

Jeffrey J. Mayer

From the author of the best-selling *Time Management for Dummies*™

Success Is a Journey



7 Steps to Achieving Success in the Business of Life

Is your life hectic and complicated?

- ✓ **Have you lost track of what you really want to be doing with your life?**
- ✓ **Have you forgotten the goals, dreams, and desires of your youth?**
- ✓ **Are you achieving the success you once dreamed of?**
- ✓ **Are you so busy that you don't have time to think about, let alone answer, the age old question: "What do I want to do when I grow up?"**
- ✓ **Do you have too much to do and not enough time?**
- ✓ **Do you rush from one meeting to another, to another, to another?**
- ✓ **When you return to your office do you have a bunch of voice mail messages that need to be returned, and scores of e-mail messages that need replies?**
- ✓ **Is your desk piled with papers that need your attention?**
- ✓ **Do you have sticky notes attached to your computer monitor as reminders of things to do or people to call?**
- ✓ **Are your in- and out-boxes filled with unopened mail, faxes, express delivery letters, and who knows what else?**
- ✓ **Do you come in early, stay late, work weekends, and never seem to catch up?**

In *Success Is a Journey: 7 Steps to Achieving Success in the Business of Life*, Jeffrey Mayer, the author of the best-selling book *Time Management for Dummies™*, shows you how to make your dreams come true. He gives you the tools you need so you can discover what it is you were born to do. He helps you develop a Master Plan of ACTION, and then shows you how to implement that plan. And most importantly, he gets you to start thinking about who you are, what's important to you, and what you want to do with your life.

(continued on back flap)

Success
is a
Journey

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Success is a Journey

7 Steps to Achieving Success
in the Business of Life

Jeffrey J. Mayer

McGraw-Hill

**New York San Francisco Washington, D.C. Auckland Bogotá
Caracas Lisbon London Madrid Mexico City Milan
Montreal New Delhi San Juan Singapore
Sydney Tokyo Toronto**

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Mayer, Jeffrey J.

Success is a journey : 7 steps to achieving success in the
business of life / Jeffrey Mayer.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-07-041129-8

1. Success in business. 2. Life skills. I. Title.

HF5386.M472 1998

650.1—dc21

98-42939

CIP

McGraw-Hill



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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 DOC/DOC 9 0 3 2 1 0 9 8

ISBN 0-07-041129-8

Printed and bound by R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company.

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*To my wife Mitzi and my daughter DeLaine.
I love you both very much.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people who have contributed to the successful creation of this book, and I would like to thank and acknowledge them for their help and contributions.

I would like to begin by saying thank you to Betsy Brown, senior editor; Susan Barry, editorial director; and Philip Ruppel, vice president and publisher at McGraw-Hill. When I first pitched the idea for this book to Susan, I could tell by the tone of the telephone conversation that this was a book she was very interested in. Shortly thereafter Susan introduced me to Betsy, who told me that *Success is a Journey* was a book McGraw-Hill wanted to publish. Needless to say, I was thrilled.

It has taken more than a year to turn my manuscript into this book, and Betsy deserves a lot of credit for helping me to write such a great book. Betsy, it's been a pleasure working with you. I appreciate all of the help, assistance, and guidance you've given to me.

Kurt Nelson, Betsy's editorial assistant, is the glue that holds everything together. Kurt, thank you so much for getting answers to questions and responding to my queries so quickly.

Lynda Luppino is McGraw-Hill's marketing manager. Lynda, thank you for taking the time to work on the marketing and promotion of *Success is a Journey*.

I would like to thank art director Eileen Kramer and her staff for doing a great job designing *Success is a Journey's* cover.

Elwood Smith is a very talented artist and one of the world's best illustrators. He's just brilliant. This is the third book Elwood has illustrated for me. I want to thank Elwood and Maggie Piccard, his wife and

representative, for all their contributions to my literary works. You can see more of Elwood's work on his Web site, www.elwoodsmith.com.

