



SERIAL WINNER



5 ACTIONS TO CREATE YOUR **CYCLE OF SUCCESS**



LARRY WEIDEL

Advance Praise for

SERIAL WINNER

“Larry Weidel is a leader with the ability to be both personally successful and reproduce that success in others. It is a rare skill; very few people can do both. In *Serial Winner*, Larry shares his unique vision and pairs it with the actions you need to take to win over and over again in business and in life.”

—**Glenn Williams**, CEO of Primerica

“Success in life and business always requires a multistep formula of discovery and integration. Larry Weidel’s experiences in business have resulted in a playbook of tips and tricks as he characterizes and defines the common traits of the serial winner. The serial winner is a finisher that is omnipresent, humble, always self-aware, and emotionally intelligent. This winner is also a leader and a team player that is constantly optimistic, self-improving, and growing. In addition the focus, the ability to do grunt work with perseverance, and the willingness to adapt to change are the hallmark exemplary features of this successful individual. This book challenges us to discover that the win is always within each of us waiting to be mastered!”

—**Bert R. Mandelbaum**, MD, author of
The Win Within: Capturing Your Victorious Spirit

“For over a decade, Larry has been an invaluable mentor who has pushed me to achieve repeated success. *Serial Winner* captures Larry’s key teachings and presents the ideas in terms that anyone can understand and apply to all endeavors. All you need to succeed are the desire to be your best and Larry’s five actions!”

—**John Clendenin**, US Ski Hall of Fame member and
founder of the Clendenin Method

“*Serial Winner* will teach you to cultivate habits that will help you build a winner’s attitude. Each chapter is full of tips and anecdotes that will inspire you to be more committed to your goals and embrace the perseverance to reach them.”

—**Todd Mullins**, lead pastor, Christ Fellowship

“There’s a saying that goes, ‘You are what you eat and the company you keep.’ Larry Weidel is definitely great company. He has proven to be wise and resourceful in his approach to success. *Serial Winner* is an eye-opening tool for anyone needing guidance and motivation for next-level thinking. If you like winning as much as I do, this is for you.”

—**Lee Haney**, 8-time Mr. Olympia,
past chairman to the President’s Council on Fitness, founder
of the International Association of Fitness Sciences

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LARRY WEIDEL



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References to A. L. Williams (now Primerica) are historical in nature. Primerica offers a tremendous opportunity for individuals who work hard and who desire to develop a business with strong income potential.

Published by Greenleaf Book Group Press
Austin, Texas
www.gbgroup.com

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Distributed by Greenleaf Book Group

For ordering information or special discounts for bulk purchases, please contact Greenleaf Book Group at PO Box 91869, Austin, TX 78709, 512-891-6100.

Design and composition by Greenleaf Book Group
Cover design by Greenleaf Book Group
Cover images: ©iStockphoto.com/seamartini

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available.

ISBN: 978-1-62634-234-7

Part of the Tree Neutral® program, which offsets the number of trees consumed in the production and printing of this book by taking proactive steps, such as planting trees in direct proportion to the number of trees used: www.treeneutral.com



Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

15 16 17 18 19 20 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

First Edition

Other Edition(s):

eBook ISBN: 978-1-62634-235-4

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THE CYCLE OF WINNING

We all know people in life who seem to move from success to success, with barely a pause or dip in between. They're always talking about their next big project or goal. They're always excited about *something*. They have limitless energy, which they use to accomplish more and more. They are role models and opinion-makers. They always seem ahead of the game. They stay on their feet. They lead rewarding lives.

They are serial winners. In a world full of people who almost win, they are the few who do it again and again.

To most of us, serial winners are confounding. They seem to have the ability to shed the negatives in life and attract the positives. How do they find the energy or time? we ask. How did they get there so fast? How do they fit it all in? We just don't understand how these people achieve what they

do. Because for the most part, they don't seem all that special. Many of them started where we did. Sure, some had elite training, but most didn't have any extra advantages (and some had even fewer)—they worked their way up from the streets. (Did you know that most millionaires in the United States are first-generation or self-made?)

