SUCCESS PRACTICES INVENTORY & GUIDE

Using the Instrument

Instrument Overview

This Success Practices instrument is designed to help individuals look at the personal business practices they use on a regular basis. The instrument contains 23 behaviors used regularly (habitually) by many successful people. Participants compare their behaviors against the success practices and then identify areas to take action to increase personal success. Participants need about 15 minutes to take the instrument. Discussion and action planning takes a minimum of one hour.

Why This Is Important

In order to grow and achieve, it is important to stop periodically and to consciously review the behaviors and practices used in pursuit of a successful job and life. By identifying practices that contribute to success and those that detract from it, participants have the opportunity to choose new practices and to turn them into success habitual success behaviors.

Objectives of Using the Instrument

- To determine what it takes to succeed
- To explore how to continue to grow
- To find ways to pass it on
- To take personal credit for your success

Getting Ready To Use This Instrument

1. Make copies of the following for use with participants.
   - Success Practices—A Self-Assessment Inventory
   - Success Practices—Individual Review and Analysis
   - Success Practices—Discussion Questions
   - Success Practices—Normative Comparisons
   - Success Practices—Acquiring and Strengthening Success Behaviors. (This theory paper may be used as a supporting handout.)
2. Set your room so that each participant has a writing surface and privacy to complete the instrument.

How To Use the Instrument

1. Introduce the objectives of the instrument and "sell" the purpose of the session.
2. Pass out the instrument, review the instructions, and give participants enough time to complete it.
3. After everyone is finished with the instrument, ask them to set it aside for a few minutes while you review some important information about it.
4. Use the Power Point presentation named Success Practices.PPT to conduct a brief lecturette on success practices.
5. Hand out copies of the Success Practices handout.
6. Distribute copies of the worksheets, Normative Comparisons and Individual Review and Analysis, to all participants. Explain how to use the normative comparison worksheet and then how to use the review and analysis sheet for interpretation. Give participants 20 to 25 minutes to work individually.
7. Put participants into pairs and give them 15 minutes to work through the discussion questions. After they have completed their discussion, ask participants to share some of their learnings with the whole group.

Things To Consider When Using This Instrument

- Our "habits" can be difficult to let go of. Be careful not to build defensiveness.
- Watch out for "shoulds."

Best Uses of This Instrument

- Personal growth training
- Management and leadership training
- Time management training
- As a portion of organizational change efforts

A Self-Assessment Inventory

Name: _____

This inventory contains 23 statements that represent how many highly successful people in business behave—habitually. Of course, not every successful person has all of these habits. Rate yourself on the items by using the scale below. Write a number in front of each item.

6 = I do this habitually.
5 = I do this most of the time.
4 = I do this some of the time.
3 = I don't do this very often.
2 = I seldom do this.
1 = I rarely, if ever do this.

____ 1. I remind myself of my purpose in doing what I do at work.
____ 2. I concentrate on the important things in my work, rather than on things that do not further my goals.
____ 3. I cause things to happen—things that move my work forward.
____ 4. I put energy into maintaining the support that I need from people outside of work.
____ 5. I build effective long-term relationships with the people I work with.

____ 6. I manage changes in how I do things, rather than simply respond to the requests and direction of others.
____ 7. I think of myself as a positive force in bringing services to people.
____ 8. I maintain balance in my work and personal life.
_____ 9. I attempt to find solutions in which no one feels like a loser.
____ 10. I tell myself that I am being successful, without regard for my personal and professional shortcomings.

____ 11. I take care of work stresses in order to avoid burnout.
____ 12. I say "no" and "no deal" when a win-win solution is not possible.
_____ 13. I listen carefully to what others need before attempting to influence them.
____ 14. I concentrate on opportunities rather than being driven by events.
____ 15. I know why I am doing the things that I do in my work.

____ 16. I accept the notion that "if it is to be, it's up to me."
____ 17. I take time to improve my ability to perform on the job.
____ 18. I handle failure by looking for its lessons.
_____ 19. I approach challenges with confidence.
____ 20. I perform my work tasks in the context of goals rather than activities.

____ 21. I face uncomfortable situations promptly.
____ 22. I ask for the feedback I need in order to know how I'm doing.
____ 23. I take personal risks in my work.

Individual Review and Analysis

1. Identify the four items that you rated the highest.

    1.

    2.

    3.

    4.

2. What themes or trends do you see among the items that you listed above?

3. What payoffs have you received by habitually following the success practices you've rated highest?

4. What steps might you take to build on the positive habits that you are currently using to build success?

5. Identify the four items that you rated lowest in the success practices inventory.

    1.