McGraw-Hill put together an entire team of people to edit and design *Success is a Journey*. I would like to start by thanking Jane Palmieri, McGraw-Hill's editing supervisor. Jane did a masterful job of coordinating, scheduling, and overseeing the entire editorial process.

Jane assigned the task of editing and producing *Success is a Journey* to North Market Street Graphics in Lancaster, PA. Art Director Patti Kahler, Paginator Lisa Kochel, Customer Service Rep Ruthann Sherbine, and Copyeditor Stephanie S. Landis did just a wonderful job. I had many long conversations with Stephanie about the final editing of my book, and she was wonderful to work with. Thanks to all of you for all your help.

The final member of the editorial team was Beth Oberholtzer of Beth Oberholtzer Design in Lancaster, PA. Beth, thank you for doing a wonderful job of designing and laying out the pages of *Success is a Journey*.

I would like to say thank you to the people who are responsible for promoting *Success is a Journey*: Claudia Riemer-Boutote, director of publicity and marketing communications; Evan Boorstyn, associate director of publicity; and Lydia Rinaldi, senior publicist.

And finally, I would like to thank the two women in my life, my wife Mitzi and my daughter DeLaine, for their love, support, and encouragement during the two years it took me to research, write, and edit this book. They left me alone on the weekends so that I could write. And they didn't ask too many questions about why I was sitting at the computer at 4:00 A.M. on a Saturday or Sunday morning. I promise to make less noise in the future.

CONTENTS

Life and Work Have Become Hectic and Complicated	1
Where Are We Going with Our Lives?	2
What Is Success?	3
Success Depends upon Your Expectations	4
What Were Your Expectations?	5
How Did You Do on the Test?	5
Did You Solve the Problem?	5
Did You Close the Sale?	6
Was the Company Successful?	7
How Did the Team Do?	8
Success Comes from Participation	11
Some Things to Think About	12
The Thirteen Characteristics of Successful People	14
STEP 1	
Successful People Have a Dream	19
Principle #1: Successful People Have a Dream	21
Become a Dreamer	23
Principle #2: Successful People Have Fun	24
Principle #3: Successful People Have Desire	27
Principle #4: Successful People Have Faith	29
Principle #5: Successful People Make Their Own Luck	30
Principle #6: Successful People Aren't Afraid of Failure	33
Overcome the Fear of Failure	35
Principle #7: Successful People Don't Quit!	36
Principle #8: Successful People Don't Take No for an Answer	38

What Have You Done with Your Life?	41
What Have Been Your Major Accomplishments?	41
What Are You Most Proud Of?	42
What Are Your Skills and Talents?	43
What Do You Value Most in Life?	45
STEP 2	
Successful People Have a Master Plan of ACTION	47
Creating a Master Plan Saves You Time	49
Put Your Plan on Paper	50
Creating Your Master Plan	51
Your Master Plan Is Constantly Changing	52
Create a Board of Directors to Help You Execute Your Master Plan	53
Speak with Many Different People	55
Listen to What Everybody Has to Say	55
Get Rid of the Naysayers	56
What Can You Do for Each Other?	56
What Do You Want?	57
STEP 3	
Successful People Get Results	59
Clean Up the Clutter	61
Cleaning Off Your Desk	61
Tools of the Trade	62
Cleaning Up the Mess in Four Easy Steps	63
Organizing Your Desk Drawers	64
Clean Out Your Desk File Drawer	65
Setting Up Your Master File Drawer	66
Setting Up Your Master Filing System	67
Dealing with Reference Materials	69
Setting Up a Reading File	70
Read with a Pen in Your Hand	70
Setting Up a Resources File	71
Using Your Master List	72
Put Your Master List Inside Your Computer	77
You Need a Place to Store Personal Information	

Activities Are Scheduled with People	81
View Your Tasks in Many Different Ways	82
View Your Activities by Person	82
View Your Activities as a List	84
View Your Activities on a Calendar	85
The Power to Modify Activities	86
Automatically Roll Over Your Unfinished Activities	
from One Day to Another	87
Rescheduling Activities Is Easy	87
You Can Take It with You	88