So we try to follow their moves. We study what they say. We may stick some of their better quotes on the wall. We even copy their style—how they dress, their mannerisms, their haircuts. They become our models. Why? Because we want similar things. We want opportunities. We want to contribute to our communities. We want to lead fulfilling lives. We want to have fun! We want to do big things. Yet we still seem to be missing some important piece.

That piece is *action*—consistent action that leads to consistent self-management.

Serial winners leverage a cycle of *winning action* to make progress. They *do something* every day that puts them or keeps them on course for the things they want in life. Along the way, they steadily overcome friction and other forces that could slow them down or knock them off course. By focusing on what they can and should do, they manage themselves out of tough, demoralizing situations. The result? They are always moving forward, following their passions, having fun, and contributing to the world.

What about you? Are you achieving everything you want to achieve? Are you making the progress you would like, or do

you feel stuck? Do you have an itch to break out, try something new, or go for more? Is there something great you want to make happen in your career, your life, or even the world?

If you're okay with your life remaining exactly as it is now, this book probably isn't for you. But if you can picture yourself doing more and doing bigger, this book can help. Because the only difference between you and a serial winner is five basic actions.

And there is nothing keeping you from applying those five actions in your own life.

THERE'S NO PATENT ON ACTION

Even though it may not seem to be true, everybody has won and lost. No one has a perfect batting average, and no one has struck out every single time. Anybody who tells you different is trying to sell you something, so be sure to read the disclaimers. Serial winners bounce back, move on, and win anyway. And they do it through action.

I've had big successes, but I also had to accept food stamps for a time just to keep my wife and two young boys from going hungry. Today I'm a multimillionaire, but I once had a boss label me Turkey of the Month in a company-wide newsletter (no kidding). I know what it is to have nothing go right, to be passed over for promotions, to be the one applauding others who were getting ahead. But I've learned a lot about success and winning along the way. And I have spent the past

forty years building a national financial services organization and helping the many, many people on my team achieve the success they want. Hundreds have been able to earn six-figure annual incomes, and even more have earned the label “millionaire.” I had to dig harder and longer than some people, but when it takes you longer, you value the results and what you learned along the way more.

When I started my career, everything was hard. But my weaknesses gave me an edge. I knew I didn’t have a chance of making something great out of my life unless I paid attention. I studied the winners I knew closely. I asked *a lot* of questions. (I’m surprised people didn’t start walking the other way when they saw me coming.) And I figured out what I had to do—step by step, detail by detail—to improve. I caught on to the fact that the people who were winning weren’t better than me. They simply *did things that I wasn’t doing*.

I learned something important: nothing can keep us from doing what winners do. There’s no copyright on wisdom, and there’s no patent on action.

My biggest advantage has been the incredible circle of advisors and mentors in my life. I learned about coaching from “Bullet Bob” Turley, professional pitcher and winner of the Cy Young Award. My cousin, Edward Roberts, who was known as “the father of the personal computer,” taught me how to follow my curiosity and apply my drive. Art Williams, founder of the A.L. Williams & Associates life insurance company (now Primerica), taught me a lot about how to be a winning leader.

Everything I've achieved, I've achieved by watching the best. How do the best do it? How did they get to the top and how do they stay on top? I wasn't interested in modeling just anyone. I wanted to watch what the top people did, because obviously they knew and did things that most people didn't. Life is too short to figure everything out on your own.

Unfortunately, not enough people have access to great mentors and coaches. They aren't close enough to serial winners to spot the simple pattern they all apply. And that is why I wrote this book—to help people discover the patterns that could catapult them to a new level of success and happiness.

THE CYCLE OF WINNING

Over the years, I figured out the go-to moves—the cycle of action that winners use to achieve what they want. The winners who return to this cycle again and again, day after day, have serial success. These five actions get them on track and help them stay on track. What are they?