    2.

    3.

    4.

6. What themes or trends do you see among the items that you listed under question number five?

7. What are the costs (or potential costs) to you from not habitually using the success practices you've rated lowest?

8. What benefits might you receive by emphasizing these success practices in your life?

9. What steps might you take to incorporate those success practices into your life? (what, when, how many/much)

10. How will you know when you have adopted those success practices as habitual behavior?

Discussion Questions

Use the following questions to draw out the key insights your partner has gained from individual review. Take turns asking one another the questions below. One of you starts the process by asking your partner the first question. After answering, that person asks the same question. Continue rotating through the questions one by one until you've both asked and answered all of the questions. You should be prepared to share key learnings with the group after your discussion.

1. What are the two or three success practices you use most habitually, and what impact do they have on you?

2. What are you going to do to strengthen those habits and enhance the results you receive from them?

3. What is the success practice that you have identified as the greatest opportunity for your personal improvement?

4. What are the costs you've experienced from not using that success practice?

5. What are you going to do to make that success practice a habit?

6. What support will you need to incorporate that success practice into your regular routine?

Acquiring and Strengthening Success Behaviors

The Success Practices Inventory is designed to help you reexamine the habits you have adopted in pursuit of your life and career goals. Some of your habits may have been consciously developed, and may be contributing to the successes you are achieving. It is important to recognize these success habits and find ways to reinforce and strengthen their use.
On the other hand, some of your habits may be behaviors that served you well at a particular point in time, but are no longer moving you toward your goals. You may be aware of these habits or you may not even think about them. It is helpful to identify these self-limiting behaviors and replace them with more helpful success practices.

The Success Practices Inventory was originally developed for top professional employees at a large telecommunications organization. It was designed to provide a "template" for self-assessment. You compare your habits to the 23 success practices, and then use the resulting information to make new choices about how you'll move forward in pursuit of success in your life. You renew your awareness of the value of the positive habits in your life, and recommit to them. You become aware of behaviors and habits that may be limiting your ability to achieve success. Finally you choose the ones you want to change and develop an action plan for the future.

What Is Success?

Success has a different meaning for each of us. For some it's a particular position in an organization. "I'll be successful when I become the president of the organization, or get elected to public office." For others it's a monetary measure. "I'll be successful when I'm worth lots of money." For many it's a quality of life that may include family, community, and spiritual desires. In fact, we each define success on a very personal level, and the definitions are as unique as each individual. Generally, success is something we are striving for. It's something we want to have, do or be. For our purposes, we'll define success as the accomplishment of hard-to-reach goals.

Where Do Our Success Behaviors Come From?

Habits are behaviors that work repeatedly and are reinforced. Regardless of the outcome, and whether it's positive or negative, we do things because we get reinforcement for that behavior. Smoking is a habit that some people acquire. The initial reinforcement for smoking may be that it "calms my nerves" or "makes me look cool."

After I smoke for a period of time, it becomes part of me. Eventually, I'm stuck with the habit, and I may even forget the original reasons for adopting the behavior.

Self-defeating behavior, while not having the same physiologically addictive properties as nicotine, can be as insidious in its effect on my ability to achieve my goals. I continue to undermine my effectiveness and well-being without consciously seeing the effects of my habit.

Building on My Successes

Habits may be positive as well. Once I have successfully incorporated positive success behaviors into my life, I will begin moving toward "success" more consistently and more easily. It's important to be aware of the success practices that I habitually use. I need to look at the positive success habits I currently have working for me. Here are some things to do to identify, maintain, and/or enhance your positive success habits:

- **Reflect on your successes.** Reflecting on your successful experiences is like stopping to smell the roses. Consciously review the experience and savor it. This (success) is what you're striving for, so it's important to "soak it in." Enjoy it! If you just mark your accomplishment off your to-do list, and start on the next goal, nothing will feel significant. There will always be more to do...
- **Take credit.** Celebrate your achievements. It's important to look at your accomplishments and to "own" and celebrate them. Recall all of the steps you took to succeed. Make it a point to celebrate. Recognize that you are a person who accomplishes things you set out to do. Ken Blanchard says, "If you don't blow your own horn, someone else will use it for a spittoon."
- **Isolate critical practices.** Use your success experiences as a way to identify the success practices that worked for you. What practices were critical to your success and should be continued or strengthened?

