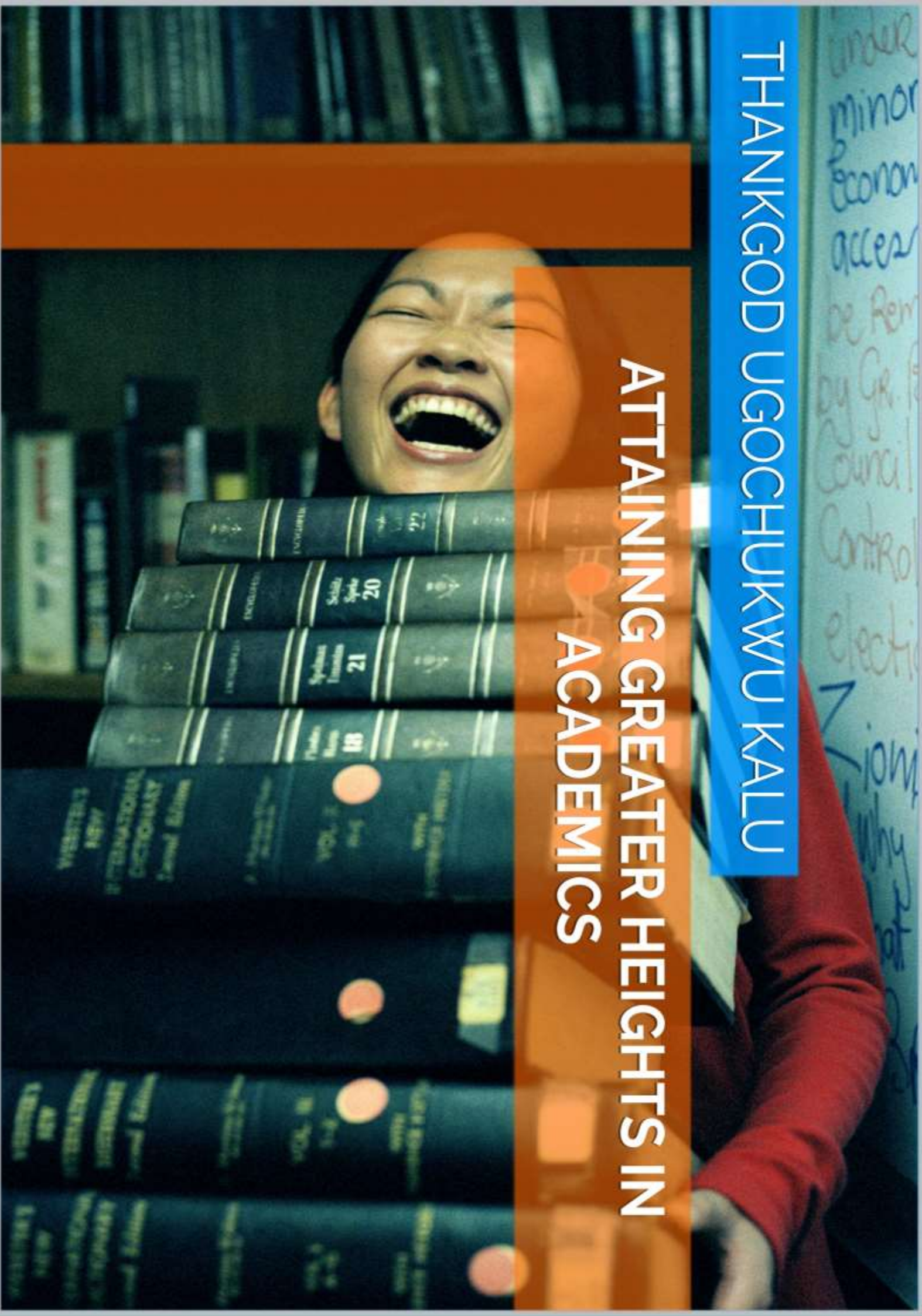


THANKGOD UGOCHUKWU KALU

ATTAINING GREATER HEIGHTS IN ACADEMICS



First Published 2015

THE LORD'S FAVOUR PRESS ENUGU NIG.

10 Nise Street

Uwani Enugu

08069660054

©2015, KALU T. UGOCHUKWU

All rights reserved. No part or parts of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any means information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the author.

ISBN

978-978-52251-0-5

Table of content

Title page

Dedication

Acknowledgement

Introduction

Chapter one:

- Academic heights

Chapter two:

- The push problem

Chapter three:

- Success elements

Chapter four:

- Putting God first
- Visualizing and dreaming
- Desiring
- Goal setting
- Preparation
- Working your dream
- Positivity
- Discipline
- Company
- Determination and Commitment
- Resurgence
- Conclusion

Introduction

Before reading this book, it is important to understand this is not an entertainment book; the main thesis of this book addresses seeming challenges militating against students' academic success in our modern day society. As such the reader should not just read but absorb the contents of this book, by so doing not only will they gain inciting knowledge but more importantly tap into their unexploited potentials as they practices the principles elaborated herein. This book is not just merely for pupils and students but parents also can learn a lot.

