

Is There A Secret To Success?

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Everyone wants to do well and thus everyone loves to know the secret of success. What will allow me to be first? How can I be guaranteed that this song will be a hit? What should I do so that this presentation is going to be loved? The fact of the matter is that there is no instant recipe for success. If you follow a number of steps, you can increase your chances of being successful but there are no guarantees.

Because there are no guarantees other than hard work, many people are attracted by the lure of short cuts and cheating. Some people think trading in the stock markets is an easy way to success, so we see a no. of intraday traders with their hopes high sitting in front of the computer screen every day but only 10% of them are able to succeed, others just loose out in the rat race. This is why steroids are so popular in athletics and why doping is so horribly rife in cycling. The horse racing industry has been beset by scandal of people taking unfair means in order to take an advantage. With the millions of dollars at stake, people feel the risk of being caught is worth it. Also the horse, doesn't get much of a say in the matter.

So what can you do which is allowed? You can be organized, prepared and methodical. You can wake up early, go to bed late and in between put in the hours to make sure that you can do everything you can possibly do to have the best chances of being successful. This isn't as glamorous nor does it have the thrill of doing something which is illegal. That's just the way things work.

Unfortunately many people are put off by the thought of putting in the hours and working hard. Hard work is just something that most people want to avoid, but on the contrary this is the easiest way to success. On the flip side, it means that if you are prepared to do it, you can come out on top. Glory via cheating is short-term. Eventually you are caught and then have to live with the shame and the guilt. This is a huge difference from success that comes via hard work - here you are left with a sense of achievement and pride that never goes away.

Marion Jones may have been the darling of the 2000 Olympics which took place in Sydney but now she is disgraced. Her medals were taken away and she went to prison. A similar thing happened in baseball with Mark McGwire and Barry Bonds who will never go into the Hall of Fame. The greyhound racing world was shocked when a highly successful trainer was found out to be cheating. He went into hiding and hasn't been heard of since.

In the corporate world, there isn't enough punishment for those who break the rules. People who embezzle and are guilty of insider trading are given a slap on the wrist. The classic example is Bernie Madoff but what could happen to him where the punishment truly fits the crime. The magnitude of his crime means nothing could ever fit the bill.

Now let's look at a few examples of how hard work has paid off in life. Remember Lance Armstrong?? On October 2, 1996, at age 25, Armstrong was diagnosed with stage three testicular cancer. The cancer spread to his lungs, abdomen and brain. On that first visit to a urologist in Austin, Texas, for his cancer symptoms he was coughing up blood and had a large, painful testicular tumour. Immediate surgery and chemotherapy were required to save his life. Armstrong had an orchiectomy to remove his diseased testicle. After his surgery, his doctor stated that he had less than a 40% survival chance. Before his cancer treatment, Armstrong had won two Tour de France stages. In 1993, he won the 8th stage and in 1995 he took stage 18 in honour of teammate Fabio Casartelli who crashed and died on stage 15. Armstrong dropped out of the 1996 Tour on the 7th stage after becoming ill, a few months before his diagnosis. Armstrong's cycling comeback began in 1998 when he finished fourth in the Vuelta a España. In 1999 he won the Tour de France, including four stages. He beat the second rider, Alex Zülle, by 7 minutes 37 seconds. However, the absence of Jan Ullrich (injury) and Marco Pantani (drug allegations) meant Armstrong had not yet proven himself against the biggest names. Stage wins included the prologue, stage eight, an individual time trial in Metz, an Alpine stage on stage nine, and the second individual time trial on stage 19. In 2000, Ullrich and Pantani returned to challenge Armstrong. The race that began a six-year rivalry between Ullrich and Armstrong ended in victory for Armstrong by 6 minutes 2 seconds over Ullrich. Armstrong took one stage in the 2000 Tour, the second individual time trial on stage 19. In 2001, Armstrong again took top honours, beating Ullrich by 6 minutes 44 seconds. In 2002, Ullrich did not participate due to suspension, and Armstrong won by seven minutes over Joseba Beloki.

Now this is what we call hard work, dedication, perseverance etc. It can be unanimously said that there is no substitute for hard work. Gambling, cheating will only get you success 1 out of 10 times. Some would say that the cheaters are just given us what we want. We want people to cheer and support and that is what they are providing us. This seems like a weak rationalization for doing something which is

wrong. They want to succeed and are prepared to do so at any cost. Well is it worth this much?

REFERENCES

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