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## ***In this Edition:***

**Growing Through Cultural Differences?.....Page 4**

**Federal Contracting - Get Registered in the CCR.....Page 6**

**Surround Yourself with Positive People for Success.....Page 10**

**The Secrets of Success.....Page 13**

**Helpful Tips for a college Student.....Page 17**

**How to Get the Courage to Pursue Your Dream Career.....Page 19**

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# GROWING THROUGH CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

## Filtering experiences through our mental maps.

The brisk growth of technology and distance communication systems is helping to rapidly shrink our world.

This in turn is resulting in traditional forms of mentoring being challenged. No longer are we tied to face-to-face relationships that occur in homogenous pairs. Cross-cultural mentoring happens every day in today's global economy. This paradigm shift is a great opportunity for businesses as well as individuals to expand skill, knowledge and awareness, as long as the challenges

are addressed. Language can be an obvious barrier, but more subtle challenges include cultural norms and communication styles. The concepts presented in this newsletter can be applied in all mentoring situations, even ones that involve two individuals from cultures that appear similar on the surface.

Every human relationship has some cross-cultural components. Even if two individuals come from the same predominant culture, each person has a filter (or "mental map") that they use to

interpret the world, and these filters can differ greatly. Where we grew up, our family relationships, schools we attended, the era in which we were reared, jobs we've had, and many other factors all determine our maps. No two people have identical maps—not even siblings!

During the rapport building process in a relationship, most people seek out similarities. They probe and search for similar experiences and interests, looking for a few points on the map that can be matched. Becoming

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acquainted and building trust in this manner is an important and natural process. Often times, these similarities help to pull relationships through challenging times.

On the other side of searching out our similarities lies the often-unexplored territory of differences in our maps. When you think back about your most fruitful relationships, differences were just as important, if not more important, than similarities in fostering trust and growth. If every relationship is indeed cross-cultural, people are bound to encounter conflicting interests. Why does it appear that most people avoid addressing them up front or wait until they actually create conflict?

While it is true that unresolved conflict can contribute to the breakdown in the majority of relationships, in many relationships conflict caused by differences is the

fuel that boosts it to a higher level. When differences are openly and candidly discussed, people tend to handle disagreements in a healthier manner.

For most individuals, handling conflict and discussing differences can cause great discomfort. However, if the goal in a mentoring relationship is growth, moving out of one's "comfort zone" into the "learning zone" is quite valuable. Interestingly, people tend to feel more comfortable engaging in conflict and ignoring their differences so that they never have to deal with the real issues.

Over time, by openly talking about differences, before an actual conflict arises, these emotions can become flags that indicate growth opportunities. For example, your mentor's/mentee's tardiness can arouse an emotion. Rather than moving to a place of fault or blame, look at the incident as an unveiling of a

difference and focus on learning from the incident instead. People have different approaches to time.

Discussing this openly can keep you both in a discovery mode, and levels of discomfort will tend to subside. With this learning focus, both you and your partner have a great opportunity to learn from each other through your differences.

Our differences fuel growth. Unfortunately, many of us have mental maps that say conflict is bad. However, conflict is usually no more than two individuals with differing viewpoints, maps, interests, etc. If we remain open and focused on learning, conflict moves us into unexplored territory. Instead of reacting negatively, try changing your map about conflict and view it as an opportunity to learn and grow.

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# Federal Contracting - Get Registered in the CCR

By Karen Miller

In 2002 the CCR became the single repository of vendor data for the entire federal government. If you are serious about doing business with the federal government, you must get your company registered in the CCR.

There is no need to pay someone to register your company. Registration is free. Save your money and take time to get registered by yourself. Before you go to the CCR website, gather this information so you can quickly fill out the form:

## Company Identification Numbers

- Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number A unique nine character number provided by Dun & Bradstreet. If you do not have a DUNS number, you can contact them via the web or using a toll free number to register your business. Be prepared to provide them with your business name, address, phone number, business start date and type of business. There is no charge for getting a DUNS number.
- Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code Commercial and Government Entity is a five digit number used primarily by the Department of Defense to identify specific companies. If you do not have a CAGE code, one will be automatically assigned and filled in for you as part of the CCR process. This is a free registration.
- U.S. Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN) The U.S. Federal is a nine-digit number used for

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income tax purposes. This is also known as the EIN number - the Employer Identification Number. Contact the IRS to for your number. Note: If your company operates as a sole proprietorship, you must enter your social security number in the provided space.