If you have ever looked at the academic achievement of others and wished you could achieve the same or even more, such as doing better in mathematics or simply achieving higher levels of success in education; well here is the holler-out to you: you are capable of all that, if you can set your cause right. Everyone has potentials in them to set new records, it sometimes only depend on one's determination to do so. Having a vision and putting on a positive attitude to your vision will undoubtedly go a long way in bringing you to the excellence you so desire and you can be whatever you want to be.

However, there are no true accomplishments without application of the principles of success. Key principles of attaining academics success and greater heights have been discussed in this book alongside several thought provoking quotes by many great achievers. Each time you learn something new use a pen or a pencil to write down or to underline inspiring ideas that you encounter as you read. Sit back and enjoy.

Chapter One

Introduction

Many scholars have defined the concept of academic heights as demonstration of the ability to perform, achieve and excel in scholastic activities. Academic heights have in the sands of time been identified with achieving high grades and superior performance in school.

However, the concept is more than just making good grades. It is the maximum development of one's intellectual capacity and skills in service to humanity.

When parents send their children to school, they expect them to gain knowledge and acquire skills in their various courses of study and eventually gain employment after graduation and become useful to them and also become functional members of the society, thus, directly or indirectly rendering service to humanity.

Most parents toil effortlessly to send their children to school to gain knowledge and skills that the former never had the privilege to gain. Yet, most times the toiling of parents becomes effort in futility.

Some students after spending good number of years in school graduate almost with no education. As we know it, schooling is not the same as education, you can gain education through school but schooling is not a guarantee to being educated. You'd probably wonder how so, let me make it clear early on that education is the permanent-positive change in character and attitude, ideally learning should bring about education but when a reformation, lifelong or lasting changes does not occur then a person is merely schooled or knowledgeable.

Now, back to our students, some of them go through school without the school going through them, laxity is common among this group; academic work does not impress them, books such as this does not interest them nor does the culture of studying; gone are the days students burn candles to study. This group is the ones who do copy and paste for their academic home works from the internet. The incorrigible attitude and poor performance of this group in their academics come as a discouragement to some parents and prompt them to lament sorrowfully. This situation has existed in our society for decades and requires urgent attention by all and sundry.

To remedy this situation, parents, teachers, government, institutions, all community stakeholders and most importantly students have a role to play. To arrest this situation, it won't be easy to see desired results or undo the damages that have occurred for decades.

For a student to maintain a high standard there is need for synergy between the teacher and the student. The employment of qualified and responsible teachers in our academic institutions coupled with the effort of schools to enhance academic performance will go a long way in seeing desired results.

It is the role of the teacher to evaluate and make proper recommendations of the students where necessary. The student in turn has to attend classes, be punctual, active and focused, this will create enabling environment and promote academic competence.

Parents have to contribute their quota by keeping the flag flying by demonstrating the practical parental care and support. They should monitor the companies their children keep, the TV shows they watch and the internet sites they visit; allotting time for academic works and electronic gadgets. Parental control works wonder if well practiced.

Paying of students' school fees in time to avoid being driven away from the school cannot be over emphasized. Parents should also equip their children with everything necessary for school especially textbooks, to enable them to prepare well before academic tests and examinations. A farmer cannot achieve much in the farm without adequate working implements; this applies in the case of a student, s/he must be equipped with adequate materials.

These days we have elected executives celebrating electoral victories with a lot of money; whilst there are dilapidated school infrastructures left attended and abandoned uncompleted school projects; poor education funding; nonpayment of salaries to teachers and much more; are some of the many ways the government has contributed to academic laxity. But there is a way out if they can decide to do the right things, the role of the government to tackle these challenges is so significant to a great extent. The government should ensure education receives the lion's share in the national annual budgets. The palpable problem of understaffing by rationalization and increase in nepotism should be arrested too. The government should ensure that the process already put in place for entrance into teachers professional bodies like the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) and the others are protected against corrupt practices, to ensure that competent and qualified teachers who passed the entrance exam are employed into service. The system must be protected against rich people buying teaching jobs for unqualified candidates.

Payment of salaries and teachers' incentives should perhaps top the list; this will curtail the strike menace and motivate teachers to deliver effectively and efficiently. Instructional materials should never be in lack. Cash prizes and scholarships should be set in place in order to motivate students.

Religious institution and other mainstream institutions are not left out of this responsibility, since some of these institutions have early access to the youths, thus the doctrine of attaining excellence and greatness through diligence should be preached at every opportunity to do so. A stitch in time saves nine.