STEP 4

Successful People Take Responsibility for Their Time 91

Increase the Value of Your Time	93
Give Yourself a Raise	94
Give Yourself an Extra Hour Each Day	96
Do One More Thing Before You Call It a Day	97
Setting Your Priorities	99
Successful People Don't Procrastinate	100
Create a Sense of Urgency by Setting Deadlines	102
Focus on the Important Tasks, Not the Urgent Ones	105
Be the Person Who Solves Problems	107
Take the Time to Solve Problems	108
Getting the Most out of Each Day	111
Schedule an Appointment with Yourself	111
Make the Most of Your Prime Time	113
Give Yourself the First Two Hours of the Day	114
Take Control of Your Meetings	116
Avoid Impromptu Meetings	119
Schedule Your Telephone Calls	120
Schedule Time to Meet with Your Staff, Colleagues, and Co-workers	121
Taking Control of Your Day	123
Technique #1: Identify Your Three Most Important Tasks	123
Technique #2: Schedule Your Day	123
Technique #3: Who Are Your Biggest Time-Wasters?	127
Technique #4: Keep a Journal of Your Daily Accomplishments	127

STEP 5

Successful People Build Relationships with the *Right* People 129

Networking: The Art of Making Friends	131
Give Yourself the Opportunity to Meet a Lot of People	131
Networking with a Paper-Based System	134
Obese Rolodex Files Aren't Usable	134
Adding New People Is a Cumbersome Process	135
Finding People Isn't Easy	136
What Happens When a Person Changes Jobs?	136
Name and Address Books Don't Work Either	137
Business Card Files Just Collect Business Cards	137
Put Your Name and Address Book Inside Your Computer	139
The Way I Used to Do It	139
ACT! Is the Ultimate Networking Tool	140
An Electronic Name and Address File	140
It's Easy to Find People in ACT!	141
Everybody's Got a Notepad	143
ACT! Makes It Easy for You to Communicate with People	144
Getting the Most out of ACT!	146

STEP 6

Successful People Get to Know the Important People in Their Lives 149

The Art of Networking	151
Get to Know the Friends of the Important People in Your Life	154
Getting an Introduction	154
The Art of Keeping in Touch	155
Networking Is a Lifelong Process	156
Look for People with Whom You've Got Chemistry	156
Networking Within Your Own Organization	157
Get to Know Your Boss Better	157
Get to Know the Important People Within Your Company or Organization	158
Get to Know the Important People Within Your Business or Industry	159
Who Are Your Most Profitable Customers?	160
When You Have a Lot of Customers, You Have a Feeling of Security . . . False Security	160

Getting to Know People	163
Basic Information	164
Business or Professional Information	165
Personal Information	165
Outside Interests	166
Goals, Dreams, and Desires	166
Spend Your Life Making Friends	166

STEP 7

Successful People Strive for Excellence 167

There Is No I in Team	169
Asking For and Getting Help When You Need It	169
The Art of Delegating	170
Share the Limelight	171
Become a Brilliant Conversationalist	172
The Art of Asking Questions	173
Always Ask Open-Ended Questions	173
Listen to Understand What the Other Person Is Saying	175
The Art of Negotiating	179
Know What You Want	179
Look at the Situation from the Other Person's Point of View	180
Make Everybody Feel Like a Winner	183
Don't Get into an Argument	183
But I'm Right . . .	184
When You're Wrong	185
Make the Most out of Every Day	187
Do Things ¼ of a Percent Better Each Day	187
Set Daily Goals for Yourself	187
Have a Great Day, Every Day	188
Strive for Excellence	189
Think Winning Thoughts	189
Surround Yourself with Positive, Supportive People	190

Index 191

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

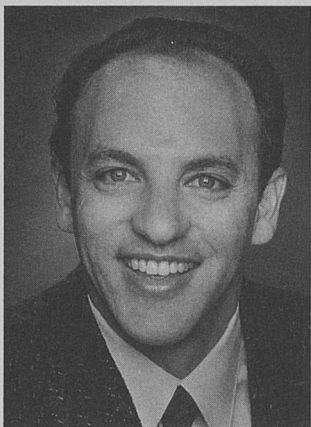


Photo: Roger Lewin

Jeffrey Mayer is one of the country's foremost authorities on time and business management. For a living, he helps busy people get organized, save time, and become more productive. Jeff's claim to fame is his "clean desk" approach to time management.

