

# Success & Failure Quotes

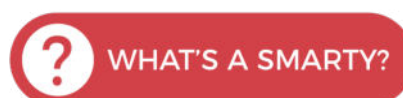
## (Smarty)

Success rarely comes easily. Achieving it can be a long and effortful journey, full of failure and adversity. How were the most successful people in the world able to make it? How did they overcome adversity and grow from failure? Their quotes give us a glimpse into their experience and minds. If they could do it, why not you?



**Smarties** are inspirational guides for educational activities. Click on the **red** button below to know more about them.

**Smarties** are complemented by our **Smart Spin** online encyclopedia. Click on the **green** button below to explore it.



# Table of Contents

## 1. Success & Failure

*Discuss success & failure with your learner using this section's guiding questions.*

## 2. Lists for Success

*Lists are a great learning tool. Your learner will compose these useful lists as they think through what they learned from the collection, and their own experience.*

## 3. More Quotes

*This is your opportunity to discover new quotes, not included in the collection, and personally bring them to your learner. Discussion is encouraged.*

## 4. Write Your Own

*Success and failure quotes need not be left just for famous figures. Your learner can try their hand (and wits) at writing some.*

## 5. Quote Match

*A fun little activity for finding connections between stories and wisdom.*

## 6. Biographies

*Your learner (or yourself) interested in knowing more about any of the success stories in the collection? These recommended biographies can help.*



# 1. Success & Failure



SOMETHING TO DISCUSS

*Discuss with your learner the following questions about their own opinions and experience with success, and equally with failure.*

## **Favorite Success Story**

- What are the most impressive success stories you know about? Which is your favorite? (You may spin the [collection](#) to discover some.) Why is it impressive? Why do you appreciate it so much?
- What area of life is the success in? Is it a success in sports, art or science? Is it an invention, a world record, a masterpiece, a victory, a social cause or charitable initiative? How did the success influence those involved?
- Who is responsible for the success? Is it a public achievement of a famous figure or a personal triumph of someone you know? Is it a single person, a team, a widespread movement, a global effort? What contributed to their success? What challenges and obstacles did they have to overcome?
- What did the success contribute to the person achieving it or anyone else affected by it? What did it contribute to the world?
- In what way did the story influence you? What do you most appreciate about it? What can you learn from it?

## **Your Greatest Success**

- What do you think is your greatest success?
- How did you celebrate it? How were you recognized for it? Did you receive a rewards or earned anything? Were you congratulated publically or felt a personal sense of satisfaction?



- How did you achieve it? What did you use to reach it (skills, information, items, advice, etc.)? How long did it take you?
- What challenges did you face? What setbacks did you encounter? What obstacles did you overcome?
- Did you receive any help? Was it an accomplishment you shared with someone else, as part of a team maybe?
- What did you learn from it? Did you repeat it and was it easier the second time?

### **Success Together**

- When did you help someone else succeed?
- How did you help? Did you join in or take part? Did you give important feedback or advice? Did you provide necessary items or other resources?
- Why did you do it and are you proud to have done it? Did you get recognition for your help? Were you asked to help again?
- Who helped you most when you needed help for your own success? How did they help? How much of your success can you attribute to their help? How did you thank them?
- Do you feel comfortable asking for help when you need it, and how do you know when you need help?

### **Your Biggest Failure**

- What do you think is your biggest failure?
- How did it make you feel?
- Were you able to overcome it?
- What did you learn from it?
- Did you do anything to prevent a similar failure in the future?
- Were you able to make it a success eventually, or apply what you've learned to achieve a success in something else?



## Facing Failure

- What do you typically do when you're faced with obstacles and experience failures? How do you react to setbacks? How do you approach challenges?
- Do you think you have had more failures or more successes in your life? You should know that many successful figures have admitted that they have many more failures under their belt than successes in their record.
- Do you have a strategy to overcome obstacles and learn from failures? What do you think is the best way to deal with failure? Do you think there are guidelines that everyone should follow, or is it different for each person and situation? What advice and tips would you give someone who has just failed?

