



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATING CLASS OF JANUARY 2014



10 tips for achieving success



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Today, I'm going to tell you a secret. It's a simple one. You can be successful. Want to know how? The easiest part is to work hard, but there are a few other parts in the formula. I'll share some of the ingredients with you, and then you decide how to mix them up, and in what ratio. I'm not going to be presumptuous enough to tell you that these are the best or only components in success, but these are critically important to credible, sustainable success. They've worked for me and for many of those successful people we admire.

So here are ten tips for achieving success.

1. Take advice, but only the good. If you get bad advice, shred it, burn it, destroy it, bury it. Don't let it get into your head. How do you decide which advice is good and which bad? This homework I leave for you. Yes, I'm giving you homework on the day you get your degree. It just doesn't end, this education bit. But believe it or not, there are those who will be happy to tell you why you can't succeed. If you don't filter that kind of advice out, you may be tempted to believe them, and then you'll begin to resent those who are holding you down, and blame them for keeping you back.
2. Resist the temptation to blame others for your disappointments. Let me tell you for your own sakes, blame is an expensive, energy-depleting emotion. Blame allows us to accept failure as something outside of our control. Blame forces us into a cycle of paralysis and failure. You, as you proceed in the next chapter of your life, cannot afford to waste time or valuable energy on blame. If someone pushes you down, the answer is not to stay on the ground lamenting the push. The answer is to get up and either stay out of his reach or plant your feet better so he can't push you down so easily next time.
3. Face your fears. Fear is a paralyzing emotion, and too often also an irrational one. What are you afraid of? Why? How can you overcome that fear? The people that we admire most in our lives are not the ones who have never been afraid. Rather, they are the ones who faced their fears and triumphed over them. Imagine how much better your night's sleep would be if you faced down that spider in your room and killed it. The most epic movies -watch Lone Survivor- are about people who didn't let fear (or spiders) get in the way of doing what they had to do.
4. Take calculated risks. Notice that I didn't just say 'take risks,' I included the word 'calculated.' The most phenomenal successes always involve taking a risk that might look crazy to everyone but them because they've thought it through. Too often in the course of what I do I encounter people who won't take a risk. They won't tell you they're afraid, but you'll know because they'll tell you everything that could go wrong, and they will never venture out of their safe zone. As Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, said "The biggest risk is not taking any risk... In a world that's changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks."

5. Develop a strategy and execute it. That's where you make the calculations to decide what risk you want to take. Strategy requires removing all the distracting emotions from whatever process you're undertaking. Too often, we are emotional about something, downright passionate, ready to run headlong into the obstacles without really thinking about how best to overcome them. We get constant headaches from running into the brick wall and we never, in our passion, stop to check whether we could have just walked a few feet down and found an opening. Strategic thinking requires us to examine all our options and find the door in the brick wall.

6. Whatever you do, do it with integrity and honesty. Make the choices you make because they are the best option for you and for those around you. I've seen too many people ultimately fail because they were not trustworthy, did not deal honorably, and so when they needed someone to believe in them, they had destroyed all the trust they needed. Too many people take the shortcuts, only to discover that in the end there is a price to be paid. We are terribly short on integrity in today's world, but it is a key ingredient in true and lasting success.

7. You're going to fail. Yes, at some point in your life you will fail at something. Failing isn't what makes you a failure; giving up and never trying again is what does it. Don't let the fear of failure haunt you into doing nothing. You are better than that. Instead of trying to avoid failure completely, take the lesson from the failure. Analyze it. How did it happen? What could you have done better? Analyze everything, dig for the answers, revise your strategy.

8. Fight. No, I don't mean go to the nearest bar and start a brawl. But don't accept the obstacles put in your way. The fact is, the good stuff doesn't come easily, or else everybody would have it. To get to the top, you have to climb, and that means defying the gravitational forces that will pull you down. Make sure the objective is worth fighting for though, because what will get you to victory is the knowledge that it was worth it to you.

9. Never stop learning. Take the lesson that failure delivers, learn from the actions (and mistakes) of others, and apply those lessons to your process. You don't know everything, even when you think you do. Actually, I find I knew pretty much everything in my teens and twenties. I had to become a bit older and wiser in order to figure out that I don't know everything, so by telling you this I'm setting you ahead of where I was at your age. Somebody once contended that curiosity never killed the cat...curiosity helped the cat figure out how to reach the fish and keep from starving, so never stop asking questions.

10. Say thank you. Yes, I know that you know about the basic requirements of manners that civilized interaction with society requires. But I also know that it is human nature to spend disproportionate amounts of time resenting the person who pushed you down or stepped in line ahead of you, and to forget immediately the person who put out a helping hand, who in some way moved you a step forward. Often they do it not because they have to, but because they want to and they can. Never forget to thank those people, whether they're work mentors, or the banker who believed in you and took a risk, or the family member who helped you with a loan, or the friend who lent you his car and told you not to worry about the gas. Thank them and through your success, show them that their help meant something. Gratitude has a way of paying off, and so does reciprocation.





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Top Overall Achievers



NELSON AMAYA

Nelson Amaya hails from the beautiful village of Trial Farm in the Orange Walk District. He is the fifth child of Mr. Manuel Amaya and Mrs. Erlinda Hernández. Nelson completed his primary education at Trial Farm Government School and graduated in 1993. He went on to Muffles College High School and later attended Muffles Junior College where he obtained an Associate Degree in Business Science in 1998.

Nelson saw the introduction of the Spanish Education Program at the University as a great opportunity for the teachers of Spanish to become better prepared so after eight years of teaching, he decided to make it a priority to be a part of the program in 2008.

Nelson is graduating with a Bachelor Degree in Spanish Education and a GPA of 3.96 from the Faculty of Education and Arts.



TRISHA SILVA

Trisha Silva was born in Belize City on January 23rd, 1983 and was raised in the vibrant and beautiful town of San Ignacio. She attended Sacred Heart College, and after attaining her high school diploma moved to Florida to attend the University of South Florida. In 2002 she graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Marketing. Trisha moved back to Belize to teach at her alma mater in 2005 and has been an educator at Sacred Heart College. Trisha has participated in several workshops over the past eight years, as a part of her constant pursuit of excellence in her career as an educator. Her passion for coaching and her students has made her an excellent coach and a phenomenal teacher.

Trisha is graduating with a Diploma in Education Methodology and a GPA of 3.95 from the Faculty of Education and Arts.



BRIANNI HYDE

Brianni Hyde was born on the 23rd of July, 1993 to her mother Carla Banner and her now deceased father George Hyde. She started her educational journey at the age of five and it was during her high school years that she discovered her passion for science. She graduated from high school among the top three achievers in her class. She then decided to venture into the Associate Degree in Biology at the University of Belize. As Brianni explained, the Biology program at the university enabled her to understand why Biology plays such a crucial role in our everyday existence.

Brianni's focus was not only in the sciences. In 2013 she wrote a persuasive essay in Ms. Ivory Kelly's Composing Process class which published in the Amandala newspaper.

She is graduating with an Associate Degree in Biology and a GPA of 3.83 from the Faculty of Science and Technology.

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