USA Today dubbed Jeff "Mr. Neat, the Clutterbuster," and *People* called him "The Dean of the Desk Cleaners." *Esquire* stamped him: "The Productivity Guru."

He walks into an office that looks like a toxic waste dump—with piles of paper strewn all over the place—and in two hours the desktop looks like the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. So much is thrown away that the wastebasket is filled to the brim, overflowing, and spilling onto the floor. All that remains are a handful of file folders, a pad of paper, a computer, and a telephone. Everything else is neatly filed away.

Long ago, Jeff realized that if people were better organized, they could take more control over their day and would have more time to focus on their most important work. At the end of the work day, they could leave the office, go home, and spend more time with family and friends.

Jeff's clients realize that time is money, and Jeff is able to help them convert wasted time into time that can be used more efficiently, effectively, and profitably. Jeff's specialty is teaching people how to improve their follow-up systems. With a good follow-up system, a person is able to spend more time working on the things that are important, instead of the things that keep him or her busy.

Since the founding of his Chicago-based consulting firm, Mayer Enterprises, Jeff has helped tens of thousands of men and women

(many are top executives at Fortune 500 companies) get organized, use their time more effectively, and make more money.

His corporate clients include American Express Financial Services, Commonwealth Edison, DDB/Needham Advertising, Encyclopaedia Britannica, LaSalle National Bank, Merrill Lynch, Navistar, Sears Roebuck & Co., and R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company, just to name a few.

Jeff has been interviewed by almost every major newspaper and magazine in the United States, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *People*, *Forbes*, *Business Week*, and *Fortune*. He has also been interviewed on hundreds of radio and television programs across the United States, including *The Today Show*, *American Journal*, CNN, CNBC, and *ABC News*.

Jeff also publishes a newsletter—ACT! in ACTION—for Symantec's ACT! contact management program. If you would like a free sample issue, complete the coupon at the back of this book or visit Jeff's Web site at www.ACTnews.com.

Jeffrey Mayer Would Like to Hear from You

Jeff would like to hear from you. How did you like this book? How did it help you find your life's calling? How can this book be improved? Please share your success stories with Jeff.

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Jeffrey Mayer Would Be Delighted to Speak at Your Next Business Meeting, Conference, or Convention

Jeff would be delighted to speak at your next business meeting, conference, or convention. For date availability, he can be reached at the addresses mentioned previously.

Success
is a
Journey

Life and Work Have Become Hectic and Complicated

Life and work have become hectic and complicated. There's too much to do and not enough time. We rush from one meeting to another to another to another. And when we return to the office there are five, ten, fifteen, twenty, or more voice mail messages that need to be returned, and scores of e-mail messages to reply to—and we've only been gone for a few hours.

On our desks are piles of papers that we've got to do something with. There are letters to write, proposals to prepare, things to follow up on, and lots of other miscellaneous *stuff* that's been hanging around for days, weeks, or months.

On the computer monitor we've attached yellow, blue, and green sticky notes as reminders of things to-do or people to call. Our in- and out-boxes have become hold boxes filled with unopened mail, faxes, express delivery letters, and who knows what else. And we spend most of our days putting out one fire after another.

When we leave the office we take our laptop computer—so we can check our e-mail and search the Internet—our mobile phone, and our beeper. We're afraid to be out of touch for even a few moments.

In order to *try* to stay on top of things we come in early, stay late, work weekends—and never seem to catch up.

