

## Success Mindset: 10 Steps to Change Your Thinking and Your Life

---

### Contents

Introduction

1. “Up” Your Deserve Level
2. Surround Yourself with Success
3. Keep Moving Forward
4. Leave No Room for Doubt
5. Select Your Mentors Wisely
6. Find Patterns of Success
7. Review Your Day on a Daily Basis
8. Keep Your Goals – and Your “Why” – Front and Center
9. Ruthlessly Remove Distractions
- 10 Allow No Excuses

Conclusion

## Success Mindset: 10 Steps to Change Your Thinking and Your Life

---

### Introduction

Are you ready to move forward – not just a step or two, but a whole level?

Are you ready to leap into a new existence of achievement and power?

Are you ready to leave your old life behind and move right into the life you deserve?

Of course you are – or so you say. But if you were so ready, wouldn't you be there already?

Maybe. And maybe not.

Maybe as much as you long for this dream world, you are also a little scared, a little nervous, a little hesitant. Maybe as much as you say you're ready, you're blocking your own way.

The good news is, if you're your own worst enemy, then the only thing standing between you and the life you've always imagined is... you! And once you recognize the issues that are holding you back, you can address them, one at a time.

That's what I hope to help you do in this short report. I'll discuss some of the main ways you can achieve lasting change and progress towards your dreams. It won't be easy, but it'll be life-changing – if you are willing to do the work.

Ready?

Go!

## 1. “Up” Your Deserve Level

We can only achieve as high as we think we can.

Try this little exercise: Stand up and extend your arms out on both sides of your body. Close your eyes and, turning at the waist, see how far you can twist to one side without causing yourself bodily harm. Open your eyes and make a mental note of where you are pointing behind you. Now, close your eyes and imagine yourself going a little farther. Ready, twist! Open your eyes and see if you surpassed your previous point. If you're like most people, you did.

Why didn't you go further the first time? For the simple reason that you didn't think you could. Once you imagined yourself going further, you did. It's not very complicated!

If your mental beliefs impose limits on your physical stretching, it makes sense that they'll limit your mental and spiritual achievement, too. So you need to ask yourself what limits you're putting on your:

- ...dreams. Are you dreaming big enough?
- ...income potential. Are you unnecessarily limiting your income or salary?
- ...relationships. Do you doubt what you can achieve in your friendships and family life?
- ...physical health. Are you accepting less than the best because you think you're too old or too out of shape?

The first step to changing your boundaries is to “up” your deserve level. Here are three things that block you from accepting that you deserve the best:

- **Envy.** Envy is the result of a scarcity mindset. You think that if someone else gets something – a great job, a new car, a book deal – that you can't have it, too. That is not the way the universe works. Just because someone else gets something doesn't mean no one else can ever have that. Hey, even Brad Pitt has been engaged more than once! Realize that whatever anyone else in this world has – from a great body to a great family to a great career – you can have it, too. Use their example to inspire rather than depress you.
- **Fear.** Fear is one of the greatest demotivators. It's hard to feel limitless and powerful when you're shaking in your shoes! It's natural to feel scared of breaking outside your normal boundaries, but remind yourself that all growth takes place outside your comfort zone. To grow, you must push your own limits, by definition. Get comfortable with discomfort – see it as a sign of growth, much like aching muscles indicate you worked out hard and are getting stronger.
- **Laziness.** We get used to where we are and decide it's good enough because we don't really want to have to work harder. Time for a harsh truth: If you want an extraordinary life, you're going to have to go to some out-of-the-ordinary measures. That means whipping yourself, bribing yourself, coaching yourself, whatever it takes to motivate yourself to move beyond “average.”

Moving upward and onward starts with believing you deserve to have more and be more. It's essential to own your dreams – and dream big.

## 2. Surround Yourself With Success

It's been repeated so often that it's basically internet law at this point: Your income will average that of the five people you hang around most.

Whether it's literally true or just sort of true, it doesn't really matter – the point is, if you want to be successful, you have to surround yourself with successful people.

If you want to run a triathlon, hang out with Ironman-types.

If you want to be a published author, go where the published authors are.

If you want to start a successful internet business, commune with online entrepreneurs.

