business world this was difficult for me to accomplish, since I wasn't willing to walk fine lines that might jeopardize my credibility. It took longer, but I managed to reach and surpass that goal. I'm pleased that I chose this way to build my career because my success is not easily undermined. It was built on a good foundation.

Understanding and believing in the concepts I'm writing about here will be easier for those who have already achieved some success. Those who always fall short of achieving their goals must explore and implement these concepts.

Read the entire book first with an open mind. Please be patient and read the chapters in order. I promise I'll get to the good stuff. Exercises and complete business and

professional action plan guides are at the end. Read to gain the knowledge; then put it to use. After all, it's up to **YOU**.

Knowledge is power. Action is success!

Chapter 1

Begin with you

Defining Success

Success is new territory. Some of us strive for what we consider at the time to be success. We manage to come close, then succumb to the traps in our conscious mind as it sabotages our efforts with large doses of negative energy--mostly fear. It's not our intent to have this happen. In fact most of us don't even realize we're afraid of success. I am always amazed at the number of clients I have worked with who fail in their endeavor because they fear success. As already mentioned, it's easier to revert to a familiar position than to go forward into uncharted territory. Some even get on such a negative roll they think and say things like "Why bother?" or "How did *they* get so lucky?" Most of us seem to measure success differently. Success should be the result of:

1. **Setting** a practical goal
2. **Identifying** tasks necessary to attain the goal
3. **Researching** well enough so that all tasks can be identified
4. **Prioritizing** these identified tasks so that we might reach our expectations.

Most often, we fail to consider these important processes, let alone use them.

Success is a dream that for many appears elusive. It's easier to settle into a routine, or for some form of existence. This happens to everyone from time to time. Winners are those who find the desire to enthusiastically break the routine.

“I find all successful people have mastered their daily shit and risen above it.”

Chef Mitchell Lucas

Begin with a better understanding and usage of time. We are issued a limited quantity of it, and should take full advantage of what we have.

Priorities

I have counseled people with six-figure salaries who were on the verge of personal bankruptcy, as well as low-income earners working dead-end jobs who were buying real estate. Why the difference? Their priorities were different. The six-figure salary earners were poor at prioritizing where their money went, while the lower income earners were good at taking best advantage of what they had. The fat cats never felt “on the edge” until they arrived there. The low earners were used to being there and found ways to survive. They respected every dollar and opportunity completely, squandering very little. They often achieved a new home and a savings account with a positive balance.

Each of us has priorities, but not always in the right order. Isn't it interesting that many people focus on “keeping up with the Jones's” rather than their own needs? Basing success on money, or perceiving failure strictly on the amount of possessions someone has, is incorrect.

In Business

Financially speaking, the bottom line is exactly where it belongs, at the bottom. Above it are all the intricate contributing events or tasks that produce the results found at

the bottom line. When all tasks and objectives are well accomplished and in proper order, the bottom-line is automatically positive. When every member at every level of an organization is encouraged and supported with growth initiatives, those who have the capacity to step up, will! The whole company improves with every employee step-up, regardless of that employee's position in the political pecking order. Managers who look only to the bottom line and not to the well-being of their employees usually see their department or company fall short of their goals. Conversely, employees who refuse to see the company's position or big picture sabotage their opportunities to profit and grow, and always fall short of their own personal goals. When you've fallen short of a goal you haven't come close—you've missed it.

“Close only counts with horseshoes, hand grenades, and thermonuclear devices”

Scott Belyea

Management must never attempt to identify winners and losers within the company. That attitude is a powerful negative, which contributes to failure. Ways must be found for everyone to win.

Relationships

The bottom line in your personal life is usually happiness and contentment, or a deficiency of both. It's very difficult to achieve happiness and contentment if you are not personally fulfilled. To have success in your life you must receive total support from your spouse and loved ones. Having a positive career or business is difficult if you are at odds with your family, unless your goal is to turn a negative relationship into a best-selling novel or self-help book.

Relationships fall apart all the time, and the contributing factors are often common ones. These contributing factors include:

- 1 A reluctance to communicate
- 2 Self-absorption
- 3 Low self-esteem (in one or both partners)
- 4 Not working toward a common goal.