*Note: when entering any of the above codes, enter the numbers only, not the dashes.*

Classification codes for your products and services

- North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes Enter at least one NAICS code to identify your company products and / or services. It is OK to list multiple codes. This is how government buying offices identify your company as one

that provides needed goods and services. The NAICS code is a six-digit code that you obtain free from several websites. Do a Google search on "NAICS" to locate a website. *Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) information* As of Fall 2003 all payments from federal agencies are made to contractors (your business) using electronic funds transfer. EFT information can be obtained from your bank. You will need to provide: *ABA Routing Number* - the 9-digit routing transit number for your financial institution. This number normally appears as the first nine digits in the lower left hand corner of your business check. *Account Number* - your unique checking account number, normally located at the bottom of your business check. Or you may choose to enter a Lock Box Number, which you must setup with your

bank. *Authorization date* - The effective date when the EFT information is valid and in effect. If you change banks, you need to resubmit an authorization form.

- Business Point of Contact information Enter the name of the person responsible for making business decisions, along with an alternate contact, the name of the accounts receivable and owner information. In some cases, one personal companies enter the same name in each of the four contacts.

Once you have gathered the information, it is time to go to the <http://www.CCR.gov> website and start filling out the information. If you have questions, there is a 800 number to call for help listed on the website.

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# Surround Yourself with Positive People for Success

By Bud Bilanich

Self-confidence is an important key to personal and professional success. If you want to become self confident you need to do three things. 1) Become an optimist. 2) Face your fears and take action. 3) Surround yourself with positive people.

In this article, I'd like to focus on the importance of surrounding yourself with positive people. Positive people help your self-confidence because they tend to see the potential in you - even when you might not see it in yourself. Negative people, on the other hand, will hinder your self-

confidence because they tend to reinforce your self-doubt and negative beliefs about yourself.

As Mark Twain said...

"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that. The really great make you feel that you too can become great."

Positive people help you realize your dreams. Negative people take them away. Positivity and optimism are contagious. Unfortunately, so are negativity and pessimism. Surround yourself with positive people, and you'll become

positive and self confident. On the other hand, surround yourself with negative people, and you'll become negative and lose your confidence. Self-confidence and negativity are mutually exclusive.

Negative people tend to come in two flavors: cynics and humorists. Cynics are not fun. They don't like much of anything. They're the kind of people who complain about having to pay taxes after winning the lottery. Humorists, on the other hand, can be seductive. They're clever and amusing. They go around with a smirk on their face, using humor to point out

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everything that's wrong. At first, they can be fun to be around. It's like the two of you have an inside joke on the world. In the long run though, their negativity will wear you out.

Set your boundaries. Walk away from the negative people you encounter. End your toxic friendships. It may be difficult at first, but as you move away from negative people, you'll become more positive and will attract positive people into my life.

Forming a group of positive friends and colleagues is one way of surrounding yourself with positive people. Make a commitment to meet with this group on a regular basis to discuss one another's hopes, dreams and goals. Exchange ideas and support one another. You want to find people who accept you for who you are, but are willing to challenge you, in a positive and constructive manner, to excel and to become a

personal professional success.

I can't take credit for this idea. In *Think and Grow Rich*, probably the most famous self help book of all time, Napoleon Hill suggested the idea of Mastermind Alliances. An article in the February 2009 issue of *SUCCESS Magazine* defines a Mastermind Alliance...

"The Mastermind principle consists of an alliance of two or more minds working in perfect harmony for the attainment of a common definite objective. Success does not come without the cooperation of others."

A Mastermind Alliance then, is a group of positive people helping one another achieve goals; exactly what I suggested above.

Of course if you want to surround yourself with positive people, you need to be a positive person yourself. Here are ten small sentences you should

incorporate into your daily vocabulary if you want to become known as a positive person:

- You can do it.
- I believe in you.
- I'm proud of you.
- Thank you.
- I need you.
- I trust you.
- I respect you.
- I appreciate you.
- I value you.
- I love you.

Here are some of my best ideas on attracting positive people.

**Think positively.** Train yourself to see the opportunity in every difficulty

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and the good in every person you meet. Be genuinely happy about not only your success - but the success of others in your life.

