

A black and white photograph showing a close-up of a hand holding a fountain pen, writing on a document. The document has some faint, illegible text on it. The pen is positioned over the text, and the hand is steady. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the paper and the metallic sheen of the pen.

First Deserve, Then Desire

Often we have ambitions beyond our abilities and capacities. Setting goals not in sync with our inherent qualities often cause embarrassment and disappointments. So, we should not desire something if we don't deserve the same. And if we are determined to be deserving of a great opportunity or great successes, we should also be ready for the gruelling, hard work ahead ably backed by a micro plan. If we don't design our own life plan, chances are that we shall fall into someone else's plan. We should never forget that the number of those desirous of a coveted place in the sun, exceed by many times, but there is only one pot at the end of the rainbow.

So, we have to master all those requisite qualities and attributes in such a way as to make us more than worthy to deserve what we have desired. There are some common qualities, which are a desideratum for success anywhere, and if we have mastered them, sky is the limit for us. They, inter alia, include a very good command over knowledge of our field (remember what they say about 'knowledge being power'), a reasonably good communication skill, self-confidence, capacity to work hard, honesty in everything we do and a concern for the larger society.

Possession of, at least, some of them in good proportion may do wonders for us. The more we can add to our positive qualities, the better. The most important of these positive qualities include a good communication skill with equally good knowledge of our field, not to speak of a polite and positive outlook. If we have them all in reasonably good measure, sooner or later Lady Luck would be smiling on us and showering the bounties we have desired all along. As they say, 'If you want something, which you never had before, do something, which you never did before'. We should always remember that great achievements and great love involve great risks. As Steve Martin said, 'Be so good that they can't ignore you'.

Our attitude and approach should always be positive as they make a world of difference to the way our life turns out. We should not only know what we want, but we should also know how to achieve what we want. One should have a 'game plan' for any and every problem. If we take care of small things, big things shall take care of themselves. So, we should always be positive.

That is why William James, father of American Psychology, said, 'The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind'. Just like a great building stands on a strong foundation, so does success. And the foundation of that success has to be the positive attitude coupled with plenty of hard work.

A study by Harvard University found that when a person gets a job, 85 per cent of the time it is because of their attitude and soft skills, and only 15 per cent of the time because of how smart they are and how many facts and figures they know. As they say, we see only 10 per cent of any iceberg. The remaining 90 per cent is always below the sea level. The iceberg phenomenon is also applicable to human beings. Every problem has a solution, only if we perhaps change our attitude. To go to the top, to that 100 per cent, we need to change our attitude. It is our attitude towards life and work that makes our life 100 per cent. By changing our attitude, we can change our life. We should not walk as if we rule the world. We should walk as if you don't care who rules the world. But we must rule our self, because that is important and that is called attitude.

It has long been felt and believed that we should start our day on a positive note, in a positive mood otherwise we may not be happy at the end of the day. As they say, 'well begun is half done' or 'morning shows the day', so we should always start our day on a pleasant note as a positive and pleasant outlook and mood then reflects on what we do through the day. Otherwise, a negative, sullen mood may spoil our day and all our planned activities for the day as the sullen and negative mood reflects on everything we do through the day. So, we must guard against such a thing.

We should always be thankful to the Almighty for what we have instead of grouching all the while for what we don't. We should always remember God has given all of us the same qualities and possessions. It is completely up to us as to how do we use the same. We should be creative and innovative. We should think differently and positively. Yes, if we are ambitious and have the grit and determination to move the mountains, then we can indulge in the luxury of setting a high profile life goal that may not even match with our extant inherent qualities. But to repeat again, fortune always favours the brave.

So, all we need to do in such a situation is to uplift our self to meet the demands of our dreams. If we choose a goal in which we are really interested and are passionate about, nothing on earth can stop us from achieving what we want. As Goethe also said, "The important thing in life is to have a great aim, and to possess the aptitude and perseverance to attain it."

We must always remember that only those succeed who believe in the beauty of their dreams. While some succeed because they are destined to, most of us succeed because we are determined to. Success naturally comes to those who dare and act, and not to those who are timid and afraid of the consequences. Winners recognise their limitations, but focus on their strength. Losers know their strength, but focus on their weakness. Whether our luck is with us or not, but our abilities are always with us. A paper always flies due to its luck, but a kite flies owing to its ability.

One thing that is very important when we set about the achievement of any goal is an honest self-appraisal. We should, through a thorough introspection, cross-examine our self and ask

our self as to whether we have all the requisite qualities necessary for the achievement of the goal that we have set for our 'Self'. Any mistake at this level could prove suicidal and would lead us nowhere. So, we should try to avoid under or over-estimation of our 'Self'. Under-estimation of our potential would not only waste the human resource in us, but it would always make us feel dissatisfied and unfulfilled throughout the life. On the other hand, over-estimation would not only keep the success away from us, at the end of the day it would also make us feel completely frustrated and incapable of any worthwhile attainment.

We should always be on our guard when we set about the exercise of self-assessment. We should never let others take decisions for us at this level, even though others can definitely help us arrive at our decision. We should take our own decisions and fight our own battles. And we should also never forget to do a cost-benefit analysis before we finally take any decision. We should always weigh all the options available before us and then opt for the one we deem most suitable for us for successful completion of the task at hand. As the great Indian philosopher Chanakya would advise, before we start some work, we should always ask ourselves three questions, i.e., 'why am I doing it?', 'what the results might be?' and 'will I be successful?'. Only after we have done some deep thinking and found satisfactory answers to these questions, we should venture out to do the work.

Salient Points

- We should not desire something if we don't deserve the same,
- If we don't design our own life plan, chances are we shall fall into someone else's plan,
- If you want something, which you never had before, do something, which you never did before,
- Human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind,
- Fortune always favours the brave,
- The important thing in life is to have a great aim, and to possess the aptitude and perseverance to attain it.
- Winners recognise their limitations, but focus on their strength. Losers know their strength, but focus on their weakness.

Glossary

Gruelling: tiring and demanding

Desideratum: something needed or wanted

Soft skills: a cluster of personality traits that characterise one's relationships with other people

Grouching: complaining

Grit: courage and resolve

Sullen: bad tempered and sulky