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About the Author Dr. David J. Schwartz was a professor at Georgia State University in Atlanta and the president of Creative Educational Services, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in leadership development. Read more Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Chapter 1

I Believe You Can Succeed and You Will Success means many wonderful, positive things. Success means personal prosperity: a fine home, vacations, travel, new things, financial security, giving your children maximum advantages. Success means winning admiration, leadership, being looked up to by people in your business and social life. Success means freedom: freedom from worries, fears, frustrations, and failure. Success means self-respect, continually finding more real happiness and satisfaction from life, being able to do more for those who depend on you. Success means winning. Success -- achievement -- is the goal of life! Every human being wants success. Everybody wants the best this life can deliver. Nobody enjoys crawling, living in mediocrity. No one likes feeling second-class and feeling forced to go that way. Some of the most practical success-building wisdom is found in that Biblical quotation stating that faith can move mountains. Believe, really believe, you can move a mountain and you can. Not many people believe that they can move mountains. So, as a result, not many people do. On some occasion you've probably heard someone say something like, 'It's nonsense to think you can make a mountain move away just by saying 'Mountain, move away.' It's simply impossible.' People who think this way have belief confused with wishful thinking. And true enough, you can't wish away a mountain. You can't wish yourself into an executive suite. Nor can you wish yourself into a five-bedroom, three-bath house or the high-income brackets. You can't wish yourself into a position of leadership. But you can move a mountain with belief. You can win success by believing you can succeed. There is nothing magical nor mystical about the power of belief. Belief works this way. Belief, the 'I'm-positive-I-can' attitude, generates the power, skill, and energy needed to do. When you believe I-can-do-it, the how-to-do-it develops. Every day all over the nation young people start working in new jobs. Each of them 'wishes' that someday he could enjoy the success that goes with reaching the top. But the majority of these young people simply don't have the belief that it takes to reach the top rungs. And they don't reach the top. Believing it's impossible to climb high, they do not discover the steps that lead to great heights. Their behavior remains that of the 'average' person. But a small number of these young people really believe they will succeed. They approach their work with the 'I'm-going-to-the-top' attitude. And with substantial belief they reach the top. Believing they will succeed -- and that it's not impossible -- these folks study and observe the behavior of senior executives. They learn how successful people approach problems and make decisions. They observe the attitudes of successful people. The how-to-do-it always comes to the person who believes he can do it. A young woman I'm acquainted with decided two years ago that she was going to establish a sales agency to sell mobile homes. She was advised by many that she shouldn't -- and couldn't do it. She had less than \$3,000 in savings, and was advised the minimum capital investment required was many times that. 'Look how competitive it is,' she was advised. 'And besides, what practical experience have you had in selling mobile homes, let alone managing a business?' her advisors asked. But this young lady had belief in herself and her ability to succeed. She quickly admitted she lacked capital, that the business was very competitive, and that she lacked experience. 'But,' she said, 'all the evidence I can gather shows that the mobile home industry is going to expand. On top of that, I've studied my competition. I know I can do a better job of merchandising trailers than anybody else in this town. I expect to make some mistakes, but I'm going to be on top in a hurry.' And she was. She had little trouble getting capital. Her absolutely unquestioned belief that she could succeed with this business won her the confidence of two investors. And armed with complete belief, she did the 'impossible' -- she got a trailer manufacturer to advance her a limited inventory with no money down. Last year she sold over \$1,000,000 worth of trailers. 'Next year,' she says, 'I expect to gross over \$2,000,000.' Belief, strong belief,

triggers the mind to figuring ways and means and how-to. And believing you can succeed makes others place confidence in you. Most people do not put much stock in belief. But some, the residents of Successfulville, USA, do! Just a few weeks ago a friend who is an official with a state highway department in a Midwestern state related a 'mountain-moving' experience to me. 'Last month,' my friend began, 'our department sent notices to a number of engineering companies that we were authorized to retain some firm to design eight bridges as part of our highway building program. The bridges were to be built at a cost of \$5,000,000. The engineering firm selected would get a 4 per cent commission, or \$200,000, for its design work.' I talked with 21 engineering firms about this. The four largest decided right away to submit proposals. The other 17 companies were small, having only 3 to 7 engineers each. The size of the project scared off 16 of these 17. They went over the project, shook their heads, and said in effect, 'It's too big for us. I wish I thought we could handle it, but it's no use even trying.' But one of these small firms, a company with only three engineers, studied the plans and said, 'We can do it. We'll submit a proposal.' They did, and they got the job. 