



True success is making others successful

We all define success differently. While some measure success by the size of one's bank account, investment portfolio or the square footage of one's home, do those things really bring fulfillment and lasting happiness? What defines the indicators of real success? I believe true success is achieved when we focus on making others around us successful. I have been the grateful beneficiary of this philosophy from the leaders and mentors with whom I have worked over the years, and today, I work hard to pay it forward. The workplace is an fascinating microcosm to explore this idea.

Inevitably, at all organizations we ask ourselves, "how do I succeed here?" Whether a large corporation or small start-up, certain behaviors are rewarded and others are discouraged. The composition of those good and bad behaviors forms the very fabric of the organization's culture. When intentionally designed, culture can differentiate companies as market leaders. Southwest is famous for empowering its employees to solve customer problems and inject their own personal style into passenger interactions. We've all seen the video of the rapping flight attendant entertain passengers. It was the culture Southwest created that allowed him – and even encouraged him – to express his personal style. One of my clients even bestows symbolic straitjacket awards as a means of recognizing employee dedication to customer satisfaction. The value we place on certain behaviors shapes the decisions our employees make and

defines the path of individual success by encouraging repeat patterns of positive behavior.

I continue to have the good fortune of leading amazing teams while serving the most innovative companies in the world. These teams are composed of exceptional leaders from whom I learn and grow every day. The best teams – the ones that far exceed any expectations set by our clients or our own internal standards – are those where each team member is personally committed to making each other successful. It is the collective belief, instilled in each person, that any individual person can only achieve success by elevating those around him/her.

The impact of this kind of servant leadership is incredibly powerful. Rather than leaders thinking about themselves all the time, they think about others. Rather than worrying about their individual goals or personal agendas, they concern themselves with helping others figure out and achieve theirs. And rather than trying to outshine the next person in competitive gamesmanship, real leaders take every opportunity to nurture the talents of those around them and turn the spotlight on their team at every opportunity. I don't know about you but those are the teams I want to be a part of.

Ultimately the job of successful leaders is to guide a group of people through a difficult objective, and in the process, build up an even larger group of leaders who can do the same thing. Real success is not measured by the accumulation of material possessions; rather, it is defined by the positive impact we have on others and our ability to cultivate legions of successful leaders.



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(nice to meet you)

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