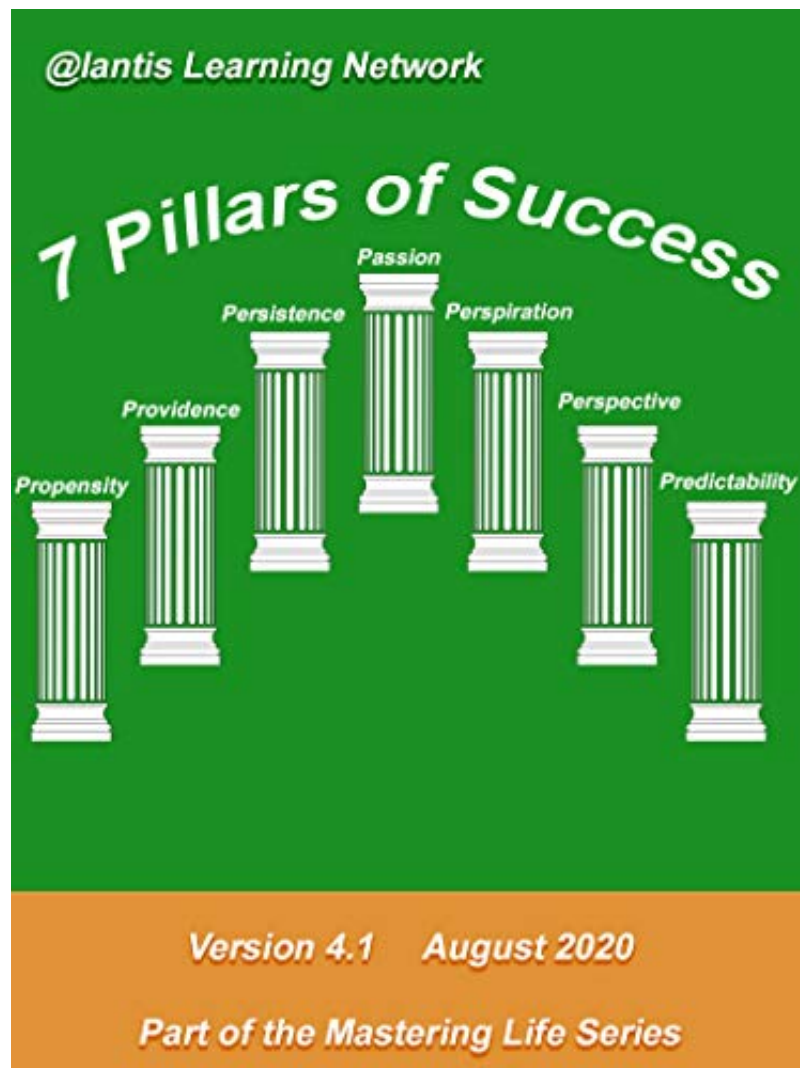


7 Pillars of Success: The Keys to Success Anytime Anywhere (Mastering Life Book 1)

by

Paul Levesque



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Synopsis

The 7 Pillars of Success will help you focus your energies in the most productive ways by describing the things I focus on. Last Updated - Aug 2020I have found that “Opportunity most often knocks very softly.” To exploit the opportunities that present themselves, you need to pay close attention to the things around you as you move through the world. Once you attend to the things around you, you have to exert the energy to actually build the skills you need to succeed. This short Book describes 7 foundational “Pillars” of success that I attend to:- Propensity - Talent- Persistence - Not Giving Up- Providence - Luck,- Passion - Desire- Perspiration - Hard Work- Perspective - Honesty- Predictability - Trust

