

Success Comes Through Confidence and Caution

As Shakespeare said, 'coin always makes sound but the currency note is always silent. So when our value increases, we must learn to keep ourselves calm'. Being successful is easier than handling the same. It is always easier to reach the top than staying there. So, we should learn to handle and manage our success and ought never to allow it to go to our head. Once we allow our success to go to our head, it can spoil the same so much that it can blur our vision and discretion which is prejudicial to success in any walk of life. It is from here that our downward descent starts.

Confidence and style should infuse and inform our deportment and comportment. Repeating again, if we don't respect ourselves, then why should others? An umbrella can't stop the rain, but it allows us to stand in the rain. Confidence may not bring success, but it gives us the power to face any challenge. A mountain is never higher than our confidence because it will be under our feet once we reach the top. A bird sitting on a tree does not fear the branch breaking down because it does not trust the branch, but its own wings. Confidence comes naturally with success, but success comes only to those who are confident.

It is much easier to criticise and find fault. Finding fault in others is as easy as finding shells on the sea-shore. Therefore, it is always advisable to have a heart to help, if we wish to have the right to criticise. We need to realise that the effect of a pat on the back is much better and heart-warming for both, the patted and the pater, than talking ill openly or behind some one's back. It makes a world of difference. So, we should exercise this faculty of ours with a lot of care and caution. As far as possible, we should be very composed and parsimonious with our criticism and very generous with our praise. As a Sanskrit maxim suggests, we should praise in the open, in front of everyone, but should criticise in camera. So, we should not criticise or embarrass anyone in public. The same must be done in private.

It is easy to judge the mistakes of others. But it is difficult to recognise our own mistakes. As they say, it is easier to protect our feet with slippers than to cover the earth with carpet.

Charity always begins at home. So through self-analysis and post-mortem, we should learn to see through our own mistakes and take corrective measures accordingly.

There are two kinds of fools in this world. There are those who give advice and there are those who don't take it. So, we need not be either. We should not give unsolicited advice to any one, outside our office or close family, as it does not gain us any credit, rather it builds an image of a wiseacre or a 'Mr. Know-How', unnecessarily trying to pile on. And also, we should not deem ourselves to be so competent or knowledgeable to know anything and everything as to not requiring any suggestion or advice from anyone.

We should judge the person and his/her advice, deliberate over it and accept or reject the same depending upon its utility/merit or relevance with respect to the problem at hand. We should always be willing to learn and from anyone. And as a learner, we must be as humble as a learner or a student ought to be. We should be thankful to the person from whom a lesson is learnt and acknowledge the same accordingly and respectfully. We must remember that growing old is mandatory, while growing up is optional. So, if we wish to grow up, then we should always be more than willing to learn newer things and from anyone. We may not learn everything from everyone, but there is always something to learn from anyone.

Often we are very afraid of taking unpopular decisions, so much so that we end up hurting our larger individual or organisational interests in the process. So, if a difficult situation stares us in the face and warrants us to take an unpopular decision, we should not mind doing the same. Such a decision may hurt us in the short run, but is beneficial in the long run.

In a particular incident, where a train was diverted to protect many children who were playing on an operational railway track was diverted to the closed track where a single child was playing. Life of one right person was sacrificed for the sake of many others even though the latter were wrong and the former was right. The great critic Leo Velski Julian who told the story said he would not try to change the course of the train because he believed that the kids playing on the operational track should have known very well that the track was still in use, and that they should have run away if they heard the train's sirens.

If the train were diverted, that lone child would definitely die because he never thought the train could come over to that track. Moreover, that track was not in use probably because it was not safe. If the train was diverted to the track, we could put the lives of all passengers on board at stake. And in our attempt to save a few kids by sacrificing one child, we might end up sacrificing hundreds of people to save these few kids. While we are all aware that life is full of tough decisions that need to be made, we may not realise that hasty decisions may not always be the right one. We should not forget that what's right isn't always popular and what's popular isn't always right.

We may have heard some of these short, sweet, success-oriented instructions before, but they bear repetition because they've withstood the test of time. If we pay attention and take them to heart, they can guide us in the direction of great things. Life will never stop challenging our abilities, our integrity and our motivation. So we have two choices: we can meet life's challenges forewarned and thus forearmed, or we can learn a lot of important lessons the hard way.

Salient Points

- When our value increases, we must learn to keep ourselves calm.
- It is always easier to reach the top than to continue staying there.
- Confidence may not bring success, but it gives us power to face any challenge.
- Confidence comes naturally with success, but success comes only to those who are confident.
- It is always advisable to have a heart to help, if we wish to have the right to criticise.
- If we wish to grow up, then we should always be willing to learn from anyone.

Glossary:

Deportment: behaviour

Comportment: behaviour

Parsimonious: stingy