**Smile.** Smiles are contagious. When you smile at others, they tend to return the favor. A smile can have a positive impact on someone who is having a bad day. By smiling, you'll attract other smiling positive people - the kind of people who will help you fulfill your dreams.

**Speak positively.** You attract positive people when you say positive things. When someone greets me by saying, "How are you?" I always smile and answer "Great. And you?" even if I'm having a tough day. This doesn't mean that I don't share my troubles with close friends. I just don't wear them on my sleeve.

The common sense point here is simple. Self-confidence is an important key to personal and professional success. Surrounding yourself with positive people is a great way to build your self-confidence. Jettison the negative people in your life. If you can't remove them completely, do your best to keep them at arm's length. Build a network of positive people by being positive yourself. Think positively. Smile. Speak positively.

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# The Secrets of Success

By Kelli Smith

What's your idea of success? How do you define it? Is it wealth? Fame? Power? Inner peace? Success is a vague notion, which means that becoming successful can be a frustrating, impossible journey; after all, you can't hit a target you can't see. So let's examine what success really is, and how you might set out on the path toward reaching it.

As kids, we measured our success by our stuff - and how it stacked up against our friends' stuff. When your best friend got the hottest toy on the market for Christmas, your own gifts

paled in comparison. In high school, you wore what your friends thought was trendy - or dealt with the merciless teasing that came with being out of style. For adults, success might mean having a bigger house in the trendiest neighborhood, then inviting your friends over to show off the new living room set.

When did "success" come to mean "having stuff"? Is money really all it takes to make you feel successful? And if there's more to success than wealth, what is it? How do you find it?

## Money Doesn't Solve Everything

Garrett Sutton is an attorney, author, and member of Robert Kiyosaki's team of Rich Dad Advisors. He has written two books, *Own Your Own Corporation* and *Real Estate Loopholes*, a 2004 bestseller which he co-authored with former advisor Diane Kennedy. Sutton has encountered much professional success, but disagrees that money alone can make anyone successful.

"There have been studies regarding

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job satisfaction for lawyers, and it's a lot lower than you'd expect," says Sutton. "Even though they're making money and have good professional standing, the job satisfaction index is low. I think part of that is that they dread going to work each day to bicker and fight, or to grind out paperwork that maybe after a while has no meaning to them. You can get caught in this path toward partnership, where they're really expecting you to give up your life... At some point, the money doesn't solve everything."

In fact, it's not just attorneys who wrestle with job satisfaction. A 2005 report by the Conference Board, which was based on a national survey, shows that an increasing number of employees are unhappy with their jobs - regardless of income or age. In fact, only a little more than half of all workers earning more than \$50,000 a year are actually satisfied

with their jobs. Only 14% are "very satisfied."

And job satisfaction is no small thing. Researchers at University College in the U.K. studied 216 middle-aged men and women in London, and discovered a link between happiness and health. It turns out that the bodies of people whose daily lives make them happy actually produce healthier levels of important body chemicals than those who are unhappy. Happier people may have healthier hearts and a lower risk of certain diseases like diabetes.

As if your health weren't enough of a reason to find inner satisfaction, here's another: results of a 2005 Gallup survey found that employees who are disengaged in their work cost the American economy up to \$350 billion per year in lost productivity.

It's hard to say what success really is, but unhealthy and unproductive people

definitely aren't it.

## **Don't Succeed - Thrive**

Anne Lazarus is a Reno, Nevada-based business coach who primarily works with principals of owner-operated companies, and some top-level executives, to help them thrive personally and professionally. She coaches people who are "stuck" and unable, for one reason or another, to get to the next level on their journey to success. She says the biggest problem she sees is that people generally define success too narrowly, for instance by how much money they make or how many hours they work. "Their definition of success is so narrow, it doesn't enrich their lives to achieve that goal."

She recalls the old Ed Sullivan Show routine that featured a man spinning plates on a pole. If that pole represents

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your life, says Lazarus, most people think of success as adding one more plate. And if you get too focused on that one plate, instead of the big picture, the whole thing collapses. Making \$100,000 may seem like success, but if you have to work 100 hours a week to get it, you might break some plates. “You have to get enough of the right plates all spinning together, then check on the wobbly ones...it’s a balancing act,” she says.