Sort review

From Publishers Weekly Canadian business consultants Levesque (Breakaway Planning) and McNeil (The I of the Hurricane) offer a detailed how-to guide to realizing deeply desired personal dreams. According to the authors, many people are prevented from achieving their dreams because they do not have adequate motivation, time, or support from others, and have not understood that small improvements can lead to big successes. In order to surmount these road blocks, the authors suggest mastering five macroskills that will foster a precise sense of mission, sustain motivation, assist with achieving a balance between short and long-term goals, and sweep away the resistance of others by inspiring their help. The fifth macroskill is to practice the other skills on a regular basis. Within each chapter, the authors offer short bios of high-profile dreamcrafters—such as Dwight Eisenhower, Rudy Giuliani, Jane Goodall and Charles Lindbergh—who had to overcome obstacles before realizing their dreams. The instructions and exercises for mastering these macroskills, though, are somewhat confusing, because the authors often pad their advice with impassioned prose (“the skillful dreamcrafter...kick starts the motivational engine by planting the flag, burning the bridges, setting fire to the boats”). Were this volume a little less concerned with rhetoric and a little more concerned with clarity and brevity, more readers might find the advice herein valuable. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. -- This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Nothing happens unless first a dream.—CARL SANDBURG Introduction: The Five Macroskills Failure Factors Top 5 Reasons Why Most People Never Realize Their Big Dream There’s no single clearly defined objective. There’s no mechanism for sustaining motivation. There’s not enough time to devote to it. There’s little or no support from family and friends. There’s no understanding of how every seemingly unrelated little improvement advances the big dream. 2 What if imagining possibilities and then realizing them—that is, making dreams come true—turns out to be the distinctly human capacity, the one and only thing that sets our species apart? (Language was long thought to be the title holder, until a bunch of smartaleck gorillas and chimps learned to use sign language and computer touch-screens to make their

feelings and wants known, and some show-off dolphins began formulating sentences by pressing series of noun buttons and verb buttons and pronoun buttons in the proper order.) What if it turns out the only reason not everyone succeeds in making their own “imagined possibilities” a reality is that there’s a special knack involved? What if anyone might be able to realize their Big Dream, as long as they developed the key skills to overcome the failure factors listed above? The lucky ones are those who apply these skills automatically, unconsciously, intuitively. Most other people don’t even know they exist. Ours is a society full of people with the “know-what”—but not the “know-how”—to make their dreams come true. What’s your Big Dream? Lose weight? Career advancement? New house? Quit smoking/drinking? Financial freedom? Find Mr./Ms. Right? Ride the space shuttle? All of the above? It doesn’t matter what the dream is; as long as it’s something that’s deeply important to you, something that generates a tingle of excitement in your belly any time you think about it—then it qualifies as “big,” even if others seem inclined to belittle it. Dreamcrafting is not an activity restricted to those who hope to become the next Walt Disney or Oprah Winfrey. A “big” dream is any goal that generates serious belly-tingle for you; all other factors of scale are secondary. Granny’s rose garden is no less an achievement than Walt’s theme parks; they’re both the tangible product of personal dreams realized. And the process for realizing such dreams is identical. It’s this very process that is at the heart of Dreamcrafting.

Skills of a Higher Order

Alex dreams of a career as a professional singer. Obviously, therefore, Alex must master the skill of singing. Lots of discipline is required: long hours of practice, voice exercises, and so on. When people talk about all the hard work it takes to achieve success, they’re usually referring to skills and disciplines at this level; let’s call it “voicecrafting” in this example. But even after a lot of this kind of hard work, not every skillful singer succeeds in realizing his or her big dream of a career as a singer. Making any big dream come true requires skills of a different kind, skills at a higher level, skills that (for singers) have little or nothing to do with voicecrafting in particular. Beyond developing the breath control to be able to sustain a high C for an extended period of time, Alex will also need to sustain a high level of motivation for an extended period of time if the dream is to be realized. Sustaining motivation is one of the key disciplines of dreamcrafting, a skill of a higher order—we call it a macroskill—that applies to the realization of any and all big dreams. This notion of macroskills—skills of a higher order or that operate at a higher level—may strike some as abstract and confusing. One way to clarify the idea may be to think in terms of set and subset: for example, fruit is a subset of “food”; apple is a subset of “fruit”; Red Delicious is a subset of “apple.” Another way to think about it is to keep the phrase “including, but not limited to” in mind. Let’s say Janice dreams of becoming a ballerina, and Mario hopes to become a master chef. The dreamcrafting macroskills make no reference whatsoever to the fine points of executing pirouettes or eggs Benedict; (those are “dancecrafting” and “mealcrafting” issues). Instead, they outline what must be done to make big dreams come true, including, but not limited to, dreams of dancing or cooking for a living. Janice will of course have to learn how to dance superbly—but even if she does, this still may not be enough to make her dream come true. Nor is every good cook equally good at