One or both partners stops working on the relationship with positive energy, causing it to become stale and no longer loving and prosperous. To love someone is one thing; to share love with someone is a powerful gift that absolutely must be nurtured constantly. Two people working consistently as one can accomplish almost anything provided their vision is shared, and they respect one another.

Unfortunately, it is also possible for one partner to fall out of love with the other. This happens once love dwindles and where respect has been compromised. What compromises respect in a relationship?

- 1 Always needing to win an argument.
- 2 Having little regard for another's position.
- 3 Demonstrating repeated frustration with a mate rather than discussing calmly.
- 4 Not caring enough to share a partner's interests or passions.

A relationship, much the same as a business or career, must always drive forward toward a common goal. To remain the same (in a rut) is equal to losing ground, because everything around you is moving forward. So what is my bottom line? Relationships get a huge boost of positive energy when each partner loves, encourages, and supports the other unconditionally.

Positive habits generate growth – Negative habits *prevent* growth

By developing and practicing habits based on positive energy we become more successful.

Why do we gravitate toward negative habits? Wouldn't it make sense to always seek positive solutions? Loving and supportive habits are infectious, and generate the same support in return from a partner. Unloving and unsupportive habits quickly lead to a business or career fatality. Yet negative habits are the path of least resistance, the easy way. That's the path 80% take.

Sure Fire Success Killers

The word killer may seem a bit harsh but I am comfortable with it. Success is something that lives, breathes, and duplicates. It has a life and it is you who must create and nurture it. Success initiatives can be fatally wounded at virtually every step along the way, or unceremoniously terminated right at the point where success was about to be achieved. Often those who have never tasted from the cup of success killed their chances a little each day without even realizing it. They may have had all the skills and tools needed to achieve it, but by refusing to examine things positively they created failure.

Success Killer Number 1

Do you focus more on what others have than on what is truly positive in your life? Do you know what you need in your life or career to feel satisfied and fulfilled? Focussing on how others measure success undermines your chances of being fulfilled, and diminishes your ability to know who you really are.

From adolescence you probably concentrated on being who others wanted you to be. After you left home did you still need to prove to your family and/or friends that you were successful? You have been programmed since childhood to accept opinions, direction, and love from others. “*Do what your mother says! Did you ask your dad first?*”

A good employee focuses on the benefit their effort delivers to an employer. This is supposed to assure an employee’s income and job security. However, the employer is in control, and the minute the employee is no longer profitable he or she will be gone. Many employees have experienced this regardless of how well they performed in the past. This is business! Why is it that most of us will only work on our own goals after we have first worked on those of our company? In other words, why do we place ourselves last? Do we have our priorities in the right order? Do you?

Managers

If you are manager of a department, you most likely do only what is necessary. This is because *your* goals (other than accumulating enough money for retirement) must be accomplished in your spare time--between your job and rest. Your main goal is achieving your employers’ satisfaction with you.

Managers tend to manage by manipulation. I once worked for someone who made me feel wonderful about myself within the organization, yet he eroded a small portion of my self-confidence every day. It took years for me to realize it was happening. This was his way of confirming our places in the pecking order. He meant no disrespect toward my abilities or me. He acted out of fear for his own position, and to bolster his ego. When last I checked he was still in the same position. Such a talented and persuasive manager has not advanced, because his focus was on protecting a little

corner he had created for himself. Had he not been so concerned with protecting his ego and position he could have been innovative and positive, leading to more success for the company. In return, his position would have been solidified, and he would have been recognized as a true leader. Who knows how far this might have taken him? True leaders have willing followers because the followers in turn are encouraged to use their abilities to innovate. This generates a vibrant, enthusiastic, and satisfied team. It creates an environment conducive to innovation and growth.