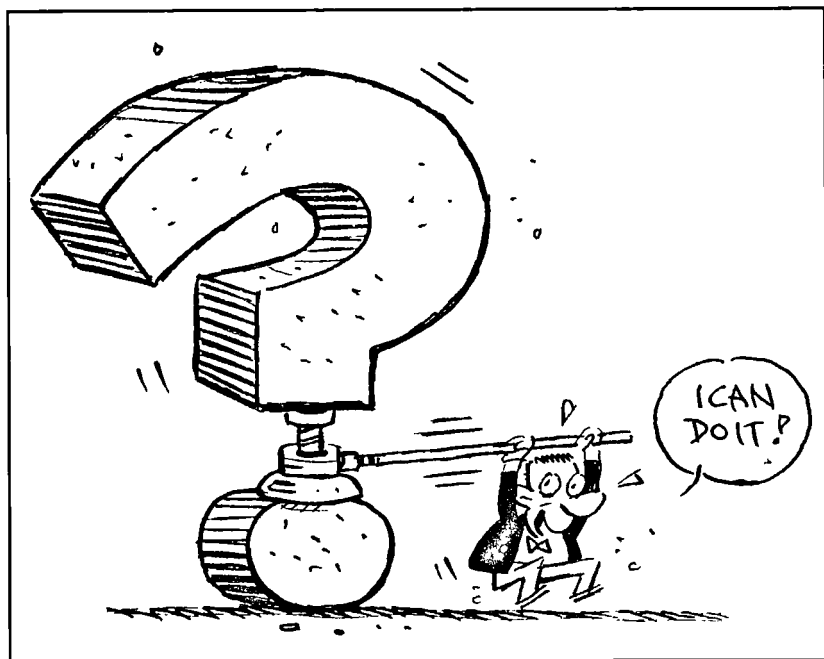
Where Are We Going with Our Lives?

Something's getting lost in all of this chaos and mayhem. We're so busy, and working so hard, that we've lost track of what we *really* want to be doing with our lives. What we *really* want to do for ourselves. What we *really* want to do for our families.

Yes, we've got a job. Yes, we're making a living and paying the bills. But we've forgotten the goals, dreams, and desires of our youth. We're putting in a lot of hard work and effort, but it isn't giving us the inner feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment we need or the success we once dreamed of achieving. We're so busy we don't have time to think about, let alone answer, the age-old question: "What do I want to do when I grow up?"

Success is a Journey will show you how to make your dreams come true. It will give you the tools you need so you can discover what you were born to do. It will help you develop a Master Plan of ACTion and then implement that plan. And, most importantly, it will get you to start thinking about who you are, what means the most to you, and what you want to do with your life.

What Is Success?



For years I have been fascinated with the subject of success. How do you define it? What does it mean? Is it temporary? Is it permanent?

As I've pondered these questions in my mind and watched the performance of others, I have come to the realization that success is not an end result. It is an ongoing process. It's a journey.

However, there's an ebb and flow to success. It's not linear. It comes and goes. There are ups and downs. One day you have a great day, the next day is so-so, and the third is absolutely rotten. But on the fourth day, something good happens, and you're back on top of the world again. Or you may have a great morning and a rotten afternoon, or vice versa. Or, maybe you have a bad year or season, but the next one is much better. That's life!



REMEMBER

Successful people never quit. When they suffer a setback, they just pick themselves up and keep going.

To be successful in the business of life you build upon your successes. You set goals—achievable goals—for yourself, and accomplish them. Then you set slightly more difficult goals, and go out and accomplish them.



SUCCESS TIP

Follow this process over and over throughout your life and you'll accomplish more than you ever dreamed.

The ultimate goal in life isn't just to succeed, it's to continue to succeed. To continue to improve. To continue to be the best that you can be. The best in your business, profession, or chosen career. The best husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, and friend. You only have one life, and you have the opportunity to make it a great one. The future is yours, and it's unlimited. You can make it into anything you want.

Success Depends upon Your Expectations

Life isn't lived in a vacuum, and whether or not any of us is successful in any endeavor is determined by our expectations before we started. We've got to know the criteria on which we're going to judge ourselves or be judged by others. Most of us are never 100 percent successful in any of the things that we do. But the goal is to try our best, learn from our experiences, and take the knowledge we gain along with us so we can do the task even better the next time.



SUCCESS TIP

Write your goals and objectives on paper before you embark upon any task. This enables you to compare your results or accomplishments with your expectations.

