

Success

Point of the Assignment: 1) To help you to identify your personal opinion on what success looks like to you.
2) To recognize how much a person's perception of success impacts their goals, actions, self perception, and relationships.

Definition of "Success": "Favorable or desired outcome."ⁱ

(The following are a few examples of how people may choose to define success)

- **Achievement** (*Achieving previously-defined goals*)
- **Career** (*Types of jobs obtained, goals accomplished, etc. Having a rewarding, respectable, exciting, well-paid, career etc.*)
- **Community** (*Being a well-respected member of your community and/or a productive or contributing member of your community – neighborhood, church, etc. Impacting the lives of others. Willingness to sacrifice individual needs and wants to benefit the greater good, etc.*)
- **Creative Expression** (*Having a lifestyle that allows you the freedom to express yourself in through art, dance, music, writing, painting, physical activity, creating new things, etc. That activity can be how you earn a living, or it can be done as a hobby, volunteer or other free-time activity.*)
- **Education** (*What you learn, types and/or levels of degrees, GPA, awards received, etc.*)
- **Fame/Reputation/Notoriety, etc.** (*To be well-known beyond your own sphere of influence- celebrity, politician, professional athlete, author, etc.*)
- **Family life** (*good marriage, having children, healthy relationships, healthy/happy/ successful children, etc.*)
- **Financial** (*Your level of income, savings, and/or responsible spending, etc.*)
- **Happiness** (*Being happy and content with your life as it currently stands*)
- **Hard Work** (*Earning what you have through your own effort and labors, etc.*)
- **Health** (*Physical, Emotional, Mental, Spiritual*)
- **Image** (*Giving the impression of success by how you, dress, act, live your life, and your material possessions, status symbols owned, etc.*)
- **Independence and/or Autonomy** (*Able to take care of your own needs and wants. Able to achieve your goals on your own without the help of others.*)
- *Do not need anyone else to accomplish some goal. Not a burden on others.*
- **Individuality** (*Standing apart from the crowd. Being a 'non-conformist'. "Thinking outside the box." Able to distinguish what makes you a unique and special individual, etc.*)
- **Integrity** (*Living a life that is consistent with your own personal value system*)
- **Intelligence** (*Being smarter than others. Able to understand and/or engage with highly intelligent or educated people. Able to solve complex problems, etc.*)
- **Knowledge** (*Having the intellectual resources needed to answer questions, solve problems, carry on intelligent conversations, etc.*)
- **Life/Work Balance** (*Able to have a life where you are satisfied with your career, its benefits, and yet still able to have a satisfying personal life*)
- **Lifestyle** (*Where you live, having desired personal possessions, personal accomplishments, vacations, what you are able to give to your family, etc.*)
- **Material possessions** (*house, car, toys, clothes, name-brand products, etc.*)
- **Passion** (*Having a clear sense of what you are passionate about, or being able to live your life in service to your passion, etc.*)
- **Physical Attractiveness** (*Able to arouse the interest of others based on physical appearance, etc.*)
- **Political** (*Impacting the political world in ways you believe are important*)
- **Popularity** (*Liked by a lot of people*)
- **Power** (*Having influence over other people*)
- **Social life** (*Having sufficient/satisfying romantic experiences, dating, friends, etc.*)
- **Spiritual life** (*Your relationship your Supreme Being, personal spiritual formation, participation in church activities, etc.*)

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- **Status symbols** (*Possessing certain brand name products: clothes, cars, etc.*)
- **Travel** (*Able to travel as frequently as desired and/or to destinations of preference*)
- **Other** (*Other examples not mentioned above*): _____

Factors affecting success that you can control: *Setting goals, accepting personal responsibility for achieving goals, your attitudes, actions, choices, and reactions to other people things, and events etc.*

Factors affecting success that you can NOT control: *Another person's attitude and choices, economy, etc.*

Part I: Your Definition Of Success:

At this point in your life, **how do you define "success"?** Provide a minimum of **three to five examples** of how you define success, and then take the time to think about where that impression comes from. (*Be sure to list your examples of success in order of personal importance to you.*)

a. **Success Source #1:** (*from list above*): _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success? _____

b. **Success Source #2** (*from list above*): _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success? _____

c. **Success Source #3** (*from list above*): _____

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Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success? _____

d. **Success Source #4** (*from list above*): _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success? _____

e. **Success Source #5** (*from list above*): _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success? _____

Part II: Your Perception of Your Own Personal Success:

1. **How does this perception of success impact your personal desires/wants?** _____

2. **How does this perception of success impact how you spend your time?** _____

3. **How does this perception of success impact your daily actions, behaviors, and choices?** _____

4. **How does this perception of success impact how you make, spend and/or save your money?** _____

5. **How close do you think you are right now to achieving those levels of success?** (*Already there, on my way, off track, completely failed, etc.*) Explain your response:

6. **Think of a time in your life when you had a different perspective of success.** (*i.e., being popular in high school, driving a fancy car, getting a good-paying job, etc.*)
 - a. What did success look like then? _____

 - b. What was the source of your perception? _____

 - c. How did this perception affect your attitude, lifestyle, goals, choices, etc.? _____

 - d. What was the outcome? (*Did you achieve it or not?*) _____

 - e. What changed your perception? _____

Part III: Your Relationship With Someone Who Values a Different Form of Success:

- a. Name a significant person in your life with whom you have differences of opinions on what success looks like. What is his/her name and relationship to you? _____
- b. How does this person define success? If you know, then list them. If you are not sure, then you will need to ask that person. (*List them in order of importance to him/her*) _____

- c. What do you believe is the source of that person's perception of success? _____

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d. How do these differences in defining success affect your relationship with that person? _____

e. What can/should you do to improve the quality of your relationship with that person? _____

Test your understanding:

What is the main point of this assignment?

Why were you expected to do this exercise?

What type of person would need to do this exercise?

How well do you fit the profile of the person for whom this assignment was created?

Reflection: *(Write down your response after completing this assignment.)*

ⁱ Merriam Webster (1988). Webster's ninth new collegiate dictionary. Springfield, MA: Merriam Webster.