- ***Decide***
- ***Overdo***
- ***Adjust***
- ***Finish***
- ***Improve***

It's true, these concepts aren't complicated. But the greats from every walk of life talk about using them to win. So why don't more people win? Because most people don't really understand them, don't apply them, or don't apply them consistently. "Yeah, yeah, I know," they say. But what they believe is that these actions seem too simple to be important. There must be something more to it, right? So they keep looking for a more complicated answer that doesn't exist, ignoring the valuable answer they've already been given.

Here's the bottom line: Anyone who wants more out of life and is frustrated enough to do something about it can learn and apply what winners do. Winners keep things simple. And where winners always start is with these fundamentals. So if you ever find yourself asking, "Who says I have to sit on the sidelines? Who says I have to live on the leftovers of people who are doing the things I would like to do?" this is where you should start, too.

WINNING ISN'T A ONE-TIME THING

Will Rogers once said, "Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." You may be a hard worker. You may have a great attitude. (In fact, I'm pretty sure these sentences describe you because lazy, negative people don't buy books like this.) But to win in life, you have to keep making progress. Winning isn't a one-time thing.

Unfortunately, when some force has come along and

knocked us off our path, we can become confused. We don't have a clue as to what to do next, so many of us stop doing anything. We sit there.

What I will help you discover is practical answers to the most basic of all questions: "So *now* what do I do?" The answer is, "Turn to the fundamentals. Go back to the basics." The cycle of winning can always guide us to appropriate action. It shapes how winners respond to whatever life throws at them.

If you are struggling to choose a path and start down it, I'll explain how to decide on a goal or destination and commit to it. If you've started down a new path but don't seem to be making much progress, I'll show you how to build momentum. If you have hit a hurdle that is stopping you in your tracks, I'll share the methods that all winners use to adjust and keep going. Most important, I'll help you keep yourself from quitting when you are moments away from winning. And then I'll describe how to keep going—on to the next and bigger thing. What I will come back to again and again is the importance of *doing*.

If things aren't happening for you right now, there's something you can do about it. And it's probably one of the five fundamentals I'll cover in this book. As you read, you'll realize that you're already doing some of these things. But one or more of them will jump out at you—the things you're missing. It's like a Ferrari with a bad spark plug. Switch it out and you'll be covering ground fast. Stop talking about what you want; stop thinking about what is holding you back. Instead, turn

your frustrations and desires into actions. The discipline of consistent action is what self-management is all about. It's the only way to win and keep winning.

I want to get you excited about what's possible and to show you how easy it can be to achieve what you want faster by digging deep on the fundamentals. My mission is to launch a revolution of doing, to unleash an army of people who are ready to race forward toward the great big things they *really* want to do—that they are destined to do.

If you're ready to join that army, read on.

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1

DECIDE

2

OVERDO

3

ADJUST

4

FINISH

5

KEEP IMPROVING

*THE
CYCLE
OF
WINNING*

CHAPTER 1



DON'T HESITATE, DECIDE

In football, the clock is always ticking.

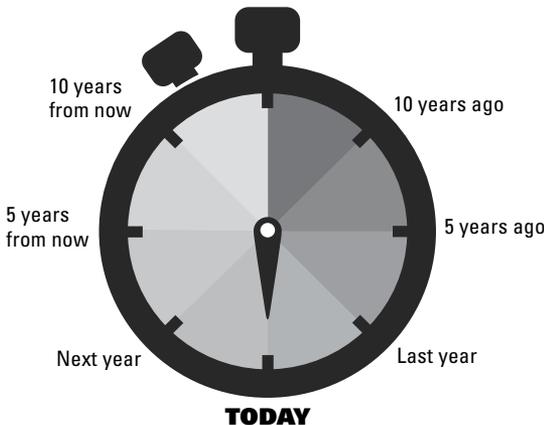
You're the coach, and the game is going to be over before you know it. You'll probably run seventy-five offensive plays, and every single one of them is designed to score a touchdown. If you're lucky, maybe three or four of them will result in points on the board. But at any moment in the game, you call the play that you think is the best option. If it doesn't work out the way you wanted, at least you have more information when choosing the next one. And maybe you're in a better position. No matter what, you don't waste time hesitating or debating. *You keep calling plays and you keep moving down the field.*

Art Williams used to tell me this all the time. It has a powerful message behind it that has always stuck with me:

If you want to win, you have to keep moving forward. To keep moving forward, you have to keep making decisions.