What Were Your Expectations?

I find the whole subject of whether or not a person is successful to be very complex. It's usually not black or white. The results are very dependent upon a person's long- and short-term expectations—in addition to his or her skills, talents, and training and a host of other factors that may or may not be within the person's control.

Here are some examples of how difficult it can be to try to determine a person's degree of success.

How Did You Do on the Test?

When you were going to school I'm sure you had to take lots of tests. (I know I sure did.) Did you ever spend a lot of time studying and preparing for a test, yet not do as well as you had hoped? How did you feel? Disappointed, I'll bet.

On the other hand, how did you feel when you did very well on a test that you hadn't spent much time studying for? Lucky?

What were your feelings when you got the grade that was representative of the work and effort you put into your studies? For myself, deep down inside I always knew I had gotten what I deserved.

And what happened when you showed your parents your report card? Did it measure up to their expectations?

You see, success depends upon your expectations.



ANECDOTE

I had a friend who studied every day and went through four years of college and *may* have gotten a single B. He got an A in every other class he took. His expectations were so high that if he had gotten anything less than an A, in his mind he would have failed. I didn't have the same expectations or work ethic. I was pleased when I got a B and was on cloud nine when I got my occasional—very occasional—A.

Did You Solve the Problem?

Every day you've got problems to solve. Things need to be done for your boss or supervisor, customers call with problems or questions, and you've got lots of tasks that need to be completed. You probably

haven't looked at it this way, but you should consider yourself successful when you solve the problem, answer the question, complete the task, and get the work done.

Now the completion of these tasks may not be what you would consider to be a big success, but it's one more thing you've learned that you can take with you on your journey through life. And it's one more thing you can cross off your list of things to-do.

But what if you work very hard to accomplish a specific task and aren't 100 percent successful in completing the endeavor?

Or what if it took longer than expected?

Or what if you found that you weren't able to solve the problem (but learned something new because of the experience)?

Are you a success or a failure?

Did You Close the Sale?

If you're in sales, you may feel that you're a success when you close a really big sale. But when you were just getting started in your career, you probably felt like you were on cloud nine when you closed your *first* sale, no matter what the size. And if you're a seasoned pro, but you've been in a slump, that next sale may make you feel like you're on top of the world.

Let's take another example. A salesperson leads her company in sales one year, but doesn't do it the next. What if she did in fact sell more the second year, but was still outsold by someone else? What if she closed more sales, but made less money? Or closed fewer sales, but made more money?

Did she have a successful year? Was she a success or a failure?



ANECDOTE

One day a young man was making a life insurance presentation. After a long period of discussion, the prospect finally said, "I'll buy it." As the salesman was completing the forms the new customer started telling the young man how he should have conducted the sale. After a few moments, the young man looked up and said: "I made the sale, didn't I?"

Was the Company Successful?

How do you determine whether a company is successful? That depends once again upon your position and your expectations. For example, the board of directors of a corporation may look at whether or not management is successful and doing a good job from the perspective of how much money the company made from one quarter or fiscal year to the next.

However, if the company is a public corporation, the board, its stockholders, and the analysts that follow the stock may look at the value of the company's stock, its earnings per share, or its earnings as compared to those of its competitors as an indicator of whether or not it has been successful. And though each group of people is looking at the same financial information, each will probably come up with different conclusions and opinions.

If, on the other hand, the company is a small start-up and is brand new, success may be determined by whether or not there's enough cash to pay the bills at the end of the month.



ANECDOTE

There's a scene in the James Stewart classic *It's a Wonderful Life* where there is a run on the family bank. George Bailey, played by Mr. Stewart, is ecstatic when the bank is able to close its doors at 6:00 P.M. and still has two dollars—yes, TWO DOLLARS—left. They've made it through the day and are still in business.

The expectations of an established company may be quarter-to-quarter, or year-to-year, while for the new company, success may be measured on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis.

