

Goal Management Skills for High School Students

a handbook penned by

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Rising above the ceiling

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Acknowledgements

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GOAL MANAGEMENT

Goal setting is a thought provoking concept that ignites a great set of energy when positively utilized but it can at the same time ignite fires of intimidation, laziness, confusion and cynicism when used wrongly. It is in the ability of purposely and positively embarking on the goal and strategizing to attain the set targets that assures results. In the wake of such a crucial life, academic and career skill what really makes it go wrong?

Communicate your goal

Communication has been and still continues to be the back bone of human relationships and even organizations up to present date. When one communicates a goal they seek not to boast or appear as more guided than others. But it is a moment when one seeks assistance from a trusted individual with utmost hope and trust in getting a monitor into their life.

I remember when I talked to a girl after I had given a talk on goal setting and she had a passion for fashion and design, while her parents wanted her to be a doctor. At that very moment I made it clear to her that, you should not play hide and seek with your parents about a career you are going to be tied with for the rest of your life. But you need to do your apt homework about that career, sit down with them and talk not shout at them. And I bet you, any sane parent will commend that effort and know you are not for pleasure but you mean business.

Write them down

God talking to Joshua He said take a tablet and put this down as evidence of what will happen in the future. *The mind can forget and the heart can forgive but a pen and paper never will – Pardington Nhundu.* You and I are beneficiaries of the best book to ever exist on earth which was written around ----AC and compiled by ----- around ----AC.

In the same manner, put your goals on paper. The paper will be a constant reminder to what you put yourself to. The monitor you selected as being human may falter and delay in reminding you but an A4 size bold printed goal stuck on your wall where you set your eyes when you wake up is a constant reminder. And this should not be a mechanical drill, to just look at it and loose the drive it generates but rather its sight should get you out of bed instantly. Choosing a goal mentor is thoroughly important because you need to select one person that's going to be supportive, objective and confidential.

By recording your dreams and goals on paper, you set in motion the process of becoming the person you want to be. Put your future in good hands – your own – Mark Victor Hansen

Time management

Goals are set in segments that is short-term, medium-term and long-term. Thus in such a scenario your time should be equally distributed in such a manner that goals do not over-cloud and block progress. Too many goals at the same time only locate you in confusion. A goal should be in progression such that a short-term goal builds into a medium-term goal and lastly assures the realization of a long-term goal.

This breakdown in goals also gives you strength in time management because goals are set according to their time and levels of specialty and it does not give you a lot of work at the same time.

Blind goal setting

Goals and wishful thinking should be clearly separated. In wishful thinking one can circle the world in a second while at the same place, but in goal setting, one moves from one place to the other with an idea, plan, resources and ability. Goals should be set with a great consideration to ability and available resources. A great number of goals fail because students fail to notice their time frame, ability and resources and they copy the great achievements of others and think a copy and paste attitude will assure the achievement of goals.

Strategize

The greatest distance is the one travelled from the mind to the hand, that is, the moment an idea is set in a mind to the time when its felt, smelt and touched is the greatest of all distances. In the same manner as, potatoes symbolized faith and literally meant to be in the same nature in the book, *Faith like Potatoes* by *Angus Buchan*, the story of Strive Masiyiwa with Econet have been the most intriguing stories told of how businesses are started from humble beginnings but now they are international. The business began as an idea, became a goal, Strive Masiyiwa strategized and today you can touch, feel and smell his goal.

One entrepreneur once said to me, let's respect the days of humble beginnings. Divine Ndhlukula began Securico in her cottage with four employees in the late 1990's but Securico is now one of the largest security firms in Zimbabwe. These are the days when strategies are set and the perfection of the fight is greater than the joy when the target is locked. It is not enough to set a goal but it is equally important to strategize towards the achievement of that set goal.

The tragedy in life doesn't lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach – Benjamin Mays

Adventure/.....

“Cheshire Puss’, she began, rather timidly, as she did not at all know whether it would like the name: however, it only grinned a little wider. ‘Come, it’s pleased so far,’ thought Alice, and she went on. ‘Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?’

‘That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,’ said the Cat.

‘I don’t much care where-’ said Alice.

‘Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,’ said the Cat.

‘- so long as I get SOMEWHERE,’ Alice added as an explanation.

‘Oh, you’re sure to do that,’ said the Cat, ‘if you only walk long enough.’

Lewis Carroll in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

What kind of person is Alice?

