

# Wroten & Associates

## October 2015 Leadership Insight

### Success and Happiness or is it Happiness and Success?

"Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful. " -- Albert Schweitzer

Success has been correlated with four specific concepts: contentment, positive relationships, achievement and happiness. Many people know they want to be successful and happy, but few of us have a good definition of what success is or looks like. Furthermore, if we do have an idea of what success is, it is often very different for each of us. Of course success in business and in life can mean different things to different people.

Forget traditional definitions of success. Forget what other people think. Ask yourself if you feel happy -- not just at work, not just at home, not just in those fleeting moments when you do something just for yourself, but overall. If your answer is yes I am happy, you're successful. The happier you are the more successful you are. If your answer is no, it's time to rethink how you define success, and start making changes to either your professional or personal life, or both. Whether or not you feel successful and happy depends on the trade-offs you are willing to not just accept, but embrace as you pursue your individual definition of success. Trade-offs are a given because your career, your family and friends, your personal pursuits are all significant aspects of your life. By focusing more on one area automatically diminishes the focus on another area, and thus, potentially reduces your feelings of success and happiness. Think about and identify what motivates you. What do you value most materially, emotionally, or spiritually? Move towards achieving those things.

Some simple proven ways to be successful and happy include participating in **cultural activities**. See a play or visit a museum which is stimulating and has been correlated with decreased anxiety, depression and increased satisfaction with life. Keep a **journal or diary**. Simply write down not only special occasion events but ordinary events too. Rereading your diary or journal from time to time makes ordinary events seem more extraordinary. You may also be surprised at how far you have come or how much things have changed. Research has shown that a successful and happy life is a **social life**. Positive social relationships activate pleasure centers in the brain that makes us feel content and fulfilled. Interact and have meaningful, substantive conversations with friends, family members peers and acquaintances. One last suggestion from a study published in *The Journal of Positive Psychology* found that **spending money on "life experiences"** makes us happier than spending money on material things! Life experiences are more difficult to quantify but study subjects reported that after spending their money on experiences it brought them a greater sense of well-being and was considered to be a better use of their money!

Success, whatever your definition, and happiness are not a pinnacle we reach or a destination. Make them daily goals created by actively choosing positive actions every day that will help you feel fulfilled, content, successful and happy!

**Wishing you a successful, happy and insightful month!**

**Positively provided by: Wroten & Associates, Marilynn W. Allemann, LCSW, CPC**

Visit Wroten & Associates at [www.wrotenlaw.com](http://www.wrotenlaw.com) Marilynn Allemann at [www.MwaExecCoach.com](http://www.MwaExecCoach.com)