

Chapter One

Write Your Own Success Story

■■■ **Can a book really help you become more successful?** Why not read about Cary and Jim - both promotional products professionals - and then decide.

Is your story about six-figure success? Or is it more of a six-day struggle?

Have you ever wondered why some people succeed, while others seem to always lag behind? Study after study has confirmed that people who set specific, measurable and attainable goals are routinely more successful. Talk to any successful salesperson or professional athlete and you will be talking to a person who has goals and is committed to achieving them.

Let's take a look at the story of two promotional products professionals - Cary and Jim. Both began in the promotional products business about five years ago with the same background, skill level and drive to succeed. Both use the same technology, have the same resources and live in the same town.

Today, Cary makes a six-figure income, averages close to a 40 percent gross profit margin on most orders and can afford to spend free time with family and friends, and on hobbies. Jim's business, on the other hand, has him working long hours, worrying about how he's going to pay the bills and struggling to attract new customers.

What's the difference? Is there a secret that Cary knows, that Jim doesn't?

In any industry, including promotional products, only a small percentage of sales professionals know how to make more money.

These are the people who don't have to cut their profit margins, or work those long, hard hours and yet they consistently outsell everyone else.

What's their secret to success?

What is it that Cary knows, that Jim doesn't? It's the same secret I'm ready to share with you in this book.

The secret is in knowing what to do, when to do it and how to do it.

So that no matter what comes down the road, you can deal with it. The secret is in **taking the time to plan for success**. It's that simple. And in this book I share **the practical, easy to apply Secrets, Strategies and Solutions that helped lead me to six-figure success** - without struggling or sacrificing or worrying into the night.

Did you start your business with an excitement and optimism that now seems more like a memory?

Does the day-to-day job of keeping customers happy and orders coming in have you chasing low profits? Does the pressure of always having to stay on top of marketing, networking *and* balancing the books have you harried?

Do you sometimes wish there were an easier way?

There is. And it's right at your fingertips! **This book – The Ultimate Manual – is the answer. It's filled with the keys to business success written specifically for promotional products professionals - like you.** This book will show you exactly what to do, step-by-step to Make More Money! Each chapter includes action steps, quick tips and strategies that you can start using - right away - to generate larger PROFITS.

Why not use this book to start writing your own story of business success?

Successful business people think differently. They're not necessarily smarter, or gifted in any special way, but they do make better business choices, and they are proactive. **Instead of letting the business run them, they run the business.**

What is it that sets them apart and how can you tap into that power? How can you become more successful and make more money? The first step is simple, but not so easy and it's a step that's often overlooked when you're starting your own business. But the best news is - you can do it anywhere and anytime - so let's start right now.

Visualize it!

Meet any highly successful businessperson and you will see someone that has a **powerful vision of the success they want to achieve**. Their vision of success starts from the inside out.

For those of you who participate in sports, you know that games can be won or lost before you ever step foot onto the field. Professional athletes, as well as actors, are frequently **trained to visualize a winning performance**.

Visualize yourself winning

You can take advantage of this powerful technique for your business, even if you've never stepped foot on an athletic field or a stage. Most people think you have to *be successful before you feel successful*, but I believe differently. I believe in the "conceive, believe, achieve" model that professional athletes use when **they visualize themselves winning**.

Here's one way I use visualization to keep myself on track to success. I like to start my day in the gym in the morning, where I have a chance to think through my business challenges and visualize myself handling every situation in a positive way. It clears my head and gives me the confidence to know that no matter what comes my way, I can handle it.

Just like in sports, your business needs to reflect a powerful vision and speak to your strongest desires.

Your vision is your blueprint for success.

Success is definitely an individual matter. But if you don't take the time to define it for yourself, you may end up living someone else's dream. **Define success on your own terms!**

What does success mean to you?

To some, success may mean a six-figure income, while to others it may mean having greater freedom and flexibility at work. Or it may mean respect from colleagues and peers. **Decide what's important to you in your business and in your life, and then focus on how to achieve it.**

► **Create a clear picture of your ideal business.**

Use the power of visualization to produce a crystal clear picture of how you want your business to look and what you want to accomplish. Your business is a blank canvas and you are the artist. Create what suits you best. What will meet your needs, values, personality and schedule?