cooking up a career as a master chef. This is where the macroskills make all the difference.⁴We traditionally think of success as the product of three main factors: talent, skill, and ambition. (Some might like to throw blind luck into the stew as a fourth ingredient, but for now we'll leave it out of the recipe; more about luck in chapter 4.) In this traditional view, talent represents innate ability, the natural aptitude an individual either does or does not possess. Talent can be developed, but most would agree it cannot be acquired if it's not there to begin with. What can be acquired is skill. Both the musically gifted child and the tin-eared youngster can master the mechanics of "keyboardcraft"—of reading notes on a page and translating them into specific keys played by specific fingers on a piano. If both these kids entertain the dream of becoming a professional musician some day, does it necessarily follow that the one with the greater talent is bound to have an easier time making this dream come true? Many would instinctively answer that it does, that this is a given. But think of all the supremely talented musicians you have encountered in your own experience who have never managed to break into the "big time" despite years of trying, and all the "big names" whose level of basic musicianship is not really all that impressive. If talent and skill are not the big issues, then what's left? Assuming that any musician with a dream of making it big has enough basic talent and music-making skill to "squeak by," it is probably those with the most ambition to succeed that have the best chance of doing so. Cultivating within themselves this ambition, this fierce motivational drive to achieve their goal despite any and all obstacles—this is one of the key dreamcrafting macroskills. It applies to any big dream, including, but not limited to, dreams of triumph in the realm of music. Does a skill at this higher level imply a higher level of difficulty as well? Wouldn't it follow that these powerful disciplines must be much more difficult to master and apply than those connected with the everyday (micro-level) skills we've had to master all our lives? The surprising answer is "not at all." In many ways, learning to operate a computer, for example, is more challenging than learning to maintain our resolve or win the support of those around us; and yet many who thought themselves incapable of it have learned to use computers effectively.⁵In fact, we can use the Delete key on a computer keyboard as an analogy to illustrate how going to a higher level of operation can often mean getting more done with less effort. Before the advent of electronic word processors and personal computers, typists had no choice but to laboriously revise or correct their documents one character at a time. On a computer, the operator can highlight a single character or an entire word or a full paragraph or even entire pages, and with a single keystroke instantly delete all that has been highlighted. But if the operator moves to a higher level (from the file level to the folder level, so to speak), the same single keystroke can remove entire documents at a time. And one level higher, at the directory level, it takes only the same single stroke on the Delete key to obliterate entire groups of documents in the blink of an eye. Note that though the power of the key increases at higher levels, the time and effort required to actually depress the key with the fingertip does not (as many of us discovered on our early-model computers when a single misplaced keystroke cost us huge unintended losses of material). Any computer user setting out to delete many documents, and who does not know

about higher-level operations, will invest a lot of time and effort highlighting individual chunks of material and deleting each one separately; those in the know will accomplish the same result in an instant with a single keystroke. Individuals who possess an innate talent for making dreams come true move instinctively to the higher level and similarly accomplish a great deal more in their lives with a great deal less effort. The rest of us must learn about these higher-level macroskills, and discover how we can get them working for us.

Theory and Practice

Teacher: "You're not doing that properly. It should be done this way." Student: "Oh? Why is that?" Teacher: "Because it's always been done this way. Don't ask so many questions." The "craft" part of dreamcrafting is the skills part. But what some teachers fail to recognize is that real mastery of any skill, whether at the micro- or macro-level, requires an understanding of the why as well as the how.