Unfortunately, too many people who have the urge to do big things get stuck somewhere along the way. Some people get stuck early. For others it happens later in life. Maybe somebody convinced them they simply aren't good enough. Maybe nobody was around to show them how to take the next step. Maybe something went wrong and they can't seem to figure out what to do next. Whatever the reason, they lose their nerve. Doubt takes over and they hesitate, they lose time, they get farther behind. They become convinced that they don't have what it takes to win or they lose touch with what it is they

**Decide or Drift.
Either Way, the Clock Is Ticking.**



really want. Eventually, they stop making decisions that will move them forward. They stop *trying*.

Serial winners don't let little, limiting things like doubt and uncertainty stand in their way. Lack of advantage doesn't matter. The people who say, "You can't" don't matter. They focus more on what they want than on why they can't have it, and then they decide to do what it takes to get it. Then they dive in. They see something they want—a promotion or two or three, a new career, their own business—and they make the big decision to go for it. Then they make smaller decisions every day that keep them moving toward the goal, and the next one, and the next one.

WINNERS CONQUER DOUBT



The three killers of dreams are detail-itis, excuse-itis, and the hesitation virus. And they all stem from doubt.

Not one of us is free of it. We all have moments when we question our ability to succeed and our ability to make good decisions. Why? Because we can't know the future. Winners feel doubt just as often as anybody else. They understand you have to earn success. They know you can't be haphazard if you want to make progress toward your most important goals. These truths inevitably lead to questions about their ability to succeed.

If we aren't on guard, though, those moments can expand and can kill our spirit. They can demoralize. They can give us a faulty perspective. They can distract us and disrupt our forward momentum. They can waste our precious time. The

clock is ticking and you can spend your time worrying and doubting or you can spend your time working.

When you allow doubt to send you into a tailspin of indecision and hesitation, you invite fear. You grind to a halt. All work stops, and with no work, you have no hope.



*With fear comes paralysis, and with
paralysis comes certain failure.*

When winners feel doubt, they manage themselves—as fast as possible—away from the overwhelming tendency to hesitate, overthink, and overanalyze. They combat doubt with decision that drives positive action. They take the next step as quickly as possible, whatever it is. Serial winners know that the worst thing you can do is to let yourself get frustrated, confused, and stalled out. They do allow themselves to question, however, because finding out the facts helps them set a definite path. Galileo said, “All truths are easy to understand once they are discovered; the point is to discover them.” Confusion is the beginning of clarity. This is how progress is made in the world and this is how progress is made in our lives.

The decisions we make and the actions we take are how we create the life we want. You’re either living the life you create for yourself or you’re living the life that other people

create for you, with their decisions and actions. It's your life. You have to live it. It might as well be the one you choose.

Throughout the rest of the chapters, I'll explore different sources of doubt that can blindsides us. But if you feel stalled out or stuck right now, a good first step to getting going again is to take a close look at your fundamental beliefs about what's possible.

BREAKING OUT OF THE COCOON

When I was growing up, we moved every year because my father was in the military. By the time I was twenty-one we had moved twenty-seven times and I had gone to twelve schools in four different states and three different countries. Eventually, I was old enough to notice that the people in each place we lived had their own views about the world. Sometimes those views were very different. And even as a kid I knew that sometimes those views were just not accurate—because I had already been exposed to quite a bit of the world. Many of the people I met had not. They lived in a cocoon.

Whether you recognize it or not, you probably live in a cocoon, too—or did at some point. We all have.

