

How to Develop and Utilize...

The 7 Power Factors of Success



The Street Kid Company

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Foster the 7 Power Factors of Success

“Power doesn’t have to show off. Power is confident, self-assuring, self-starting and self-stopping, self-warming and self-justifying.

When you have it, you know it.”

—Ralph Ellison

Every successful entrepreneur, company, entertainer, or athlete has several key ingredients, which I call “power factors,” that are critical for playing and achieving at the highest level. Some people have more of one than another, and that’s perfectly okay. It’s your responsibility to take notice of what you have, what you can develop (strengths), and what you must manage (weaknesses).

The 7 power factors are:

Persistence

Attitude

Discipline

Vision

Purpose

Focus

Action

Starting with the next page, let’s look at what each one means and begin to develop the mind-set of the high achiever.

Power Factor #1. Persistence

You've probably heard of the incredibly popular and profitable Chicken Soup for the Soul series of books. When the first collection of stories was published, it was a near-instant success, but this belies the fact that there's a story of amazing persistence behind it. The creators of the series, Mark Victor Hansen and Jack Canfield, approached more than fifty publishers with their book idea before one agreed to give it a try. Think about this for a moment. That means fifty rejection letters, fifty people who told them "I don't want your book," fifty people who passed. It was a costly error for those less-than-visionary publishers; the pair has since sold more than 75 million books, garnering unimagined profits for the lone publisher who was willing to take a chance.

"Those who are blessed with the most talent don't necessarily outperform everyone else. It's the people with follow-through who excel."

—Mary Kay Ash

When should you give up? When do you throw in the towel and abandon the journey, the mission, the purpose, and your dreams? When would you give up on teaching a baby to walk? Toddlers are not very good at it when they start; in fact, they wobble around, have to hang onto other people and furniture to stand up, and fall down all the time. But do you let that discourage you?

What about a business venture? Finding the love of your life? A lost brother or sister? Will you let short-term setbacks and missteps deter you from your dream? Some things are even worth dying for; others must be handled with caution because you might be better off moving in a different direction.

For example, if you were heavily invested in a sector of the stock market that was proving to be a dog, all the persistence in the world could leave you bankrupt. On the other hand, if you were trying to close a deal that could catapult your company to the next level, you'd probably be wise to do whatever it took without being dishonest to get the deal done.

Finding different ways to accomplish something is a critical virtue for success. Trying all you can and never quitting until every last possibility is exhausted is the quality that separates the leaders and winners from the mediocre. When Winston Churchill told us when we should quit—never, never, never—he didn't mean that we ought to be irrationally stubborn, just that we ought to stand by our convictions so long as they continue to be both sensible and noble.

"Never give in—never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming

might of the enemy."

—Winston Churchill

Of course, persistence comes in many forms, as do “enemies.” In business, your opponent may be a company competing for your market share; it may also be something less obvious, such as flaws in management or strategy, or even your team’s perception of how long it will take to get something done. In a relationship, the enemy could be your fears, anger, or neglect. In your finances, you could be battling debt or cash-flow problems. Churchill tells us not to fold under these pressures. Not to fold under any pressures.

Think that’s too much to ask? Perhaps we can take a lesson from a venerable senior citizen, the late Colonel Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken. At the age of sixty-five, when he wanted to start KFC, he began by driving from town to town offering to sell his “secret recipe” to restaurants. He frequently slept in his car and almost exclusively ate his chicken for sustenance. He achieved his objective only after he had approached 1,009 people. The 1,010th finally said yes, he thought the Colonel’s chicken was indeed “finger-lickin’ good” enough to sell to the public.

The rest is fast-food history.

Thomas Edison failed nine thousand times before he perfected his invention of the light bulb. (Was he distressed by the number of failed attempts? He is reputed to have said, “I’m glad to have found 8,999 ways to not invent the light bulb!”) He later went on to secure 1,093 patents, more than any other person in U.S. history.

What about Michael Jordan? The first time he tried out for the varsity team at his high school, he didn’t make the cut. That fueled him to become a better player—practicing every day until the next year’s tryouts—and ultimately, he became the best there ever was in the sport. He simply never quit.

There are multitudes of stories like this, enough to fill a library. Helen Keller, Mother Teresa, the astronauts of Apollo 13, Ray Kroc, Sir Edmund Hillary and, yes, Winston Churchill, too. There are so many others, both famous and not at all well known. You have probably met someone in your own life who has summoned this resource, refused to quit, and accomplished something great because of it.

I don’t know of any other characteristic more important to achieving success than persistence, the first cousin of will.

Never has there been a time when this incredible virtue has failed to create greatness in the person whose heart and soul has been gallantly given in pursuit of a dream. You can be such a person.

Power Factor #2: Attitude

One of the great mysteries for us to uncover is attitude. Why are some people always in a good mood and enjoying a great outlook, while others are exactly the opposite? How much of attitude is genetic versus a learned behavior?

I'm blessed with a great attitude that I believe I've developed by choice.

