



The Architect of Your Destiny is Yourself

After finishing a meal at my favorite Chinese restaurant, I cracked open my fortune cookie. It read, "the architect of your destiny is yourself." Inspiration comes from the strangest places. How simple, but powerful, the message. Not too long after, an entrepreneur wrote in to ask, "how do you get to the next level?" Shortly after, a quote came across my computer from the legendary Jim Rohn that brought such wisdom in answering this question. Jim Rohn, a very successful mentor, speaker, and entrepreneur influenced many lives for before his passing in December 2009. He had a natural gift of speaking and engaging you in his stories. The 'next level' in your life or in your business means different things to different people. As an architect of your own destiny, consider his quotes as you think of what the next level means in your life:

"Don't join an easy crowd. You won't grow. Go where the expectations and the demands to perform and achieve are high." When professionals make the decision and commitment to adopt their big vision for their life, they are, at times, surrounded by relationships that may be holding them back. The key is to pay attention to your feelings. If you feel worse after spending some time in their company, it may be an occasion to look for a different circle of friends. Re-evaluate, too, whether those relationships are able to support you to your next level and expand your circle. Seek out the relationships or mastermind groups that will support you while being upfront and honest with you. In order to move ahead, you might also need to let go of things, mindsets or relationships that hold you to the status quo and move toward the places where expectations to perform and grow personally and professionally are higher.

"The few who do are the envy of the many who watch." The thing that often prevents people in achieving their next level of success is that they have a goal in mind, but they keep it in their head so it appears so big that they stop before they've even started on it. I've lost count on how many people have said they always wanted to write a book but never take the first step. Creating a plan has never been more important to achieving your next level of success. Write out the goal, the action steps to get there, and the timelines you will achieve these steps. One entrepreneur tried this exercise with a project she had in mind. She also identified all of her resources that could assist her with associated deadlines. She went from anxious to anticipation in just one hour. Her anxiety level was reduced once she realized it wasn't going to be as difficult as she thought. The simple act of writing down your steps taps into another part of your brain. Instead of being one of the many who watch, you transform into one of the few who do.

"Success is something you attract by the person you become." Continuous personal development is the key to continuously moving to the next level. Just when you think you're done developing, there's always another dimension or new lesson to learn. Successful entrepreneurs regularly identify their areas of development and seek out resources that provide the skills or competencies to move ahead. You see, the valuable things are on the highest shelf. If you want the things on the highest shelf, you must stand on the books you read. With every book you read, you get closer to that high shelf.

"Learn the skills, practice the skills, apply the skills." Few words are more powerful than these. Have you heard entrepreneurs say, "I already know that" but they haven't applied the skill or implemented the solution consistently to achieve the next level of success? Success has many dimensions, too, not just financial. Reflect on all areas of your life and write out that vision. It takes the unique formula of learning, practicing, and applying to create the next level of success in all aspects of life and for you to reach your desired vision.

When you make the commitment to attain your next level, consider these quotes and apply them to your own situation. Observe the changes and celebrate your successes often.

