

Being Successful on One's Own Terms



Success exists in many different fields. As a principal of a school, I have to think of success through the perspective of my students – what they need, where they're going in life, and the best way for them to get to that point. I rely on my natural ability to teach, explain, and develop rapport with students and families. I use the data that I have gathered and the experience I have gained from working with counselors, administrators, and teachers. In other words, I choose to work in a field that caters to my strengths.

On the other hand, you wouldn't see me running for office during this election cycle. I don't have a background in political science or law, and I am not a person with a temperament that would thrive in the political arena. It's not to say that a political career isn't indicative of success – but I'm not going to pursue it.



It's not successful *on my terms*.

You cannot find academic success on your way up to higher education without defining what your own terms will be. Here is are three steps you can take:

Defining “What”: What am I pursuing? What are my goals? Some of our students answer this question by starting a capstone project, pursuing an internship, or shaping their course of study to match the trajectory of their major. You need to choose a target first so that you have something to aim for.

Don't know what to pick? Take this as a hint that you need to explore. It's often a very humbling step to take, but many students don't realize that there are lots of possibilities out there that they would end up loving – but they don't love it because they don't actually know anything about it. You need to have awareness first before you have the love, and sometimes lose sight of that.





Define “How”: How will I hit my target? What are the doors that I need opened? One of our first students at Legend College Prep had an immensely difficult time with her academics. She knew she wanted to pursue business, but had to struggle through language barriers and math courses that could match her pace. This student needed to learn how to succeed in classes with good results, and AP classes to show that she was a serious candidate. With dedication, she was able to go from being a low-achieving student to being a student in UCLA.

Another student we have had recently is a very motivated 9th grader who has a passion for sciences, particularly in Biology. He’s been ready for AP Biology even during 8th grade because of his self-study and past science competitions. He had barriers to overcome – not by his own making, but in systemic issues where he couldn’t take AP’s at such a young age. Moreover, because he wants to pursue a future in biotech and wants to get internships as soon as he can, he needs to take AP classes early AND quickly. That’s something his school wouldn’t let him do. (And that’s where Legend stepped in to help.)

I want you to see that obstacles come up even for high-achievers. You have to carve a path to get to where you want to go. Do not assume that the default path that everyone else is taking in public school will do that task for you. You need to be proactive, speak up, and ask questions so you can get the help you need.

Define “Why”: Lastly, you need to be able to express why you love what you love. Whatever your achievements, you must tell a story out of it that makes you a character that colleges and universities can relate to and understand. Show that you took the right classes. Show that your activities make you a serious candidate. This is the difference between a theoretically good student and a proven, passionate young person.



Start this skill today. It comes in handy during college and beyond.
Contact us: Office@LegendCP.com