

BELIEVE IT!

BECOME IT!

MODULE TEN



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Pillar Principle #4 Preparation

Research comparing students of similar ability finds that the distinguishing feature between those who maintain a strong work ethic in their studies and those who give up is a sense of control. Those who express a sense of control receive scores that are a full letter grade higher than those who do not (Mendoza, 1999).

Sixty-eight percent of people who consider themselves successful say that there is at least one area of their job in which they are an expert (Austin, 2000).

**“In all things, success depends upon previous preparation,
and without such preparation there is failure.”**

Confucius

Famous basketball coach Bobby Knight was interviewed shortly after his Indiana Hoosiers captured the NCAA National Championship title. The interviewer asked him, “Why is it, Bobby, that your basketball teams at Indiana are always so successful? Is it the will to succeed?”

“The will to succeed is important,” replied Knight, “but I’ll tell you what’s more important – it’s the will to prepare. It’s the will to go out there every day, training and building those muscles and sharpening those skills.”

There is no substitute for preparation. Scholar, basketball star, and senator Bill Bradley reminds us that, “When you are not practicing, remember someone somewhere is practicing and when you meet him, he will win.”

Penelope, age 18, has a dream to become a world-class ballerina. She reported, “I just kept telling myself that I could become the best if that’s what I really wanted. My parents always taught me that you can become whatever you want to be. I told myself I could be just as good as the best girls in my class and better. I’d also think and I even still continue to tell myself, ‘*You’ve got what it takes, just keep going!*’ Penelope’s advice: “Be prepared to work hard and have self discipline. Also, you will only become good or master a step with continual practice. Always think positively because you can become what you tell yourself you are. Never give up.”

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Marty, age 55, from Corvallis, Oregon, shared his thoughts on how he prepared for the Iron Man competition in Kona, Hawaii:

Twenty-four years ago my plan was simply to get in the best physical shape possible. I trained for an average of 30 hours a week for nearly a year before I went to Hawaii. It cost me my first marriage. I put my training first and my family second. Still, I think of this as an accomplishment that took much effort and determination. The last 10 miles or so I felt like quitting every step. I collapsed on the finish line and had to be treated in a hospital.

In the toughest moments of the race, I counted strokes, strides and breaths. Sometimes the pain is so intense that you just try to run faster than the pain, live outside of your body. When you want to quit, you remember how many hours, days, and MONTHS you have trained for this day and you say NO WAY, I WILL NOT GIVE UP. The only thing that would have stopped me was a broken bone or heart attack. I had blisters on my blisters but still finished the race.

During Preparation, Avoid Procrastination

At a seminar I once attended in Phoenix, I was making conversation with a gentleman during the break. I asked, "Are you going to buy the presenter's product?" The man answered, "No way! At the last seminar I attended, about a year ago, I bought an audio cassette tape series that I've never even opened!" I then asked him, "What are the tapes about?" He replied, "procrastination."

To eliminate procrastination from your life:

- Openly discuss with your family, a friend, or partner, the reasons you procrastinate. Sometimes verbalizing our concerns enables us to get past them more easily.
- Consider the consequences of *not* doing the tasks. Ask, "What will happen if I don't do this?" Sometimes this spurs us into action.
- FIRST do the things you least enjoy each day. Put them at the top of your "To Do" list.
- As soon as thoughts enter your mind like, "I'll do that later" think this:
 - Label "No, that's procrastinating, and that's not like me.
 - Replace "I'll do that at 2:00pm today."(set a definite time).
 - Focus Forward "I feel great when I don't procrastinate!"
- Visualize yourself doing things in a timely manner.
- Affirm each day: "I feel great when I don't procrastinate!" Until it becomes a habit, reward yourself each time you take immediate action.



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**“It takes a lot of unspectacular preparation to produce spectacular results.”
Roger Staubach**

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