Ralph has become interested in taking up woodworking as a hobby; who knows, if he likes it, he may even decide to become a professional carpenter like his cousin Ted. Ralph receives a birthday card from his wife into which she has folded a check for two hundred dollars with a message that reads, "Please use this to launch your new hobby." Ralph is confronted with a pleasant dilemma: the money would cover the cost of a handsome set of woodworking tools he spotted in a local hardware store—or he could use the money to pay for an evening course in woodworking being offered at the community college. From a dreamcrafting point of view, what's his best choice? He mulls it over. "If I take the course, it will probably get me all excited about woodworking. But I'd have no tools of my own, at least for some time; that would be frustrating. If I buy the tools, I can begin getting hands-on experience immediately. The satisfaction I derive from building things right off the bat will fuel my determination to learn, and I can always visit the public library and read up on some of the finer points later, as my projects become more elaborate." Ralph buys the tools. He applies himself to learning how to use them properly. He builds a small side table that turns out fairly well, despite being a bit wobbly. Next he tries a rocking chair, but quickly discovers this is too ambitious a project too soon. A small dresser doesn't come out quite the way he'd envisioned it, even after he discarded and rebuilt most of it. After many false starts and painful splinters, Ralph begins to realize woodworking is not quite the rewarding pastime he'd hoped it might be—an impression reinforced by a nasty cut he inflicts upon himself one afternoon. The intervals between projects grow longer. One day, Ralph's wife spots the woodworking tools resting on a table among other items in their yard sale.

7As happens with many enthusiastic people, Ralph was impatient to get immersed in the "how" of woodcrafting—tools in hand, the smell of sawdust in his nostrils. In his haste to get to the practice, he bypassed theory that the woodworking course would have given him: the different types of wood and why some types lend themselves better to certain applications, the types of joints and why some work better than others in certain situations. In the absence of this understanding, he was doomed to forever be dissatisfied with the results of his efforts. His level of motivation fell off, and later he chalked up his "dabble in woodworking" as just one more example of his inability to stick with a dream and see it through to successful completion. Ralph's mistake is a common one. How many people do you know who own expensive professional-

level cameras, but remain unaware of even the most basic principles of photography? (It's always fascinating to see camera buffs taking pictures of a full moon and using their flash units to "illuminate" an object over two hundred thousand miles away.) Among the people you know who own a piano, how many can actually play more than one or two standard "party pieces" on it? (Uh-oh, here comes another rendition of "Chopsticks.") This is a how-to book with extensive "why-to" components as well. The book is not aimed at those impatient souls who might like to try briefly dabbling in making this or that dream come true before moving on to something else. It's for readers who are (or would like to become) determined to succeed, and is designed to make them masters of the dreamcrafting macroskills.⁸ Even those who have already achieved mastery of one or more micro-level skills will need to fully understand both theory and practice of the five macroskills if they hope to make their higher-level dreams come true. Ralph's cousin Ted, for example, is the best cabinet builder in the area. For years, Ted has dreamed of setting up his own cabinetry business in town. Now a younger rival, Harry, who couldn't build a decent cabinet if his life depended on it, has beat him to it. What's especially infuriating is that Harry's shop is doing great and drawing away some of Ted's regular customers. At this rate, Ted may have to go cap in hand and actually ask Harry for a job! The thought of having that younger, third-rate carpenter for a boss makes Ted's stomach churn. Pam is just as upset. For years she's been honing her writing ability, studying the classics of literature, submitting samples of her work for critical evaluation, and attending every writers' conference she could. Meanwhile that vapid little Janice takes a first crack at writing a novel, and bingo, she lands a book contract just like that, on the basis of a few crummy pages of outline. Is there no justice in the world? Ted, you may be able to tap-dance circles around Harry when it comes to making cabinets—but when it comes to making dreams come true, Harry's the better hooper. You know how to custom-fit and stain perfectly; he knows how to set goals and stick with them until they're achieved. Different skills altogether. Pam, you're good at finding just the right adjective. What Janice is good at is finding just the right publisher. Microskill and macroskill; not at all the same. How many would-be photographers, pianists, sailors, home-owners—how many would-be anything—have felt the frustration and disappointment of a dream unfulfilled, and have blamed their failure on themselves, on their "weakness," their "lack of willpower"? Dreamcrafting bolsters willpower with skillpower. The chapters that follow introduce the five dreamcrafting macroskills in both their theoretical and their practical aspects.⁹ The five macroskills are Aspiration—Igniting a Sense of Mission To make any cherished dream come true, you must first learn to unleash the full power of your basic determination to succeed. You must come to feel you're "on a mission," with a compelling vision of success to guide you. In addition, it's critical that your dream be defined with precision. The unclear mission is practically doomed to fail from the start. Chapters 1 and 2 outline techniques for cultivating a meaningful big dream that inspires a driving sense of mission, and for achieving great clarity of purpose by defining the dream with precision. Motivation—Intensifying and Maintaining Resolve Everyone's big problem—motivation levels are high at the outset, but invariably fizzle out in short order. The New Year's resolution is