THE STOCK MARKET PASSES ITS OWN JUDGMENT

Publicly traded companies are judged by investors and stock market analysts in addition to their stockholders and their boards of directors. Sometimes they judge success in strange ways. Bizarre as it may seem, many companies' stock prices have gone up because everybody expected them to lose a lot of money, and they lost less than expected. And the stock prices of other companies have fallen because they didn't make as much money as was anticipated.

Here are some examples of how the stock market passes its own judgment as to who is and isn't successful:

- **The Oracle Corporation raised the earnings caution flag, and its shares lost 29 percent of its market value—\$9.44 billion—in one day. Lawrence J. Ellison, the company's chairman, suffered a paper loss of about \$2 billion.**
- **The Plexus Corporation, an electronics company, announced that its earnings would fall short of expectations because customers were delaying orders. Its shares fell 44 percent, from \$25 to \$14, in one day.**
- **Silicon Graphics shares went up 22 percent in one day when it was announced that Richard E. Belluzzo, the number two man at Hewlett-Packard, had agreed to become chairman and chief executive of the troubled computer company. Analysts and Silicon Graphics customers felt Belluzzo was a higher-level executive than they had expected the company to attract.**

How Did the Team Do?

In sports, a team that wins a championship is considered to be a success. But what about the runner-up? Were the members of that team *really* losers? Once again it depends upon expectations. If the runner-up was expected to win the whole thing, then maybe that team had a bad year. But what if they were picked to finish dead last, made it to the

finals, and then lost? Were they losers or did they have a great year because they got to the championship?

And what if the star on the championship team played poorly and didn't contribute at the level that was expected of him? Does he feel like a success? What if the star of the losing team had a great series, but the team still lost?

And what about the person who has an MVP year, but never performs at that level again?



ANECDOTE

I remember reading about a runner who finished second in one of the sprint races at a recent Olympics. He was disappointed that he didn't win, but he had still run faster than he ever had before. He just wasn't fast enough to win the race that afternoon. He couldn't decide if he was a winner or a loser.

WHO WON, WHO LOST?

In the fall of 1997, *HomeCourt*, the official magazine of the Utah Jazz, created a special commemorative issue entitled "The Finals." This was a special keepsake magazine celebrating the team's participation in the NBA championship series. Each game of the finals was recounted with loving words and photographs.

In Chicago things were different. The Chicago Bulls' management was treating coach Phil Jackson with disdain. They made it clear they weren't sure they wanted him back as the team's head coach. They let it be known that Bulls star Scottie Pippen would probably be traded. And Michael Jordan stated that he wouldn't play for another coach if Phil Jackson wasn't rehired. The entire city was having a panic attack.

You would have thought that the Jazz had won and the Bulls had lost. Right? Wrong! The Bulls won the championship, had just won back-to-back titles, and had been champions for five of the last seven years. Yet management was telling the fans that all good things must come to an end.

In the end, Phil, Scottie, and Michael stayed (they beat the Utah Jazz in the 1998 NBA finals to win their sixth championship in eight years), but you would never have known it by watching the way each team reacted after the conclusion of the 1997 NBA championships.

So how do you look at success? You have two criteria:

1. You have to look at success within certain time frames: moment-to-moment, day-to-day, month-to-month, year-to-year, or over an entire lifetime.
2. You have to consider what your expectations were before you started.

DID TIGER HAVE A GOOD YEAR?

For most golfers, any of these achievements would constitute a good year: winning the Masters by a record-setting 12 strokes. Winning more tournaments (four) than any other player on the tour. Becoming the first golfer on the tour to win more than \$2 million in a single season.

Tiger Woods did all of the above in the first half of his first full season on tour, at the ripe old age of 22. But Tiger didn't perform very well during the second half of the 1997 tour. He played in eight tournaments, had no victories and only two top 10 finishes, and earned just \$300,000 of his year's total of \$2,066,833.

Tiger Woods lives in a world that is different from yours and mine. He is expected to win every tournament he enters. And when he doesn't it's big news. So let me ask you: Was Tiger a success or a failure?

IS A 9-7 FOOTBALL TEAM THAT DOESN'T MAKE THE NFL PLAYOFFS A SUCCESS?

