

## FIVE SECRETS FOR GROWING SUCCESS

I have been very fortunate and blessed to be able to pursue my passions and thrive for the past twenty-five years. I have been a successful musician, a veteran music industry executive, guest speaker and lecturer, and an author. I am often asked by students and adults what my five biggest secrets are that I could share that would really help to explain my longevity and continued success.

I will start off by telling you that it may seem easy, but it takes a lot of dedication and hard work. For me, this first started back in 1992, and has now culminated in a new book that I wrote called *Growing Success: A Young Adult's Guide to Achieving Personal Finance and Success*.

Below are five secrets that I share in that book and in so many conversations:

1. **Mentors** - Regardless of how old you are, you should always continue to seek out *mentors*. I have often found that in times of uncertainty or despair, mentors serve as excellent role models and sounding boards. They not only model the way for your potential success, but they can also serve as great resources for information and advice. You have several options when acquiring a mentor. You can reach out to an actual person such as teachers, parents, professionals and others. You could read books, watch DVDs, and study biographies to acquire strategies and lessons from those authors, experts and others that interest you. You can choose to model yourself after a friend, co-worker, classmate or someone you admire the most. Simply write down the qualities you admire about them and start incorporating those qualities into your own life. The important thing here is that you seek out others who can assist you with helping you to achieve your long-term desired goals and success. I have been extremely fortunate to include Dr. David Baker, Kenny Aronoff and Michael E. Gerber in my long list of mentors.

2. **"Be Distinct, or Be Extinct"** - Many years ago I was at a conference where I heard motivational speaker and coach, Tom Peters, utter these five important words: "Be Distinct, or Be Extinct." It is crucial that you learn from an early age how to differentiate yourself from others, if you wish to grow and achieve your long-term success. Most people "go with the flow" and never "challenge the status quo." Now this is fine for someone content to live an average life, but if you are someone that wants to experience a high level of success, you will need to be very clear about your intentions. Successful people do not coast through life. They break out of the box and they make things happen! To really be distinct, you need to sit down and decide:

- What you want to pursue
- Visualize what that success will look like
- Create goals for acquiring your success and

- Most importantly, take action!

Most people fail to achieve their dreams because they remain stagnant and become extinct.

3. ***You Are Not The Smartest Person In The Room*** - I was recently told by my former boss, friend and business mentor, Vinnie Freda, that the main reason why he offered me my very first job in the music industry two weeks after I graduated from Indiana University was because I never asked him “how much the job paid.” The only thing I cared about was that I wanted to work in the music industry and I would do whatever it took to get it. Now more than ever, having a realistic and positive ***work ethic*** is crucial to succeeding in the 21<sup>st</sup> century marketplace. Do not, regardless of your age or prior experience, enter an interview or new work environment with *an entitled attitude*. Despite what your parents, friends, spouse, significant other or “mirror reflection” tells you, you are dispensable! Successful people don’t need hype. They get the job done. They check their egos at the door and figure out how they are going to do the job better than anyone else, or as business owners, better than their competition. Successful people are always results-oriented. If you want to learn more about what I am talking about, I would recommend reading Mark Cuban’s book, *How to Win at the Sport of Business*.

4. ***Always Embrace “WHY”*** - To really achieve and get good at something, you not only need to learn *how* something is done, but I strongly suggest you understand *why*. In my experience, the truly successful people always go the extra mile to figure out “the why” because it enables them to consistently recreate their success. Once you understand “why”, you can improve on an idea, innovate based upon the changing times or, more importantly, discontinue something if it no longer works! Have you ever been around someone who always says, “But we have always done it that way...”? I guarantee you that the successful person sitting next to him or her has already figured out what they are doing wrong and *why* they will improve on what they already know in order to beat out their competition. Over the past two years, I have become a much more successful and consistent stock, options and futures trader, thanks to my friend and mentor, Todd Davis. Todd has generously taught me the “why” of successful trading. As a result, I have been able to create and improve upon my prior investing strategies, simply because I learned how to embrace the “why”.

5. ***Get Out of Your Own Way*** – If you have been following my website and reading my blogs, then you know that I believe that fear and not one’s own abilities is the greatest reason why most people never achieve the success they desire. They simply cannot get out of their own way. One of my favorite quotes is by motivational speaker, Les Brown, who says, “*Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears.*” When I first started writing *Growing Success*, I quickly came to the realization that if I were to ask a hundred young adults to define their individual meanings of the word “success”, I would probably get a hundred

different answers. Does success mean having a lot of money? Being the President of a big company? Owning a huge house and a fancy car? Being a Hollywood movie star? A famous musician? Athlete? Wall Street billionaire? Which definition is correct? All? Some? Most? Confusing, right?! When I thought about the one thing that almost all young adults never really confront, it would be fear—which is probably the most obvious common denominator preventing them from defining their success. Why fear? Because the majority of our parents, high school teachers or college professors probably never discussed personal and/or financial success with us as kids. The main reason why so many people seem to fail and never achieve their goals and success is because they either lack the necessary information that provides the important ingredients and tools to succeed or they simply succumb to their fears and never make any real efforts to ever get out of their negative comfort zone. To quote the great Zig Ziglar: *“You don’t have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.”* The first thing I had to learn when I started my quest to be successful and grow my success was that I had to get out of my own way.

Please remember, most successful men and women did not become successful overnight. It takes a lot of hard work, patience and dedication to attain what you really want. Your commitment and devotion to following these five secrets as well as adopting new positive habits, right here, right now, will definitely help you to overcome many of the potential obstacles later in life that will most certainly continue to plague others that are ignorant and less knowledgeable. I guarantee you: with the right energy, focus and follow-through, you too *will* achieve your goals and continue to grow your own success.

*Please feel free to visit my website [www.LarryMJacobson.com](http://www.LarryMJacobson.com) often to read my blog articles, find out when I’ll be appearing at an event near you, or to interview me or request me to speak at your next event, class or meeting.*