.....
.....
.....

What have you noticed from her first response to the Cat?

.....
.....
.....

In what way do you think this is not good for a student?

.....
.....
.....

Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, magic, and power in it
– Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Goal Management for Careers

Believe in yourself – Many students fail to realize their potential mostly because their level of self-esteem is so low and poor. A girl who thinks lowly of herself in a relationship can just do anything because of the mindset that the guy is doing her a favor, loving her. A student continuously told he/she is a failure both home and at school can start believing it and end up in the frame of low self-esteem resulting in more failure at school and even loss of motivation in study. The very ability to know that I can do it is the panacea to all human learning and the key to unlocking your potential.

Take a few moments and do this exercise: Shout out loud the word, ‘NO’.

Now do it again, again and again. Listen to yourself and how it has drained you.

Now shout out the word, ‘YES’, now do it again, again and again. Listen again to how it has strengthened you.

The same happens when you lose confidence in yourself, you become apologetic for nothing, you see yourself as a second rate citizen and end up needing everyone’s pity. The moment you start believing in your ability is the beginning of the world believing in you.

Create your own world – Prentice wrote that, ‘Every thought of yours is a real thing-a force’. What you think and imagine becomes you in the end. You have the ability to make yourself happy and look magnificent and also the ability to be weary and look miserable. My first week at boarding school I was very lucky to have fallen into the hands of a very good senior guy and he said to me, ‘Pardie this is boarding, no one, I say none, even a single person will come to you and say, come I want to make you happy. You just have to make yourself happy.’ I managed to pick on the things that made me happy and truthfully I never had time to think of home or even shade tears on a visiting crying to get back home. The ability is in you, honestly you cannot blame a waitress for giving you coffee without sugar, while you did not steer the tea. So gird up your loins and take charge of your life!

Unlock the potential – A research done at Stanford University revealed that, the average person functions with only 2% of his/her potential. The rest just lays idle and barely or not even made use of. *Brian Tracey* in his book, *How to get everything you want*, noted that, it is just the same as your parents left you a trust fund with \$100 000, in it, but all you ever took to spend was \$2000. The other \$98 000 dollars sat in the account unused throughout your life. Just imagine a realization afterwards, the frustrations, deep sorrows, laboring days and even days of great despair and borrowing. Only to realize in the end that all you ever needed in life was just right within and around you. Goal setting is that tool which can allow you to unveil the potential and be able to make manifest the great energy that lies within you.

Happiness is the progressive realization of a worthy ideal, or goal – Earl Nightingale

A burning desire – A great poet once noted that, sitting on a niddle for a minute would seem like an hour but an hour with a loved one can seem like a minute. The desire to satisfy a loved one propels companionship and makes time fly. Instituting a great desire in one's heart is the panacea to goal achievement. Clarity in goal is the first stage to create a desire thus a continual thought and search to achieve it propels a heat that burns the desire straight in the conscious and unconscious mind. An entrepreneur in Entrepreneurship Development and coaching, Maxwell Mahosi once noted, *'When you have a vision, a real one, it will not allow you to sleep...'* It is that desire that burns in you to the extent that, you study in extra-ordinary ways; you develop learning skills that assure you progressive results. **Write a visible trail in your mind and let your life, follow that path and life will never be the same again.**

Take responsibility – I was very sure of one thing when I finished my first degree that, you should know someone so that you get a job somewhere but even though I had managed to be among a clique, I realized that I had a role to play. I realized that nothing comes to me without me doing something either going for it or attracting it to me. Even if I had a pool of resources it was up to me to adopt all of them and decide to make use of them positively. As I was going into my final year at University I started a Facebook page on career guidance and I titled it Careers Zimbabwe and I started to post vacancies, motivational quotes, events, scholarships and anything I thought mattered to careers. I took responsibility with what I had set to do and managed to make use of resources around me. At this very moment you are a student and a very great amount of your time is not occupied and this is the perfect time to build your ideas and dreams and the fact of the matter is the world very much wants to work with a progressive youth at school than one who is out of school. Check how Justin Bieber, Makanaka Wakatama, Maudi Chifamba, Mark Zuckerberg became popular it's because they made use of their youth days. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND DO THE SAME TODAY.