Chapter Two

The Push problem

The rate at which students switch from the orthodox schools to the option of special or remedial centers or whatever they are called these days is alarming. I believe that parents are partly to be blamed for this unfortunate situation. Most parents tend to push their children academically farther than they can go or should go, just to have them graduate with or before their mates thus, these students fill the gaps with “miseducation”.

People in a hurry never have time for recovery. —Archibald Hart

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education. —Mark Twain

I will call the situation described above “the push syndrome”. Some students being naïve agree and clamor for this academic decay; after all they will gain admissions just like the regular students in orthodox schools, probably even quicker; and of course they believe that the end justifies the means. Make no mistake my friend; it takes more than academic grades to be educated. Good grades in High School or Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations can be bought with money but education cannot be bought. Didn’t Socrates put it right?

An education obtained with money is worse than no education at all -Socrates

In case you are lost, let me explain, the moment you leave traditional school to go to remedial centers, you have soiled a part of you, your moral experience is never the same. The gap that has been created gradually gets filled with all forms of social vices from these uncontrolled environments, you can claim not to be easily influence and all but the fact remains that you can never walk through a stream without ever getting wet. Please don’t miss the point, the remedial centers may advertise high grades for their candidates and all but as I said the experience is never the same, fabulous grades is what it is and

education is what it is. A Tibetan proverb admonishes “*a child without education is like a bird with broken wings*”, how can a bird fly with broken wings? So how can a child change the world with a broken education (broken from the original) through a broken system?

The money used to pay for these dubious results in special/remedial centers ought to be channeled more profitably, do things like hire private tutors, buy textbook, motivational books and other educational books such as the one you’re reading right now and even educational friendly gadget and applications. These can help to mold a student into.

From the forth going, you can agree with me that not everyone subscribes to doing things the right way; there is an assortment of such examples in our society. Little wonder why we have unemployable graduates, most of these graduates belong to that group, most of them jumped the traditional school system to special/remedial centers in their high school era. How can a house survive a great wind upon a broken foundation? Such students will have themselves to blame in a couple of years, sooner or later, you get to a point in life where you face challenges on your own, where there are no shortcuts nor remedial centers, students who have been “pushed” get frustrated and throw in the towel; they lost their way long ago. One may not see the significance now but certainly it is there. But the unfortunate thing with failure at a later point in life is that we tend to blame others for it. This group of students will blame their parents, relatives or whosoever for allowing them go to remedial centers, where they got involved in cultism, alcoholism, drugs, sodomy and the likes of it. But look let’s face the hard truth, even when one finds someone else to apportion blames to, it doesn’t make the problems go away.

Perhaps, in the near future, this set run to prayer houses seeking for divine intervention but they forget that you cannot pray yourself out of what you

behave into. The time to set you free is now! Stand up on your feet and seize your destiny, refuse to be pushed.

Break free from ignorance and receive liberty.

—David Ibiayomie

Chapter Three

Success Elements

The wonder to being successful in school is based on two key elements: managing the mental and physical elements of student life. Therefore, if you can focus on these two factors, you can attain academic heights and success. Follow these steps:

- Write out a study schedule for the term or semester; this will reduce your stress, which will allow you increase your performance with less effort.
- Commit to completing at least 30 minutes of school work a day. Make this mandatory and put this into your schedule.
- Study during the time when and where you are most productive, you need to figure out what time works for you.
- Schedule review time after completing your regular class.
- Learn to say NO to unprofitable adventures. This is the cause of many failed destinies and why many intelligent students struggle in school because they just could not say no.
- Learn at least one new thing a day, even a new word or two a day will suffice.
- And very importantly try to do at least one physical activity every day.

All work and no play make Jack a dull boy...

—Samuel Smiles

- Never short change yourself on sleep and meals, as these will keep your mind sharp.

Many students who perform well in school and in life, follow a completely different strategy than those who work extremely hard but achieve lesser. The attitude of a successful student is taking care of the physical and mental needs both alike.

On the other hand, other students do not give required attention to these factors; they only focus on the outcome they want. The result is that they get stressed out and feel miserable trying to achieve desired results. This brings about withdrawal from academic activities, depression and eventually retrogression. Therefore, if you must succeed in academics, you must never ignore these important elements of success mentioned in this chapter.

These are some of the benefits you stand to gain if you aim to achieve academic excellence by imbibing the success elements:

- ❖ making a meaningful contribution throughout your life,
- ❖ receiving academic scholarships,
- ❖ being in a position to be of service to others,
- ❖ gaining university and national recognitions,
- ❖ being competitive in the job market,
- ❖ the respect of others,
- ❖ getting selected for membership in professional and honor societies,
- ❖ getting selected for competitive academic programs during and after undergraduate studies, and
- ❖ gaining admission to graduate and professional schools.

