

LifeMapSM



"LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more enjoyable and abundant life."

February 20, 2007

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One Step Back

We've all had those kinds of weeks. When asked how things have gone, we sigh and answer with the phrase "Two steps forward - one step back." It's fun to fantasize how it would be if life were nothing but a series of one success right after another. But that's not how life is. In fact, some particularly frustrating weeks will come without even the reward of two steps forward.

Quick Links

In our current celebrity-crazed culture the media frequently

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presents us with examples of overnight success. But for every sudden American Idol or jackpot winner there are dozens of achievers who have succeeded the old-fashioned way: one step at a time and, often, two steps forward – one step back. The stories of how these pluggers, who succeed by proceeding steadily, relentlessly toward their goals, may not be as exciting as that of the sudden sensation but they can be a lot more instructive to those of us who are still striving toward our definition of success.

I've read quite a bit lately about dealing with or overcoming failure and though I never thought much about it before I must say I really don't like the word *failure* itself. To me it denotes a certain finality like that of an ultimate defeat with no hope of future success. Instead I prefer words and phrases like *temporary setback*, *detour*, *shortfall*, *unsolved problem*, *current lack of success*, *challenges*, or something at which *I haven't succeeded yet*. This is more than petty semantics. The world gives us more than enough negative feedback and negative messages and to counter this I believe in using every tool at one's disposal to create hope, endurance and optimism. How we speak to others and how we speak to ourselves can do just that. Drop *failure* from your vocabulary and try substituting some of these phrases yourself. Here are a few other ways to turn those temporary setbacks into stepping-stones to your success.

Paths Forward

- **Look For The Why.** You tried to succeed in a relationship and didn't. You tried to succeed with a new boss and didn't. You tried to succeed at that new diet and didn't. The reality of the shortfall is right there in your face; you don't need to dwell on it endlessly and beat yourself up. What would actually be helpful is to evaluate the situation and think through why your efforts came up short. Maybe some insight from another person would be helpful. Incorporate this feedback into your ongoing efforts towards each of these targets, recalibrate your efforts and try again.

- **Commit Yourself.** When embarking on something that is important to you jump in – emotionally - all the way. If you truly believe your goal is worthwhile this commitment should come fairly easily. You'll devote time and energy to it, you'll research and read about it, you'll plan for it and you'll gather resources for it. If you find yourself holding back then take the time to analyze how meaningful this goal really is for you. Perhaps you are doing it for someone else

or perhaps the goal is no longer important to you, or perhaps you've just outgrown it.

● **Repeat Mistakes Are The Real Enemy.** We humans learn things in increments. No one goes from stumbling novice to skilled expert in one jump. Despite our natural discomfort with error and failure these are the normal, predictable elements of learning anything new - be it a musical instrument, a new language or how to successfully live with another person. Obviously the key to learning from one's mistakes is not to repeat them. As with many other issues here is where a journal can come in handy because it is not always easy to see, without reflection, when and where one is repeating one's mistakes.

● **Don't Reinvent The Wheel.** You may be another Jonas Salk, Pablo Picasso, or Oprah Winfrey ready to burst forth with the next new, great development in your field. Even so there is still much to learn from those who have preceded you. Those who create new pathways, who break old paradigms, who teach us to see things in new ways don't start from scratch. Why should you? Modern libraries, countless publications and the Internet now put the wisdom of the ages ever more easily at our fingertips. The sum total of the mistakes, errors, setbacks and, yes, failures of those who have gone before are there for our edification. Reach out and build on them.

● **A Little Crazy Is Okay.** Love isn't rational. It may even make you a little crazy- and that's part of the fun. When I wrote, "*Love Your Job!*" it was because I wanted people to be as charged up about their work as I was and still am about mine. If you are engaged in a task you love it will be much easier to overlook the setbacks you encounter along the way. You may remember that it took Thomas Edison 5,000 wrong tries before he found the right filament for the light bulb. He drove his co-workers crazy with his persistence and they would say, "My God, we've failed again." He would reply, "We haven't exactly failed. We've discovered one more thing that doesn't work, so we're that much closer to finding what will." A little crazy? Maybe. But it's that kind of crazy that can carry you over some obstacles.

● **Your Strengths Will Always Open Another Door.** Life is always tough and many times unfair. Sometimes, regardless of your endurance, optimism and hard work, a valued goal stays just outside your reach. Once there was a promising

young West Point cadet from Lowell, Massachusetts who wanted more than anything to be a career military officer, but he couldn't pass chemistry. He tried and tried again. He failed and failed again and was eventually dismissed from the academy. But he took that same drive and commitment and applied it to his second love – painting – and he became one of the most sought after artists of his generation. His name was James Whistler and his works live on more than 100 years after his death in museums around the world. The alternate door to his ultimate success did not open automatically; it opened because he recognized that failing at one thing did not make *him* a failure. And he had the courage to apply his true strengths in a new direction.

LifeMap is about giving reinforcement to achievers, risk-takers and innovators as they face incremental setbacks and challenges along the way. Setbacks are inevitable – it's *how you chose to deal with these detours* that determines the degree of success and satisfaction that you will achieve in any element of your lifespan.

Resources

Someone you know job hunting or thinking about it?

To order the best, concise, all-round job changing guide available. "Winning Job Interviews: Reduce Interview Anxiety, Outprepare the Other Candidates, Land the Job You Love" by Dr. Paul Powers, click the link below.

Stalled at work? Still struggling to find your true vocation?

Or know someone who is? To order your copy of "Love Your Job! Loving the Job You Have, Finding a Job You Love" by Dr Paul Powers, click the link below.

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Sincerely,

Dr. Paul

Email: **drpaul@drpaulpowers.com**

Phone: 781-237-0550

Fax: 781-237-5721

Web: **<http://www.drpaulpowers.com>**

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