

# INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY

Friday, January 23, 2004

## LEADERS & SUCCESS

### IBD'S 10 SECRETS TO SUCCESS

Investor's Business Daily has spent years analyzing leaders and successful people in all walks of life. Most have 10 traits that, when combined, can turn dreams into reality. Each day, we highlight one.

- 1 HOW YOU THINK IS EVERYTHING:** Always be positive. Think success, not failure. Beware of a negative environment.
- 2 DECIDE UPON YOUR TRUE DREAMS AND GOALS:** Write down specific goals, develop a plan to reach them.
- 3 TAKE ACTION:** Goals are nothing without action. Don't be afraid to get started. Just do it.
- 4 NEVER STOP LEARNING:** Go back to school or read books. Get training and acquire skills.
- 5 BE PERSISTENT AND WORK HARD:** Success is a marathon, not a sprint. Never give up.
- 6 LEARN TO ANALYZE DETAILS:** Get all the facts, all the input. Learn from your mistakes.
- 7 FOCUS YOUR TIME AND MONEY:** Don't let other people or things distract you.
- 8 DON'T BE AFRAID TO INNOVATE; BE DIFFERENT:** Following the herd is a sure way to mediocrity.
- 9 DEAL AND COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE EFFECTIVELY:** No person is an island. Learn to understand and motivate.
- 10 BE HONEST AND DEPENDABLE; TAKE RESPONSIBILITY:** Otherwise, Nos. 1-9 won't matter.

#### Be Persistent And Work Hard

## Keep Aiming For Results

Second Of Two Parts

**5** Want to speed that climb up the corporate ladder? Build a reputation for delivering results.

It's not what you bring to the table, it's what you leave there, leadership trainer Stuart Levine says in "The Six Fundamentals of Success."

Achievers master several principles, he says, including these:

■ **Conquer the kings and queens of chaos.**

If you're implementing change, be prepared for a small minority to block it through disruption, Levine warns.

People resist change "because they're afraid of what they don't know. They build a resistance bonfire with 'It can't be done,' 'We've always done it this way' or 'Let me play devil's advocate.' They'll have a thousand reasons not to do something."

Chaos kings breed fear

that the initiatives will fail. They then do what they can to ensure self-fulfilling prophecies. Levine's solution? Take their power away "with frequent communication. Give them a voice, but don't let them dominate. Use facts and statistical information to counter baseless claims."

Keep everyone in the loop to obliterate rumors, and make everyone responsible for success at the outset. This will discourage "extreme naysayers from letting things slip on purpose to prove the initiative was flawed," Levine said.

■ **Manage your risks.** Spearheading a new project can be a great way to get recognition, but be aware of the risks going in. If development money is involved, "make sure you're clear about what reward the organization expects to gain" and how much it's willing to bet before you're asked to cut your losses.

"Identify as many scenarios as possible, positive and negative," Levine advised. "What could go wrong? What opportunities might emerge that you'll need to respond to quickly? What's the likelihood these things will happen?"

Also, make sure "everyone understands what you're doing and why," he said.

■ **Treat the firm's money as your own.** Achievers know the big picture is often a mosaic. They master details — sometimes down to the penny. "If your company's profit margin is 10% and over the course of a year your group saves \$10,000 in expenses, that has the same impact on profit as if you generated \$100,000 in new sales. Be relentless in eliminating waste," he advised.

On business trips, stay at moderately priced hotels and keep meal tabs down. "Travel as if you could be spending your pay raise," he said.

When leaving the office at night, "turn off the lights, your computer and anything else that's wasting electricity and money."

■ **Behavior speaks for itself.** When hiring, meeting new clients or shaking hands with new negotiating opponents, remember this, Levine said: "People often reveal who they are to you in the first few minutes. Don't ignore what you see — it could come back to haunt you."

"Treat people's actions as indicators. Don't jump to conclusions, but don't ignore their behavior either. It's not judgmental to read the signs. It's just smart."

**Cord Cooper**

# INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY

Wednesday, January 21, 2004

## LEADERS & SUCCESS

### IBD'S 10 SECRETS TO SUCCESS

# It's All In The Approach

Investor's Business Daily has spent years analyzing leaders and successful people in all walks of life. Most have 10 traits that, when combined, can turn dreams into reality. Each day, we highlight one.

**3 Take Action:** Goals are nothing without action. Don't be afraid to get started. Just do it.

#### First Of Two Parts

**3** The surest route to the fast track is the one paved with results. Delivered on time. Without fail.

Become known for delivering what you promise - and a whole lot more - and you're halfway up the next rung on the ladder, says leadership trainer Stuart Levine.

Get-noticed delivery often turns on boiling down information effectively and motivating your team, Levine says in "The Six Fundamentals of Success."

Boost your odds by remembering these principles, he urges.

**■ Data don't equal knowledge.**

Interpretation is the key. The more you can take raw information and turn it into a tool for growth, the more valuable you'll become, he says.

If translating data for a peer or higher-up, "ask yourself how the person will use it. What's relevant? What's new about what you're forwarding? How much does the person really need to see? What's the best way to format or highlight it so its significance is clear?" Levine said.

**■ Build ownership from the start.**

When assigning tasks, clear explanations are the best tools for results and accountability. Tell people what you need done - and how you'll measure success. Indicate "what the consequences will be if they don't deliver," Levine said.

Don't be confrontational - just matter-of-fact: "If we don't make these numbers, market share will drop X%. Commissions will drop and

bonuses will be out the window."

**■ Never overexplain.**

Tell team members what the goals are, offer guidance - but let them flesh out their own action plans.

When performing on their terms, Levine says, people push themselves harder than they'll let others push them.

**■ Don't fear realism.**

When you're given a project you know isn't feasible, don't say so at the outset. Hear your boss out, accept the task positively, but also sketch out the potential downside.

"Ask what the larger goals are and how success will be measured. Then bring together the people who will be involved in making it work. Give them the information you have, and together determine how you'll carry out the strategy: the specific tasks, the milestones, start and finish dates, the technology and money," Levine said.

"Be creative. Be aggressive. But if the project is really not possible within the constraints you've been given, be honest. Go back to your boss with a realistic plan that achieves his goals. Walk him through the plan and show him specifics. Details keep the conversation from becoming theoretical."

**■ Make every meeting a strategy tool.**

Levine suggests locking the doors when meetings are scheduled to begin. This assures prompt start times - "with every participant in the room."

Make meetings motivational by noting individual and team achievements. Check progress on goals, and set new ones where possible.

Balance criticism with praise - and the bad news with the good. People should leave meetings fueled to achieve, not sapped of their energy.

Part two: Friday.

**Cord Cooper**