Education has given me the understanding that I actually have chosen this attitude. I'm not talking about school; I'm referring to the understanding of self. You have the choice every day about how you're going to spend your time and how you choose to react to whatever happens.

In any situation, you have a decision to make. You can either give circumstances total control over you and allow them to rob you of your energy, or you can take control of them and propel yourself forward. Remember how Nate Brooks beat the odds, emerging from the projects to become extraordinarily well educated and an incredibly successful businessman. It was his attitude that propelled him forward; he would still be living in the South Bronx (or worse) if he had decided to let his circumstances control him.

You are blessed with the ability to wake up each day and decide your attitude. Each circumstance gives you the opportunity to choose how you'll react to it. It's never the circumstance that controls you. It's your choice each and every time.

As you now know, seeing both sides of everything is using one of nature's laws, the law of polarity. Choosing to be positive and moving forward is simply a matter of decision and attention.

Not only can you choose your own attitude, but you can make choices about the attitudes of those around you. I don't mean that you can influence people to be positive by being positive yourself, although that's true to a degree; I mean that you can be selective about the people with whom you spend your time, and therefore your life. Personally, I don't allow negative people to infiltrate my mind or life. It's not that I won't be sensitive to someone being sad because of a particular event or a tragedy. I'm saying I avoid people who cannot see the good in anything, people I call "psychic vampires."

One member of my family has the uncanny ability to see only what's wrong with something. I once offered to take her on a cruise, first-class airfare included. I was shocked (or maybe not) when she started to complain about the packing, the time to fly, the heat, five different ports of call, and a layover. I quickly agreed and suggested that maybe we should do it at another time. Thank goodness she also agreed. Shortly after I returned, she experienced a feeling of self-pity for not having taken me up on the offer. I felt relieved!

Attitude is so important. It's the wind in your sails. It's the single most important part of being totally happy. It's also one hundred percent in your own control. Every once in awhile, one of my kids cops an attitude I don't appreciate. I point

this out to them along with the consequence of continuing this attitude. We talk about whose attitude it is and who can change it. In almost every case the outlook and behavior change.

For example, let's say my boys come home from school and they start to whine: "I don't waaaant to do my chores."

My question to them: "Why don't you want to do your chores?"

Predictably, they answer, "I don't know," so I ask, "Is this attitude going to benefit you, or is this attitude going to cause consequences you don't want?"

Keenan and Noah are both smart kids, and it doesn't take long before they realize the attitude isn't going to get them anywhere they want to go, so they tell me, "It's going to cause consequences I don't want."

"Whose choice is it to change your attitude?"

"Mine."

"And if you don't change it," I ask, "what will the consequences be?" They understand what kind of consequences come with refusing to do something, usually spending some time in their rooms alone, what used to be called a "time out." And they always have the option of accepting those consequences—they always have a choice. But usually, they opt for changing their attitude.

After they tell me what they think the consequences will be, I ask, "When do you think it would be a good time to choose the attitude that will get the results you want?"

"Right now."

If my children can learn this lesson so quickly, I have absolute confidence that adults can apply it just as fast. I truly believe that you can condition yourself, if you're aware, to control your attitude and thereby direct your life.

Power Factor #3: Discipline

Discipline is to your life's success what carbon is to steel: You need the one to have the other. The ability to give yourself a command and follow it is imperative in order to achieve the life of your dreams.

You expect your children and your employees to be disciplined, and you must expect it from yourself. Without discipline, stuff just waits and gathers dust. Once you have decided and determined what you want to achieve, a pragmatic and disciplined approach must be part of the path to achieving the desired outcome. Greatness takes time, and patience and consistency determine the outcome.

Your willpower and true desire play a huge role in your discipline. If there's no real emotion and benefit in the outcome you want, then you won't pay the price of following through with what you need in order to achieve your dream life. The times when you don't feel like doing what's needed are when it counts the most. The way to develop the ability to get up and do it anyway is through sheer determination and desire. Gold medallist Peter Vidmar is known to say that to be a champion he had to do only two things: Work out when he wanted to and work out when he didn't.

The same holds true with regard to discipline and your own goals. Even though you may not want to do something, if you know it's important and part of your plan, you must do it anyway. With time, you'll develop a skill and habit for short-circuiting the temptation to be lazy and instead suck it up and take action. There's a saying that the difference between being interested in a result and committed to that result is that when you're interested, you do what's convenient; when you're committed, you do whatever it takes.

Are you “interested in” or *committed* to creating the life of your dreams?

By the way, it's now four in the morning as I'm editing the book you're reading. I went to bed at eleven and woke up at 2:50 a.m., got up and came to my office to edit. Trust me, it was very cozy and warm in my bed, but I'm committed to the outcome you now have in your hands. Without that level of effort on my part, this book would never get done. Be a doer, not a talker.

Power Factors #4 & #5. Vision and Purpose

Of what importance is all this planning and designing if there's no purpose to it all? One of the greatest motivators for each one of us is the question of why. Why should I? Why am I?

Deep inside each of us we yearn for the true meaning in our life.

