

HARD WORK



We've heard it since childhood. We've heard it from parents, teachers, and friends: "You just have stick to it and try (work) harder." Success is more a combination of how hard one is willing to work or practice than the God-given talents we are born with.

"TALENT IS CHEAPER THAN TABLE SALT. WHAT SEPARATES THE TALENTED INDIVIDUAL FROM THE SUCCESSFUL ONE IS A LOT OF HARD WORK."

— STEPHEN KING

Hard work has clearly paid off for the most successful people.

Take **Bill Gates**—the richest man in the world, who evidently never slept, never changed clothes, never did anything but code and maneuver and strategize. For Bill Gates, it was the ability to have access to a computer and log 10,000 hours of programming time. Gates didn't seem like a shoe-in for success after dropping out of Harvard and starting a failed first business with Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen called Traf-

O-Data. While this early idea didn't work, Gates' later work did, creating the global empire that is Microsoft. In an industry filled with incredibly smart people—where smart was and is commonplace—he rose to the top by also working incredibly hard.

For **The Beatles**, it was playing 1,200 one-hour live shows to smaller audiences that would prepare them for stadium concerts and super stardom.

Or take sports. **Tom Brady**, quarterback for the New England Patriots, probably spends more time just watching film than the rest of us spend at work. In a sport filled with incredibly talented athletes—where incredible athletic talent is commonplace—he'll one day be in the Hall of Fame because he works incredibly hard.

"IT'S HARD TO BEAT A PERSON WHO NEVER GIVES UP."

— BABE RUTH

Walt Disney: Today Disney rakes in billions from merchandise, movies and theme parks around the world, but Walt Disney himself had a bit of a rough start. He was fired by a newspaper editor because "he lacked imagination and had no good ideas."

After that, Disney started a number of businesses that didn't last too long and ended with bankruptcy and failure. He kept plugging along (working harder), however, and eventually found a recipe for success that worked.

"THE TROUBLE WITH OPPORTUNITY IS THAT IT ALWAYS COMES DISGUISED AS HARD WORK."

— ANONYMOUS

Henry Ford: While Ford is today known for his innovative assembly line and American-made cars, he wasn't an instant success. In fact, his early businesses failed and left him broke five times before he founded the successful Ford Motor Company.

"I'M A GREAT BELIEVER IN LUCK, AND I FIND THE HARDER I WORK THE MORE I HAVE OF IT."

— THOMAS JEFFERSON

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JOHN TSCHOHL



John Tschohl is an international service strategist and speaker. He is founder and president of the Service Quality Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Described by **Time** and **Entrepreneur** magazines as a customer service guru, he has written several books on customer service including **Moving Up**. The Service Quality Institute (www.customer-service.com) has developed more than 26 customer service training programs that have been distributed and presented throughout the world. John's monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.



All are examples of very talented individuals. But the common theme is taking that talent and supporting it with a fierce and committed work ethic. It sounds tough and sounds like a lot of hard work. Well, don't kid yourself, it is. There are four simple principles that I have talked about before and that are in my books that relate to hard work and success:

Belief – Believing in yourself is all about being sure that you are going to do what you want, even if others stand against you.

Dedication – It's part of your make-up. It's part of the way you do things.

Focus – It's a focal point that you aim for. For example, the object in target shooting is to aim for the center. The same standard applies for success.

Skill – It's the right combination of skill sets in order to be successful. For example, if you are going to be the best on the rodeo circuit, you will have to have mastered the skills necessary to stay on that horse and how to get back up without fear and get back in the saddle. Hours and hours of incredibly hard work and a few bumps and bruises along the way.

In my book, *Moving Up*, I constantly remind readers that it's about your life, it's about succeeding in whatever you choose to do. It's about taking chances, being proactive, and being ready and willing to put in the hard work necessary. ■

“GREAT THINGS ARE NOT GOING TO HAPPEN FOR YOU UNLESS YOU ARE WILLING TO WORK INCREDIBLY HARD.”

— JOHN TSCHOHL

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