

Secrets of Success

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1. Keep a paper notebook and **stuff it to overflowing with your own ideas**, inspiration culled from books and blogs and movies. And amazing plans and dreams. (Re-)read a page or two of it to kick start every day.
2. Don't expect everyone to love you as you gain success. They won't.
3. Get places on time every time. Rain, sleet or snow. Or Northern Line down. It isn't about punctuality, **it's about self-discipline**. With those two rare-mentioned hyphenated dirty words a world can (*and has in the past*) be conquered.
4. Seek **love**. Without an 'if'. *That'll energise you to escape velocity.*
5. Seek **true friends**. Who don't do melodrama.
6. Seek **deep productivity**: doing what you want to do whilst time stands still.
7. Be able to **cook tasty, nutritious food to a tiny budget**. Then you will never starve while you manifest your plans.
8. **Begin**.
9. **Write every day** to improve your thinking, your creativity and let go of your demons. *And er, improve your writing.*
10. **Stop thinking you need a(nother) qualification**. You need to make some calls, ask some people, show you are willing, work really hard, build your reputation, be incredibly polite, be subtly persistent, get up early, cope with feeling exhausted and unloved. And do that every day for weeks on end. And then you will get glimmers of hope... and realise that you can manage your own destiny.
11. **Laugh more** to heal the wounds of every day living, to keep you young and to annoy the hell out of those who are miserable simply because it's 9am on a weekday.
12. **Listen** to your gut, your heart and to that recurring dream. Now get your mind to create a workable plan.
13. **Be Bold**. *Every minute, every day.*
14. **Drive** (*all day if necessary*) until you find a light pollution free area. Stare at the night sky and remind yourself: what a fu**ing gift to have received! Don't waste it.
15. **Your genes do not determine who you become**. *The way you nurture your genes ensures that.*
16. Help your genes by taking the right drugs.
17. **Yesterday** was for the plan. **Today** is for the action. **Tomorrow** is for the learning.
18. Remember that *fear, uncertainty and doubt* are simply a chemical by-product of making **distinct progress on your goals** and shedding baggage.
19. **Have at your finger-tips a perfect play-list** that will instantly dissolve your occasional *bad moods, lassitude and 'there is no point' declarations*.
20. Use **AND** more than OR, BUT and IF.
21. Stay professional.
22. **Establish** *routine and ritual* to: get stuff done.
23. **Shatter** *routine and ritual* for: creative breakthroughs.
24. Recognise you will need help: ask.
25. Develop your **mission control** area. A study, a planner on the kitchen wall, a bit of the garage: whatever. *Fill it with plans, milestones, inspiration, photos, quotes, mission plans...*
26. Write 1000 words on success and what it is for you. Now in 100. Now in ten words. Now in one.
27. Don't be sniffy about the **need for money**. You'll need money.
28. On average every 45 minutes stop, stretch, sip water and ask: **what's really important now?**

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29. **Study those you admire:** in sports, the arts, politics... What specifically do they do which gives them that edge you seek?
30. **Get supremely physically fit.** It will support your stamina, your creativity and your agility.
31. Much success starts with **believing in yourself.** It's not enough on its own, but it has to be the place to start.
32. **Get better at noticing things.** How people are responding. What else is in the room. In your peripheral vision. What you pass as you drive cross-country. You'll **notice** you get more ideas.
33. **Build courage** with relentless practise, be it public speaking, judo or cake baking.
34. **Catch up** with yourself by getting organised; but don't get ahead of yourself by not building foundations.
35. **Face down fear** by avoiding negative talk and thus giving it zero oxygen to spread and build.
36. **That person you admire?** They have been to hell and back to get their 'success'. You will too. But it's worth it.
37. **Play a lot.** *But not at working hard.*
38. **Simplify everything: goals, plans, finances, travel...** With simplification comes accessibility. With accessibility comes success.
39. **Document what you believe.** *Are all of those 'fundamentals' aligned to your success?*
40. **Wake one morning and understand you know nothing** until you start the journey. Then the universe will start to unfold for you in exciting and totally unexpected ways.
41. *"I'm not one of those complicated, mixed-up cats. I'm not looking for the secret to life... I just go on from day to day, taking what comes"* Frank Sinatra. **Yep, the best of the best make it look -s-o- easy.** Go back to 1.
42. **Write down your excuses.** Really focus on them. Remind yourself you can conquer them. Now burn them.
43. **Notice problems** and turn them into opportunities. And sell some of the latter.
44. **Persistence.** Multiplied by politeness. Will get you what you want.
45. **Be prepared** to abandon, U-turn and regularly update your plans.
46. **Learn** how to relax, switch off and unplug. Consider simple phone-free walking, yoga and meditation.
47. **Face your dark side.** *Required viewing: Breaking Bad.*
48. **Success is a plan** not a cool logo.
49. **Be determined** to get deep quality sleep which ensures you spring out of bed refreshed.
50. **Ensure your plans for the day** can be encapsulated on a *flight-deck* the size of a '3 by 5' card.
51. **Eliminate anything** which messes with your number one superpower: thinking.
52. Travel widely, yes. But also **travel deeply:** beyond the *'16-stop, 22 languages spoken bus tour'*. Walk the town, walk the city, sit quietly in the cathedral. Notice more than the locals now notice. Gain ideas, perspective and epiphanies.
53. Be careful what you call something: **you might give it attitude.** Or not. Calling them your *'Number 1 Competitor'* really makes them frightening. Especially as they are not: they are merely something else to consider on the check-list.
54. Review success to date. Because it is happening and you are so focused on your mission you are missing some of it. *Slow down and enjoy it.*
55. **Break conditioning.** Be outrageous.