The cocoon starts with the protected environment in which we grow up. It's constructed of opinions, values, beliefs, and priorities. We absorb them from our parents and the few adults we encounter in our early formative years. Within this cocoon, we learn what's right and what's wrong, who we trust

and who we don't, what's important and what isn't, where we belong and where we don't, and most important, what's possible and what isn't. The people in our lives—family, teachers, community—create that cocoon based on what they've been told and what they've experienced. These attitudes and beliefs are embedded deep in our core as we grow up. Even if we grow up to be very different from our parents or other adults in our community, we've been influenced by them in a thousand little ways. We often don't even realize how much so.

Now, your cocoon might be made up of encouraging beliefs, like “Anything is possible if you want it badly enough” and “You've got what it takes to succeed.” But from what I've seen and from the people I've met, that's not the case most of the time. I would bet that some of the beliefs that make up your cocoon aren't doing you any good. They are limiting. They convince you that statements like “I don't have what it takes” or “Things like that don't happen to people like me” are true. These are just lies we have internalized, based on myths about what it takes to win in life.

Not sure you believe in the power of the cocoon? Take a look at the research done on how what we believe affects our performance, our ability to learn, and so many other things. Carol Dweck, author of the popular book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (Random House, 2006) conducted a study with middle-school students with lousy math grades. One group was taught study skills. The other group was taught the same skills *and* the idea of the “malleability

of intelligence”—they were told they had the ability to get better at math because they could grow their intelligence and get smarter.¹ Which group do you think got better at math? The second group. Why? Because they believed they could! Somebody shared *facts* that helped them conquer their doubt. The truth is that the biggest factor in what we achieve is what we believe we’re capable of achieving.

Our cocoons have the power to influence us—unless they are challenged. It doesn’t matter where your cocoon came from or what it looks like. Until you break out of it, you’ll have a hard time fulfilling your potential. People who do break out either are forced out by the things they experience or fight their way out. Let me help you make a dent by breaking down some of the myths that exist in most cocoons.

The Myths of Advantage

Misinformation about what makes some people successful and others not seems unavoidable. Depending on where we came from and the experiences of our family and friends, we’ve been bombarded by any number of myths about winning. They hang out in our subconscious and influence our thought processes and our actions.

Even though everybody’s cocoon is different, most of us share certain myths. The most common and debilitating are the myths of advantage:

- ***Myth #1: Winners are just born that way.***

Let's talk about the people who start life with every advantage. You know who they are. They're smarter. They learn faster. They're naturally talented in sports or music or computer programming. They have sparkling, magnetic personalities. They stand out in a crowd. Studies have shown that people who are better looking, people who are taller, and people who have higher IQs generally make more money. They are born to win, and if you aren't one of them, you'll always be runner up.

- ***Myth #2: Winners come from better families.***

People from better families are destined to succeed, of course. They grow up with loving parents who have good jobs. They live in the right neighborhoods. Their parents never criticize or belittle them. Instead, they support them in all their endeavors, encouraging them to study, to compete, to be the best they can be. If they need extra coaching or special equipment to improve, you can bet it's available.

A better family usually means a better network of well-connected friends and relations who are happy to help these people get ahead. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, neighbors—everyone wants and expects them to win. People from better families grow up safe and secure, knowing they'll never have to “go it alone.”

They are so well loved, well coached, and well cared for by their family and friends that they have no fear of the future. They are ready to step into their roles as guaranteed winners. The road to the top is paved for them in advance.

▪ ***Myth #3: Winners are better educated.***

Education creates an unbeatable advantage. All winners are in part successful because they graduate with important degrees, usually from the best schools. They've benefited immeasurably from specialized, elite training that most people only dream of. Their superior education allows them to think on a higher level. They know how to strategize. They never run out of ideas. They're incredible problem-solvers and leaders, with the ability to organize and run huge projects.

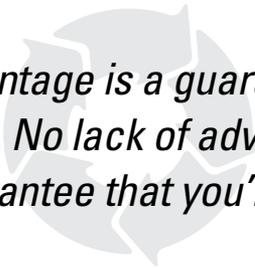
Their formal education has allowed them to meet and develop relationships with experts—mentors who took extra time and care to reveal all the secrets of success. When problems arise, this network of experts can be called upon to deliver the right answers right away. As a result, winners almost never get stuck.