Grow Up – The usual misconception of connecting age to maturity or growing up is what made me wine so much. I had a good number of people willing to assist me every step of the way and I failed to realize that am losing a grip to my life it now rests on well-wishers and am not growing up. I remember very well the moment I decided to be my own man and take responsibility with my life. It was scary because all those moments I had to beg had to be eliminated by a creative mind to start earning the money for myself and made a decision that every time I ask for something should be to top up on what I already have. That was the decision that showed me the door to maturity, a transition from childhood to adulthood. Growing up also means being able to know what you want your life to be like not the mere wishes of 'being happy' but rather pure goals of knowing what career you want and how to pursue it.

When I did my 'O' Level I was completely clueless of what I want to do if the results come out. I remember very well when I collected my 'O' Level results I was happy that I had passed but also

Success is goals, and all else is commentary – Unknown

confused to what I should do with the results. My teachers just picked subjects for me and also followed friends on what they were taking. Even after that, I went up to the whole of Lower six without clearly knowing what I would want to do exactly. But later I grew in love with History and then Politics and decided to do that at University. Trust me it is of paramount importance that at this very moment you grow up and be clear with what you want to do with for your life.

Don't give excuses – A book I once read made it so clear that, never give excuses because an excuse is equivalent to failure. I just imagined all the moments I gave excuses and putting much thought to it and I realized that I was justifying and dressing failure all the way. Every time I gave an excuse I had failed not only myself but the people around me and those who were looking up to me. More so, I just saw myself as a victim and in need of sympathy from everyone as if the world owed me anything. The idea of giving excuses is like lying, because when you lie you need ten more lies to cover up for one. The artificial success brought by it also motivates the continual use of justification. But by the use of the *Power of Observation* it becomes clear that an excuse is equal to failure.

Just take a few minutes now and visualize all those moments you gave excuses.

What was your vantage point?

What was your attitude?

Did you see the problems as challenges or obstacles?

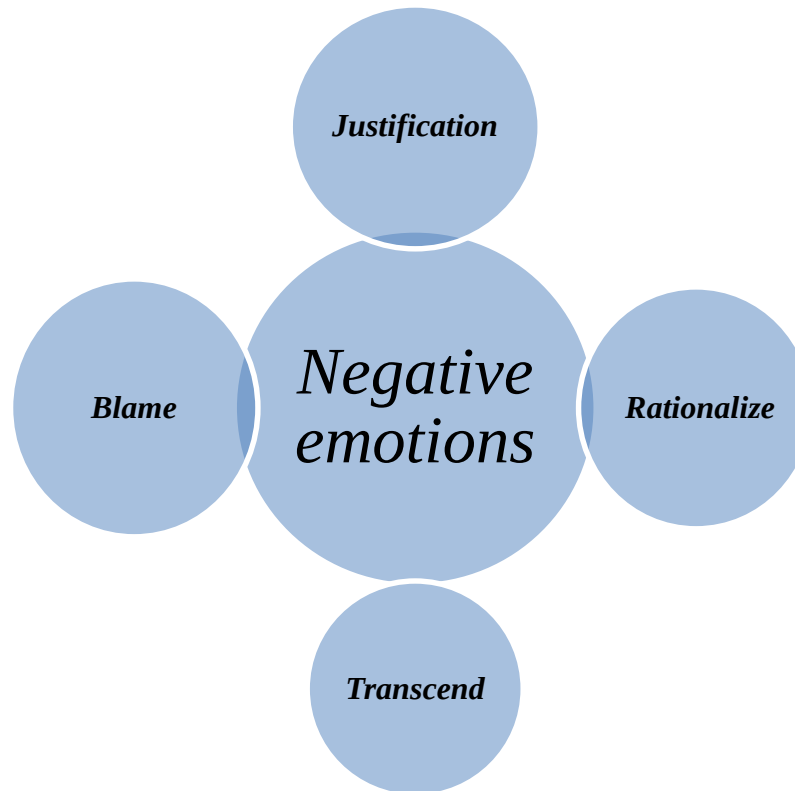
What were your options?

