

SUMMARY

BY ALYSSA BURNETTE

What Got You Here, Won't Get You There

By Marshall Goldsmith



QuickRead

FREE BOOK SUMMARIES

Summary of What Got You Here, Won't Get You There by Marshall Goldsmith

Written by Alyssa Burnette

The guide book for successful people who want to
take their success to the next level.

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
What Got You Here, Won't Get You There.....	6
Learn to Accept Criticism With Grace.....	9
Final Summary	12



**DO YOU WANT THIS BOOK
AS AN 20-MINUTE AUDIOBOOK?**



**Get the key insights of non-fiction books
in minutes instead of hours. Listen to
our free audiobooks while you workout
or on your commute to work.**



**DOWNLOAD
OUR FREE APP**



Introduction

I'd like to begin this book with one simple question: what qualities make a person successful? Is it determination? Tenacity? Confidence? Each of these qualities contribute to a person's success but none of them are enough to make you successful on their own. In fact, no one quality is powerful enough to take you to the top without the assistance of any other factors. The author observes that this fact highlights a common misconception about successful people. Sadly, far too many people assume that if they are confident enough, loud enough, or persistent enough, they can get everything they want in life. But unless these qualities are tempered by other traits and mixed with a few other positive elements, you might just wind up being too loud, too pushy, and so brazen that you accomplish your goals at someone else's expense.

And, if we're honest about it, when we think about successful people, we often envision the image of someone who is pushy, competitive, and a bit cutthroat in their pursuit of their goals. But the author wants to reconstruct that image of success and replace it with a vision of someone who is mature, well-adjusted, and emotionally helpful. He wants to cultivate the next generation of people who are successful without stepping on others in the process. And over the course of this summary, we'll learn how to take your success skills to the next level and how to eliminate the toxic habits you may have picked up along the way.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://www.quickread.com/app)

What Got You Here, Won't Get You There

No matter what level of success you have currently attained, there's a good chance that you once needed a certain set of skills to get you there. Maybe you needed to be more assertive. Maybe you needed to learn the art of crafting a persuasive speech. Maybe you needed help identifying your goals and creating a step-by-step plan that would help you accomplish them. No matter what skills you needed, you probably figured out how to implement them and reach the next level. But what else have you picked up along the way? And what aspects of your life have you neglected?

The author observes that this unique trade-off regularly occurs when we attempt to improve ourselves in the pursuit of a certain goal. As you devoted yourself to the development of one quality, it's possible that you might have forgotten to cultivate balance in other areas of your life. For example, maybe you were concentrating so hard on being a leader in your workplace that you forgot all about maintaining your work-life balance! Or maybe you put so much effort into developing boundaries that you now say no to everything, even when it causes you to miss out on valuable experiences. No matter what you've cultivated and lost along the way, one thing is certain: if you want to attain the next level of success, your current skill set won't get you there. It's time to develop a new set of skills that will take you the rest of the way.

To begin considering this, we'll start by examining the common negative qualities of successful people and why we might need to exorcise some of those qualities from our lives. The author observes that one good example of a negative quality is our belief that our behaviors and personalities are set in stone. For example, let's say that you're naturally a very confident and assertive person. You're the first to take charge, to speak up, and to say what you think. And maybe this quality was initially helpful because it enabled you to speak up at the right times and land the promotion you've been dreaming of. But what if there is a negative side to this quality? What if you're also inclined to talk over others, interrupt, and shoot down other people's opinions in favor of promoting your own? If you go through life believing that

these are good qualities that contributed to your success, you might never develop the self-awareness to critically analyze your behavior and implement change.

The author observes that this kind of myopia is common for many successful people because it's easy to fall into one of two traps (or both!) One possible mistake is believing that there is a correlation between your behavior and your success. Another common error is believing that, because you are successful and have worked hard for what you have, it's okay if you have a few negative traits and you shouldn't be expected to improve. However, these assumptions are wrong on a number of levels, and it's important that we analyze these fallacies closely and learn how to deconstruct them. If we begin with the first assumption-- the belief that there is a correlation between your behavior and your success-- then we can acknowledge that this belief is not entirely unfounded. In many cases, it's certainly true that putting positive habits into practice can open doors for you; behavior and success are definitely linked to a certain extent.

After all, if you were to simply lay around on the couch all day, waiting for an opportunity to fall into your lap, this would be a perfect example of behavior that does not lead to success. Anyone would tell you that, if you wanted to be successful, you would need to change this habit and replace it with positive and productive patterns of behavior. But the correlation between behavior and success doesn't mean that your behavior is inherently successful and should never be changed. In fact, the author remarks that sometimes, your success can occur in spite of your behavior rather than because of it! This is an important thing to consider because this possibility invites us to take an honest and realistic look at ourselves and our flaws. For example, how would you feel if you suddenly thought that your assertive and outspoken nature might sometimes work against you? What would you do differently if you knew that your boss actually thought, "He's really annoying and he interrupts people all the time, but I guess we'll give him the promotion because he's still good at the job?"