**There are many reasons to hob-nob with people who have achieved the goals you aspire to:**

**a. They show it can be done.** Often we think that success happens to “other” people, not people we actually know. When we get to meet actual achievers, though, we see that they're really not much different than we are. They put their pants on one leg at a time, they have dogs who chew the furniture, and they have kid/car/in-law troubles just like the rest of us. By demystifying those who live and breathe where you want to reside, you gain a realization that you can do it, too.

**b. They know what it takes.** We tend to believe the “overnight success” stories. But talk to the Ironman athlete, the best-selling author, the online businessperson, and they'll tell you that it took a lot of hard work to get where they are. The bad news: It takes extraordinary effort to achieve extraordinary results. The good news: Once you stop believing that luck determines your success, you'll see that if you're willing to put in the time and the sweat, you can have whatever you want.

**c. They share their secrets.** It may be nothing more than where to buy the best wetsuits, or how to cut a minute off your transition time from swim to biking stage, but these little secrets add up – and they're exactly the kind of help that you won't read in books or magazine articles.

**d. They want you to succeed, too.** Most successful people know that there is more than enough to go around, and they're happy to see you get your share, too. Being surrounded with people who have an abundance mindset will help you think of all you can have in this life, not all that you can't.

**e. They show the gaps in your knowledge, skills, and behavior.** If you see that all the self-made millionaires you know invest in real estate and act as their own agent, you

might decide it's time to brush up on your broker's license courses. If the people who have lost a significant amount of weight and kept it off all bring their lunch to work and work out at least an hour a day, you may commit to finding more time to hit the gym. Model yourself after those you admire and you'll find yourself becoming more like them, success and all.

I'm not saying you have to say goodbye to the boys from the old neighborhood, but if you want to soar with eagles, you may have to limit your time with the turkeys.

### **3. Keep Moving Forward**

Life is all about choice. Will we wear the blue tie or the red tie, or no tie at all? Will we have bran flakes or a donut for breakfast? Will we take the car or walk?

Yes, these are seemingly simple decisions that you may think don't belong in a report on how to change your life. But when it comes down to it, the decision to quit your job, start a business, lose 100 lbs., or move to Idaho and build a log cabin are no different physiologically speaking than the decision to go for pizza instead of Chinese. What is different is the amount of strife and angst we place upon ourselves.

And one major source of that angst is when we choose to assume the outcome of our decisions will be bad instead of good, and when we revisit our decisions over and over again in the hopes that things will become more clear the second (or third, or fiftieth) time around.

You've done this before: You make an informed decision. You look at all sides of the matter. Maybe you even make a "Franklin List" where you list all the pros and cons. You consult a friend or an expert or two. Then you decide.

And you immediately second-guess yourself. You assume you made the wrong decision. You wonder, "What if...?" You may even try to change the original decision, whether it is returning a new car, second-guessing your business decisions, or just wondering if dinner would have been better at the Chinese place.

Then you put yourself right back to square one – agonizing over that decision again. Not only are you right where you've started, you've also managed to kick yourself in the self-confidence and waste some time, too. And it's not like you've gotten some great information that would've affected your decision; you're right where you were, with the same information you had before, struggling with the same decision you've already made once.

Here's what to do instead: Go through the same careful process of decision-making, then let it go. Tell yourself you're stuck with it. Assume you made the right decision instead of the wrong one. Move forward, move upward, move onward.

Sure, you can revisit the past, wondering if your decisions could have been better or the outcome could have been different. It's up to you. But it only wastes time unless the facts have changed and you're interested in learning something new.

#### **4. Leave No Room for Doubt**

You say, "Let's go to the drugstore. I need a new pair of reading glasses." Your friend says, "Are you sure? We could probably get the same thing cheaper at the mall."

You say, "I hired a new accountant." He says, "Are you really ready to invest in that?"

You say, "I'm ordering the steak." He says, "The seafood here is really good."

And if you were to take his advice and go to the mall, fire your accountant, or order the lobster, he'd have problems with that, too. That's because his input isn't a matter of helpful suggestions; it's only designed to make you question your own choices.

If you had a friend who constantly questioned every move you made like this, you'd probably knock him in the teeth.

If this behavior is so unacceptable in our friendships, why do we do it to ourselves? We choose – and then we immediately revisit that decision over and over again. Here's the problem: Sometimes there are no "right" decisions. There are only choices we make and live with.