What do I stand for? What do I believe in? For what importance am I here on earth? These are all questions worthy of serious consideration and contemplation.

"Most people tiptoe through life, hoping to make it safely to death."
—Earl Nightingale

I believe each of us has a need to belong and fit into the whole. I also believe we all need and want to contribute as much as we can. In truth, we are all part of the whole, although some people feel more connected than others.

Determine your life's purpose. Ask yourself, What is one thing that if I don't do it, I will feel my life has been a waste of time? There are visions for each part of your life and together they'll create the life of your dreams. It doesn't matter whether you contribute your life to being a great mom, husband, athlete, or businessperson. The essence of who you are and what you are is always for fuller expression and expansion. People become lethargic and sick when they don't feel that there's purpose or meaning for their existence.

What's the purpose of your life? How will you derive the greatest fulfillment as you experience this journey you're on? The time to fully enjoy yourself and create a masterpiece is now, not sometime in the future. All we have is now.

Determine the vision you see for your life, and immediately do something to move yourself toward that frontier.

Power Factors #6 & #7: Focus and Action

All the written plans in the world, all the inscribed goals, dreams, desires, and the rest of the lot, won't make even good wallpaper if the first action isn't taken. There are so many brilliant people out there who analyze and plan and never get to first base because they don't get out and do. The focus is the goal; the action is where the real difference is.

So many people are afraid of making mistakes that they paralyze themselves into observation instead of action. Once a plan has been researched and thought through, it's time to get into the game. If you agree in advance that the worst thing that can happen is being wrong, big deal. You try something different. Keeping your eye on the mark is the only way to hit it. You cannot hit a target you aren't focused on unless it's an accident.

Don't trust your success to accidents. Trust your success to yourself and your actions.

Action and persistence go hand in hand. The more options you have available to you, the more action you can take. Taking action gives you results you can measure, evaluate, and proceed with after modification.

If you wait till you have every piece of the puzzle figured out before you feel confident that you can do it, you'll miss out on the whole journey. Don't get caught in the waiting game and in telling yourself stories about when this or that happens you'll be ready. Those are just self-stalling stories that will leave you with nothing but regret.

All the winners I know take action. Be a person who takes action and you'll never feel ashamed or guilty for not trying and doing.

The most fun is on the playing field. Every professional sports team starts the year focusing on winning the championship. They practice every day with winning in mind. Some days are better than others. They never allow one bad practice or one bad day to deter them from the end result. I suggest that you take on this kind of focus and commitment.

Each day should be dedicated to working your plan to get better and to move closer to your goals. Some time ago, I started calling this kind of focus "oxygen-thinking only," which means that you do only what's absolutely required for the task or mission at hand to get the result.

Think Apollo 13, where the astronauts were running out of oxygen and there was no time to waste. All you have is that second to move yourself further toward home. In business, that's exactly how I operate: oxygen-thinking only. All the stuff we don't absolutely have to do right now we don't do.

Being efficient is really all about oxygen thinking—and option thinking. You must ask yourself, What are my options? You assess all the options, make decisions, then take action.

Throughout this book I've endorsed planning time and again. I'm so insistent about it because most people just don't want to give it the time it deserves; it just seems to be too tedious for them to really take the time to plan. Most people are out in the middle of the ocean with the sails just being battered around, and they're going nowhere. If you take a look at why businesses fail, or why a certain area in a person's life isn't working, it's usually because they haven't put much thought into it. They haven't taken the time to simply ask, "What am I trying to do? What are the different ways I can do it?" Nor have they taken the time to decide which way makes the most sense for them.

You can be different. You can take the time to plan so you're laser-focused on your outcome. Then you're poised for oxygen-thinking only—you're poised to take action on creating the life of your dreams.

About the Author



JOHN ASSARAF (“the Street Kid”) is best known for being one of the leading optimum performance experts in the world. He is founder of The Street Kid Company, which conducts seminars and coaches senior executives and ambitious entrepreneurs who choose to take their lives and businesses to the next level.

An experienced businessman himself, John has owned and operated a franchising company whose annual real estate sales topped three billion dollars.

He was also part of the senior executive team that grew Internet virtual tour pioneer Bamboo.com from a team of six people to fifteen hundred in just over a year, netting millions in monthly sales and completing a highly successful NASDAQ IPO.

From his early years as a street gang member to his life today, John has been fascinated with why some people achieve great results in their lifetimes while others merely eke out an existence. As a result, he has spent the last twenty-two years studying peak human performance and behavior and has identified the mental factors that lead to failure or success at the highest level in entrepreneurial endeavors and life.

John lives in Rancho Santa Fe, California with his two amazing sons Keenan and Noah. He enjoys reading, writing, consulting with companies, mentoring ambitious entrepreneurs, and nurturing the wonderful relationship he’s developed with his sweetheart, Maria.

In his spare time, John loves to ski, travel, exercise, and entertain friends and family. He’s also known for his passion and appreciation for excellent wines.

To learn more, or to order the book, visit the website today at
<http://www.TheStreetKid.com>