If we considered the fact that our behavior can sometimes work against us, we might be more willing to take a close look at ourselves and implement positive change. This is also true when it comes to the belief that very successful people should be allowed a few flaws. No one is perfect and no one expects you to be, but there's a difference between acknowledging that you are imperfect and believing that you don't have to work on your personal growth and development. The truth is that everyone is responsible for cultivating their best self and everyone has a responsibility to learn and grow. This is especially true because changing our negative patterns of behavior can make us more approachable, help us to be better listeners, and improve our ability to connect with other people. The author observes that change is especially vital if you're in a leadership position because your attitude and the qualities you embody have a direct impact on the people you lead. For example, if you are rude, unapproachable, or prone to believing that you are always right, your team won't feel safe to come to you with ideas. This can limit the effectiveness of your team and damage your relationship with your colleagues.

Sure, you might be successful now, but imagine what heights you could reach if you worked on becoming your best self! Imagine how you could help others if you actively cultivated humility and positivity and embraced the opportunity to receive constructive feedback. Constructive feedback is crucial to success at any stage but it's especially important when you're in a leadership position. In the next chapter, we'll learn more about feedback and why we need it even when we really don't want it.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://www.quickread.com/app)

Learn to Accept Criticism With Grace

No one likes being criticized-- that's simply a fact for every human being! But sometimes, well-intentioned feedback can help us grow and learn. That's because there's a difference between somebody saying, "You suck!" (which is designed to cut us down) and constructive criticism that is designed to help us grow. It's never fun to hear that we're in the wrong or that we should have done something better, even if it's true. But if we never acknowledge our inadequacies and failures, we'll never grow! So, even when it's painful, we have to be open to constructive criticism from people who have our best interest at heart. In fact, the author observes that this is a crucial skill for any leader.

We often associate positions of power with immovable strength and emotional security. And as a result, it's easy to assume that leaders don't need constructive criticism, especially not from others. But in reality, everybody needs advice and emotional support, no matter where you are in life! That's why it's important for us to never feel as though we're above taking advice and support from people who care about us. In fact, the author observes that our relationships with others are the most important things in our lives. Our personal and professional relationships keep us grounded, keep us connected, and keep us happy. Put simply, we need other people! So, don't be afraid to open up and be vulnerable with those around you.

Many people in positions of leadership feel that they shouldn't be vulnerable or admit that they are human too. But this actually strengthens your relationships with others and encourages them to like and trust you! Above all, people value sincerity and authenticity. So don't try to appear powerful or confident or infallible. Just focus on being real. Because when you're real and honest with yourself, you communicate a few things to others. For one thing, you show that you're open and relatable. And for another, you demonstrate that it's okay to struggle with things and okay

to be honest about it. So, when you lead by this example, you advance a culture of sincerity and honesty that encourages other people to be emotionally healthy too. And when you encourage other people to be their best, healthiest selves, you know you're succeeding as a leader!

Leadership scholars Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner expounded on this concept when they conducted an investigation into the characteristics of leadership that generate the most positive responses in people. At the end of their study, they concluded that the defining factor was affection. The most successful leaders and managers were those who lead with kindness and warmth and who weren't afraid to develop close relationships with their employees. They were also willing to be open by sharing their thoughts with those under them and inviting their employees to communicate with them in return. As a result, Kouzes and Posner found that leaders who show compassion are the most effective because not only do they inspire the people around them, they seek to connect with others rather than garnering attention for themselves. So, as you seek to improve your leadership skills, remember that it's not about bullying or manipulating people into doing what you say and it's not about pretending that you have all the answers. Instead, you should lead by example, showing others that you're still working on your personal development and you want to help them grow too.

If you keep this principle in mind, you might find it easier to avoid a few of the common mistakes that typically beset people in leadership positions. The author asserts that if he had to boil his advice for this chapter down to a few key points, it would mostly be these: for starters, don't assume that you have to be anything you aren't. If you're nervous or new at something, it's okay to say that! And don't assume that a position of power automatically grants you emotional stability. Leaders struggle too and no one is perfect. And lastly, don't ever feel as though you're too important to acknowledge that other people may have good insights about how you can improve. Being a leader doesn't make you better than everybody else; it simply means that you have an opportunity to guide and

encourage others. So, be vulnerable, be honest, and be open to constructive criticism. Accepting feedback with grace is part of our “never stop learning” philosophy because you can’t grow if you never learn anything new! And all growth starts with admitting that you have room to improve.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://quickread.com/app)

Final Summary

When you're starting from the bottom and reaching for success, there are multiple guidebooks filled with advice for how to get to the top. But once you get there, those resources seem to disappear; no one tells you how to maintain or improve upon the success you've cultivated. However, the author seeks to fill this gap by providing this book of tips for successful people.

If you want to take your success to the next level, the author recommends taking a hard, honest look at your behavior. Don't assume that your behavior automatically created your success; instead, consider the possibility that your own traits might work against you. Once you've identified your flaws, work on replacing them with positive traits that will definitely contribute to your success. It's also important to be open to constructive criticism from your colleagues and employees. Many leaders fall into the trap of assuming that they don't need feedback and that they certainly don't need it from the people who work under them. But in reality, no one is too important for constructive criticism; we all need it because it helps us grow.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://www.quickread.com/app)



**DO YOU WANT THIS BOOK
AS AN 20-MINUTE AUDIOBOOK?**



**Get the key insights of non-fiction books
in minutes instead of hours. Listen to
our free audiobooks while you workout
or on your commute to work.**



**DOWNLOAD
OUR FREE APP**

