

The 7 Secret Traits Of Enduring Champions

While the competitive spirit and desire to win can provide powerful motivations, it is also important to note that it is usually not when we are standing in the championship circle that we discover our best self. It is often during our most trying and darkest hours that we find out what we are truly made of.

Greatness exists within us all. If life's circumstances have left you in a place where you don't feel great at the moment, those traits may just be hiding right now.

Michelangelo said, "In every block of marble I see a statue as plain as though it stood before me, shaped and perfect in attitude and action. I have only to hew away the rough walls that imprison the lovely apparition to reveal it to the other eyes as mine see it."

Knowing that, what are the traits that great people invariably possess? We've narrowed our list to seven. We're betting you have these traits, even if they're hiding, and if you don't recognize them they may simply need to be honed.

Here are the seven personal qualities successful people have that you can use to discover and develop your own best self over time:

1. They Never Quit. Even when they face defeat, successful people never stop trying and they eventually win for themselves and others. What this means to us in our company is that we don't quit on each other. If someone says, "I have your back," they mean it, without fail. We love our work and we want to win for the team.

2. They Possess an Iron Will to Win. I inherited a positive mentality from my family. I have an iron will to win. I point out in my book—[The 7 Non-Negotiables of Winning](#)—that my greatest triumphs came in my darkest hours. The year 2010 found [Fishbowl](#) (and countless other companies) struggling with the after-effects of the recession. No one knew how long they would last; companies were closing right and left. Even some of our customers didn't escape unharmed. Challenges also present tremendous opportunity for development and growth.

3. They Understand That "What's in It for Me?" Is a Self-defeating Question. Instead of focusing on their ego, successful people maintain a laser focus on the big picture and continually prepare and train for the success of the bigger vision, instead. By the time we need to act, the time to prepare is over. You have to cultivate the right mentality early if you want to have the fortitude to succeed when problems arise. Start right now, when things are going well, to develop those qualities that will help you through any situation you may find yourself in.

4. They See the Good in Themselves and Others. It's amazing how people who have embraced their greatness are, in fact, humble and they work to bring out the best in everyone around them. They inspire others to transcend comparison and jealousy. These people focus on possibilities and lift others up when they need a boost. Rather than looking for problems to fix in others, they look for the good and encourage others to be better by using positive examples and encouragement instead of petty behavior and threats.

5. They Are Scrappy! I get excited when I meet someone with drive and a lot of raw talent. They're usually not excellent at just one thing and don't have a lot of experience at first, but it's always fun to see all the ways they influence the entire organization for good over the years. They have a contagious work ethic, "you betcha" attitude, and commitment to a greater cause than their own gratification.

6. They Push Through the Pain Until They Find Their Stride. I remember my experiences when I was a bit younger. To letter in another sport besides football I joined my high school's Cross Country team. There was nothing like reaching my "runner's high." That's the point where you've pushed hard enough to get through the conditioning struggles, the pain of the initial run, and you've hit your stride. At that point your legs tell you that they would hurt more if you stop than if you keep going. They beg you to move forward. It's an awesome feeling. Successful people know this feeling well.

Every business requires its members to push through growing pains to hit their stride. After overcoming obstacles on the way to success, you and your team are rewarded with the desire to continue improving and moving forward to achieve your goals.

7. They Often Leave Their Comfort Zone. It is inspiring to all involved to work in a company with great people. When you're surrounded by people who are eager and willing to step out of their main roles and help others, everything goes more smoothly. These people are willing to constantly learn and grow, and that helps the entire company.

Do you recognize these traits in yourself, or do you see their potential to grow in you? Just like Michelangelo's view of the potential in each block of marble, I'm betting you do. With a little practice and honing, you and everyone around you can bring those traits into view. I encourage you (no, I even dare you) to try.