

Introduction

*“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. The slogan ‘Press On!’ has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.”
-Calvin Coolidge*

I know a lot of successful people.

Because of what I do, and because of the success that I’ve been lucky enough to achieve in my life, I’ve found myself in the company of people who have achieved the type of success we all dream about. We’re talking Tony Award-winners, Academy Award-winners, professional athletes, entrepreneurs worth hundreds of millions of dollars, famous physicians, politicians, and more.

Not only are these folks my friends, but they’ve also inspired me to reach higher in my own quest for success.

TIP: If you want to be a success, surround yourself with successful people. The human mind is an amazing thing, and it adapts to the environment that it’s in over time. So, if you put yourself in a place where you are constantly around people with the type of success you want, whether that’s artistic, financial, or even with personal relationships, slowly but surely you will adapt to that environment. Like a plant grows towards the

sun, you'll find yourself leaning up to their level.

(Warning – this concept works in the reverse. Too many people I know surround themselves with individuals who are nowhere near where they want to be . . . and they end up sliding down to their level without even knowing it. Remember how your parents didn't want you to hang out with kids who were a "bad influence"? Turns out, they had a point.)

That's why I always look to surround myself with people smarter than I am, more creative than I am, wealthier than I am, have a better golf swing than I have, etc. And the more of them, the better. There is strength and success in numbers.

As I surrounded myself with more and more of these successful people over the years, the more curious I got about their success. And the more comfortable with them I got, the more I poked them for details on how they got to be where they are. I've always been a curious person, but to get a chance to ask questions to people who had already achieved the kind of success that I so wanted was the biggest blessing I could ask for. It was like getting ten graduate degrees . . . with no tuition.

In my opinion, you can never be too curious. Or as I like to say, curiosity may have killed the cat, but it also fed the dog. :-)

I acted like a two-year-old whenever I was around any of these folks and asked them things like . . .

“How did you get where you are? What were the steps you took? Did you have help? What was the best advice you ever got? What was the worst? What was the one thing you’d do differently if you were to do it again?”

If you listen to my podcast (you can find it on TheProducersPerspective.com), you may recognize these questions . . . because I’m still asking them! I’m still learning with every person I meet. As long as I have something I want to do differently, or more efficiently, then I’ll always be asking questions.

Because you can never get an answer without first asking a question.

I’d ask these questions and then . . . and here’s the real important part . . . I’d shut up and listen.

TIP: The simple concept of “listening” took me a while to learn, but as one of my mentors once said to me, “Smart people talk. Smarter people listen.”

I’d listen to their stories of how they started their companies, how they made it through tough times, how they made money, lost more money, and then made even more back again.

And the more I asked and the more I listened, the more I realized something about super successful people.

It was quite an epiphany, and I remember the exact place I was when I realized it . . . like it was my first kiss or something! That's how important it was to me.

Are you ready for it? It may shock you so be prepared.

The most successful people I knew . . . weren't the smartest people in the world.

Seriously!

We're brought up to believe that the smart ones are the successful ones (it's a teacher's trick to keep us in school studying our little butts off), but it's not always true.

While it's easy to think that only the smartest, most gifted people, the ones that are "born with it," are the ones that are the most successful, that's just not true. Not at all.

(That kind of thinking is just another excuse, or a "Limiting Belief," that keeps us on the couch, doing what we've always done, instead of getting up and taking charge of our destiny. And, it's just BS.)

A Limiting Belief is anything we tell ourselves that holds us back from our pursuit of what we really want out of life. (e.g. "I'm not smart enough." "I'm not pretty enough." "I don't know the right people.")

Just because people are gifted doesn't mean that they're going to be successful, and certainly vice versa. I remember this kid I went to high school with who aced his SATS, got A's on all his papers that he dashed off in a 50-minute study hall . . . and now is in a middle management job that's going nowhere. And I'm sure you know lots of folks from your youth like this too!

The fact is, success has nothing to do with smarts.

Can it help? Sure. But it ain't necessary. (That's right, people who say "ain't" can be as successful as people who can recite the Strunk & White rules from memory.)

When I learned this, man oh man, it was like breaking through the ceiling of my life. And it should be for you too.

You don't need an IQ of 200. You don't need a law degree from Harvard. You don't need to be a card-carrying member of Mensa.

But I know what you're thinking, if it isn't smarts, then what is it that you do need to achieve the success that you've been dreaming about?

That, my friends, is what this book is about.

But if you want a clue, I think this quote says it best . . .

"Ambition wins over genius 99% of the time. Sooner or later the other guy is going to have to eat, drink, go to the bathroom, get

laid or take a vacation. And that's when I catch him." – Jay Leno

Jay Leno wasn't the best comedian when he was starting out. There were a lot of other folks funnier than he was. But NONE who had his work ethic. And he was committed to doing something about getting better . . . and that's why he ended up being one of the most powerful people in Hollywood. Not because he was the most talented. And not because he was the smartest. But because he was committed.

If you're just as committed to achieving your goals, then I guarantee you can get there. All you have to do is turn the page, my friend . . . and do something about it.