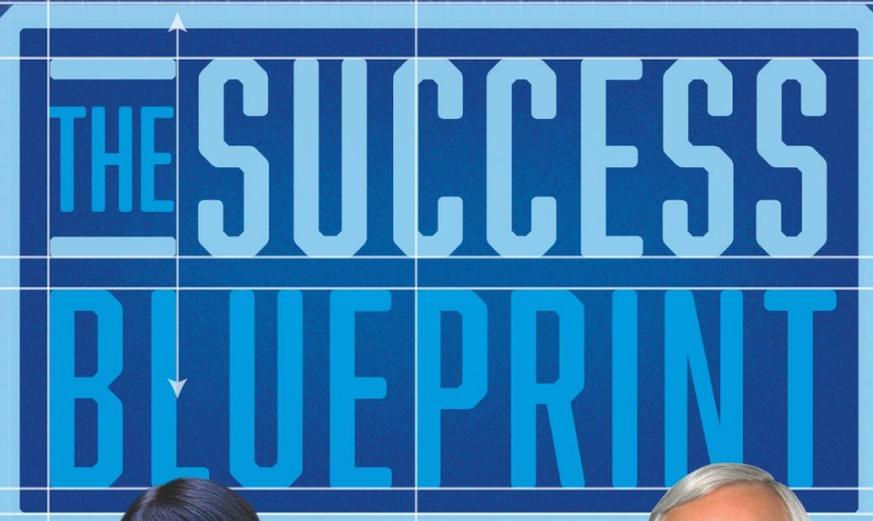
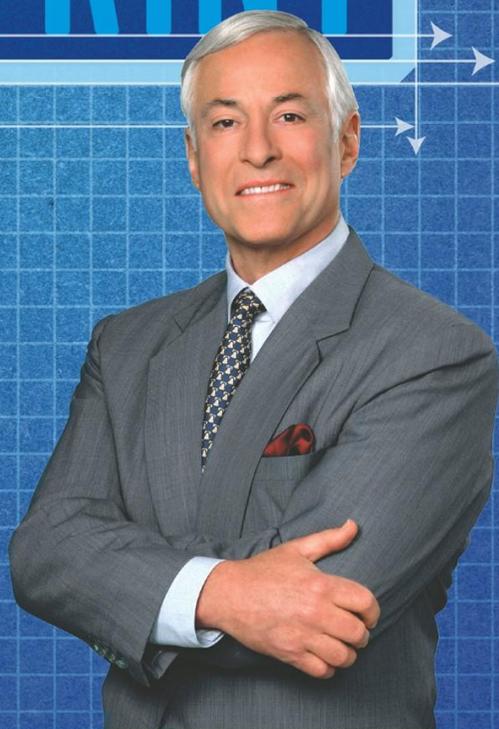


TODAY'S LEADING ENTREPRENEURS & PROFESSIONALS
REVEAL THEIR **BLUEPRINT** TO SUCCESS IN
HEALTH, WEALTH AND LIFESTYLE



**THE SUCCESS
BLUEPRINT**



ANNE MARIE GRAHAM, BRIAN TRACY

And Other Leading Experts From Around The World

CHAPTER 18

FOUR SECRETS TO BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL, SELLABLE BUSINESS

BY ANNE MARIE GRAHAM

INTRODUCTION

There are very simple reasons why some entrepreneurs are more successful than others, and why some go on to be multi-millionaires while others don't. In this chapter I will share with you the Four Secrets of my success that led to me building and selling a profitable business.

Like many business owners, I was very “technically competent” at what I do, devising and implementing Health Strategies in Organisations. Four years in, I realised that it wasn't growing any further and I realised that I had to start doing something differently if I wanted better results.

I learned that Brian Tracy was delivering a seminar in Dublin and having read some of his books, I took myself off to learn more about how I could get myself to the next level. I came away newly-focused with simple, practical principles of peak performance, a new mind-set and a clear plan of attack. Although simple in theory, their execution persistently was by no means easy. I needed steadfast discipline to put them into action to ensure that success unfolded. And success did unfold, which is why I want to share those four principles with you now.

The four (4) main principles that became an absolute part of my daily, weekly and monthly routine were:

I. Laser Focus

II. Action

III. Managing YOURSELF as opposed to your “Time Management”

IV. Persistence

I. LASER FOCUS: KNOWING WHAT IT IS YOU WANT, KNOWING YOUR GOAL

The indispensable first step to getting the things you want in life is this: decide what you want.

~ Ben Stein

The Oxford English Dictionary defines focus as “an act of concentrating interest or activity on something.” That something is your goal.

- What do you want to achieve, by when?
- What do you need to do (and give up) to achieve it?
- Why do you want to achieve it?

These are all the essential elements of Laser Focus!

It is not the person with the highest qualifications in their field or the person with the best product or service on the market that necessarily achieves the most success. It is the person with Laser Focus as to what their goal is, that knows what they want, what they have to do to achieve it, and has a written targeted plan of action for achieving that goal, that will most likely achieve greater success more quickly. You also have to take responsibility for reviewing that goal and be 100% accountable so that you can ensure you are on track.