That's why to take yourself to the next level, you need to let go of doubt. Accept that you're working with imperfect knowledge, that you will indeed make some mistakes along the way, but that that you're a smart cookie and will do the best you can. Tell yourself that whatever happens, you can handle it.

If you pay \$5 too much for reading glasses, you can live with that.

If you hire an accountant and discover you're really not ready, you can let him go.

If you order the wrong food, you always have the next meal to look forward to.

Often we think that we are at the whim of circumstance and we can't control the outcome. Not so! If you chose to buy a car instead of a pickup, YOU get to decide whether that was a successful outcome. Does it get you from Point A to Point B? Does it get the required gas mileage? Is it a safe ride? (By the way, these are probably all items you considered before you made your purchase!) If the answer is "Yes," then congratulations! You made a successful purchase!

The situation with your business may be a little different. The "success" criteria are not as clear-cut, but your influence on the outcome is no less significant. You can hustle, work extra hours if need be, commit to working things out, or even end up selling the business and thanking the benevolent heavens for giving you the opportunity to learn some lessons along the way.

Commit to doing whatever it takes to ensure your choice was a good one. And don't doubt your own ability to make it so.

## 5. Choose Your Mentors Wisely

The most successful people in life all had one thing in common: They had someone to help them navigate their path. A mentor, a coach, a personal trainer, a teacher: Someone walked beside and ahead of them, helping them make their way.

If you were attempting an African safari, your most important decision would be who would lead you on your trek. Hopefully, you wouldn't go online and do a search for "Cheap African safaris." You also probably wouldn't choose the guide with the best profile picture, the most Facebook friends, or the biggest safari hat.

How would you select your guide? Through reviews, referrals from friends, and possibly some interviews.

How you select your business mentor should be no less thorough. Don't select someone just because they're the "guru du jour," or the dude that seems to be everywhere or has great on-screen presence. Sure, it's great to be hot, but there are other considerations to make sure you're selecting the right guide for you. Here are some things to think about:

- Where is my business now, and what do I need to get to the next level?
- What specifically am I hoping this coach or mentor can help me achieve?
- How do I work best – with weekly check-ins, daily updates, monthly in-person calls?
- Do I need someone to give me "tough love" or be a sympathetic guiding presence?

Different coaches and mentors have different styles. Some are non-nonsense taskmasters; others have a more gentle approach. Some are great cheerleaders, while others are better technicians. Some are great connectors; others are in-the-trenches comrades. No style is right or wrong; there's only "right" or "wrong" for you. If you need someone to help you figure out how to set up a website and online shopping cart, a cheerleader isn't going to do you much good.

By the same token, if you need someone to inspire you and introduce you to potential JV partners, a well-connected "you can do it!" type may be perfect. No matter how nice, talented, or charismatic your coach is, a mismatch will cause you nothing but frustration.

To really move forward towards your goal, a mentor can be a perfect springboard, helping you move past obstacles and other blocks. But not all coaches are created equal: Find the one that matches your needs.

## 6. Find Patterns of Success

Even if you're not quite where you want to be, you still have a history of success. You've graduated high school, done well on a test, lost weight, had a great friendship, or otherwise set and achieved some sort of goal. By analyzing your past successes, you can find a lot of clues about how you best work and what you can do to set yourself up for future success.

I recommend mining your own past for success stories because not everyone works in the same manner. You may read a book about adopting a low-carb diet and loses 20 lbs. in two weeks. Wonderful! But right next to it on the bookstore shelf is a high-carb, low-fat diet that promises the same thing. And right next to that is the Zone diet, which is next to the Raw Foods Diet, which is next to... well, you get the picture.

Not everyone's body is the same. Not everyone's brain is the same. Nor is your motivation, history, goals, or personality. That's why looking at your own history will be a huge clue as to how you can replicate your own patterns of success.

Here's what to ask yourself:

- When did I set this goal? Did I consciously set it, or was it an unconscious goal?
- How analytical was I in charting out my path?
- What kinds of obstacles and challenges arose, and how did I handle them?
- Who helped me along the way? What specifically did they do to assist me? (Concrete skills, advice, sounding board, cheerleading...?)
- Was I accountable to someone along the way? Who and how?
- Did I track my progress? How?
- If I were going to give someone else advice about how I achieved Goal X, what would I say?
- If I were to go after this goal again, the one thing that I would do differently to speed up my progress would be...?

