

## LEADERS & SUCCESS

### IBD'S 10 SECRETS TO SUCCESS

Investor's Business Daily has spent years analyzing leaders and successful people in all walks of life. Most have 10 traits that, when combined, can turn dreams into reality. Each day, we highlight one.

- 1 HOW YOU THINK IS EVERYTHING:** Always be positive. Think success, not failure. Beware of a negative environment.
- 2 DECIDE UPON YOUR TRUE DREAMS AND GOALS:** Write down your specific goals and develop a plan to reach them.
- 3 TAKE ACTION:** Goals are nothing without action. Don't be afraid to get started. Just do it.
- 4 NEVER STOP LEARNING:** Go back to school or read books. Get training and acquire skills.
- 5 BE PERSISTENT AND WORK HARD:** Success is a marathon, not a sprint. Never give up.
- 6 LEARN TO ANALYZE DETAILS:** Get all the facts, all the input. Learn from your mistakes.
- 7 FOCUS YOUR TIME AND MONEY:** Don't let other people or things distract you.
- 8 DON'T BE AFRAID TO INNOVATE; BE DIFFERENT:** Following the herd is a sure way to mediocrity.
- 9 DEAL AND COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE EFFECTIVELY:** No person is an island. Learn to understand and motivate others.
- 10 BE HONEST AND DEPENDABLE; TAKE RESPONSIBILITY:** Otherwise, Nos. 1-9 won't matter.

#### DECIDE UPON YOUR TRUE DREAMS AND GOALS

### Grateful? Put It In Writing

**2** It's the Thanksgiving season — when you nosh turkey, watch football and, most importantly, reflect on the people and events that make your life meaningful.

But did you know that feeling grateful and saying thank you can also power your goals?

Alex Ramsey, management coach and president of LodeStar Universal in Dallas, regularly asks executives at her client companies — which include ExxonMobil, Liberty Mutual and others — to keep a daily "gratitude journal."

"At least once a day, every day, for three months, you must write down five — only five — items you are thankful for. The catch? You have to genuinely think and feel thankful," Ramsey said.

Ramsey doesn't make her clients stick to business on their lists. They can be thankful for anything — the gleam of their spouse's headlights in the driveway, for instance, or a lowered electric bill or the taste of a good barbecue.

#### Daily Miracles

Gratitude journals help turn pessimism into possibility, she says. "Especially when in the middle of challenges, it's easy to lose perspective and to develop a negative attitude."

When you delve into daily miracles, though, thoughts of the unachievable seem to dissipate, replaced by a robust belief that anything can happen.

"After two to three weeks, a transformation begins to happen," Ramsey said. "At first, it can be difficult to think of five things, especially when you are mad about a situation

or frustrated with something going on in your life. At first, the items written down are either grandly abstract — 'I'm thankful for seasons' — or moderately trivial — 'I'm thankful for oatmeal.'"

She continued, "After some degree of consistency, the items become more genuine, specific and thoughtful — 'I'm thankful for getting up this morning at 5 a.m. to complete my project report on time.'"

#### Hear Opportunity Knocking

Journal keepers build a sense that opportunity's all around, Ramsey says, so they set meaningful goals and pursue them with passion.

Once you've started to sense gratitude, the next step is to thank the people who've helped you meet past goals or who are working to help you make a dream come true.

Why say "thanks?"

"When you show your appreciation to someone for what they've done, it leads them to want to do more," said Andrea Kay, author of "Greener Pastures: How to Find a Job in Another Place."

"Your success is a reflection of them. It not only makes them feel good about themselves, but they like being associated with successful people and will promote you."

Leadership psychologist Susan Battley, who's advised such companies as J.P. Morgan Chase, adds that the most effective "thank you" statements are "the out-of-the-blue variety that are communicated at a time when nothing is asked or expected of the other," she said. "Those people you thank are more likely to continue to be active, positive influences in your life." Amy Alexander