So what do you do if you don't fit the winner's mold? What if you aren't naturally gifted? What if you don't have a great, supportive family and a spectacular, high-dollar education? You should give up! It's pointless to compete with people who

are sure to get the best positions, the best opportunities, and the lion's share of support. Unlike you, they won't have to experience the pain of a slow start or the disgrace of failure.

Does this sound like BS? Of course it does! And yet on some level, *most of us believe it*. We live in a cocoon of belief that our disadvantages will prevent us from creating the life we want.

Here's the truth:



*No advantage is a guarantee that
you'll win. No lack of advantage is a
guarantee that you'll lose.*

Bust the Myths

It's up to each of us to overcome our particular circumstances and to make the most of what we're given. No myth about winning can stand up to that truth. As Calvin Coolidge once said, "Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent."

Everybody is born blessed with some level of talent and

ability. Those natural advantages can certainly help you win—but only if you're willing to develop them and put them to work for you.

Unfortunately, that's often not what happens. Sometimes too much of a good thing can backfire. Being gifted can make life difficult. Gifted athletes may struggle to prove they aren't "dumb jocks." Geniuses can struggle to relate to other people. Most of us assume that really beautiful people aren't very intelligent. (How surprised are you when you find out that a model attends an Ivy League college?) And being naturally good at something can make it difficult to learn the pattern of hard work necessary to reach elite levels.

Likewise, having a supportive family can give you a strong foundation, but parents can only drive you so far in life. Eventually you have to take the wheel. And while privileged children may get lots of attention, many times it's of the wrong kind. They grow up with unrealistic expectations for themselves, piled on top of unrealistic expectations from those around them. They may be pressured into activities and even careers for which they have no passion or aptitude. That pressure can cause them to burn out early. Growing up in a wealthy family can breed even more challenges: an entitlement attitude, poor financial judgment, an inability to connect fulfillment with contribution to the world. Why do you think Warren Buffett plans to give away 99 percent of his wealth before or after he dies? He has famously said, "I want to give my kids just enough

so that they would feel that they could do anything, but not so much that they would feel like doing nothing.” Whatever the circumstances, no family or upbringing is perfect.

An education can be a valuable thing, it's true. But as someone with a degree from both a four-year college and the school of hard knocks, I can tell you that there are many things you need to learn about how to succeed that the best colleges in the world will never teach you. People don't get an automatic pass into the boardroom just because they graduated from Harvard. Degrees give you credentials, but they don't necessarily do anything for your character, coach-ability, and commitment—which play huge roles in your ability to achieve. A college education is only a start. I'm proud to be a graduate of Georgia Tech, but I know that your most valuable education happens outside of the classroom, and usually begins after you receive your degree.

If you're feeling undereducated, it might be helpful to know how many people have done big things without a college degree, or even a high-school degree in some cases. Here's a short list: Bill Gates, Paul Allen, Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, Warren Buffett, Ray Kroc, Walt Disney, Annie Leibovitz, Wolfgang Puck, Ellen DeGeneres, Richard Branson, Kelly Clarkson, Mark Zuckerberg, Glenn Beck, Cindy Crawford, Carl Bernstein, Paula Deen, Andrew Carnegie, Winston Churchill, Michael Dell, Ted Turner, David Geffen, and Larry Ellison, to name just a few. Most of these people are

millionaires and quite a few are billionaires. And many are doing big, world-changing things with their money.

The Disadvantage of Advantage

The biggest disadvantage of an early advantage is that growing up in a “perfect” world can make you soft.

I think this is why Henry David Thoreau wrote, “It is the greatest of all advantages to enjoy no advantage at all.” When you’ve had it easy, it’s hard to adjust when things start to get a little tough. If you grow up without learning how to overcome obstacles on your own, you might not recover when you suffer your first failure. And you will fail. Everybody does. Winners are the ones who know how to keep moving forward anyway.