The New York Jets had the worst record in professional football during the 1996 season, when they went 1 and 15. Then Bill Parcells became their head coach. He changed players. He changed habits. He changed attitudes. And the team started to win.

The Jets could have clinched a playoff berth with a victory in the last game of the season. But they lost to Detroit 13-10 on a day when super running back Barry Sanders rushed for his 2000th yard of the season. Did the Jets have a successful season?

Success Comes from Participation

You see, everything in life depends upon your frame of reference: where you are, where you came from, and where you want to go.



REMEMBER

You should feel that you are a success when you try, when you participate, when you go out there and put your butt on the line.

Success is the act of trying to improve upon the things you're already doing. It's growing and developing. It's accepting bigger and greater challenges. It's not being afraid of making a mistake, suffering a setback, or failing. It's trying to do your very best.

And if, in the end, your very best wasn't quite good enough, you just have to go back to work and prepare a bit harder for the next time.

It is through the act of participating, as you try to achieve your goals, that you succeed. Nobody succeeds 100 percent in anything they do. When you're able to recognize and accept this fact of life, you realize that failure and losing are as much a part of the game of life as are success and winning.

So embrace your goals, dreams, and desires. Pour your energy into completing those daily tasks. Go out and play your game, and play it to

(continued from front flap)

Success Is a Journey is a hands-on workbook for developing and implementing your own individualized plan of ACTION. It is filled with lively and amusing anecdotes, helpful reminders, and practical tips that are designed to take you to new heights of success and achievement.

You begin by examining the characteristics of successful people and determining your own expectations of success, and you end by learning how to make the most out of every day. In between you will work your way through Mayer's inspiring seven-step system for continued achievement in the business of life. As you progress through each phase of this exciting and enriching quest you will:

- Learn the eight principles of success, and overcome the fear of failure
- Reduce the clutter in your life and learn valuable time management strategies
- Master crucial interpersonal skills
- Learn the secrets of those who continually strive for excellence

You have the opportunity to make your life the very best it can be. With *Success Is a Journey* in your hand, your dreams are well within your grasp.

Jeffrey J. Mayer is one of the country's foremost authorities on time and business management, and is the author of many best-selling books. These include *Time Management for Dummies™* and *If You Haven't Got the Time to Do It Right, When Will You Find the Time to Do It Over?* Since founding his consulting firm, Mayer Enterprises, he has helped thousands of people become more productive on and off the job. He has been featured in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Esquire*, *People* magazine, and many other publications.

Jacket Design: Eileen Kramer

Jacket Illustration: © Curtis Parker/SIS



Achieve new heights of personal success at work, at home, and in everything you do

- ✓ Is your life hectic and complicated?
- ✓ Do you have too much to do and not enough time?
- ✓ Is your desk piled with papers that need your attention?
- ✓ Do you come in early, stay late, work weekends, and never seem to catch up?
- ✓ Have you lost track of what you really want to be doing with your life?
- ✓ Have you forgotten the goals, dreams, and desires of your youth?

Jeffrey J. Mayer, author of the best-selling *Time Management for Dummies*[™], provides you with hundreds of tips, techniques, ideas, and strategies that will help you succeed in the business of life. *Success Is a Journey* is a practical, hands-on workbook designed to help you achieve what you want out of life. As you complete thought-provoking exercises, and follow Mayer's practical advice, you will learn **The 7 Steps of Success:**

Step 1: Successful people have a dream.

Step 2: Successful people have a Master Plan of ACTION.

Step 3: Successful people get results.

Step 4: Successful people take responsibility for their time.

Step 5: Successful people build relationships with the *right* people.

Step 6: Successful people get to know the important people in their lives.

Step 7: Successful people strive for excellence.

The ultimate goal in life isn't just to succeed, it's to continue succeeding. To continue to improve. To continue to be the best that you can be. The best in your business, profession, or chosen career. The best husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, and friend that you can be. You've only got one life, but you have the opportunity to make it a great one. With this unique book as your guide, you will realize the future is yours and it's unlimited. You can make it into anything you want.

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ISBN 0-07-041129-8



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