

CAZ RUSSELL

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FACILITATOR

SHARPEN THE SAW!

One of my many mentors told me “We do not find success, success finds us!” Once I truly learned this, my life changed forever. Many times, I have tried to define success at home, work and at play. Possibly, your definition of success is having lots of money in the bank, a second home at the beach or mountains or even possessing certain material items. To each one of us, the picture of success could and should be different.

With tons of ‘How to be successful’ books on the market, I have found that no one book holds the silver bullet. No one person knows the one Golden Nugget which when achieved, success is obtained. Each person’s journey is truly one of a kind. We may say, I have done that, but very rarely do we all achieve success in the same way. Let’s define what success is and is not.

My personal vision of success is when I achieve my goals; physical, financial, spiritual, career, family, mental and social. I find it amazing how each of these goals and the discipline required to achieve them, affect each other. When one goal is achieved it affects and alters how the next goal is achieved. In other words, one accomplishment helps us obtain the next one. Taking ownership of these goals is always an inside job.

Many times, I have heard the words “Sharpen the Saw!” Quite a few years ago, I had a pretty significant chain saw accident, severely injuring two of my fingers, which the doctor so magnificently repaired. Its incidents in our lives that we reflect upon, which reminds me to be intentional about what I want to achieve. Having a desire to be successful, is the first step in this process. Developing a plan to reach these goals is the next order of business. Asking questions like “What do I want to achieve, how will I achieve them and why do I want to achieve them?” is what Simon Sinek refers to as the “*Golden Circle*.”

Stephen Covey calls it “Sharpening the Saw!” The sharpened saw blade helps us to cut the wood faster, cleaner, smoother and more accurately. In the same way, when we sharpen our human skills, we become more effective leaders, communicators and team players, at home, work and at play. I love the old adage “Keep your nose to the grindstone!” human skills need as well. In woodworking,

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we sharpen our tools by utilizing a harder object such as the grindstone, heat and a consistent hard effort. This is what I term “Intentional Ownership!”

Mel Robbins reminds us that when we have an idea to accomplishing something, say to yourself a countdown 5-4-3-2-1 and then Just do it! Procrastination is the biggest problem we will have tomorrow, answer the following questions so that you may find the right tool to accomplish any goals, large or small.

Zig Ziglar suggests:

- 1) Identify your goals – every arrow shot without a target, just flies thru the air.
- 2) Set a deadline for reaching your goals – hold your feet to the fire.
- 3) Make a list of obstacles that will keep you from reaching your goals.
- 4) Identify the people who can and will help you overcome the obstacles.
- 5) Make a list of the skills you already have and need to achieve your goals.
- 6) Develop a plan, put it in writing, sign it, date it and tell others about your goals – accountability.

I recently made a promise to never text and drive to myself, my spouse and a group of others. Guess what? The next time, while being tempted to text, my mind immediately remembered my promise to others. I needed to hold myself accountable.

What we become by chasing our goals is much more important than obtaining the goals. The Lone Ranger had a silver bullet, which always won the battle. In achieving our life goals, you and I do not have one single item that guarantees success. Our success is determined by continually – **Sharpening the Saw!**

“What will I do today to sharpen my saw? “
“What will I do today to help someone sharpen their saw?”



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