This is why she suggests thinking not in terms of “success,” but in terms of being efficient while thriving. Success isn’t a perfect place, a destination to be reached. There’s always something more to do or learn. If you are good at what you do, make the amount of money you want, have the right clientele, and are effective, you can have fun. And when you’re having fun, you’re thriving. Instead of focusing on success, she advises making incremental improvements, or what she calls “the 10

Percent Solution.”

“Too often I find that people are going for all or nothing, black or white. This is why I don’t like the word success, like it’s some perfect place out there. I prefer to think of it as being pointed in the right direction, a compass heading,” she says. “All you have to know is where you are now, where you want to be, and how to get there. And everyday, just go 10% further, be 10% better, learn 10% more. It’s like compound interest that builds on itself. It’s not about perfection, it’s about progress.”

Now an avid hiker, Lazarus could once only walk a mile in a day. But by asking herself to walk just a little bit farther each day, she improved her abilities tremendously; not only was she eventually able to hike the entire 165-mile Tahoe Rim Trail, but she is now able to hike 25 miles a day. “It’s about doing a little better tomorrow than you did

today,” she says. “That progress builds on itself, until you get there.”

## The Keys to Success

Interestingly enough, the most successful people often don’t think of themselves as successful. Even Garrett Sutton, a bestselling author, hesitates to think of himself that way. “I got on the bestseller list and it felt great,” he says, “but the next day it didn’t matter. I thought maybe I wasn’t as deserving, or I could do better. So it’s really about cherishing those successes along the way.”

So be honest with yourself. What is it that you really want? What is your goal? Once you figure that out, take small steps each day along that path, celebrating your achievements along the way. It’s the journey, not the destination, that offers true success.

So start by breaking out of your comfort zone. We all like to do what we’re good at. But if we’re not improving ourselves, we’re certainly never going to grow or become successful. “When we learn to do the things we couldn’t before, the things we’re not comfortable doing, we become effective at them,” says Lazarus. “And chances are, you’ll end up liking those things after all.”

Enroll in a class. Enlist a mentor. Try something new. When you can acquire skills that you didn’t have before, you’ll feel improved, and therefore successful. Develop an appetite for learning, and you’ll thrive.

“Success is a process, not an end,” says Sutton. “If you define it as the end, I think, you’ll be disappointed. But during the process, you’ll gain experience, make friendships, gain knowledge...all of which you’ll enjoy. If it’s just about reaching the end, then once you get there, what is there to look forward to?”

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# Helpful Tips for a College Student

By Emily Sismour

Being a college student is both demanding and rewarding. The time you spend pursuing and earning your college degree can be taxing.

However, what you take away from the college experience and the value your degree will hold in the marketplace will likely outweigh the demands and rigors you experience during your time as a college student. Typically, college students choose to pursue their degree at an online college or a ground school. Both are good choices and both types of schools traditionally offer a wide variety of degree programs.

Whichever college route you choose-

online or ground school- it's essential to ensure that the school is accredited and offers a quality education. Then, it's up to you- the college student- to do the rest!

Let's take a look at a few helpful hints for college students -

As a college student, you may be eligible for federal financial aid or some type of tuition assistance. Take care in exploring your financial aid options and understand that after you have completed your degree, you will be responsible for paying back the money you have borrowed. Navigating the financial aid gauntlet can be tough for a

college student. One great resource that a college student can use is the FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid website. FAFSA's site connects students with all of the information they need in order to apply for financial aid and understand their aid options. On the website you'll also find direct links to your state's higher education agency and various grants and scholarships that are offered. Additionally, FAFSA's website provides users with a scholarship search link where students can search for all available scholarships- not just those offered by a specific state. Check out

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FAFSA'S site at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/> to learn more about financial aid and aid opportunities.

As an incoming college student, you'll also have to choose an area of study or a degree program. Popular degree programs include business, finance, marketing, and engineering- although there are countless other degree programs as well. It's important to pinpoint your areas of interest and figure out what type of profession will most suit these interests. If you're interested in math and numbers, a degree in finance or accounting may be right for you. Conversely, if you enjoy reading and writing, a degree program in journalism or creative writing may be your best fit. As a college student, you will have to determine the area of study that's right for you. Determining your area of study or degree program early will often help you complete your degree program more quickly. Many college students wait to "declare" their college major and by doing so tack on extra time to their degree completion. Choose a major in a degree program that you enjoy. By doing so, you will be able to translate your skills and interests into a future career.

