

Habits of Exceptionally Successful Leaders

In an August 2015 Business Insider article, Richard Feloni writes about the relationship between self-made industrialist Andrew Carnegie and journalist Napoleon Hill, in which Carnegie decided that Hill would be the conduit for sharing his strategies for leadership, success and wealth creation..

Their conversations and Hill's own research on hundreds of self-made millionaires became the basis of the 1937 book "Think and Grow Rich." Years later, Hill held a series of lectures in Chicago that expanded on the principles explored in his book. Those lectures are now collected for the first time in print in "Your Right to Be Rich." Feloni collected his observations on what it takes to be exceptionally successful from the sixth speech in the series, on personal initiative and lists 26 habits he found the most successful leaders have in common.

Here are 10 for consideration.

1. They surround themselves with people smarter than them.

It's common to find huge egos among the leaders of any industry, but they also know the extent of their capabilities and seek out people whose talents can complement theirs.

2. They are self-reliant.

A talented network and support group are necessary, but the most successful leaders also have a degree of self-reliance that allows them to pursue their definite purpose regardless of circumstances.

3. They can control their enthusiasm.

All successful leaders are salesmen of a sort. That's to say they have a genuine passion for whatever drives them and are able to communicate this enthusiasm to others without overdoing it.

4. They gather information before reaching conclusions.

It's important not to make decisions or form opinions about a person or topic on a whim, ignoring relevant data.

5. They are open minded.

"Unless you form the habit of maintaining an open mind on all subjects — toward all people at all times — you'll never be a great thinker, you'll never have a great, magnetic personality, and you certainly will never be very well liked," Hill says.

6. They listen more than they speak.

The most successful leaders don't use conversations to fuel their self-worth, but rather as a way of learning from another person.

7. They pay attention to details.

A good leader is someone who observes all the things that are happening around them, the good things and the bad things, the positives and the negatives.

8. They can take criticism.

Hill says if you aspire to do something noteworthy in your field, you will draw criticism regardless of who you are or how well you do your job. Exceptional leaders aren't disturbed by critical remarks, but they do pay attention to ones that have merit and take lessons from them.

9. They learn from their mistakes.

A key difference between leaders who achieve their purpose and those who fall short is the perception of mistakes as worthwhile educational experiences rather than humiliating failures.

10. They praise the achievements of others.

Leaders who achieve a high level of success are comfortable with themselves and do not seek praise from others. They do, however, build strong relationships and inspire their team members by recognizing their good work.