forgotten two weeks later. To stick with your mission, you'll need to set up some form of time-release mechanism for re-energizing your motivation and sustaining your determination over the longer term, despite the inevitable setbacks. Nothing must be allowed to weaken your optimism or enthusiasm. You must master the techniques for renewing and boosting your resolve on an ongoing basis. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 introduce a number of such techniques in detail.

3. Projection—Linking Today with Tomorrow Who's got time to meet all of today's responsibilities, let alone work on some big dream for tomorrow? You'll need to find ways to free up blocks of time and establish some kind of balance between conflicting immediate needs and longer-term goals. Chapters 6 and 7 uncover techniques for making timesaving gifts to your future self, and for learning to live with "one foot in tomorrow."

10 Inclusion—Getting Others Involved It will also be important to reduce and ultimately eliminate motivation-sapping resistance from those around you, and get them working with you and for you, rather than against you. Chapters 8 and 9 present powerful techniques for turning resistance into support, and for inspiring others to become directly involved in helping you achieve your mission.

Application—Cultivating the Dreamcrafting Habit Finally, you will need to become even better at using all of these skills, since the cycle will repeat itself many times. Chapter 10 describes ways for applying elements of the macroskills to small dreams as well as big ones, on a daily basis. It uncovers the many benefits—some of them life-altering—that will ensue. Each of the book's chapters concludes with a profile of a famous dream crafter who applied the macroskills effectively in his or her own life.

Dreamers and Achievers Don't give up your day job," people will jokingly—and sometimes not so jokingly—admonish others when confronted with their faltering attempts to realize a dream. The reality is that for many, the need for that "day job" is seen as a primary impediment to making the big dream come true. Above all else, Dreamcrafting is a book about creating alignment in life. The basic premise is that a dream generates a sense of purpose, and out of purpose comes alignment. When the dreaded day job, for example, can be seen to be in alignment with the dream—even if only in the sense that it is funding a lifestyle that permits the dream to be pursued during leisure hours—a peculiar hidden benefit emerges. People whose lives are in alignment tend to achieve greater success even in areas not directly related to their dream. What we view as a demeaning livelihood, after all, is one that literally "de-means"—that is, that robs our life of meaning. Bringing such a livelihood into alignment with a meaningful dream often restores meaning to the livelihood itself, with interesting results.

11 Two brief examples: a night watchman dreamed of being a writer. His friends would ask him, "What does being a security guard have to do with your dream?" "Everything!" he would answer. "I get paid a regular salary to sit at a table all night and write whatever I want!" He was careful to do his job well; it was an assignment he did not want to lose, a rare opportunity to earn money while developing his skills as a writer. One of the companies at which he served as night watchman was so impressed with how well he carried out his duties, they hired him away from the security guard company and made him their full-time staff security guard, at nearly twice the salary, and with a more comfortable desk at which to do his writing. A telephone installer and repairman had once been