William Deresiewicz, who was a Yale professor for ten years, wrote a book titled *Excellent Sheep* (Free Press, 2014) that makes similar points. The most privileged students at the best colleges aren’t being taught to think and don’t understand how to create meaningful lives:

The system manufactures students who are smart and talented and driven, yes, but also anxious, timid, and lost, with little intellectual curiosity and a stunted sense of purpose: trapped in a bubble of privilege, heading meekly in the same direction, great at what they’re doing but with no idea why they’re doing it.²

Deresiewicz makes strong points, but I don't think he uses the word "driven" correctly. The people he's describing are going through the motions, doing what's expected of them. Granted, those expectations are high and meeting those expectations takes hard work, but that's not drive. That's being bullied into pursuing a life you aren't even sure you want.

By comparison, disadvantages are often the source of drive and determination. You've heard the old cliché, "It's not the size of the dog in the fight; it's the size of the fight in the dog." It's true. Millions are born with advantages and never learn how to leverage them.



***Every day, people with fewer advantages
and more drive decide to outthink,
outwork, and outperform their more
"advantaged" counterparts.***

Check out the most-valuable-player award winners on high-school, college, or even pro teams. They often aren't the most gifted players. Invariably, they *are* among the most committed and driven.

Whether you have passion or talent or some other advantage, it's meaningless until you do something with it. In the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30), the Lord sends a

message: doing nothing with the resources we're given because we fear the possible outcome is offensive. Why? Because that's not how we contribute to the world or lead meaningful lives.

YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF TO GET THE FACTS

I played just about any sport I could when I was in school—football, basketball, baseball, tennis, even track and field. I was never the best athlete, but I always made the team. Why? My father was in the US Air Force, and I was often in schools on military bases or in towns nearby. The schools were usually small, which meant you had a good shot at getting on just about any team if you tried out. So I was exposed to lots of teams and lots of coaches in lots of towns.

When I look back on it, it's amazing to me the lack of vision of the coaches I played for—people responsible for coaching, teaching, and inspiring young athletes. None of them had any vision other than getting ready for the next game or match. I don't remember starting a single season with an inspiring speech about winning the championship. I never heard them talk about making extra effort in order to make the all-star team. They never talked about other players they had coached who had gotten sports scholarships. Maybe they had limited views of their own abilities. They were in their own cocoon. Because of this, they couldn't envision anything greater for the athletes.

Some of the people I played with were really good. They had elite-level talent. I don't know if they were cut out for the pros, but they definitely could have received college scholarships if they had put in a little extra effort. Unfortunately, nobody ever told them that was a possibility. Sure, we had a general sense that the team could get a bit better through practice. But nobody ever sat us down and said, "If you really want to improve, if you want to try for a scholarship, here's what you can do." We never talked about clinics. We never talked about special coaching to build certain skills. We never talked about off-season camps. No one challenged us to look higher, to shoot for bigger things. Amazingly, no one mentioned the possibility of becoming an all-star or getting a college scholarship. So none of us considered these opportunities or put in the kind of effort necessary to make them happen.

The truth is that at the professional level of every major sport, you'll find players who came from small towns and small teams with poor facilities. Often, a coach, a parent, or another adult made the difference by pushing the athlete to go for something bigger. They got scholarships, they became all-stars, they got drafted. If you read the stories of some of the football greats, you'll find out that a lot of them worked hard just to make it onto the third string of their college teams. Success didn't come easily, and early on they didn't look that special to most people. But because of their drive to improve and the belief that they had a chance to succeed, they became special. Often you'll hear

them say that it all started when someone saw potential in them and challenged them to go for greatness.

Look at Kurt Warner—he wasn't even drafted by the NFL out of college. In fact, he couldn't even get a Division I college to give him a scholarship. But he never lost his grip on his dream of playing in the pros. It took him a while. He had to attend a Division II school, play in the Arena Football League, bag groceries at \$5.50 an hour to survive, and then play in NFL Europe before he got his chance. But once he did, he made an impact. In his second year he quarterbacked the St. Louis Rams to victory in the Super Bowl, winning the game's MVP award in the process!