Imagine if your goals coincided with those of your employer. Imagine being encouraged to innovate, develop, and implement new positive ways of moving your department and the company forward. Can you see how you would likely advance in stature within that company? How advancement means more fulfillment, and how the product of all this would be more money, or more time to achieve *your* goals? Now imagine empowering everyone under you to operate in the same manner. Would a spirit of innovation be established, leading to new ideas and growth? The employees in your department would become more fulfilled and respectful of you and your positive energy. This becomes the catalyst for more advancement--that advancement being a product of your goal to have everyone feeling fulfilled in the workplace.

I believe that to be successful I must find ways to help everyone around me become better in some way. I expect to go as high as my own skill sets and natural abilities will take me. As a manager I wouldn't squash the advancement of someone under me, particularly when I helped to bring out his or her very best. Learn to establish goals that aren't concerned with selfish immediate needs. What we give to others (negative or positive) usually comes back to us ten times greater. This concept works everywhere in everyday life. It's a great habit to get into.

“You can have whatever you want, if you help enough people get what they want.”

Zig Ziglar

Proactive management propels prosperity. Re-active management, or the “fire fighting” style is much more common. Perhaps it’s 80% more common?

In his book The E Myth Manager Michael Gerber speaks of the powers of being completely in tune with you and your needs. Then understand how to be true to your goals while also being true to those of your employer. Then get the most out of those who work for you in a manner that allows them the same focus you have. If everyone steps up the quality of their individual goals, and at the same time works toward a common goal, positive things will happen. Everyone’s goals are achieved by creating a positive team effort that is real and lasting.

Old Habits

We might take note of key words that keep entering our discussion: **Focus**, **priority**, and **innovation**. If you were to study each of these words, and learn how they apply in your personal and business endeavors, you would likely find your ability to win the small battles would increase dramatically. Win the small ones and you can be sure the war will be yours.

Some might suggest the first order of business is to set goals. I disagree. My belief is that preparation is necessary before goal setting. The following tasks must be completed:

1. Identify and evaluate your natural instincts.
2. Identify and evaluate your natural way of reacting to challenges (most likely developed by the sum total of your experiences to now).

3. Find ways to replace all current negative aspects with positive ones.
4. Discover all resources that are as yet untapped. Find potential!
5. Realize your true passions and face the fact they are where your best opportunities for success are.
6. Determine that you want to grow and accept new challenges.
7. Determine if you can make a difference
8. Determine if you really want to make a difference.

After dealing with these 8 tasks you should be ready to set goals that make perfect sense for you. Notice that the above steps have to do entirely with YOU. You must be in tune with yourself, your passions, and your natural instincts and abilities. Only then will you be able to set a reasonable and practical course for success. This process will also enable you to break old negative habits, and will position you for more prosperous results.

You must take these 8 steps seriously regardless of the war you find yourself in, your relationship with your spouse, a career move, or a new business start. Skip one step and your chances of achieving any goal diminish. If you are really serious about where you are headed, make time right now to explore these steps and where they fit in your life. One process I use in my practice is to have each student and client spend several days collecting thoughts and facts regarding their self-investigation: Who they are, where they want to be, and how they might get there. No matter how important or meaningless each thought might appear, it must be recorded. An honest effort always produces many pages of thoughts.

Once completed, students are encouraged to organize their thoughts into rough categories. Examples of categories are: Money, passions, work habits, play habits, fears, loves, and

so on. I encourage you to take the same challenge, recognizing that your categories will differ slightly from mine since they will be *your* unique thoughts.

Having accomplished this task, you will have generated the ability to analyze them objectively and to determine where you are today, where you need to be tomorrow, and several years from now. Don't allow negative thoughts to interfere with collecting and recording your thoughts and known facts. In other words, if you were jotting down your longtime dream of owning a restaurant, don't allow the negative thought (it would be impossible because of a lack of money) to get in the way of recording it. Allowing your negative thoughts to interfere at this point will sabotage you on your path.

I ask you to do this in the spirit that all things could be possible for you. There is a very good reason: If you look at the 20% who achieve their goals and realize success, you'll discover that all things are possible if those negative thoughts are given little consideration.

Questions of Quality

A quality questionnaire will become the basis of your research. Everyone should accomplish this task for both personal and business purposes. If you realize you need more education, then questions will arise regarding tuition, location, timing, etc. In business your collection will almost always lead to numerous market analysis-based questions.