- **Share the story. Pass it on.** There is an old adage among trainers: "We teach what we most need to learn." The act of telling your story helps to keep it current and reinforce the success practices you used to make it happen. In other words, you get to learn it again. By sharing the story, you also "pass it on." That is, you create the opportunity for others to learn from you.

Addressing My Self-Limiting Behaviors

I need to raise my awareness of the things that I do or don't do that keep me from becoming as successful as I want to be. I can use this information to make conscious changes in my behavior. I can incorporate new success practices into my life or replace other self-limiting or self-defeating behaviors with success practices. Here are some thoughts to help identify and change self-limiting behaviors.

- **Identify what you're doing now instead.** And, determine the cost to you.
- **Do it.** Recognize that you don't have to "believe it" before you do it. Try it out. Do it, and watch for the results after a reasonable time. The results will follow the action, and you may change your beliefs after you see the success results.
- **Plan the changes deliberately.** Initially you may find that your natural reaction and old habits take over. Notice when you "slip," and re identify the success practice you want to use instead. Consciously choose it next time.
- **Get reinforcement.** Reward yourself, and ask colleagues to give you feedback when they see you use your new success practices.
- **Overlearn your success practice.** Look for opportunities to use it in your day-to-day activities. Use it at every opportunity. Talk about it. Try it. Give yourself feedback as you use it. Ask for others to give you feedback. Go after it with "bulldog persistence." Overlearn it. It is said that if you do something consistently for 21 days, it will become a habit.

Mentor Others

One of the most effective ways to learn a new success practice and incorporate it into your daily life is to share it with others.

- **The LUTI model**—This acronym, which stands for "Learn it, Use it, Teach others, and Inspect it," represents an effective way to fully integrate new learning, and change personal behavior. The model was developed within the Xerox Corporation as part of their quality-improvement effort.
- **Transcending competition**—One way to measure success is to compare what you have, or what you have accomplished with others around you. This competitive approach to success, or "keep up with the Joneses" mentality, can be a self-limiting habit as well. If I hesitate to share my success practices with others, I limit the potential positive impact of the practice by "hoarding" it to myself. Likewise, I limit my integration of the new skill or idea unnecessarily. If I transcend competition, I will share it, and both of us will benefit from the sharing.
- **Making a contribution**—Success is really not about how much you get, but how much you give to others. By sharing your knowledge and struggles along the way, you will help clear a path for others to walk their path more easily. In Passions and Prejudices, Leo Rosten said, "I cannot believe that the purpose of life is to be 'happy.' I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be honorable, to be compassionate. It is, above all, to matter: to count, to stand for something, to have it make some difference that you lived at all."

Seizing the Future

This is the time to take steps to build more success into your life. Seize the future and make it yours.

- **Avoid being doomed**—Your current habits are getting you what you're getting now. If you don't do things differently, you're doomed to the same results in the future. Small changes in behavior on a consistent basis can have major impact on your future.
- **Create opportunities**—Create opportunities to make changes in your success practices. Look for the most obvious areas where you will be able to practice or demonstrate change in success practices. Make it happen and be ready for it when the opportunity presents itself.
- **Set stretch goals**—Set specific goals with "stretch" in them. Challenge yourself to accomplish specific results that will force you to concentrate and put conscious effort into change. Accomplishing your goals will move you to a level of conscious competence. That is, you'll know how to do it, with conscious thought. Continued practice and success will move you to a level of unconscious competence. The success practices will be a part of you. You won't have to think about it, you'll just do it.
- **Remember this adage: "If it's to be, it's up to me."**

Normative Comparisons

The data in the table below represent the ratings of 164 highly successful professionals in a major telecommunications company. Circle the number (percentage) that corresponds with your rating in the columns to the right of each item. Note that the percentages are distributed under the 6-point scale that you used on the success practices inventory. The average rating of the norm group is in the column labeled "average rating." Use the normative comparisons to compare your use of the success practices with ratings of the successful individuals in the normative study. Use the column on the right to make notes for future reference about strengths and development needs.