Repeat this series of questions with several different goals – and maybe even some goals you didn't achieve – to look for patterns. You may discover you work best with an accountability partner or when you tracked your progress in a visual manner. These are your patterns you can easily adapt and replicate for just about any goal you're striving for.

We can overlook our own stories when trying to learn how to succeed. That's a mistake. Often, the best indicators of future success are right under our own noses – and in our own histories.

## 7. Review Your Day on a Daily Basis

Our lives are full of scheduled check-ups. You see the dentist every six months. You get a mammogram every year past 40. You get your car tuned up every 3000 miles or so. And you should review your day every 24 hours.

Why so frequently? After all, you could do this once a week or month, or even once a quarter. Well, you should review your progress at different time frames, but there are several reasons to review your activity daily:

1. Because you're looking for a big breakthrough. And if you wait too long between assessments, you can find you've let weeks or even months go by when you could have been making consistent, positive movement towards your goals.
2. Because it's easier to correct a minor slip-up. An inch off-target now becomes a mile or more when extrapolated over time. Make the fix now and you won't have to deal with the big problems later.
3. Because it's less intimidating. Sitting down for an hour or two to review a month's worth of activity can be downright off-putting, but taking five minutes at the end of the day can become a relaxing bedtime ritual.
4. Because your actions are fresh in your mind. You'll forget lots of details if you wait too long to go over your schedule and activities. It's hard enough at the end of the day; don't wait a week or more.

Here's what you should ask yourself at the end of the day:

- What did I do today that I was proud of?
- What one item on my to-do list made the most difference in the achievement of my goal?
- What one item on my to-do list is left over, but I should have done it?
- What took longer than I anticipated?
- What took less time than I anticipated?
- What did I enjoy doing the most?

You can easily go through these questions in five to ten minutes. You might even consider writing the answers down; it will take a bit longer, but having a longitudinal view of your answers can be invaluable to figuring out where you're wasting time, what your highest-value activities are, and what you can change.

You might find that just by paying attention to what's going on in your life, and where you're spending your time, you will naturally make adjustments that put your schedule more in line with your goals.

## **8. Keep Your Goals – and Your “Why” – Front and Center**

If you're finding yourself mired in muck, longing to jump forward to success, it could be a matter of not having strong enough motivation, or not reminding yourself of why you want to achieve your goals. As a result, you can start slacking, skipping your workout, sleeping in instead of writing your daily five pages on your novel, or just existing when you could be excelling.

In the inspirational movie, “Invincible,” walk-on Philadelphia Eagles player Vince Papale keeps a heart-cutting note from his ex-wife in his locker. He regularly takes it out and

reviews it – not to beat himself up, but to remind himself in a very visceral, emotional way why he must succeed.

While I don't necessarily recommend that you encourage your friends and family members to write you letters, telling you what a loser you are, there is something to be said for negative motivation.

Equally inspiring, however (and somewhat easier on the ego) is positive motivation. Knowing you want to send your kids to private school, look great at your high school reunion, or send your parents on an all-expenses-paid, first-class trip around the world can all keep you focused and moving forward.

Here are some ways to keep your goals in front of you:

- **Create a vision board.** Cut photos, words, and other images from magazines and glue them, collage-style, on a piece of poster board. Hang it somewhere you can see frequently. (Hint: You can do the same thing digitally by creating an electronic vision board and using it for your desktop wallpaper.)
- **Write it big.** Write your goal on a large piece of paper, or on the whiteboard in your office. Keep it in front of yourself constantly.
- **Write it everywhere.** Put post-it notes on your car's dashboard, on your bathroom mirror, on your checkbook, or in your day planner or calendar. The constant visual reminder will keep you focused.
- **Go audio.** Record your goals on a digital voice recorder and play it back, or read it out loud each morning and evening.
- **Make it vivid.** Like Papale's note, make your reminders emotion-laden. Picture your kids in their school uniforms. See your parents on their trip. Feel how your body will be lighter and more healthy. Post a photo of the Eiffel Tower on your bulletin board. The more completely you can view your future, the easier it will be to latch onto it and use it as a guiding light.

