

Success

Point of the Assignment: 1) To help you to identify your personal opinion on what success looks like to you.
2) To recognize how much a person's perception of success impacts their goals, actions, self-perception, and relationships.

Instructions:

1. Review the list of possible definitions of success and highlight everything you relate to. If there is something not listed, then use the "Other" line.
2. Among those definitions highlighted, identify between three (3) to five (5) of those to be most important to you.
3. Rank the 3-5 items in order of importance to you. List them as separate items.
4. Answer the questions in Part I. Be sure to list those 3-5 items separately and in priority order.
5. Finish the rest of the assignment as directed.

Definition of "Success": "Favorable or desired outcome."ⁱ

(The following are a few examples of how many people may choose to define success)

- **Achievement** (*Achieving previously-defined goals*)
- **Authenticity** (*Not false or copied; genuine; real; representing one's true nature or beliefs; true to oneself or to the person identified*)
- **Career** (*Types of jobs obtained, goals accomplished, etc. Having a rewarding, respectable, exciting, well-paid career, working for a well-known or respected company, etc.*)
- **Community** (*Being a well-respected member of your community and/or a productive or contributing member of your community – neighborhood, church, etc. Impacting the lives of others. Willingness to sacrifice individual needs and wants to benefit the greater good, etc.*)
- **Conformity** (*Behaving consistently with social standards, attitudes, practices, etc.*)
- **Consistency** (*Staying the same over time and/or in different situations/environments, etc.*)
- **Creative Expression** (*Having a lifestyle that allows you the freedom to express yourself through activity, creating new things, etc. That activity can be how you earn a living, or it can be done as a hobby, volunteer or other free-time activity.*)
- **Education** (*What you learn, types and/or levels of degrees, GPA, awards received, where you go to school, etc.*)
- **Equality/Fairness** (*Everyone is treated the same, held to the same standards, and/or given same opportunities, etc.*)
- **Equity** (*Different from equality. Giving each person what they need. Some need more and some need less based on their individual circumstances and/or Socio-Economic Status. Distribution to different populations will be different based on needs.*)
- **Expertise** (*Being very knowledgeable about a specific topic to the point where others come to you for advice, consultation, and for help in solving problems within your area of interest.*)
- **Fame/Reputation/Notoriety, etc.** (*To be well-known beyond your own sphere of influence- celebrity, politician, professional athlete, author, etc.*)
- **Family life** (*Good marriage, having children, healthy relationships, healthy/happy/ successful children, etc.*)
- **Financial** (*Your level of income, savings, and/or responsible spending, etc.*)
- **Friendship** (*Having relationships with friends that are healthy, deep, meaningful, loyal, supportive, respectful, and/ or will stand the test of time*)
- **Happiness** (*Being happy and content with your life as it currently stands*)
- **Hard Work** (*Earning what you have through your own effort and labors, etc.*)
- **Health** (*Physical, Emotional, Mental, Spiritual*)
- **Helping** (*Being in a position to positively impact the lives of, or to serve, others.*)

Success

- **Image** (*Giving the impression of success by how you, dress, act, live your life, and your material possessions, status symbols owned, etc.*)
- **Inclusion** (*Making sure that everyone has an opportunity to participate, without regard for their physical ability, Socio-Economic, demographic, or other characteristic that may otherwise exclude them from a given activity.*)
- **Independence and/or Autonomy** (*Able to take care of your own needs and wants. Able to achieve your goals on your own without the help of others. Do not need anyone else to accomplish some goal. Not a burden on others.*)
- **Individuality** (*Standing apart from the crowd. Being a 'non-conformist'. "Thinking outside the box." Able to distinguish what makes you a unique and special individual, etc.*)
- **Integrity** (*Living a life that is consistent with your own personal value system*)
- **Intelligence** (*Being smarter than others. Able to understand and/or engage with highly intelligent or educated people. Able to solve complex problems, etc.*)
- **Knowledge** (*Having the intellectual resources needed to answer questions, solve problems, carry on intelligent conversations, etc.*)
- **Life/Work Balance** (*Able to have a life where you are satisfied with your career, its benefits, and yet still able to have a satisfying personal life*)
- **Lifestyle** (*Where you live, having desired personal possessions, personal accomplishments, vacations, what you are able to give to your family, etc.*)
- **Loyalty** (*Faithful devotion to people, group, institution or principle*)
- **Material Possessions** (*Owning a house, car, toys, clothes, jewelry, name-brand products, etc.*)
- **Meaning and Purpose** (*Living your life for something that is greater than yourself: i.e. dedication to a cause, finding a cure for cancer, ending world hunger, fighting for your political point of view, etc.*)
- **Membership / Group Affiliation** (*Being able name yourself as being part of some community or group -- family, neighborhood, school, employer, citizenship, branch of military, etc.*)
- **Nature/Naturalist** (*This can take many forms, such as wanting to live in or be in natural outdoor settings, living a life that is not harmful to the environment expressing or being your natural self, working towards an environmentalist cause, feeling comfortable with being seen in public in your natural appearance (i.e. no make up or dyed hair, etc.)*)
- **Overall Perspective** (*Being able to view things from a big-picture perspective. Having a general understanding of all relevant issues related to a subject matter.*)
- **Passion** (*Having a clear sense of what you are passionate about, and/or being able to live your life in service to your passion, etc.*)
- **Persistence** (*Staying with something to the end, continuing on through adversity and unexpected trials, completing goals/dreams despite obstacles, etc.*)
- **Physical Attractiveness** (*Able to arouse the interest of others based on physical appearance, etc.*)
- **Political** (*Impacting the political world in ways you believe are important*)
- **Popularity** (*Liked by a lot of people*)
- **Power** (*Having influence over other people, things or decision-making processes*)
- **Provider** (*The ability to earn enough income to provide for the needs and/or livelihood of family and other loved ones*)
- **Social life** (*Having sufficient/satisfying romantic experiences, dating, and/or friends, etc.*)
- **Spiritual life** (*Your relationship with your Supreme Being, personal spiritual formation, participation in church activities, etc.*)
- **Stability** (*Having a life that is dependable, predictable and does not change much.*)
- **Status symbols** (*Possessing certain brand name products: clothes, cars, etc.*)
- **Titles** (*Having an official title, such as doctor, lawyer, president, vice president, manager, officer, Dr., Mrs., Ph.D., MS, BS, Senior ____, lead person, etc. May also include the ability to have certain initials or titles after one's name on doors, offices, business cards, etc.*)
- **Travel** (*Able to travel as frequently as desired and/or to destinations of preference*)
- **Other** (*Other examples not mentioned above*): _____