As a nurse by profession, the one thing the profession taught me is, “What gets measured gets done.” You can have the most elaborate business plan in the world, but if you don’t have a measurable goal of what you want to achieve and in what timeframe, it is unlikely to bring you the success you desire.

Goals need to be specific, measurable and they must stretch you out of your comfort zone in order to achieve them. Your goals should be constantly changing and moving you to the next level, but this only happens if you set goals, set deadlines and you measure your success in achieving them. For me, I set the goal of building a successful business with a ten-year exit strategy. I aimed to become a leading Workplace Health Service provider, working with National and International companies, employing highly-trained nurses and to achieve financial growth and profitability year on year. Through weekly and monthly review of my goals, I was able to achieve this and annually I reviewed my plan and set about planning new, bigger goals for the year ahead.

One of the fears we have when starting out in business is how are we going to achieve our goal, how will we get there? In my experience it is essential to do two things.

1. Set your ultimate goal and then break down the steps required to achieve it. What daily tasks do you need to do? Have you prioritised the top five steps of your goal? What weekly tasks and monthly tasks do you need to do? Again have a top five or at the very least a top three.
2. Identify why you want your goal, know why you have set this goal, that way, the “what you need to do” becomes clearer.

II. ACTION: THE ART OF MAKING IT HAPPEN

Inaction breeds doubt and fear, action breeds confidence and courage.

~ Dale Carnegie

Our actions are dictated by our behaviour and behaviour is largely controlled by our habits. If you want success, you must assess your habits. Once you are conscious of your habits, you can take action to replace poor habits with good ones and good habits with better ones.

Your entrepreneurial success starts with taking concentrated action, TODAY. What is it that you need to do TODAY to achieve your goals? This is what will lead you to achieving your weekly, monthly and annual goals and this will ensure you achieve your ultimate goal successfully.

Whilst having a vision for the future of your business is vital, if your action is planned for the future, for example next month, then it will always be in the future. This type of procrastination will not lead you to success; in fact it will likely demotivate and frustrate you as you are not moving forward. You are standing still which really means you are going backwards. In my opinion, my success has been ultimately due to doing these simple actions consistently.

- Firstly, I set daily goals and writing them down in order of priority. I have always used a “Top 5” and looked at the five most important tasks for me to do today that will move me forward. Having worked my way through my list, I then ticked them off when they were achieved. The feeling of ticking all the boxes and knowing I was moving forward is hugely gratifying and this becomes addictive.
- Secondly, you must get into the habit of practising discipline. As a nurse I was no stranger to having to practice discipline, having had it instilled in me in my training, but there were still times when I had to give myself a reality check and say, Anne Marie, just get on with it, just do it. This is ShowTime! It is only through doing the difficult, unpleasant, least enjoyable tasks, that you come out of your comfort zone and it is here where you will achieve your greatest success.

As I have already stated, what gets measured gets done! It doesn't really matter how you choose to measure, as long as you have some measurement for the actions you are taking to achieve your goal.

Let me share a sample of the targeted plan I had for my goals on an ongoing basis.

Daily Goals: My Rule of 5

1. Make Sales Calls.
2. Send follow up proposals/promotional material to prospects spoken to and met with.
3. Update Prospects and Progress Spreadsheet.

4. Call one current client to set up “Quality Control Meeting” this month (designed to review level of service, but also keeps me in front of our customers and try and get more business and/or referrals).
5. Read for 30 mins per day.

Weekly Goals: My Rule of 5

1. Call 20 prospects per week (*and speak to someone* rather than leaving a voice mail).
2. Meetings - I measured that this led to two meetings per week and a 50% conversion rate meant one new client per week.
3. Quality Control Review and follow up with five current clients.
4. Review Debtors and Creditors list.
5. Complete and review Weekly Progress Diary.

Monthly Goals: My Rule of 5

1. Achieve a minimum turnover of \$41,666 per month with a Profit of \$20,000 per month and review monthly management accounts to assess target.
2. Review Time Management Schedule: Daily Plan, Weekly Plan, Actual Time Spent, document monthly score.
3. Develop and update Prospects Listing.
4. Document five things you have learned and applied from this month’s reading
5. Review this month’s goals achieved.

III. MANAGE YOURSELF RATHER THAN “TIME MANAGEMENT”

Either You Run the Day or the Day Runs You.

~ Jim Rohn

The Pareto Principal states that 20% of your activity will account for 80% of your business growth and success. To that end it is vital that you spend your time doing the highest value, highest productivity and highest revenue generating tasks as a matter of priority on a daily basis.

Let's look at my goals above and apply the 80/20 rule. In relation to My Rule of 5, let's say we take 10 tasks and apply the 80/20 rule, 2 of these tasks contributed most to my success. The two highest value tasks for me were calls to prospects/customers, and arranging meetings to get in front of them to win business thus generating revenue and sales growth. My second highest value task was to send proposals relevant to their needs and follow up on these until a decision had been made.