One of the greatest resources available to college students are student services. Utilizing available student services will be beneficial to you not only while you're enrolled in school, but also after you graduate. Student services like tutoring, academic advising and career counseling are offered at both online colleges and ground schools in order to help students succeed in school and after graduation. As a college student, it's important to take advantage of these resources; they're there for a reason and your tuition pays for it. For example, if you're struggling through a difficult statistics course, seek help from your school's tutoring center. Chances are that the more you utilize the student services offered at your school, the better you'll do. Lastly, it's imperative to set clear-cut goals for yourself. College, whether at an online university or ground school, is a time to grow and enjoy, but it's primarily a time to learn and prepare for your future. Having goals, both short and long-term, will keep you on track until the finish line.

A college degree will likely be one of your biggest investments. Therefore, as a college student, it's important to invest the time and energy into choosing the right school, understanding your financial aid options, mapping out your goals and choosing the degree program that is the best fit for you.

# How to Get the Courage to Pursue Your Dream Career

By Raymond Gerson

Congratulations. After much thought and research, you have discovered which career is right for you. The thought of it fills you with passion, enthusiasm, and inspiration. This career will give you the opportunity to use your favorite and best talents to make a great contribution. This is the type of work that Joseph Campbell referred to when he said, "Follow your bliss."

## Ahead of the Pack

You're ahead of many others who have not discovered their "bliss."

You feel grateful that you discovered your right livelihood, but now you face a dilemma. There are risks. Do you quit your present job or business and plunge ahead into your dream job or business? Will you be able to pay your bills? What will your family and friends think? Is this career practical?

## Heart and Mind Conflict

Your heart says, "go for it." Another part of you is scared and urges caution. Fears you didn't know you had start appearing. You wonder, "What if I fail?" When you listen to

your heart or that part of the mind that says, "go for your dreams," fears often come up. The self-preservation part of your mind raises concerns. Both parts of yourself are attempting to support you. Both parts need to be heard and considered. Before making your final decision, you may experience intense inner conflict between these parts of your mind.

You may feel like a war or boxing match is going on inside of you. I once experienced this inner turmoil before I resigned from a secure job to begin full-time self-employment. I had a steady salary, excellent benefits,

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DISTRICT**



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and was less than three years from receiving a retirement pension.

Some of my friends and family cautioned me against leaving my job to follow my dreams. I decided that leaving was best for me.

### **The Choice Is Yours to Make**

I am sharing my experience to let you know that I have experienced this dilemma, not to influence you to do it the way I did. The ideal is to start a part-time business and build it before leaving your job, or to go from a job to a job. However, what is right for one may be wrong for another. Only you can decide when to leave your job and whether to do it slowly or quickly. It depends upon your personal makeup, circumstances, and finances.

### **Questions to Consider**

How can you decide whether to pursue your passion?  
Here are some questions that can help.

1. What will be the costs for you and your loved ones if you don't pursue your dreams? What are the costs of leaving your current job or business?
2. What are the benefits of pursuing your passion? What benefits will you lose if you quit your present employment?
3. What if you fail? When you come to the end of your life, would you rather have tried and failed than to have never tried?
4. What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
5. How will you feel about yourself if you pursue this inner calling? What will your feelings of self-worth be if you don't try?

### **Steps to Overcome Fear**

Also consider the following:

1. Begin moving toward your goal, no matter how slowly. Start it as a hobby, or as volunteer work, or part-time employment. Take the first step even if it's a small one. Emerson told us, "Do the thing you fear and the death of

fear is certain.” Action is powerful! According to Goethe, “Whatever you think you can do, or believe you can do, bring it. Action has magic, grace, and power in it.”

2. Read the biographies of others who took risks, overcame failures, and succeeded.

3. Place inspiring quotations and pictures in your home and office.

4. Listen to CDS that lift your spirit and motivate you.

5. Reflect deeply on how you want to live the rest of your life.

You were born for a purpose that you are worthy of fulfilling. The world needs your talents and contribution.

I leave you with a powerful quote by Helen Keller that had a positive impact on me when I was battling the fear of following my passion. I hope it will inspire you to pursue your dreams.

“The marvelous richness of human experience would lose something of rewarding joy if there were no limitations to overcome. The hilltop hour would not be half so wonderful if there were no dark valleys to traverse.”

## We Are Committed To Career Opportunities For All



730 South Main Street  
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