

## Lesson 39 – Success & Failure

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Successful Samantha has a long list of **impressive accomplishments**. It seems like everything she does ends up being a **phenomenal success**. In her very first job, she created a **highly effective** way to motivate the company's employees, resulting in a **dramatic improvement** in workplace morale.

Now she's developing a system for real-time translation among 100 different languages. If she can pull it off, it'll be an **unprecedented success** (*success in something for the first time in history*) and the **crowning achievement** (*best or most significant achievement*) of her career.

So far, the program has enjoyed **modest success** (*some limited success*) but there is still **room for improvement** (*potential for improvement*). However, Samantha says that the team is **making good progress**, and that in the next month or two she hopes to **make a breakthrough** (*make a sudden advance in success, especially when you overcome an obstacle*).

Although Samantha is very ambitious, she's also a very likeable person. She **brings out the best** in other people, and quickly **wins the respect** of colleagues.

Samantha's brother, Disastrous Dan, is the opposite – everything he attempts seems to **fail miserably**. He wanted to be a doctor, but his teachers told him he wasn't smart enough, **dashing his hopes** (*making him abandon hope*) of a career in medicine. He had the opportunity to do a prestigious internship in another country, but he **lost his nerve** (*lost his courage*) and turned down the offer.

He then applied for various jobs, but **completely failed** to show up to the interviews on time. He was eventually hired, but later lost his job during an economic downturn due to his **mediocre performance** (*average work, not very special*) and total lack of **remarkable achievements**.

Dan then tried to start his own software company to compete with Samantha's; that was a **spectacular failure**. He invested his life savings in the business, despite all his friends telling him that it would be a **recipe for disaster** (*very likely to result in disaster*). His sales predictions were **way off the mark** (*completely inaccurate*), and the company **went under** (*lost all its money and shut down*) just eight months after it was founded.

Poor Dan – it seems like he's **doomed to failure** (*destined to be unsuccessful*). But **if all else fails** (*if everything is unsuccessful*), he can always move into Samantha's mansion **as a last resort** (*a final possibility*)!

## Lesson 39 – Quiz

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1. Edward certainly bet / took / won my respect when he turned down an unethical business deal.
2. Efforts to reduce teen pregnancy through better sex education have seen average / modest / ordinary success.
3. Getting a new haircut has made a crowning / dramatic / theatrical improvement in his overall appearance.
4. I made a real breakdown / breakover / breakthrough in my English when I started practicing listening more often.
5. I wanted to try waterskiing, but I lost my heart / nerve / spirit and ended up staying inside the boat.
6. I'm not a complete pacifist; I just believe war should be the last option / prospect / resort.
7. Immigration reform was the championing / charming / crowning achievement of the president's term in office.
8. My attempts at losing weight have failed inadequately / miserably / strongly - in fact, I've gained a few pounds!
9. My girlfriend really brings / gets / helps out the best in me - I'm a better person thanks to our relationship.
10. Putting inexperienced teachers into the country's worst schools is a method / program / recipe for disaster.
11. Researchers have invented a new, highly / richly / sharply effective treatment for leukemia.
12. The company's advertising campaign was a miraculous / spectacular / wonderful failure - it didn't attract a single new customer.
13. The new movie has been a mediocre / phenomenal / supernatural success, with billions of dollars in ticket sales.
14. There's a lot of area / room / space for improvement in his writing skills.
15. We thought the repairs on the car would cost about \$500, but our estimate was way off the mark / point / spot - it was \$4000.