## Coming Out Stronger

- Do you believe failure and adversity can make you stronger?
- Do you believe that failure is necessary for success, or that success is better or greater if it follows failure?
- Do you think there are failures one cannot get over or adversity one cannot overcome?
- Do you think some failures can be viewed as successes if looked at from different perspectives?
- In retrospect, can you try and link a failure (yours, of someone you know, or of a famous figure) to an eventual success?

## Secret to Success

- What do you think is the ultimate secret to success?
- Is it one thing one should do, or is it a set of principles to follow? Is it something one naturally has or something one gains through experience? Is it to do with the planning, the setup, the beginning, the process, the completion or the goal itself?



- From the successful people you know (in your life, and/or famous), do you think they have a secret to their success? Is it an ability or a gift? A formula or a strategy? A supporting partner, a team, a community?
  - Do you have a secret to your own success? How did you happen to find it or figure it out? Do you share it with others or keep it to yourself?
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## 2. Lists for Success



*In this exercise, your learner may prepare lists that can help them be better prepared for achieving success, and learning from failure.*

### Commonalities List

Many successful people share the same mindset, the same attitude, and follow the same principles and behaviors. Spin through the [collection](#) and make a list of everything you notice is common to the figures you find and the wisdom they give in their quotes. Can you apply these commonalities to yourself and your own quest for success? You may want to write and use the list as a guideline for you to follow. You may share it with others to help them reach their success.

### Debriefing List

Prepare a “debriefing” list of questions to ask yourself after experiencing failure. These may be questions for identifying why the failure happened and what you can do better next time. You may use it to evaluate previous failures and any time you want to learn from, and improve on, failed attempts.



Here are some examples of questions you may want to use:

- What happened? Can I write the details of the attempt in a way that can help me (and others) understand it better, such as track it along a timeline or as a story that I can compare with stories of success to identify the differences? What are the more important or significant details and which are less relevant?
- Did I have a good plan of action?\* What specific steps in the plan went wrong (and which went according to plan)? What should I change in the plan if I were to try again? What steps in the plan were actually a success despite the overall failure at reaching the goal?
- Was this a total failure or a partial one? According to what standards is this considered a success and are there different standards that can make me look at it differently? Can it be viewed as just a step towards a bigger success?
- What helpful information did I collect despite the failure? Did I accomplish or produce anything of value anyway that can still be used going forward? What conclusions and insights can I draw from my attempt that are useful, and in what way are they helpful?
- What can I improve for my next attempt? What other resources or information am I now aware that I need in order to succeed? What things do I now know that I need to do better? How will I acquire the resources and information? How will I be able to improve what I do and how I do it? Who can I ask for help from?
- Did I make the wrong decision based on missing or false information? If so, was I misinformed or didn't collect all the information I needed? Do I now have the right information? How can I make sure it is indeed the right information? Should I make another attempt based on that new or additional information?
- Did I make the right decisions, yet circumstances and conditions (maybe beyond my control) were such that failure happened anyway?\* Are the circumstances now different and should I try again? Can I do anything to change the conditions or be more prepared for the circumstances I may encounter next time?



\* “By planning to the end you will not be overwhelmed by circumstances and you will know when to stop. Gently guide fortune and help determine the future by thinking far ahead.” (Robert Greene, The 48 Laws of Power)

...and in the subject of planning, Benjamin Franklin, the father of time management, is attributed the following quote: "Failing to plan is planning to fail."

## Encouragement List

Failure and adversity can often be a source of discouragement. It is good practice to help your mind, your emotions and your thoughts, recover and get back in action, and not be demoralized or in a rut.