'Those who believe they can move mountains, do. Those who believe they can't, cannot. Belief triggers the power to do. Actually, in these modern times belief is doing much bigger things than moving mountains. The most essential element -- in fact, the essential element -- in our space explorations today is belief that space can be mastered. Without firm, unwavering belief that man can travel in space, our scientists would not have the courage, interest, and enthusiasm to proceed. Belief that cancer can be cured will ultimately produce cures for cancer. Currently, there is some talk of building a tunnel under the English Channel to connect England with the Continent. Whether this tunnel is ever built depends on whether responsible people believe it can be built. Belief in great results is the driving force, the power behind all great books, plays, scientific discoveries. Belief in success is behind every successful business, church, and political organization. Belief in success is the one basic, absolutely essential ingredient in successful people. Believe, really believe, you can succeed and you will. Over the years I've talked with many people who have failed in business ventures and in various careers. I've heard a lot of reasons and excuses for failure. Something especially significant unfolds as conversations with failures develop. In a casual sort of way the failure drops a remark like 'To tell the truth, I didn't think it would work' or 'I had my misgivings before I even started out' or 'Actually, I wasn't too surprised that it didn't work out.' The 'Okay-I'll-give-it-a-try-but-I-don't-think-it-will-work' attitude produces failures. Disbelief is negative power. When the mind disbelieves or doubts, the mind attracts 'reasons' to support the disbelief. Doubt, disbelief, the subconscious will to fail, the not really wanting to succeed, is responsible for most failures. Think doubt and fail. Think victory and succeed. A young fiction writer talked with me recently about her writing ambitions. The name of one of the top writers in her field came up. 'Oh,' she said, 'Mr. X is a wonderful writer, but of course, I can't be nearly as successful as he is.' Her attitude disappointed me very much because I know the writer mentioned. He is not super-intelligent nor super-perceptive, nor super-anything else except super-confident. He believes he is among the best and so he acts and performs the best. It is well to respect the leader. Learn from him. Observe him. Study him. But don't worship him. Believe you can surpass. Believe you can go beyond. Those who harbor the second-best attitude are invariably second-best doers. Look at it this way. Belief is the thermostat that regulates what we accomplish in life. Study the fellow who is shuffling down there in mediocrity. He believes he is worth little, so he receives little. He believes he can't do big things, and he doesn't. He believes he is unimportant, so everything he does has an unimportant mark. As times goes by, lack of belief in himself shows through in the way the fellow talks, walks, acts. Unless he readjusts his thermostat forward, he shrinks, grows smaller and smaller in his own estimation. And, since others see in us what we see in ourselves, he grows smaller in the estimation of the people around him. Now look across the way at the person who is advancing forward. He believes he is worth much, and he receives much. He believes he can handle big, difficult assignments -- and he does. Everything he does, the way he handles himself with people, his character, his thoughts, his viewpoints, all say, 'Here is a professional. He is an important person.' A person is a product of his own thoughts. Believe Big. Adjust your thermostat forward. Launch your success offensive with honest, sincere belief that you can succeed. Believe big and grow big. Several years ago after addressing a group of business men in Detroit, I talked with one of the gentlemen who approached me, introduced himself, and said, 'I really enjoyed your talk. Can you spare a few minutes? I'd like very much to discuss a personal experience with you.' In a few minutes we were comfortably seated in a coffee shop, waiting for some refreshments. 'I have a personal experience,' he began, 'that ties in perfectly with what you said this evening about making your mind work for you instead of letting it work against you. I've never explained to anyone how I lifted myself out of the world of mediocrity; but I'd like to tell you about it.' And I'd like to hear it,' I said. 'Well, just five years ago I was plodding along, just another guy working in the tool-and-die trade. I made a decent living by average standards. But it was far from ideal. Our home was much too small and there was no money for those many things we wanted. My wife, bless her, didn't complain much, but it was written all over her that she was more resigned to her fate than she was happy. Inside I grew more and more dissatisfied. When I let myself see how I was failing my good wife and two children, I really hurt inside.' But today things are really different,' my friend continued. 