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56. Automate all you can to give you **quantity of time**. Silence everything you can to give you **quality of time**.
57. Read widely. Take notes. **Synthesise the notes to their very essence**. Act upon the distillate.
58. When something isn't going your way, ask: **what does this situation say about me?** We're always some percentage of the problem and if we fix that it often helps the other percentage get fixed.
59. If you are missing something apparently unobtainable for your plan (e.g. 50 million euros start-up fund), create a **different plan**.
60. When all goes badly wrong, write large on your whiteboard in Mission Control, '*this too will pass*'.
61. Question the need for money and or power and or celebrity in your plan. Many who achieve those crave for what you have now: simplicity, anonymity and freedom.
62. Keep gnawing.
63. **Regularly re-boot**. Ask what is success for me? What is my plan? How is it going? What do I need to change? Who can help me? Who can I help?
64. Ask 10 people you both know and consider successful **for their top tips**. Write to 10 people you consider successful but don't know; ask them too for their top tips. **Look for the themes** and what is common across all the responses, especially between those who know and those who don't know you.
65. Learn to be **inspired by others** but be determined to **carve out your own route**. Genes, circumstance and sheer luck are in the equation and ensure their will only be one Steve Jobs, one The Beatles and one Marie Curie. But equally only one **best version of you**.
66. **Develop a sense of humour**; *at times even a sense of lightheartedness*. Life is what it is: rarely predictable, not always fair but certainly exhilarating.
67. **Look after yourself**. It is admirable to work hard. It is stupid to work too hard.
68. **Stay in touch**. Thank those who help you, even if it is 'their job'. Remember e-mail transmits words, phone adds emotion (even in voice mail). In person adds magic.
69. **Save then spend**: wealth is your personal balance sheet (assets less liabilities) not simply your salary, T/O nor billing rate.
70. **Nobody** apart from your lovely partner in life wants to hear about all your problems. *And even they only want a few occasionally*.
71. **Reduce** your TV viewing time even more to boost your thinking, planning and experimenting time.
72. **Find a system** which allows you to record actions immediately having decided/accepted them. To have visibility and follow up and through on these actions. Ensure there is no gap at all in your system. Manage Paradoxical Productivity.
73. **Keep a food and drink log for 5 days**. Everything. Yellow high-light the trash. Stop eating/drinking it.
74. **You do not need a cool car to impress the client**. You do need to deliver awesome work consistently to impress the client. *Then you can afford a cool car*.
75. **Don't be your emotions**. Notice them, use them. But don't let them manage you.
76. **Dress smarter** than you need to. It indicates to all you don't set your standards by what you can get away with but what you think is appropriate.
77. **Back to Zero**. For clarity of thinking on the road to success, ask "*if I were starting over, what would I do differently?*". Never a question of regret, simply a question of laser sharp focus on what-with hindsight-is truly what you seek.
78. **More music**. It puts you in the mood. But which mood for success? Concentration? Focus? Creativity? Unleashed energy?

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79. **Get the best return on your time** by: being fit, having a plan and hanging out with the very best people.
80. **Build knowledge.** A power-lifter builds muscle. You build knowledge of your craft, your market, your customer, your team, your strategy, marketing, sales, finance...
81. **Never waste a moment.** And that means knowing the perfect thing to do sometimes is waste a moment.
82. **The Long Game.** Planning, patience, perspective... build foundations, build relationships, build skills. None are a waste of time. All are essential for long term sustainable success. It's a long game.
83. **Spend** more time on your own (1) to clear your head (2) to get away from the distractions of others (3) to see what you can really do on your own.
84. **Part of success is never working again.** It's about doing what you love. Awesome. But there will still be cr*p days. *On those you need to simply love what you do.*
85. **Add one, drop one.** Your time and energy are finite. Place them on what will give you what you want. So when you add to your busy life, take something out. Spanish class: awesome. But squash club had better go for a while. Do what you do really, really well.
86. Choose **simple activity** in preference to rare visits to the gym. Activity supports energy which *gets things done.*
87. Take **breaks.** A day in which you can breathe ensures you make good decisions and get *the right things done.*
88. **Lift weights, do cross-fit and get a heart monitor. Learn how to take your body to peak performance. Every day.**
89. **Do the simplest of things brilliantly.** Make coffee, send a note of love, steam spinach, a PPT free presentation, home-made soup.
90. **Help** people out. *That'll bounce back in some form or another.*
91. **Realise rules are for traffic, cocktails and legal exams.** Not for success.
92. **Stagger** people with your sheer oooooommmph.
93. **Be aware** that once you really know what success is for you. That's REALLY know what success is for you. That's the real you, not the hyped, stressed out buried in a corporate maze of Dilbert cubicles you. Once you get to that point you'll realise it's within you grasp.
94. **But grasp** you will need to do. You'll need to re-read: Zen & The Art of Cubicle Freedom.
95. **Get out** more. Find a life beyond driving a car, visiting a mall, loading a dish-washer, standing at an ATM, despairing in a conference call, realising you are a year older, looking for an electrical socket, wishing, wanting, waiting, thinking about a new iPad, wondering if you need to see a doctor, staring at a bank statement, being speechless at a politician's pronouncement, stepping on Lego bricks in the corridor in the middle of the night, hacking out an on-line food shopping list as there's a voucher to be redeemed...
96. **One more time:** do you really (that's REALLY) know what success looks like for you? Make sure it's not your mum's, that conjured up in an MBA brochure or a GQ magazine. And delete it if it needs you to win the lotto.
97. **Take quality actions** every day.
98. **Ensure** you have a hand to hold on the toughest, most exciting, most testing path.
99. **Never look behind you.** Just develop an awesome sense of smell.
100. **But begin.**
101. *Never defer life, fun, relationships to 'one day'. Success starts today. Success is today.*