Chapter Four

The Key Principles

Put God first

Doing first things first always reduces the most complex human problems to manageable proportions. God himself is a God of excellence. He has given you all that you need to succeed at everything you do, all you need do is believe and tap into His abundant resources.

The time for studies must never compete with the time for God, because you need Him to sustain and see you through. The simple truth is you need God to overcome failure, you must understand the place of prayers in your studies. If you let God rule your life, you will rule the world, including your studies or whatsoever you desire.

If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and unbraideth not...

—James 1:5(KJV)

Prayer is the key to real success; we stand tallest when we are on our knees.

Seek God first and all things you want will seek you.

—John Mason

Visualize/Dream

If you visualize defeat you will be defeated, visualize success and you will definitely succeed. One can be whatever they want, go wherever they want, from right where they are now, if they can dream it. Think of it this way: what you see, is what you become. Remember what Helen Keller (that wonderful blind-and-deaf woman) said, “The greatest tragedy to befall a person is to have sight but lack vision.

You are half way to your destination if you can dream that far.

I am sure you that you can only go as far as you see.

—Kalu T. Ugochukwu

Desire

You must desire to achieve your visions and dreams; you need ‘to want’ to attain greater academic heights. You seldom get what you don’t desire for. The emphasis here is to want the success you desire, this want is what will drive you along the way, when the going gets tough you need a drive to keep you going, otherwise no matter what anyone does to help, if the drive is not there, it will all be in vain.

It is pointless to sign you up for something and put in a half-baked effort, because you are not being true to yourself, it will just be a waste of time at the end.

Desire is half of life and indifference is half of death. –Kahlil Gibran

Dreams are never born indifferent. –Napoleon Hill

How many people do you know who became successful at something they hate?

–John Mason

Set a goal/purpose

Successful students have legitimate goals and are motivated by them. Remember your goals emanated from your dream, so the emphasis here is your academic goals not someone else’s goal.

Now remember that there will always be some other person more successful, more talented in their part but you are not running their race, you are running yours. So set achievable goals for yourself.

With dreams you develop momentum; with goal direction... –Bob Harrison

Prepare

Every goal needs a proper strategy to come to life. Setting a goal and not following through is like driving to your destination without knowing the route to follow or making a map. The greater your ambition, the more tactical you should be with your plan to achieve it.

Don't start the term/semester or plan the activities of the new session without a sense of direction. For instance avoid studying too close to tests or examination, as you will fatigue your brain, learning is meant to be done over time, not in a moment. So set out time everyday to study at least a topic per day, week or whatever works for you, make this a part of your plan. Also get your priorities set.

Be ambitious and aspire the best, don't settle for less but set out plans and develop strategies to accomplish them. Planning ahead ignites your passion and that will certainly propel you towards the success that you desire.

Proper planning prevents poor performance. –Tim Redmond

Success is 1% inspiration and 99% preparation. –Thomas Edison

Every minute you spend planning saves ten minutes in execution.

A dear vision, backed by definite plans, gives you a tremendous feeling, confidence and personal power –Brain Tracy

Working your dream

You must understand that all accomplishments steam from dreams courageous people turn into reality. Vision and dreams come true when desire (as a drive) transforms them into concrete action. If you are a Christian remember that even the Bible said 'faith without works is dead'.

Sitting still and wishing makes no person great. The good Lord sends the finishing but you must do the bait. –Zig Zigler

There is a great difference between struggling and working your dream. In working your dream there is love for what you do regardless of condition whether favorable or unfavorable, to producing desired result, not struggling for something you do not love, just because you have to do it. There is but one way to achieve your vision and that is working for it, you cannot sit in a corner and

have your dreams come true, if you are unwilling to pay the price for success then a lifetime of mediocre is imminent.

Action is the foundational key to all success. –Pablo Picasso

Defeat is not the worst of failures, not to have tried is the true failure.

–George E. Woodberry

The dictionary is the only place success comes before work –Vince Lombardi

Success is spelled work. –Robert H. Shuller

Positive Attitude

Great thinkers of old, all of whom we celebrate today for their works, the likes of Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, and Abraham Lincoln just to mention a few were not without mistakes in their quest to bring forth those great ideas and deeds to light but they persistently continued their theories until they succeeded. You can only be great when you think big and have positive attitude towards your goal. If we take an example from the business many great men today like Harrison Ford irrespective of being unable to complete his schooling gained success in the manufacture and design of Ford cars by his great thinking and optimism towards his goal. This type of people worked in conformity with aspirations and positivity, the result is what we see today.

When such thinking and positive attitude are also invested in academic pursuit, the same results are achieved. Negativity and fear are the biggest obstacles to any goal, once you are afraid you're already failing, once you let little challenges discourage you and you give up hope for the best, then you're invariably inviting failure. Positivity is the attitude of an achiever; love what you do with a passion and keep a smiling face; your desired result is not too far away.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