Transcend – The way Mount Everest is to the one at its bottom and to the one in a helicopter above it is totally different. The manner in which you get affected by people's perception and words about you if not treated well ignites negative emotions in your life. Am very gifted in the way my skin is like making me a true representative of Africa but at one point in time at school people had to change the SADC acronym for me and said 'Southern Africa's Darkest Child'. It ate me at that time but one girl said to be, 'you are not black you are chocolate brown' at that time it transformed me and I started again to be courageous and I went on to be one of the best Prefects at my school. The truth is I did not change to a Cadbury color but rather it was how I perceived myself that changed. Now I got to understand Mike Dooley when he said, 'thoughts become things', I transcended from the SADC acronym and took the Cadbury perception and for me it worked and I was able to bring out the potential in me. Adolescent stage is the time peers scorn, bully, make fun of you and all but you need is to transcend above all that. This is very crucial because you would need to store positive emotions in your conscious and subconscious mind because they build up into your character and your performance at school.

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent – Eleanor Roosevelt

Blame game – The moment when you unplug a fridge from power all that is in the fridge goes bad and cannot be eaten any longer. The moment you unplug the blame game from your life it removes all the other notions of negative emotions. Blame game is the back bone of all negative emotions and once dealt with it; all will be well.

Figure 1.3



Choose Friends – The old adage has it that, we cannot honestly choose our family but only our friends. Many Psychologists agree that to determine a child's behavior observe the friends he/she is around with most of the time. I was very fortunate with friends I chose at High School and we are still friends up to today. We studied together, went to church together and had time to advice each other. Currently I have finished my degree; the other one is finishing his Masters and the other a Manager at his workplace. The friends you have shape you and they start today. I witnessed friends at University first year that just bumped into each other and thought they were good friends. Later they took separate ways because they realized they were not compatible the other was a Church specialist and the other a Party specialist. I respect their decision to take separate ways because they resolved they could not stay together but still they could greet each other afterwards. The way you choose friends should be a realization of who you are and what you want. If you are bad in a certain subject choose a discussion group with someone good in that area and you should be a guru in a certain area too to reciprocate. Friends who also have goals are perfect for you assist each other in achieving goals.

Some men give up their designs when they have almost reached the goal; while others, on the contrary, obtain a victor by exerting, at the last moment, more vigorous efforts than ever before – Herodotus

Feedback – It is very crucial that a goal is set in a time frame, measurable and develop scorecards for yourself. A personal calendar can come in handy when you set days for activities and the plans. The feedback allows you to measure progress and gives you hints on how to change strategies adopting plans that bring results without working hard but smart. Feedback can be sourced from friends, family and teachers. These sources are crucial because a point repeatedly talked about by the three sources proves to you that you need to improve that or keep up the good work.

Don't Quit – *Napoleon Hill*, in the magnificent, *Think and Grow Rich* wrote, “*Before success comes in any man's life, he is sure to meet with much temporary defeat and, perhaps, some failure. When defeat overtakes a man, the easiest and most logical thing to do is quit. And that is exactly what the majority of men and women do,*” My very first ‘A’ Level assignment for History was a big hit. I started off on a high note in theory and managed to even tell others what the requirements of the question were and how to cite sources. When the books came the people I had told had 15's and 16's but I the source had a 5 out of 25. I had thought tearing the pages from the book but my friend wouldn't allow me but I managed to hide the book from my classmates. As if it's not enough, all the schools exams I wrote for my ‘A’ Level never did I had a double digit, I once had 9 points and that was the best term for me. But in the end I managed a double digit and was one of the highest at school. So no matter what you go through at school or even at home you are very much able to transcend and maneuver your way through all challenges until you reach the top. *Conrad Hilton* also noted that, “Achievement seems to be connected with action. Successful men and women keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit.” So it is really true that, Winners never quit and quitters never win. What do you want to be known of?

Your greatest assets in life are the relationships that you have around you – Rabison Shumba

Academic Mindset

The mind is the headquarters to all positive and negative emotions. The moment you set your mind in the right rail using the four mind games it would be clear that school days can be the best in life. The steps are easy more like watching a plant grow, but with the same care given to a plant you should do the same with your mind until you are in full control of your life. *The Secret* notes that, our lives are a reflection of what goes around in our minds. Goals that you set determine the kind of person you become thus how you control your mind brings about who you are.

1. Show appreciation for every mark you get:

In order to build more confidence in yourself you must continue to give gratitude on every mark you receive on assignments, tests and even presentations. Instead of killing your moral by zoning on little marks you get, bask in gratitude on the ability to have written because someone is busy giving excuses on why did they not write. Take a step further of zoning on why you got that mark and how best you can improve it. When you focus on what you are already getting you are able to seek the correct assistance to magnify your potential.