Success

Factors affecting success that you can control: *Setting goals, accepting personal responsibility for achieving goals, your attitudes, actions, choices, and reactions to other people things, and events etc.*

Factors affecting success that you can NOT control: *Another person's attitude and choices, economy, labor market trends, technological advances/automation, world forces that affect economy and labor market trends, etc.*

Part I: Your Definition Of Success – Which are most important to you?:

At this point in your life, **how do you define “success”?** Provide a minimum of **three to five examples** of how you define success, and then take the time to think about where that impression comes from. (*Be sure to list your examples of success in order of personal importance to you.*)

a. **Success Source #1:** *(from list above):* _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success? _____

b. **Success Source #2** *(from list above):* _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success? _____

c. **Success Source #3** *(from list above):* _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success?

d. **Success Source #4** (*from list above*):

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like:

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success?

e. **Success Source #5** (*from list above*):

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like:

Why does this represent success to you?

What is the source of that definition? – In other words, where did you learn this is success? (*I.e. Culture, family, religion, media, friends, role models, personal likes/dislikes, other, or combination, etc.*)

Based on the factors affecting success above, what can you do to increase the likelihood of you achieving this level of success?

Which Success Symbols are LEAST (or NOT) important to you?

Success

Take the time to identify at least two (2) symbols of success that other people care about, **but you do not:**

a. **Success Source #1:** *(from list on the first page):* _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why is this NOT important to you?

b. **Success Source #2:** *(from list on the first page):* _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why is this NOT important to you?

c. **Success Source #3:** *(from list on the first page):* _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why is this NOT important to you?

d. **Success Source #4:** *(from list on the first page):* _____

Give example(s) of what achieving this level of success should look like: _____

Why is this NOT important to you?

Part II: Your Perception of Your Own Personal Success:

1. **How does this perception of success impact your personal desires/wants?** _____

2. **How does this perception of success impact how you spend your time?** _____

3. **How does this perception of success impact your daily actions, behaviors, and choices?** _____

4. **How does this perception of success impact how you make, spend and/or save your money?** _____

5. **How close do you think you are right now to achieving those levels of success?** (*Already there, on my way, off track, completely failed, etc.*) Explain your response:

6. **Think of a time in your life when you had a different perspective of success.** (*i.e., being popular in high school, driving a fancy car, getting a good-paying job, etc.*)

a. What did success look like then? _____

b. What was the source of your perception? _____

c. How did this perception affect your attitude, lifestyle, goals, choices, etc.? _____

d. What was the outcome? (*Did you achieve it or not?*) _____

e. What changed your perception? _____

Part III: Your Relationship With Someone Who Values a Different Form of Success:

a. Name a significant person in your life with whom you have differences of opinions on what success looks like. What is his/her name and relationship to you? _____

b. How does this person define success? If you know, then list them. If you are not sure, then you will need to ask that person. (*List them in order of importance to him/her*) _____

c. What do you believe is the source of that person's perception of success? _____

d. How do these differences in defining success affect your relationship with that person? _____

e. What can/should you do to improve the quality of your relationship with that person? _____

Test your understanding:

What is the main point of this assignment?

Why were you expected to do this exercise?

Success

What type of person would need to do this exercise?

How well do you fit the profile of the person for whom this assignment was created?

Reflection: *(Write down your response after completing this assignment.)*

ⁱ Merriam Webster (1988). Webster's ninth new collegiate dictionary. Springfield, MA: Merriam Webster.