One of the keys here is experimentation. If you've always tried positive motivation, maybe it's time to change things up and brandish the stick instead of the carrot. You may even want to review your "patterns of success" (see section 7) for keys to your personal motivation recipe.

## 9. Ruthlessly Remove Distractions

The dog needs a walk. Your leg hurts. The dishes/grocery/laundry needs to be put away. You really should change your email signature. Is it time for a new header on your site? Maybe another color background for your Twitter profile page....

If you let the voices in your head – what esteemed writing teacher Natalie Goldberg calls your monkey mind – take over, you will have a very clean kitchen floor, but not much else to show for your work day. Distractions are everywhere, and you must guard against their infiltrating presence as firmly as you would guard against a thief in your home.

From email to laundry to researching your dog's itchy ear on petcare.com, the tasks that pull us away from our goals aren't inherently bad – and that's the problem. They seem like good, productive activities, something any fine upstanding home- or pet-owner would do. But there's only one problem: They aren't moving you closer to your goal. Instead, they're taking you farther away.

If you want to make big progress, you have to cut the distractions – no matter how worthwhile they seem. Here's how to keep your eyes on your prize and your seat in your desk chair (or wherever it belongs):

**a. Make a list – and stick to it.** The to-do list is like marching orders from your general. Make it and stick to it. You can rearrange the spice cabinet or de-tick Fluffy after you've finished your daily goals.

**b. Do the tough stuff first.** Get the hardest (and usually most value-packed) tasks out of the way early in the day. That way you won't be distracted by the minutiae of daily life that seem to breed and multiply with each passing hour.

**c. Give yourself regular breaks.** Sometimes, some of that “life” stuff has to be taken care of. Give yourself regular mini-breaks of 10 minutes a few times a day to take care of calls to the vet, kitchen floors, etc. But set a timer and drop what you're doing when your 10 minutes are up.

**d. Keep a list of short tasks.** One of the reasons we get pulled off track is that we come to a standstill. We've completed a big task and have yet to start the next round, or we're waiting to hear back from someone before we can proceed. These natural lulls are common places for our monkey mind to sneak in. Instead of allowing your imagination free rein, have a ready list of activities related to your goal that take less than 15 minutes. Pull out the list and knock something off instead of getting pulled away.

Be ruthless about banning any distractions from your life. Each minute you reclaim is like a huge stepping stone towards your goals.

## 10. Allow No Excuses

In the immortal words of one of the greatest philosophers of our generation:

Do or do not: There is no try.  
--Yoda

Yeah, that little green guy had it right: When it comes down to it, your excuses don't matter.

Your customers don't care that you were going to release your next product but you couldn't because you got strep.

Your body doesn't care that you were going to eat right and go to the gym, but it was your birthday.

Your future editor doesn't care that you were going to finish that last chapter, but your couch was just too comfortable.

You do it, or you don't. There are no points for trying. Once you accept that, you can move out of victim mentality and realize it really is all up to you.

The other thing you can be sure of is that 99.9 percent of people don't really care if you succeed or not. Whether you finish your novel, run the triathlon, start your business – they're going on about their life, without much regard to you and your goals.

What it really comes down to is that it's all about you, and it's all up to you. That's a little scary, but it's also very empowering. That means once you make up your mind, no one can hold you back. In fact, if you look at the top excuses for not executing on ideas, as presented by the Behance Team on American Express's [www.theopenforum.com](http://www.theopenforum.com), you'll see that most are completely within your control.

1. **I don't have enough time.** We all have the same amount of time. In fact, someone who is busier than you are is doing what you want to do, right now.
2. **I'm afraid of the competition.** Fear is an emotion. You could just as easily decide to be inspired by the competition.
3. **It's not the right moment to do it.** It's never the right moment, because there is no right moment – there is only now.

Excuses are nothing more than a matter of opinion. Change your mind; change your life.

## Conclusion

If you are ready for a quantum leap forward in your business, you can do so, today. You have in your hands ten ways to launch yourself forward towards your goals, whether they're personal, professional, or both. Go through this report and flag a few of the suggestions that grab you right away. Test them out, see how they work for you, and do it again.

Whatever you want in your life, you can achieve it. And I hope this short guide will help you get there.