Increase Your ‘Want-to’ Power

Your path to success begins with desire.

QUICK OVERVIEW

Everyone wants to find success, as quickly and easily as possible. The self-help market is flooded with how-to books on subjects ranging from relationships to money to health. But the truth, according to Zig Ziglar and Tom Ziglar’s new book Born to Win, is that there is no quick fix to lasting transformation. It’s a lifelong process that takes work and the right mindset. The father-son team breaks down the process of winning into manageable steps using diagrams, quotes and inspirational examples. The result is a book that is as useful as it is inspiring.

The book’s premise is simple: First, you have to have the desire to win. Then you need to plan and prepare to win. Finally, you must expect to win. Whether you’re a longtime Zig Ziglar fan or are new to his teachings, you’ll find something in this book that applies to you. It’s loaded with tips on how to make the most of your life, no matter where you want to go or what you want to accomplish.

APPLY AND ACHIEVE

In Born to Win, the authors take readers through the steps needed to find success, starting with understanding what success is, and what it isn’t. Leaving behind the classic definitions of success—fame, wealth and power—they outline what success really means. It’s going to bed at night content with your day and your life. It’s closing the door to your office at the end of the day and leaving it closed. It means having enough to pay bills and securing your future, but not driving to acquire more money than you will ever need. It’s about enjoying hobbies, being loved and taking care of yourself. Success isn’t putting work before family, hiding from relationships or being too busy to eat well or exercise. Ask yourself what success means to you. Are you running down the wrong path? Be open to the answers and you can find the right path.
I’ve always said that man was designed for accomplishment, engineered for success, and endowed with the seeds of greatness. I believe that almost as much as I believe in God. What I mean when I make that statement is that man has the opportunity to achieve greatness and is hardwired to make it happen. Every person has unique gifts, and those gifts give him or her the power and the opportunity to accomplish great things, if he or she learns how to use those gifts and channel them in the right direction. Now you might say, “Zig, if that’s true, why doesn’t everyone achieve greatness?” Actually, that answer is easy. Everybody doesn’t want to be great, and many people who want to be great aren’t willing to do the work to make it possible!

**Commitment and Perseverance Are Powered by Desire**

If you could somehow count all the books that have been written on what it takes to be successful, the number would be astronomical. A significant number of those books (including several I have written) emphasize the importance of taking action on the ideas and opportunities that present themselves in life. The fact is that you can have lots of good ideas and you can be exposed to many great opportunities, but if you don’t do something about them, they might as well be nonexistent. It’s pretty amazing how most people put off taking the necessary actions to acquire the things they want and then complain about how they never get a break!

There are many reasons people find to justify not taking action, but the absence of desire is one of the root causes. They just really don’t want it badly enough. This is a fatal condition when you are trying to be successful. We all know that life is tough. Many times our best plans turn sour as we pursue our goals and dreams. For that reason, there are two qualities every person must have to fuel their desire and sustain their pursuit of success. Those two qualities are commitment and perseverance. You need commitment to produce the focus and consistency you need to keep your eye on the target. Then you need perseverance to make it over the rough spots and setbacks you will most certainly experience along your journey to success. Commitment is the solution to help you overcome the distractions you will face in life and help you stay focused on what really matters. Commitment is about binding ourselves to a specific course of action. People who are committed realize that they have to do specific things to get specific results they want. Simply stated, commitment—which is fueled by desire—helps us stay on track to achieve our goals and ultimately win.

More often than not, too many people give up when they get more resistance than they bargained for. Things just seem to get a lot tougher and more difficult than they are willing to deal with. If they fail to persevere through those times, they will fail permanently! If you don’t finish something, it won’t be complete, and until something is completed, it isn’t finished. Much about success is just the result of simply the ability to follow up, follow through, and finish what we started. You’re not beaten by being knocked down. You’re only beaten if you stay down.

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The great coach of the Green Bay Packers, Vince Lombardi, wisely stated, “Winning isn’t everything but wanting to win is.” The simple truth is that you have to want to do something badly enough before you have the slightest chance of doing it! If you don’t want it badly enough, I absolutely guarantee that you will not be willing to do the planning and preparing it takes to get it.

The impressions that are most vivid in your mind are the things you want to do. That’s why desire is so powerful and plays a big role in planning. If you really want to do something, it means that it’s something you are going to think about most of the time. When you constantly think about something, you talk about it all the time and you get lots of new ideas about how to make it happen. When you have lots of ideas about something, it makes planning easier and more enjoyable. Desire also makes you willing to become accountable for your plan, and that makes you more willing to create the plan you need to win.

My core philosophy on winning and motivation is summed up by saying that you were born to win, but in order to be the winner you were born to be, you have to plan to win and prepare to win before you can expect to win. The playing field of life is not level, and for you to compete in the game of life, you need an equalizer of some kind. Desire creates an edge. Desire produces the energy to get out of bed when you don’t feel like it. Desire is the mother of motivation, because it is where motivation is born.

**Encouragement is the fuel on which hope runs.**

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WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT?

