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# HARD TRUTH

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9 Truths You **Must** Embrace to Be **Successful**

**Hard Truth ©**  
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**[www.chelliephillips.com](http://www.chelliephillips.com)**



It's a no-brainer. Everyone wants to be successful, right? And in theory, everyone can be successful. But you may have noticed that most people give up way before they achieve their goal. Or they're happy with some short-term success, early on in their careers. They choose to stay in comfortable stagnation and think that success is only for high flyers.

But if you want to be successful at anything, you need to accept and run with some basic principles. Here are nine hard truths you must embrace to succeed.

### ***1. Success is different for everyone***

Not everyone perceives success in the same way. For many of us, and the way society paints it, success is about making money, having power and influence. It's about being asset-rich with a big house, a big car, and expensive possessions.

To become truly successful, you have to work out what success means to you, not to your parents or your friends or colleagues, but you. What sort of life do you want? Lots of travel, or the big house ideal? Or do you want to alleviate poverty or discover new health treatments? Are study and research your passion? Or do you want to balance your life and family commitments? Maybe being home in time for family dinners and keeping your weekends free is your priority.

Take the time to work out really what success means for you. You will be much more motivated to achieve it and much happier when you get there! Whatever success means for you, focus on that.

### ***2. Be prepared for the cost***

Whatever your success goal is, you must be prepared to give up some comfort to get there. Because whenever you make a choice, you are also choosing to give something up or to miss out on something. If you want to focus one hundred percent on being a CEO in five years time, you are choosing to spend all your energy and time on achieving that goal. There won't be much time left over for friends or family. There won't be time for a lazy weekend or vacations. That's the cost.

If you choose to prioritize family time, you are giving up the opportunity for fast-tracking your career.



None of these are bad choices, but you need to make them with your eyes open. You must understand what you're giving up to succeed at what you want. Whatever your decision you must be prepared to be flexible, to learn and adapt to changing circumstances. You must be ready to grow and to sit with discomfort.

### ***3. Prepare for some pain***

Being successful may not be a comfortable road. In fact, comfort is the enemy of success. If you're comfortable, your energy goes down. You're not going to take chances, and you're not going to explore. If you want to stay in the same position, if you choose safety, then that's your choice – but accept that this will not lead to a successful life.

To be successful, you have to choose to learn and evolve and grow. You'll need to engage with the world and be open to possibilities. It's not a hard-nosed race to the top but a journey to becoming your best you.

Growing and learning and being prepared to start again, acknowledging that you don't know everything – these can be painful concepts to accept. And that is why most people choose not to learn and grow. But the road to success requires you to be humble. It requires you to accept that you still have so much to learn. To be truly successful you need to be constantly changing, constantly becoming a better version of yourself.

### ***4. Prepare to fail***

Fear of failure is what prevents many people from succeeding. They think that failure is final and conclusive and ends up defining you as a person. The most successful people allow themselves to fail. They pick themselves up, recover and learn from what went wrong. Failure can and does happen to everyone. Sometimes factors outside your control can scuttle your project. Sometimes you make mistakes. But regardless of how you came to fail there is only one way out that leads to success.

You assess, and you learn, and you don't make that mistake again. You don't beat yourself up. You see that failure as a stepping stone to your future success.



### ***5. Don't confuse willpower with commitment***

People tend to mistake willpower for commitment. Just wanting something to happen will not make it so. That's why most New Year's resolutions don't work. If you rely on willpower, you will run out of energy fast. You'll get discouraged, and you'll give up, thinking that success is not for you.

If willpower is teeth-gritting, 'in spite of' negative energy, commitment is a different kettle of fish. Commitment is positive. It assumes that your goal is achievable and getting there will happen. It is a considered approach to achieving goals.

Commitment focuses your energy, your mind and your passion on achieving something that is truly important to you. If you're committed to your goal, you will plan and work and adapt to get there.

### ***6. You have to show up***

Persistence and consistency will beat innate talent every time. To achieve anything, you have to show up and keep showing up day after day, week after week, month after month. You have to do the work and keep doing the work. And like any project, each step builds on the last. A big goal might seem impossible if you try to do it all at once or expect to get there in a week. But by breaking your big goal into smaller steps, you'll slowly build up one small win after another. Before you know it, you will accomplish what you set out to achieve.

### ***7. You need to plan for success***

Key to this is accepting that you need to treat your goal of lasting success as a marathon, not a sprint. Short bursts of activity will leave you depleted and discouraged and more than likely you'll give up. Success is a lifetime project. If you truly want to be successful, treat it like any other big project. Work out what resources you need, plan your short, medium and long-term goals and deliverables. Take it seriously enough to make a proper strategic plan and prepare to adapt as the environment changes.

The other advantage of mapping your success is that you consciously take control of your destiny. Planning for success means you don't think of success as a mysterious



innate talent or a piece of luck. It is something you can decide to have and work hard to achieve.

### ***8. The first draft of anything sucks***

Successful people know that they won't achieve their goal immediately. Or even anytime soon. They know that whether your goal is to write a book, discover the cure for cancer, or win an Olympic medal, your first efforts will suck.

If you've ever written a job application or a presentation, you know how hard it is to get that first draft done. But you have to get it done to get it out of the way. Then you can get on with writing the better version. And there will be lots of versions before you get one that you're happy with and finally use.

Take heart from Edison, who famously tried more than a thousand times to invent the light bulb that worked. In his view he merely got thousands of poor alternatives out of the way, so he could invent the one that did work.

Don't give up at the first obstacle. If your first version sucks, be glad you've got that out of the way, so that you can get closer to the right one.

### ***9. You need to learn to say no***

If you're focused on achieving success, you'll have to learn to say no. And not just say no to things you don't want to do. You'll have to turn down some really attractive offers, things that sound like fun, even opportunities that sound great.

Because if they don't align with your goal, they are just distractions. Saying yes to too many things scatters your energy. Obligations that you feel you can't refuse are also distractions.

You can learn to say no politely but firmly to all the things that prevent you from achieving success. You might have to be prepared to disappoint people you care about, even yourself. If an opportunity for a vacation with friends comes up and that clashes with a work priority, you'll have to choose between pleasure and achieving success.

Being aware of the opportunity cost will help you to say yes to the great opportunities that align with your goal, and you will be successful.



Mastering success above all means being aware of what you're choosing and why. Consciously working out your version of success and working towards it will help you to have a happier, more meaningful life. It means choosing growth and learning and adapting.

Above all, it means choosing a path that may not be easy but leads to your success.