Planning your tasks is essential to maximise your effectiveness in carrying out high value tasks in a timely manner. Plan tomorrow today, plan next week this week, plan next month this month and **PRIORITISE!**

One of the most powerful tools you can use to assess how effectively you use your time is to keep a time diary, even just for one week. This is one of the biggest 'eye opening' things I have ever done. For one week, I kept a diary that assessed for every 30 minute period exactly how I had used my time. I quickly realised on review of that one week that there were many parts of my day where I was not performing my highest value and highest productivity tasks, and I had total clarity on where I was using my time most and least effectively.

IV. PERSISTENCE

Persistence is Self-Discipline in Action.

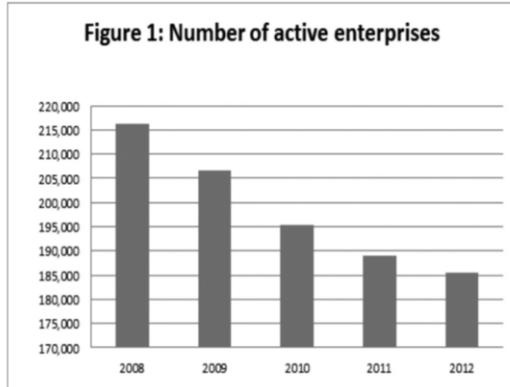
~ Brian Tracy

One of the single biggest reasons why some entrepreneurs succeed and others fail is their ability to persist. You need to persist through fear, failure, disappointments and challenges. Persistent people usually view these as opportunities to learn, grow and do things differently.

Six years into my business, Ireland went through the worst recession in its history, something that was documented globally. With the Irish State almost bankrupt, organisations turned their attention towards spending only on the essentials, and in many organisations Proactive Health Strategy wasn't one of them.

Suddenly Health and Wellness Activities were discontinued overnight as they were seen as an “unnecessary spend” – particularly as many organisations were making people redundant. These activities represented 70% of my business and revenue! In Ireland it is estimated that 1-in-5 businesses went out of business in the recession.

Persisting Through a Recession



CSO, Ireland 2012

Determined not to be one of the casualties after six years of hard work, I looked at what I could do differently, what other services I could offer and how I could use clients’ current needs to offer services that met them.

I realised that Occupational Health, obligations under Statutory Health and Safety legislation were now pivotal to an organisation’s survival as well as to my own, and so I offered more of these services. I networked in networks where there would be Human Resource Personnel, the buyers of this service. I built up a team of associate trainers who worked under my company’s brand. I did compliance review meetings with all clients with the purpose of ensuring they had all statutory obligations covered, whilst helping me gain and retain business. For employees who went on a 12-month contract and retainer, I offered them some additional incentives.

One of my competitors approached me in 2012 as their business had gone into decline, and I acquired that business. My persistence and

discipline had paid off and ensured my survival and not only did I survive, I thrived!

CONCLUSION

You can hire the best business coach who'll help you set your goals, the best accountant to keep your finances on track, the best PR agent to help you sell, but the one thing you cannot hire...is someone to reach your goals for you. The only person who can reach your goals...is you!



About Anne Marie

An inspirational leader in her field, Anne Marie Graham successfully sold The Healthforce Group in 2015, following a bid between an Irish Provider and a U.S Provider, which led to the acquisition of her company with Healthcare Screening Ireland, where she now works on the Senior Management Team.

Anne Marie, who is also an experienced trainer, has worked with a number of Corporates across a wide variety of sectors both nationally and internationally, helping them to develop a Health Strategy that maximises the benefits and values of best practice for Employee Health and Wellbeing. She has also worked as an Advisor in relation to Occupational Health Statutory Obligations for Corporate National and International clients including successful defence of medical legal cases for over 15 years.

An experienced speaker on radio, she has presented to a number of businesses and Business Networks for almost 15 years. She has served as National Chairperson for the Irish Nurses & Midwifery Organisation Occupational Health Branch – which saw her innovate in areas such as Lobbying, Policy Development and speaking to organisations on Best Practice. She has also lectured in Nursing Studies with Dublin City University, a University that has forged its reputation as Ireland's University of Enterprise.

Anne Marie has served on a number of Boards as a Non-Executive Director, bringing the value of her Business Experience and Expertise to these organisations.

SUCCESS BLUEPRINT

Trained in Nursing at Beaumont Hospital Dublin, Ireland's Centre of Excellence for Neuroscience, she further achieved an Honours Degree in Health Studies from London's Royal College of Nursing, one of the United Kingdom's leading Colleges in the field, as well as a Master's in Occupational Health.

Her strength, focus and determination led her from this to setting up The Healthforce Group in 2004, acquiring the company Employee Health in 2012 and selling The Healthforce Group in 2015.