Prepare an “encouragement” list of motivational points, tips, reminders, quotes and other notes, to read through after you experience a failure or setback, or when you encounter an obstacle or difficulty. It may also include photos (of your role models, for example, or great achievements that you appreciate), videos (inspirational talks, for example) and music (your favorite mood-boosting beat, for example). Use it to lift your spirit and push through trials and tribulations.

Here are some suggestions for things you might want to include:

- A routine of tasks to follow that will lead you through the process of making the most out of the situation and carrying on. It can include steps like taking a deep breath, go for a walk to stretch your legs and your mind, and even allocate a few hours or a few days to relax and reflect. It may include actions like discussing it with someone you think highly of (e.g. a parent, a mentor), or specifically someone who succeeded in a similar undertaking. This routine may include answering questions in a “debriefing” list (see the relevant task in this section). It may include reviewing previous successes of yours to be encouraged that you



can do it and remember what you learned along the way. It may include starting to prepare for the next attempt. Having this routine is useful especially when your thoughts and emotions might distract you from planning ahead.

- Quotes and anecdotes by successful figures about overcoming adversity, recovering from failure, battling challenges, and succeeding despite all odds. Learn from their triumphs as well as their mistakes. Because if they were able to do it - so can you! (You can find some such quotes here.)
- Photo, drawing or description of the goal you are trying to accomplish, the achievement you are trying to reach or the reward you will receive when you succeed, to keep your “eye on the prize” and focus on the destination. Because you are going to try again, aren’t you?

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### 3. More Quotes



Here are some more quotes about success, failure and adversity, from a variety of figures. They don’t appear in the collection but are definitely worth learning from. You may want to bring them to your learner and ask them what they think about them, and how these contribute to the other activities in this Smarty.

*“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful men 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.”*

- Calvin Coolidge (the 30th President of the United States, he is praised for his support of racial equality and restoring the public’s confidence in the White House)



*“Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure... than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.”*

- Theodore Roosevelt (statesman and writer who served as the 26th President of the United States, he was born a sickly child with debilitating asthma, but he overcame his physical health problems by embracing a strenuous lifestyle and developing an exuberant personality, vast range of interests, and world-famous achievements)

*“You have to be able to accept failure to get better.”*

- LeBron James (one of the most successful basketball player of all time, along with [Michael Jordan](#))

*“I have self-doubt. I have insecurity. I have fear of failure. We all have self-doubt. You don't deny it, but you also don't capitulate to it. You embrace it.”*

- Kobe Bryant (one of the most successful basketball player of all time, along with [Michael Jordan](#))

*“Women, like men, should try to do the impossible. And when they fail, their failure should be a challenge to others.”*

- [Amelia Earhart](#) (aviation pioneer and author. Earhart was the first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean)

*“It's fine to celebrate success but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure.”*

- Bill Gates (business magnate, investor, author, philanthropist, humanitarian, and principal founder of Microsoft. At times he was the richest person in the world)



*"If you set your goals ridiculously high and it's a failure, you will fail above everyone else's success."*

- James Cameron (the highly successful and highly acclaimed director. He is responsible for some of the most successful films of all time, and is also a philanthropist and deep-sea explorer)

*"Don't worry about failures, worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try."*

- Jack Canfield (an author, motivational speaker and entrepreneur. His series of books has more than 250 titles and 500 million copies in print in over 40 languages)

*"What is success? It is being able to go to bed each night with your soul at peace."*

- Paulo Coelho (a Brazilian lyricist and novelist and the recipient of numerous international awards. He is best known for his widely translated novel The Alchemist)


*"Failure will never overtake me if my determination to succeed is strong enough."*

- Og Mandino (An author whose books have sold over 50 million copies and have been translated into over twenty-five different languages. He was the president of "Success Unlimited" magazine)

*"Failure is the key to success; each mistake teaches us something."*

- Morihei Ueshiba (Morihei Ueshiba was a martial artist and founder of the Japanese martial art of aikido. He is often referred to as "the founder" Kaiso or Ōsensei, "Great Teacher".)