Item	Normative Comparisons						Notes	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average	Strength or Development Need
1. Purpose	1.2%	1.2%	3.7%	25.6%	44.5%	23.8%	4.8	
2. Important Things	0%	1.8%	1.8%	23.2%	50.0%	23.2%	4.9	
3. Proactivity	0%	0%	1.8%	14.6%	42.1%	41.5%	5.2	
4. Support Outside	.6%	4.3%	9.1%	27.4%	31.1%	27.4%	4.7	
5. Long-Term Relationships	0%	1.8%	2.4%	26.8%	33.5%	35.4%	5.0	
6. Manage Changes	.6%	1.2%	2.4%	34.1%	40.9%	20.7%	4.8	
7. Positive Force	0%	0%	1.2%	4.9%	37.2	56.7%	5.5	
8. Balance	.6%	3.0%	7.9%	31.1%	32.3%	25.0%	4.7	
9. Win-Win Solutions	.6%	1.2%	4.3%	20.1%	50.6%	23.2%	4.9	
10. I Am Successful	7.3%	13.4%	26.8%	24.4%	20.1%	7.9%	3.6	
11. Avoid Burnout	3.7%	7.9%	22.0%	32.9%	22.0%	11.6%	4.0	
12. Say "No" and "No Deal"	3.7%	14.0%	21.3%	34.1%	21.3%	5.5%	3.7	
13. Listen First	0%	0%	3.0%	19.5%	53.0%	24.4%	5.0	
14. Focus on Opportunities	0.6%	0.6%	4.9%	26.2%	48.2%	19.5%	4.8	
15. Know Why	0%	0%	3.0%	9.8%	48.2%	39.0%	5.2	
16. Self Accountable	0%	0.6%	2.4%	23.8%	33.5%	39.6%	5.1	
17. Self Improvement	0%	2.4%	6.1%	23.2%	47.6%	20.7%	4.8	
18. Lessons in Failures	0%	3.7%	6.7%	20.7%	40.2%	28.7%	4.8	
19. Confidence	0%	1.2%	1.2%	15.9%	48.2%	33.5%	5.1	
20. Goals Context	0%	4.3%	4.9%	27.6%	45.2%	17.8%	4.7	
21. Confrontation	1.8%	2.4%	4.9%	39.6%	38.4%	12.8%	4.5	
22. Solicit Feedback	0.6%	6.1%	12.2%	22.6%	33.5%	25.0%	4.6	
23. Risk Taking	0.6%	5.5%	8.5%	34.1%	26.2%	25.0%	4.5	

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About Rick Conlow International

Rick Conlow, CEO/Senior Partner, and Doug Watsabaugh, COO/Senior Partner have helped companies, governmental agencies and non-pro it organizations achieve record-breaking results for more than 20 years as performance improvement experts. Their clients' achieve-ments include double digit improvement in repeat and referral business, triple digit in-creases in sales, more than 50% reduction in customer complaints, 34 quality and service awards, and domination in their respective markets. Rick and Doug are popular motiva-tors and speakers, inspiring audiences with their engaging down-to-earth but down-to-business approach. They have authored more than a dozen books, including *SuperSTAR Customer Service* and the *SuperSTAR Lead-ership Model.*

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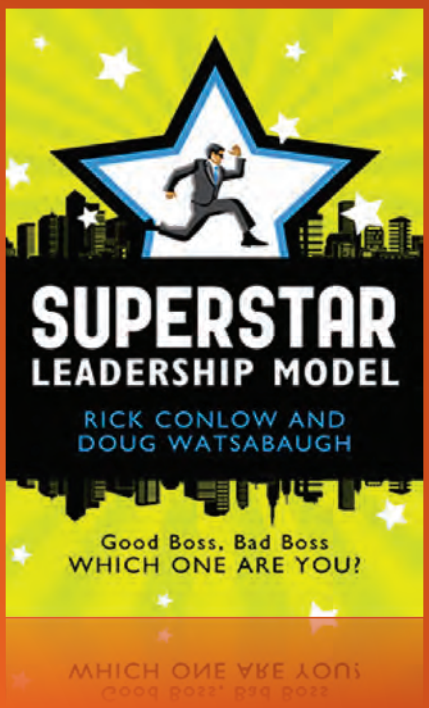
About the eBook

***The SuperSTAR Leadership Model, Good Boss or Bad Boss—Which One Are You?*, identifies key habits of the best and worst bosses. This thirty-one-day book uses TEN key performance drivers to evaluate and help leaders more quickly increase results and sustain them.** With the expert navigation of Rick Conlow and Doug Watsabaugh, you will identify your weaknesses, strengths, and path to improvement. Each evaluation and activity within this manager's bible distills your leadership skills, perfecting you into a SuperSTAR leader. Do you want to earn more money for your company? Do you want to electrify your department? Do you want to increase customer loyalty, sales, and productivity while simultaneously decreasing turnover, improving innova-tion, and having fun? It is not impossible. You can have these results and be a SuperSTAR Leader with the nine strategies of *The SuperSTAR Leadership Model.* CLICK THE BOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION.



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