Before you go any further in the planning to win process, it’s a good idea to do a desire inspection on yourself. Why? Because if you don’t have a real desire to do something, your heart won’t be in it. The question we need to ask ourselves is, “Why do I want to do or accomplish this?” If you are unable to answer the “why you want something” question in one simple sentence, it probably isn’t a true desire of yours, so you can let go of that idea.

BEGIN TO WIN

If you really want to win, you have to begin. I’ve always agreed with what I heard my friend and fellow speaker Joe Sabah say: “You don’t have to be great to get started, but you do have to start to be great.” This means you have to be before you can do, and do before you can have. That statement really captures the core issues that are connected to being successful. Let me ask you a question. What is your definition of success? And do you know what success is and what it isn’t?

There are six characteristics that comprise the foundation stones of your life and your success. The six characteristics are honesty, character, faith, integrity, love, and loyalty. All of these foundation stones are necessary to create a Wheel of Life that is balanced and will produce the kind of success I’ve described. In my eighty-five years of living I have learned that people who compromise any of these principles usually end up with only a beggar’s portion of what life offers them. The longer I live and the more successful people I meet, the more convinced I become that these foundation stones are the most critical success weapons you have in your arsenal.

Who we are is determined by the foundation stones of honesty, character, faith, integrity, love, and loyalty. The six foundational stones essentially provide the raw material for all your thinking. As such, they become the core characteristics of what you be, do, and have, which ultimately determines the results you get in life.

YOU CAN DO MORE THAN YOU THINK

Your experience influences how high you think you can go. Preparing yourself to win is crucial to success. I once heard that preparation is the foundation for any level of achievement. I am totally convinced this is so. Whether you are preparing for an athletic event, an important speech, a sales call, or a camping trip, the better prepared you are, the better the results. The great Tom Landry said, “If you are prepared, you will be confident… and you will do the job.” It’s true: planning and preparing gives you the confidence you need and the right to expect to win. What does it mean to be prepared? It means equipping yourself with the tools, skills, knowledge, and attitude you will need to achieve all that you planned.

ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE A RISK?

One of the main reasons people fail to reach their full potential is because they are unwilling to risk anything. They are fearful of losing, failing, or getting hurt and just want to do the things they believe will keep them safe. They simply want to maintain their status quo and avoid anything that might upset the mediocre expectations they have for their lives. Now, I don’t want you to get the idea that I am making fun of people
who have mediocre expectations. Most people have mediocre expectations for themselves, and they come by it naturally. Their experience has conditioned them to believe mediocrity is about as good as it gets, so their expectations match their experience.

What I’m saying is that experience is a great teacher but we should never let our experience influence what we think about our potential. Did you know that every human being is created with a purpose and that they have a responsibility to not only discover their purpose but also to fulfill it? I don’t mean that it is every person’s destiny to be rich and famous, but it is every person’s destiny to do something that will make a positive difference in the lives of others. That is one of the reasons I believe you can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want. I love what Joan of Arc said when she stated, “I’m not afraid. I was born to do this.” If you believe as I do that you were born to win, you’re going to have to find your fears and start facing them. Face them over and over again until you have nothing to fear but fear itself.

To discover your purpose and act on it, you will have to take risks. What does it mean to take a risk, and how can you overcome the fear of taking risks? First, let’s consider how you might have become fearful of taking risks in the first place. Most people become fearful because they have been hurt by taking risks in the past. That is why our experience contributes to possibly limiting what we think we can do or are willing to do. The way to correct this thinking is to realize that the mistakes we made in our past are actually assets that we can use for our benefit today. It is not that we should stop taking risks. It is that we should not repeat things we have done in the past that did not work. There is a big difference between the two!

**POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE CHOICES**

Now we come to the real issues regarding risk-taking. As I said before, it is not risk-taking that is the problem—it is the tendency we may have to make bad choices. I am sure you have known many people who make the same bad choices over and over again.

They almost seem to be in a never-ending downward spiral of bad decision-making. As a result, their lives are a mess. When we make poor choices, our circumstances become worse. As our circumstances become worse, our choices become more limited. As our choices become more limited, the likelihood of making more bad choices is inevitable. On the other hand, when we make good choices, our circumstances improve. As our circumstances improve, we have better opportunities, and better opportunities make it possible for everything in our lives to become better.

Once we begin to make certain types of choices, the likelihood of making similar choices in the future almost becomes a self-fulfilling destiny. Every time we make a choice, it is either positive or negative. If the fear of attempting to do more than you think you can do is a problem for you, let me ask you a couple of questions. Are you afraid to set goals because you are afraid you might not be able to complete them? Are you afraid of failing in front of friends and family? Is that what keeps you from making a commitment to try something new or stretch yourself? I am a firm believer that goals and commitments should be put in writing, but many people avoid doing that. Somehow, by not putting their goals on paper, they believe they have a built-in explanation for failure. They can say they did not really fail, because they never had the goal in the first place. I hope

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**Character**

Sometimes all it takes is a word, a phrase, or a thought planted in someone’s mind to change his or her whole life. It truly pays to watch closely what and how you think. Our thinking really does drive our character. Frank Outlaw expressed the power of our thoughts this way:

- **Watch your thoughts; they become words.**
- **Watch your words; they become actions.**
- **Watch your actions; they become habits.**
- **Watch your habits; they become character.**
- **Watch your character; for it becomes your destiny!**

The point I want to make here is that your character truly does become your destiny, because your character determines your future. And your character is largely formed by how you see yourself in relationship to God and other people.