How to use the trick: Every time you get your report book, exercise book, test paper, instead of tearing, hiding or even thinking of forging the signatures to have a report book of your own, use a few moments to thank yourself and your parent/ guardian for giving you an opportunity to learn. All the time you write homework, assignments, tests or do presentations and discussions, stop and appreciate that you are at least not giving an excuse but doing all you can. I was very afraid of presentations and I never thought I would do well at seminars but my Divinity teacher believed in me and advised me to do the same in myself. In my first seminar presentation I was all the way happy with my research and tried to use big words whenever necessary and I allowed the essay to sink in me so much. When the moment came to present I was alone on the stage unlike the other groups and they were only to come when I was through and entertaining questions. I flowed with it that at the end no hand was up for questions and even the best teacher who was there only stood up to say, 'that was a good presentation'. That day was the last time I saw that presentation because the three schools who had come grabbed it from me and from then on I can now research and do a presentation in front of a crowd no matter how big. Doing this all the time you are working and setting goals continues the construction of personal appreciation and courage.

When the voice and the vision on the inside become more profound, more clear and loud, than the opinions on the outside, you've mastered your life – Dr John F Dermartini

2. Act as if you are a genius:

This is the most important of mind games, in which you act as if you already have that which you want. So act as if you have already attained the scores you want and the subjects you want to study. Ask yourself these questions, if I was the top at my school, how would I act, how would I feel, and then do, act, and feel in those ways. Of course, this doesn't mean that you stop studying and relax, but like the best you get registered at a local library, start discussion groups, revise past exam papers in groups, write mock exams in groups, study smart. Eat a little bit better, dress a little nicer, write a little bit better and focus on those subjects that give you sleepless nights.

How to use the trick: The next time you are given work to do set a time to finish it and target a score you want, which is slightly higher than the one you were always getting. Even if the score costs you your sleep or time to be with friends, make that commitment and thank yourself for abiding to personal obligations.

Even though it is a small step but you have begun coaching and training your mind that the order of things has changed and that you are expanding your limitations. A new way of life has been introduced which is of setting goals and going for them. A friend of mine once said, a human is like a rubber band such that they work much better when stretched.

3. Be open to smart study tips:

One thing all best students agree is that, there are so many ways to learn and there are also so many people ready to assist you in whatever study area. There are probably many vivid times in your study life which you think back to and just imagine what would have happened if you took a friendly advice to study, to abstain, to join a study group or even go for extra lessons and you just imagine how things would have turned out to be. The major difference between best students and the rest is that they seize opportunities of study when they come across them. Take this as another opportunity and start over and *George Elliot* said that, *'It is never too late to be who you might have been.'*

How to use the trick: Take a pen and demarcate a page into two columns, write the headings study tips and smart study tips and write all you know in the two columns. Now consult a friend on what study tips they know. The second opinion will open your eyes to see that so many study tips around you and even better than yours which give you more results with less effort.

If you keep on adding study tips to the list, one day you will come across an incredible smart study tip that suits you so much. Then go for it! One great mistake most students do is to copy and paste study tips. I shared a room in High School with a friend who was good in night-study and as many times as I tried, it drained me so much. And I resolved to afternoon and morning study but we managed to produce more or less the same results. So being open to smart study tips is not taking everything in but it's about adopting that suits you perfectly.

Remember, you attract to your life whatever you give your attention, energy and focus to, whether wanted or unwanted – Michael J. Losier

4. Be joyful:

The Law of Attraction and Pursuit for Happiness agree that, to do that which you love all the time brings you joy and reenergize you. When you choose subjects you love, your energy rises, it gives you the ability to study even when many people are not because you are doing that which you love. Is life that easy? No, but we continuously miss the carriage of life by constantly focusing on the past and those moments that drain our happiness and ignite negative emotions which can even make study a difficult process.

It would seem a difficult process when the subject you want to love was imposed on you by either a parent or a school authority. In such a scenario it is important to consult your Career Guidance office at school and they might be able to give you good reasons on why they gave you those subjects. The idea is to do everything whole-heartedly and with all your focus and build a connection with your studies. This simple act of being joyful can bring you the best rewards by the end of the year.

How to use the trick: Every time in the morning sing or listen to your favorite song and dance. Read a book that gives a positive vibe. Just pick on a life event that gives you happiness and zone on it. All that is important is you are feeling important and happy; this gives you a positive intake on your studies.

