

IN PURSUIT OF A



BY LEAH SHMERLING CMF

SUCCESSFUL CAREER

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Confucius said “Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.” How many people love their jobs? Sadly, many people see work as a means to earn an income. Although this is true, there is more to work.

Work provides the outlet for you to practice your skills, express yourself, thereby, validate who you are. Some may think that their career is their destiny.

Let’s consider some examples of people who made a success of their careers. For some, it may have been against the odds.

Janine Allis, founder of Boost Juice left school at 16 and is now the head of a \$130 million turnover business, “She had a variety of jobs but wanted a part-time job so she could spend more time with her children. She ended up working 17 hours a day as she inadvertently created a brand that now has 240 franchised stores globally..”

The architect of Sydney Opera House, Jørn Utzon was a relatively unknown until 1957 when his entry was announced as the winner of the ‘International competition for a national opera house at Bennelong Point, Sydney’.

Judges declared the Utzon design to be outstanding. He had never visited the site, but his life and travels had shaped his ideas for the Sydney Opera House.



Richard Branson struggled at school and dropped out at age 16. He decided to sell popular records out of a church which led to the creation of Virgin Records.

His entrepreneurial skills expanded into other sectors making Branson a billionaire.



On the road to build your career success, a number of factors will help you.

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Understand who you are

To build a successful career entails self understanding of who you are as an individual – what makes you tick: your personality, attributes, skills, values, motivation, strengths and weakness. You know what is important to you so decisions are made from this framework.

Acknowledge your greatest skills and do what you 'love'

Consider your primary skill and passion as a way to create a meaningful career. Successful people love what they do because they apply their strengths and skills to their work.

Consider job roles where you can express your core skills. Your career will represent the authentic you. Your passion will shine and be obvious to people you come in contact with. Not only will you be happy, you will produce great work.

For example, if writing is your strength, there are ways to express your passion and earn a living. Careers with writing include: journalism, editor, instructional designer/course developer, blogger, advertising copywriter, author, fundraiser, technical writer, or public relations.

Tasks that are less desirable will be completed as a way to achieve your work role responsibilities. It will be done with positive energy as a means to an end, rather than with dread.

You will also be efficient and productive in your work. You find ways to improve by creating your own professional standards and, stretch yourself to surpass your standards.

Overcome obstacles

There is a fine line between success and failure. As you set out to undertake work responsibilities, you will encounter challenges and obstacles. It's unrealistic to think that it is a straightforward process.

Positive and successful people will design strategies to overcome obstacles. They will seek assistance, learn and grow during the process. These lessons will be carried into new situations. They will enhance their work performance through wisdom. Others, give up and look for excuses. If you want to succeed, you will encounter failure, but apply the lessons from which to learn and grow.

Notice your success and validate it

Many people have success at work, but may not stop to appreciate their achievements. So often, it passes unrecognised!

Success does not need to be major, even small triumphs such as: designing an efficient work process, meeting your deadline, completing a project with successful collaboration from your time and on time, a positive contribution during a meeting with your team or with stakeholders, developing a workplace document, or staying calm when you are faced with pressure or a difficult person.

Self awareness is critical to your self esteem, and appreciating what you do well validates you and your work. It is the first step to building self confidence.

Develop a healthy self concept

Self concept is how you view yourself. It determines how you will experience life. If you see yourself in a positive and healthy

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light, your life experiences will be positive and healthy. The challenges that you face will be handled as learning experiences from which to make decisions and grow professionally and personally. Conversely, if one's self concept is fragile, they will struggle with life's challenges which will affect self esteem.

To develop a healthy self concept, you must understand who you are, appreciate your qualities – both positive and weaknesses, be true to yourself to lead an honest life.

Record your achievements

Record your achievements in a work diary or journal, and refer to it during a business meeting, staff performance appraisal, or at a job interview. It may lead to a promotion or new role. When left to memory, you are at a risk of omitting important information.

Develop positive work relationships

When you are engrossed and focussed on your work, it will take a priority over other matters. In all workplaces there exists office politics, work pressures, and individuals who do not always act in the best interests of others. You acknowledge this, but prefer to focus on your job. Rather than being hooked into negativity, you choose to rise above this. It takes self discipline, a positive disposition and a strong work ethic. This is not always easy and creates a professional challenge. Yet, you focus on your passion and work values which are about work quality and professionalism for you to achieve. Through work satisfaction, authentic self expression and true happiness is attained. Individuals will stretch themselves to grow and learn. When successful, individuals will mentor

entrants to the company or industry, thereby, duplicating success.

“ The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well and doing well whatever you do without thought of fame. ”
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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Leah is a published author of 2 books and former freelance writer for the Herald Sun – where she wrote in Education, and The Age – she wrote in Education, Employment and had a few articles published in Business. Leah is a professional member of the Career Development Association Australia (CDAA), a professional member of Australian Career Professionals International (ACPi-Aus). Leah is Board Certified as a Career Management Fellow (CMF) by the Institute of International Career Certification (ICCI).

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