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**You have to be before you can do, and do before you can have.**

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Reaching Your Goals

1. Make the commitment to reach your goal. “One person with a commitment is worth a hundred who only have an interest.” —Mary Crowley

2. Commit yourself to detailed accountability. Record your weekly activities and list the six most important things, in the order of their importance, which you need to do tomorrow.

3. Build your life on a solid foundation of honesty, character, faith, integrity, love and loyalty.


5. Shape up mentally, physically and spiritually. It takes energy, mental toughness and spiritual reinforcement to successfully deal with life’s opportunities, and to reach your objectives.

6. Be prepared to change.

7. Share your “give-up” goals with many people. Chances are excellent they are going to encourage you. Share your “go up” goals only with those rare people you strongly feel will give you support and encouragement.

8. Become a team player. Learn to work with a team, such as your family, corporate associates, etc.

9. See the reaching.

10. Each time you reach a goal, your confidence will grow that you can do bigger and better things.

Expect to Win

At Ziglar Inc., we say we are really in the transportation business: We help you get from where you are to where you want to be. If I am born to win, what is winning? Understanding this question is critical to establishing the right kind of life goals. Believe me, nothing is more frustrating than achieving the wrong goals! In Ziglar’s forty-plus years of researching this, we have determined that there are eight things in life that everybody wants. No matter what your specific life goals are, you must also achieve these eight things in order to be truly successful.

Everybody wants to be:
- Happy
- Healthy
- Reasonably Prosperous and
- Secure

They want to have:
- Friends
- Peace of Mind
- Good Family Relationships
- Hope

Once you understand that these are the eight things your life goals and vision must include, you can begin to work on the key areas in your personal life to achieve them. Make it your mission right now, at this very moment, to make enough positive changes in your personal, family, business, and spiritual life that you can ultimately make a difference in the world! Change starts with you, but it doesn’t start until you do. What are you waiting for? Go! Prepare yourself! Expect success! Change the world! After all... you are born to win!

Choose Your Friends and Associates Wisely

Finally, a determining factor that limits our potential and keeps us from being all we can be is the opinions of other people. It is sad to say but there are many negative people in this world who are not successful, and they would prefer that nobody else be successful, either. As we talk about preparing ourselves to win, a big part of that preparation is surrounding ourselves with people who are encouragers. While it is true that there are many negative people who take every opportunity to encourage failure, there are others who can help you be successful.

Encouragers are people who have been successful themselves. They are people who stepped up and took risks and were able to accomplish things they may not have believed possible. Encouragers are the kind of people you can share your goals with and they will encourage you to go for it. Encouragers will also share their own mistakes with you and tell you how they overcame them to achieve success.

This is not your approach to goal setting! If it is, it may be safer emotionally and even appear to be a no-risk approach. However, it is also a guarantee that you will never achieve a fraction of your true potential.
ACTION STEPS
Get more out of this SUCCESS Book Summary by applying what you’ve learned to your life. Here are a few questions and activities to get you started.

1. Before you can set goals, you need to know what you want. Take a few minutes to create a dream list of everything you want to do, be or have.

2. Who are the encouragers in your life? Surround yourself with people who encourage you to win.

3. Feed your mind with powerful and positive material. Start a good book today.

4. Don’t be a SNIOP (Susceptible to the Negative Influence of Other People.) Tune out the people who take pleasure in bringing you down.

5. Make a list of goals. Take pleasure in crossing off items as you accomplish them.

6. Visualization is key in attaining your goals. Take a few moments to see yourself reaching one of your goals.

7. What risks have you taken in your path to success?

About the Authors
For 40 years, Zig Ziglar has been helping people to achieve long-term balanced success through his books and inspirational words. During the past four decades, he traveled more than 5 million miles, reaching out to people around the world who want to improve their lives. In Born to Win, Zig teamed up with his son, Tom Ziglar, who is the CEO of Ziglar Inc. The two share not only a last name but also the philosophy that it’s possible to “have everything you want in life if you will just help enough other people get what they want.” While Zig has published dozens of books, which have been translated into multiple languages, Tom is focusing on the world of social media to share the message. He tweets, blogs and holds live video webcasts to share the company’s themes of hope, integrity and positive thinking. Tom is married with one daughter and a goofy dog. Zig, who is in his 80s, continues to share his message of hope and inspiration with the world.

Recommended Reading
If you enjoyed this summary of Born to Win, you may also want to check out:

- Getting More Done: 10 Steps for Outperforming Busy People by Chris Crouch
- What’s Next... for You? by Patricia and Robert Gussin
- Zig Ziglar’s Secrets of Closing the Sale by Zig Ziglar