Focus on developing questions of quality that are worded positively. Asking, "Why am I so fat?" or "How can I get this weight off?" will never produce the same result as asking "How can I become thinner and have fun doing it?" When asking questions we revert to our old and most natural habit of incorporating negative thinking and negative energy.

Get into the habit of questioning the quality of your questions and you will have a powerful approach to creating your future.

Success Killer Number 2

You might now be able to identify this success killer on your own. It is failing to act! You determine you *can* make a difference and you *want* to make a difference, but how can you make a difference if you are not completely committed to taking action? As if that isn't enough, I am also going to toss in another key word and that is consistency. We've all experienced how easy it is to be motivated into beginning to take action, then procrastinating on following through. Winning is little more than identifying and doing the things that are necessary to become successful. Eighty percent of all sales people do a great job at motivating customers to buy their products yet do not close the sale. Why is this? Not following up is a primary reason. As Anthony Robbins points out, we naturally attach pain to making the effort needed to follow-up. Enter that old habit: our negative instincts. Less Effective Salespeople (LES) think in this way: *"If I call now to follow up it's probably a bad time. I'll call later."* or *"If I try to assume they are ready to buy from me now, they will find me too pushy and will be impatient with me"*. These are well-entrenched negative thoughts instinctively generated by past experiences.

So a salesperson's smaller fears sabotage their ability to solve a larger one--generating income. More important, there is no development of positive habits to feed professional self-confidence. Someone else will make that sale, receive the money, and generate a happy repeat customer. LES lose because of negative thoughts that were either self-inflicted or put upon them since childhood. Sound familiar? The good news is that this condition is entirely curable. The bad news is that it's not easy.

Negative inclinations are as strong as any other serious habit. Nothing worth while is easy. To change requires a major commitment. Your first question of quality should be, “How can I better understand my own natural instincts and use them as the foundation for becoming more effective in generating quality plans for my future?”

Now begin to draft your action plan document by using this self-analysis to write a personal mission statement. This statement should be a summary of your findings from the exercise. Go ahead and do it now.

Chapter 2

Getting Things Done!

Enter a new key word: productivity. Whatever the goal, positive results demand productivity. For a business to be productive it must profit from each and every transaction! Many business managers consider a transaction to be an actual sale. This is very shortsighted. Prepared managers realize that in business:

Every action is a transaction.

Transactions include purchasing inventory, hiring and firing personnel, closing a sale, designing and implementing an advertising campaign, and answering a telephone. All these things directly translate into revenue or lack thereof. When management focuses on profiting in every transaction, success is imminent. When it does not, consultants flock like buzzards overhead, waiting to feed off the business remains.

Being a productive employee at work helps assure that our employers need us there. The more productive we are, the more likely we are to achieve higher pay and promotions. In our personal lives we must also concern ourselves with productivity. A homemaker has a position that demands incredible productivity. She (in some cases he) must produce a budget, produce children who learn and grow to be responsible adults, produce a pleasant home environment, and more.

To understand how we can be more productive we must continue to investigate our own natural instincts.

Instinctively Us

“We all have equal instinctive power, however those who are more productive engage that power more fully, focusing its force and reacting within reason. Others fritter away their mental energies, misdirecting efforts or unduly editing their own actions.”

Kathy Kolbe

We all have thoughts, dreams and goals, but to try to achieve them without understanding our own natural instincts hinders our results.

Thank you for flying with Broken Prop Airlines, where you don't buy a ticket – you buy a chance!

A passenger airliner would never reach its destination without the aircraft, a skilled pilot, flight plan, backup plan, all equipment working properly, and enough fuel. All of these components make the flight a success. Provided there exists a business plan focussed on profit and derived from a quality market analysis, having paying passengers along makes each flight financially viable. When I am a passenger, I trust all of the above success factors are firmly in place. There is always a slight chance that something will go wrong.

Our example of a commercial flight is similar to our own travels. To realize a goal, we must **put it all together**. It begins with innovation, skilled management principles, a game plan, a backup plan, a good support network, and the