*“You build on failure. You use it as a stepping stone. Close the door on the past. You don't try to forget the mistakes, but you don't dwell on it. You don't let it have any of your energy, or any of your time, or any of your space.”*

- Johnny Cash (one of the best-selling music artists of all time)

*“Honesty is the fastest way to prevent a mistake from turning into a failure.”*

- James Altucher (hedge fund manager, entrepreneur, best-selling author and venture capitalist. He has founded or co-founded more than 20 companies and says he failed at 17 of them)

*“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson (essayist, lecturer, philosopher and poet, a champion of individualism)

*“Treat failure as a lesson on how not to approach achieving a goal, and then use that learning to improve your chances of success when you try again. Failure is only the end if you decide to stop.”*

- Richard Branson (one of the most successful business person in the world. He founded the Virgin Group, which controls more than 400 companies)

*“One's only rival is one's own potentialities. One's only failure is failing to live up to one's own possibilities. In this sense, every man can be a king.”*

- Abraham Maslow (the celebrated psychologist who is best known for creating Maslow's hierarchy of needs. He is the tenth most cited psychologist of the 20th century)



“Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor.”

- Truman Capote (novelist, screenwriter, playwright, and actor. Many of Capote's short stories, novels, plays, and nonfiction are recognized as literary classics)

*“Develop success from failures. Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.”*

- Dale Carnegie (the developer of famous courses in self-improvement, salesmanship, corporate training, public speaking, and interpersonal skills)

*“Success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation there is sure to be failure.”*

- Confucius (Chinese teacher, editor, politician, and philosopher. Confucius is widely considered as one of the most important and influential individuals in affecting the lives of humanity. His teaching and philosophy greatly impacted people around the world and still linger in today's society.)

*“The only real failure in life is not to be true to the best one knows.”*

- Buddha (founder of Buddhism)

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## 4. Write your own



SOMETHING TO DO

*Now that your learner has read through the quotes in the collection (and the ones from the Smarty), and being inspired by them...*



If you were to teach others about your own\* success (and failure), why not do it with your own quote? Think back at your own experience, as well as what you have learned from the [collection](#) and the activities in this Smarty.

- What would you write (or say)? How would you best convey your message? Would you use a clever play on words or another stylistic phrasing (e.g. [Antimetabole and Chiasmus](#))? Will it be humorous or serious? Will it be long and comprehensive or short and sweet?
- What would be the wisdom behind it? Would it be about your secrets to success, failures you experienced, adversity you faced or the people and things that helped you along the way? Would it be about perseverance or planning ahead? About attitude or fortitude? Self respect or respect for others?
- Try to think of your successes so far and try to imagine future successes you might have (do the same for failures).

\* You may choose to think of a quote that is based on what you know about the subject of success and failure in general, or about others' experience with success, failure and adversity, even if you didn't have such an experience but were inspired by it. It can be based on someone you read or heard about, or better yet someone you know personally.

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## 5. Quote Match



*This activity can be a fun exercise between you and your learner or between two or more learners. You may also prepare it as a quiz.*



## Version 1

Participant #1:

- Spins through the [collection](#) and find a quote you like.
- Tell the quote the participant #2 and ask them to find who it belongs to.

Participant #2:

- Spins through the [collection](#) and read the summary of the figures you find.
- You are not allowed to scroll down to read their quotes.
- Try to figure out who the quote chosen by participant #1 belong to.

## Version 2

Participant #1:

- Spins through the [collection](#) and find 7-8 figures you like.
- Write them down in one list, and one quote by each of them in another list.
- For each figure you may also write down, in a separate list, a hint that helps participant #2 make a connection between the figure and the quote. You may choose a detail from their life that probably have made them reach the wisdom that the quote conveys. You may either use the details in the Smart Spin collection or research more about the figure's biography.
  - ◆ For example, a hint for Michael Jordan's quote "I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed." can be the fact that this famous figure have missed more than 9000 shots in their career. (Granted, this hint might be too obvious. It's just an example.)