Consult your Career Guidance Office or Teachers on what they see in you probing them to switch you from one class to the other. Take some time with your parent/ guardian and ask why the advice you to take a certain career or why not they are quite about a career choice you make. Many students play hide and seek with parents and teachers and try to prove them wrong using methods that hurt them by the end of the day. This the age of communication, knock on your teachers office door and have decent conversations and move on to have deep family time with your family. Zig Ziglar noted that, “All of us perform better and more willingly when we know why we’re doing what we have been told or asked to do.” The joy that comes from the knowledge you acquire from the people around you allows you to know yourself better and set realistic and competitive goals.

We aim above the mark to hit the mark – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Hey Pardington Nhundu

It's Sarah!

The following study was conducted at Yale University in 1953. In that year, a batch of fresh graduates was surveyed, and in this batch, only 3% had their goals written down.

Some of their goals included: 'being a best-selling novelist, starting a computer company and taking it public, running for President etc...'

97% of the students had no clearly defined goals written down. Many of them chose to adopt the 'whatever will be, will be' mindset, possibly popularized by a hit '50s musical titled 'Que Sera Sera' (Whatever will be, will be).

Twenty years later, a follow up study revealed that the 3% of students who wrote down their goals earned a combined income three times greater than the combined income of the 97% who had no goals written down.

This surely shows the incredible power of goal setting.

I can tell you that if I did not sit down 14 years ago and design my life the way that I wanted it to unfold, I certainly wouldn't have achieved what I have right now. I would be somewhere else, probably doing something totally different.

Very often, if we don't have a clear plan for our life, we will fall into somebody else's plan. For most people, it would be our parents' plan: 'Be a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer in order to make plenty of money'.

Though it may seem to be (in their view) for our own future good, more often than not it is more of meeting their expectations and sometimes their very own unrealized dreams.

Now, don't we all want the freedom to do and be whatever we choose to become?

The secret of success is constancy of purpose – Benjamin Disraeli

When I was first featured in the newspapers as a 26-year old millionaire who's speaking fee commanded a thousand dollars per hour, many of my friends asked me how I was able to command such a high fee within two years of graduating from university.

At age 26, two years after graduation, I had written a best-selling book, started and ran three companies, spoken to thousands of people and made over a million dollars. Most of my peers were either looking for their first job or working for other people for about \$2000 + a month.

The irony is that many of these peers and friends are probably just as intelligent, talented and hardworking as I am. The only difference between us was the fact that at age 15, I sat down and scripted out a detailed life plan.

I wrote down exactly what I was going to achieve in the next 10 years of my life.

After scripting out my life plan, I took action and each action I took enabled me to focus all my talents, my intelligence and energies like a laser beam. I use the analogy of a laser beam because I was so energized I felt I could cut through anything that was in my way.

Achieving success rarely ever happens by chance. The roll of the dice never made anyone happy or rich for a long time. It always begins with a clearly defined outcome fueled by a passionate desire.

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It's never too late to be who you might have been – George Elliot

About the Author

Pardington Nhundu is the Founder and Director of Careers Zimbabwe, a non-profit career development organisation in Zimbabwe. He is a political analyst, keynote speaker, educator and author of numerous articles on career development. He is a holder of a degree in Political Science from University of Zimbabwe and also a Certificate in Career Management Professional Program from Life Strategies.

Other books by the Author

AS YOU GRADUATE...

By Nhundu Pardington



Simplicity of believing in yourself is the vital organ to your success. The availability of resources can insurmountably be useless when the partaker is down trodden within. The simple action of acknowledging your strength and weakness is virtually the springboard to that success. It does not take a crazy teacher, the greatest motivational book ever written or a crazy enough amount of cash to make you realise what you have in store and how you can make use of it. Set your life in motion by taking stock of your daily activities. Invest in personal development with full knowledge of your strengths and weaknesses. Have a strong and steadfast desire to maintain your real person by becoming honest, most importantly to yourself and others. Set goals that challenge you and are ready to launch you to greater heights. Your perception of life should not be anchored on pessimism but let it be monitored by an optimistic injunction and learn from your mistakes daily. Redeem yourself from procrastination by acting diligently when needed and necessary and talking less. Remember to be led by your passion and equip yourself with the necessary skills. You are a unique being that has the greatest power ever imagined. A unique being with no copy and never will have a copy in this lifetime or the aftermath. You only live once enjoy every day and make your CAREER COUNT!!!