- What is the purpose of your business?
- What attracted you to this business?
- What are your business strengths?
- Ideally, what hours, income and vacation schedule will suit you?
- What will your business look like in one year? In five years? In ten years?
- What do you want to personally gain from your business? How will that make you feel?
- What would a perfect day in your business look like?

► **Develop a success vision that reflects the real you and make sure it includes the values that are important to you.**

Take the time to decide what is most important to you. Is it money or freedom? What about feeling a sense of accomplishment? Do you value family, financial independence or creative expression the most? Is making money the primary reason you are in business, or are you looking for something more? Are there other values that are important to you?

Rank the values you have chosen in order of importance then see if your day-to-day business activities truly reflect this list. Do your actions match the values of greatest importance to you? Once you are clear on your values, it becomes much easier to make day-to-day business decisions.

► **Your success vision needs to be measurable. That's how you'll know you've achieved it.**

► **Make your success vision BIG. This isn't the place to hold back.**

Here are several examples of **success visions** from my coaching clients:

Success means -- providing a valuable service to my customers (that's fun too) that allows me to make \$100,000 or more a year, without working weekends or evenings. It means having time for my family and friends and taking four weeks of vacation every year. To me, success also means being able to retire before I'm sixty.

Success means -- working five days a week from my home in a business that energizes me and allows me enough time for my children's activities.

Success means -- being able to save 15 % of my income every year and having plenty of time for my family and my hobbies.

► **Once you know what success means to you, you can develop goals to achieve your success vision.**

Goals are the tactics you will use to achieve your vision. Your goals are not the same as your vision. The vision comes first, then the goals that support it.

Setting goals is powerful, and can become even more so when you put the goals in writing. But just writing them down isn't enough; you need to take specific steps every day to achieve them. Success in business and in life is the result of having **a clear vision of where you want to be and the willingness to commit to taking action to achieve that vision.**

For example, if your success vision is to make \$100,000 by the end of the year, a partial list of your goals may be:

- To call on four new accounts every week
- To ask every current client for a referral
- To form strategic alliances with companies that serve your target market

Setting short and long term goals and committing to achieving them can help you live the life you want.

Now it's your turn!

Define what success means to you. Use the space below for **your success vision.** Post it in a place where you can see it every day. It need not be long, just a short

paragraph will do. Many people want to skip this step, but just the act of writing your vision down will put you light years **ahead of the competition**.

My success vision is on the wall behind my computer. When I'm feeling less than motivated (yes, even coaches have bad days), I use it to get me back on track.

Once you have your success vision, focus on it frequently and **be passionate about it**. Working on setting goals and taking action every day will help make your dream a reality. You may want to share your vision with a trusted friend, colleague or coach. Allow others to be there for encouragement, support and to help you celebrate your wins.

Use this space to define what success means to you...

Just a few small steps

Every day commit to taking specific actions that move you closer to your vision. All it takes is a few small steps each day. Use each chapter in this Manual to help you with these steps.

You Can Do It!

You have the power to start growing a highly profitable business now. Of course, there will be challenges along the way, but this Manual is designed to guide you through them.

Are you ready to get started? Reading this Manual and creating a powerful vision is your first step, but not the only step. You'll also need....

- A belief in yourself and your abilities
- A commitment to your business
- The ***right information*** (this Manual)
- A willingness to take action

In short, with this powerful combination -- nothing can stop you. I know you can do it!

Let's get started...

► *What Can You Do Now?* ◀

Write your success vision and post it in a place where you can look at it every day. Make it specific and measurable.

The written word is powerful and will keep you connected with what you want to achieve. It's also a great way to get yourself **back on track** when you get caught up in non-productive activities.

Use your vision to support your daily business goals and to help you prioritize your workday.

Everyday ask yourself:

- Is what I'm doing supporting or detracting from my business vision?
- What is the best use of my time at this moment?

Set aside time every week to work on your business, as well as in your business.