

Success is something everyone wants but few achieve. However, it doesn't have to be that way. No matter where you are in your career—from job seeking to having held the same position for an extended period—there are principles you can apply to ensure your success. Below are seven sure-fire success principles you can start using right now:

1 **Work with relentless urgency.** Getting up and showing up are a great start, but if you want success in your career—or in any part of your life—you have to be willing to work and work hard. The Army's slogan from the early 1980s was, "We get more done before 9 a.m. than most people get done in a day." It's that hard-driving work ethic that will set you apart from the pack and create opportunities that will open the doors to success.

2 **Apply a disciplined approach.** Discipline is defined as a system of rules governing conduct or activity. When you wake up in the morning, do you have a systematic plan of what you are going to accomplish and how you are going to accomplish it? If not, you can't expect to move forward in your career in any meaningful way. Begin using a disciplined approach by first setting goals and then planning activities that will achieve those goals. Finally, measure the success of your activities and then adjust your plans accordingly.

3 **Focus on implementation.** Closely related to discipline is implementation. This is simply the principle of carrying out and accomplishing the goals and plans you created, ensuring actual fulfillment by concrete measures. You can dream and plan and set goals for yourself all day, but if you do nothing tangible to see those goals through, you're simply spinning your wheels and wasting time. Implementation is the step that transitions plans into results.

4 **Simplify whenever possible.** Why take two dozen steps to accomplish something if you can get it done just as effectively in only three or four? Simplification is a critical part of achieving maximum results with the least amount of effort. Working hard is important, but using your time in the most effective way possible is even more important. Simplifying processes whenever possible makes it much easier to accomplish more in less time. It also makes it quicker and easier to share your knowledge and bring team members up to speed when necessary.

5 **Embrace discomfort.** Nobody likes to be uncomfortable and it's a natural inclination to avoid discomfort. However, in order to be successful, you must be willing to not only be uncomfortable, but also embrace discomfort. This means the willingness to give something up in order to gain something, such as giving up comfort in order to gain forward momentum. This means working late to ensure deadlines are met or making lifestyle changes in order to be able to invest in a new venture. Either way, sacrificing comfort now can enable you to take the steps you need to achieve future success.

6 **Continually develop your skills and knowledge.** Taking courses to gain certifications, along with expanding your industry knowledge base, is a fantastic way to move forward and be more successful in your career. Wake up early to study if you need to, but make sure you take advantage of all the classes and instruction available to you to become an expert in your field. Another great way to increase your skills and understanding is to read—read anything you can get your hands on that can help you become more knowledgeable and effective. Fifty-eight percent of people never read non-fiction books after they graduate from high school, so simply picking up a book and reading it will help establish your expertise and set you apart from your colleagues.

7 **Develop the right relationships.** It's not only the relationships you develop with your company's clients that are important. Developing good, healthy relationships with co-workers, supervisors and even hiring managers is an important step in career success. These are the people who can influence your career—for better or worse. Ensure that influence is working in your favor by identifying ways to help team members achieve their goals and objectives. Your assistance will help establish you as a go-to person within your organization and position you for advancement.

Success might not be easy but it is achievable. There will always be setbacks, but perseverance, dedication and drive eventually yield success. Follow these seven sure-fire success principles and you will enjoy the success you've always wanted.



Sure-Fire

SUCCESS PRINCIPLES

By Daniel C. Steenerson, CLU, ChFC, RHU

Foremost disability insurance field authority Daniel C. Steenerson, CLU, ChFC, RHU, is the founder and principal of San Diego-based Disability Insurance Services—the nation's leading disability brokerage agency that's earned the distinction as the largest wholesale distributor of disability insurance products in the United States. He may be reached online at www.DanSteenerson.com.