in a rock band, had dabbled in theater, and had developed a taste for meeting people and bringing good cheer into their lives. He was a mediocre technician, but talked his bosses into transferring him to a marketing job. He did not especially enjoy selling for its own sake, but he realized that in marketing he'd meet a steady stream of people with quandaries he could help resolve. Spreading the product was less important to him than spreading his own brand of energy and enthusiasm for helping others find solutions to problems. He excelled in his marketing role, and before long became the youngest executive in the telephone company's history. In both cases, their day job was merely a means to an end—yet, with their lives brought into alignment by a dream unrelated to their jobs, they achieved a level of on-the-job success that may not otherwise have come as easily, if at all. This is a book that may show you how investing more time and effort in your hobby could provide the fuel to make you more successful at your work. It may help you understand how your love of raising flowers can improve your effectiveness with your sales team or with your children, or how the profound enjoyment you derive from oil painting may equip you to be a more successful banker or electrician.¹² Primarily, of course, it's a book to teach you how to make even your most ambitious dreams come true—as happened for both our security guard and our telephone repairman. The night watchman with the literary aspirations became editor of technical publications at Amdahl, the company that originally hired him as a guard. He was later offered a position as their training specialist, and caught the help-people-achieve-their-goals bug. In the mid-1980s he became an executive consultant at a company called Achieve; for many years he delivered executive seminars around the world. His name is Paul, and he did go on to write several books, one of which you are now holding in your hand. The telephone repairman eventually left the phone company and created a training and consulting company, the better to connect with people and help them realize their dreams. His name is Art, and he is the coauthor of this book. It was Art's company—Achieve—that Paul joined years ago; the two have been collaborating over the years ever since. Art ultimately sold his company to Times-Mirror; its namesake, Achieve Global, has gone on to become one of the largest training companies in the world. The authors of *Dreamcrafting* have spent much of their lives not only sharing with people around the world the ideas and concepts that are outlined in the chapters ahead, but also applying them in their own lives. They—that is, we—know these approaches work, because we have seen them successfully applied by hundreds of international clients, not to mention by close friends, and by loved ones, and by ourselves, again and again, over the years. In every case, the journey begins with an individual “on a mission.” Igniting a powerful sense of mission is the first of the five dreamcrafting macroskills, as we're about to see. --This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition. About the Author For over ten years Paul Levesque was an executive consultant with the Achieve Group (founded by partner Art McNeil). As lead instructor at Achieve's Service Quality Academy, he helped guide over 350 international corporate clients through the planning and implementation of their change and improvement efforts. For four years (1997~2000) he served as executive director at Catalyst, a British management consulting firm. Paul is the author of *Breakaway*

Planning: 8 Big Questions to Guide Organizational Change (Amacom, 1998) and The WOW Factory: Creating a Customer Focus Revolution in Your Business (Irwin, 1995). Articles he has written have appeared in publications such as Quality Digest and the business journal Biz.Art McNeil founded the Achieve Group, a consulting company whose namesake Achieve Global has gone on to become one of the largest training companies in the world. He also served as chairman of Times Mirror Training's international board of directors.Art wrote the international best-seller The "I" of the Hurricane: Creating Corporate Energy (Stoddart Publishing, 1987), which has been translated into several languages, and co-authored TheVIP Strategy: Leadership Skills for Exceptional Performance (Key Porter Books, 1989). With partner Paul Levesque, he is the coauthor of a weekly syndicated newspaper column entitled Dreamcrafting.

--This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition.From BooklistThe authors head up the Achieve Group, a successful training franchise that helps guide international corporate clients through planning and implementing change and improvement. They use a nut-and-bolts approach to teach others to develop what they call the "macroskills" necessary to make dreams come true. They tell us that it's not always the most talented people who achieve their highest aspirations but the most driven, and most of us have resigned ourselves to never realizing our dreams because the necessities of life get in the way. The basic skills required can be learned, and the authors give many examples of those who realized their dreams despite great odds, such as Walt Disney, Jane Goodall, and Charles Lindbergh. Although the five dream-crafting disciplines that they outline, such as aspiration and motivation, are more inherent in some people than in others, this guide should be an asset for those who dare to dream big but haven't got a clue how to move from dream to reality. David SiegfriedCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition.Read more

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