Just because somebody tells you something can't be done doesn't mean that it can't. Just because somebody never tells you you're good enough or capable enough to make something happen doesn't mean you aren't. It simply means that they don't know how to do it. Why do we have the word "pioneer" in our language? Because we need a term for all the people who do things that nobody else has ever done. And they are everywhere.

I knew a woman who wanted to become an editor at a publishing company. Apparently, it's tough to get in on the editorial side of the business. The competition is fierce. Even though she was told that getting a job in a non-editorial department would never lead her to an editorial position—it would only put her on track for promotions in that

department—she took a job in production. She kept signing up for cross-department groups, offered editorial advice on her projects when it seemed appropriate, developed positive relationships with the editors, and eventually, she got a job in editorial. She couldn't believe all the email she received from others in production offering congratulations and asking how she had made the leap.

What beliefs about what is possible and what is not run rampant in your company? Are you letting them hold you back?

It's easy to fall into the trap of believing what we're told by people who seem to know better or who seem to have our best interests at heart. We usually don't consider that there is more they *aren't* telling us, usually because they don't know. The people teaching or guiding us frequently only have the opportunity to study winners from afar; they never get past the superficial “packaging.” What winning looks like from the outside is advantages and luck. From the perspective of families or communities or groups where few people break out and do something big, this is especially true. Their assumptions about winning are wrong—they never learn what makes true winners tick. Incorrect assumptions based on incomplete evidence are the source of the myths we believe and of our own doubts.

Instead of accepting the myths and doubts, winners challenge them. They don't meekly accept that they don't have a chance. *They don't let themselves be bullied into not trying.* They dig in and find out for themselves if what they're being told

is true. They find out if the obstacles they're facing are big enough to make trying a waste of time. Usually they find out that lots of people facing the same obstacles win anyway.

Take a look at what it is you believe about success and try to figure out who planted those ideas. Were those people winners? Did they achieve what they wanted in life? If not, should you trust that what they've told you about winning is true?

Conquering doubt means finding your own answers to the questions you have about how to succeed and then developing faith that you'll find a way to make it happen.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In the mid 1970s, Larry Weidel was just a few years out of college when he was promoted to a well-paying job as the supervisor for a top real-estate construction company in Atlanta, Georgia. However, it was not long before the oil embargo and economic turmoil hit the company hard, and Larry found himself without a job. He was forced to accept unemployment checks and food stamps in order to feed his young family. Refusing to settle just for any available job and determined to find a more stable industry, he decided to tough it out until he found the right opportunity. It took nine long months, but in 1975, he found it—a chance to help build A.L. Williams, now Primerica, an award-winning financial services company that has grown to more than 100,000 representatives.

During his decades at Primerica, Larry has learned the fundamentals of winning from mentors like baseball legend Robert “Bullet Bob” Turley and Art Williams, the founder of the company and a billionaire philanthropist. He has built a team that consistently outperforms. Over the years, hundreds of his sales and management team members have been able to generate six-figure annual incomes and even more have become millionaires.

Larry holds weekly coaching calls for an audience of hundreds of top leaders across the United States and Canada. His videos on leadership, sales, recruiting, and training are widely popular inside and outside the company. Through his website, WeidelonWinning.com, he shares articles, podcasts, and other resources to help people overcome the obstacles preventing them from winning in any area of life.

Larry is a proud graduate of Georgia Tech, and due to his success in business has been able follow the advice of his cousin H. Edward Roberts (the inventor of the first commercially available desktop computer) to “stay fresh and motivated by following his natural curiosity.” This guidance has spurred him to try new and interesting things that also provide opportunities to spend quality time with his family. He plays guitar, banjo, and the drums; is an avid skier, golfer, and hunter; and today devotes much of his spare time to photography (you can see his work at larryweidelphotography.com). Pursuing the patterns of winning, even in his hobbies, has kept him

energized and has exposed him to people and ideas that have profoundly influenced his business and his life.

He splits his time between Palm Beach, Florida, and Aspen, Colorado.

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