Participant #2:

- Review the two lists prepared by participant #1 and try to match the quotes with the figures to which they belong. You may spin through the collection for more details about the figures, but do not read the quotes.
- You may ask participant #1 for a hint for each quote, but you might get fewer points for each match you make (it's up to participant #2). ;)



## 6. Biographies



SOMETHING TO READ

*The following biographies correspond to the extraordinary figures featured in the [collection](#). These books bring more of the details of their stories of life towards success, if your learner (and also you) is interested in reading more about them.*

*You may ask your learner which of the figures or quotes were most inspirational for them in order to choose which book to get for them. You may use any of these books as a basis for an assignment. One idea would be to select two and have your learner write an essay comparing the two life stories, potentially focusing on the aspects of their lives that correlate to their quotes.*

→ **“The Essence of Success: 12 Mini Biographies: Richard Branson Bill Gates Nelson Mandela Steven Spielberg Stephen Hawking Chris Evans Frank Sinatra Tony Malcolm X James Dyson & Margaret Thatcher”**

→ **The Churchill Factor: How One Man Made History, Boris Johnson**

- [Churchill quotes](#)

→ **Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln, by Doris Kearns Goodwin**

- [Lincoln quotes](#)

→ **Thomas Edison: A Captivating Guide to the Life of a Genius Inventor, by “Captivating History”**

- [Edison quotes](#)

- [Thomas Edison](#)



→ The Letters of Vincent Van Gogh, by Vincent Van Gogh

- [Van Gogh quotes](#)

→ Hide-And-Seek With Angels: The Life of J.M. Barrie, by Lisa Chaney

- [Barrie quotes](#)

→ Albert Einstein: The Genius Who Failed School, by “Baby Professor”

- [Einstein quotes](#)

→ Walt Disney: The Biography, by Neal Gabler

- [Walt Disney](#)
- [Disney quotes](#)

→ Robert Frost: a Life, by Jay Parini

- [Frost quotes](#)

→ The Story of My Life, by Helen Keller and Candace Ward

- [Keller quotes](#)

→ Warren Buffett: The Life, Lessons & Rules For Success, by “Influential Individuals”

- [Buffett quotes](#)

→ Michael Jordan: The Life, by Roland Lazenby

- [Jordan quotes](#)

→ Conversations with Jk Rowling, by J. K. Rowling and Lindsey Fraser

- [Rowling quotes](#)



→ **I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban, by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb**

- [Malala quotes](#)

→ **Steve Jobs: The Life, Lessons & Rules for Success, by “Influential Individuals”**

- [Jobs quotes](#)
- [Steve Jobs](#)

→ **My Life and Work - An Autobiography, by Henry Ford**

- [Ford quotes](#)
- [Henry Ford](#)

→ **On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft, by Stephen King**

- [King quotes](#)

→ **My Autobiography, by Charles Chaplin and David Robinson**

- [Chaplin quotes](#)

→ **The Pursuit of Happyness, by Chris Gardner**

- [Gardner quotes](#)

→ **Against the Odds: An Autobiography, by James Dyson**

- [Dyson quotes](#)

→ **From Rags to Riches: The Oprah Winfrey Story, by “Baby Professor”**

- [Oprah quotes](#)



→ **Honda: The Boy Who Dreamed of Cars, by Mark Weston**

- [Honda quotes](#)

→ **Maya Angelou (Little People, Big Dreams), by Lisbeth Kaiser**

- [Maya Angelou quotes](#)

→ **Thrive: The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Happier Life, by Arianna Huffington**

- [Huffington quotes](#)

→ **Ball of Fire: The Tumultuous Life and Comic Art of Lucille Ball, by Stefan Kanfer**

- [Lucille Ball quotes](#)

