

# Focus for Success

A conference I attended recently reinforced the importance of focus when it comes to being successful at everything we do. The featured speaker was Jack Canfield, who spoke about his book, *The Power of Focus*, which he wrote with Mark Victor Hansen and Les Hewitt. Yet, these authors aren't the only ones who recognize the importance of being focused. When I asked a very successful businesswoman what her secret to success was, she replied, focus, focus, and focus. What can you do to avoid distractions and eliminate procrastination? Focus. It will help you get what you want in life. Here's how.

## #1. Your Habits will determine your future.

A habit is a behavior you repeat. We are all creatures of habit. Some of our habits are good for us. Some are not. Either way, we're very predictable. We have routines and daily rituals—the way we shower, eat breakfast, read the paper, answer the phone, etc.—are all habits that determine how our lives operate. These normal activities affect the results we get. If you're not satisfied with the results, it's time to change. You can reprogram yourself, but you must be consistent. For example, if you are always late for meetings and you want to change and be early, you will need to make a consistent effort to be on time. You may have to set your clock and watch ahead so you get to your destination on time. It

will take time to change. However, the more often you're early the easier it will get. Then one day it will simply be normal behavior for you.

Successful people take action and are disciplined. They create successful habits that create positive rewards. Creating new habits can be very challenging. Many people say it takes three to four weeks to change a habit, but if it's been with you for many years, it could take several months to change.

Take an honest look at your habits. Some common ones that prevent us from getting what we want are not returning phone calls promptly, watching too much T.V., not allowing enough time between appointments, not paying bills on time, eating junk foods, and procrastinating. If you're courageous you can also ask people you respect and admire to tell you about your habits.

One point Jack Canfield repeated was "the people you hang out with and the environment you live in strongly influence what you do." If you spend time with people who always complain, you may start believing what they say. But if you surround yourself with people who are positive you're more likely to see opportunity. Successful people leave clues. Study the habits of successful role models. Read their autobiographies, listen to motivational tapes and build relationships with successful people.

A well-known business philosopher Jim Rohn suggests you invite one successful person to breakfast or lunch every month and interview them. The way to create successful habits is to identify your unproductive habits and define your new successful ones. Think of all the benefits of creating a new habit. Now you need to take action. Create three action steps to create one new habit that will positively impact your life. Your habits will determine your future. Create the future you want!!

## #2. It's not Hocus Pocus, It's all about Focus

Entrepreneurs and managers often spend time doing tasks to run their businesses, but don't have time for the activities they went into business for. It's important to focus on the activities with which you produce extraordinary results. Your brilliant activities give you energy and help you to reap big rewards.. It's important to identify your talents and to honestly see the percentage of your time that is spent in your areas of brilliance.

Now look at three things you don't like doing and see if you can delegate them or eliminate them. For example, I have never enjoyed the financial aspects of my business, so I hired an accountant to pay the bills and monitor my expenses. There are still several tasks I am doing that I must delegate. Successful people delegate. What is it that you are doing that

someone else can do? If you're stuck doing day-to-day routine activities it keeps you from the high payback ones.

Setting boundaries and saying "no" are important steps to staying focused. Very often we're interrupted by the phone, or people, or by our own thoughts. To achieve what you want you must focus on what works.

So, this month let's look at habits that don't serve us well and all of the tasks that we do that are not the best use of our time. If you work on changing a habit and work on delegating three tasks that you previously did, you will be on the way to greater success in the year 2004. Next month we'll continue with more strategies for staying focused to achieve success.

Phyllis Sisenwine, Master Certified Coach  
Email her at:  
[Phyllis@PowerfulCoaching.com](mailto:Phyllis@PowerfulCoaching.com)  
Or via the Web at  
[www.powerfulcoaching.com](http://www.powerfulcoaching.com)



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