'Today we have a beautiful new home on a two-acre lot and a year-round cabin a couple hundred miles north of here. There's no more worry about whether we can send the kids to a good college and my wife no longer has to feel guilty every time she spends money for some new clothes. Next summer the whole family is flying to Europe to spend a month's holiday. We're really living.' 'How did this all happen?' I asked. 'It all happened,' he continued, 'when to use the phrase you used tonight, I harnessed the power of belief.' Five years ago I learned about a job with a tool-and-die company here in Detroit. We were living in Cleveland at the time. I decided to look into it, hoping I could make a little more money. I got here early on Sunday evening, but the interview was not until Monday. After dinner I sat down in my hotel room and for some reason, I got really disgusted with myself. 'Why,' I asked myself, 'am I just a middle class failure? Why am I trying to get a job that represents such a small step forward?' I don't know to this day what prompted me to do it, but I took a sheet of hotel stationery and wrote down the names of five people I've known well for several years who had far surpassed me in earning power and job responsibility. Two were former neighbors who had moved away to fine subdivisions. Two others were fellows I had worked for, and the third was a brother-in-law. Next -- again I don't know what made me do this -- I asked myself what do my five friends have that I don't have, besides better jobs. I compared myself with them on intelligence, but I honestly couldn't see that they excelled in the brains department. Nor could I truthfully say they had me beat on education, integrity, or personal habits. Finally I got down to another success quality one hears a lot about. Initiative. Here I hated to admit it, but I had to. On this point my record showed I was far below that of my successful friends. It was now about 3:00 A.M., but my mind was astonishingly clear. I was seeing my weak point for the first time. I discovered that I had held back. I had always carried a little stick. I dug into myself deeper and deeper and found the reason I lacked initiative was because I didn't believe inside that I was worth very much. I sat there the rest of the night just reviewing how lack of faith in myself had dominated me ever since I could remember, how I had used my mind to work against myself. I found I had been preaching to myself why I couldn't get ahead instead of why I could. I had been selling myself short. I found this streak of self-depreciation showed through in everything I did. Then it dawned on me that no one else was going to believe in me until I believed in myself. Right then I decided, 'I'm through feeling second-class. From here on in I'm not going to sell myself short.' Next morning I still had that confidence. During the job interview I gave my new found confidence its first test. Before coming for the interview I'd hoped I would have courage to ask for \$750 or maybe even \$1000 more than my present job was paying. But now, after

realizing I was a valuable man, I upped it to \$3,500. And I got it. I sold myself because after that one long night of self-analysis I found things in myself that made me a lot more saleable. Within two years after I took that job I had established a reputation as the fellow who can get business. Then we went into a recession. This made me still more valuable because I was one of the best business-getters in the industry. The company was reorganized and I was given a substantial amount of stock plus a lot more pay. Believe in yourself and good things do start happening. Your mind is a 'thought factory.' It's a busy factory; producing countless thoughts in one day. Production in your thought factory is under the charge of two foremen, one of whom we will call Mr. Triumph and the other Mr. Defeat. Mr. Triumph is in charge of manufacturing positive thoughts. He specializes in producing reasons why you can, why you're qualified, why you will. The other foreman, Mr. Defeat, produces negative, depreciating thoughts. He is your expert in developing reasons why you can't, why you're weak, why you're inadequate. His specialty is the 'why-you-will-fail' chain of thoughts. Both Mr. Triumph and Mr. Defeat are intensely obedient. They snap to attention immediately. All you need do to signal either foreman is to give the slightest mental beck-and-call. If the signal is positive, Mr. Triumph will step forward and go to work. Likewise, a negative signal brings Mr. Defeat forward. To see how these two foremen work for you, try this example. Tell yourself, 'Today is a lousy day.' This signals Mr. Defeat into action and he manufactures some facts to prove you are right. He suggests to you that it's too hot or it's too cold, business will be bad today; sales will drop, other people will be on edge, you may get sick, your wife will be in a fussy mood. Mr. Defeat is tremendously efficient. In just a few moments he's got you sold. It is a bad day. Before you know it, it is a heck of a bad day. But tell yourself, 'Today is a fine day;' and Mr. Triumph is signaled forward to act. He tells you, 'This is a wonderful day. The weather is refreshing. It's good to be alive. Today you can catch up on some of your work.' And then it is a good day. In like fashion Mr. Defeat can show you why you can't sell Mr. Smith; Mr. Triumph will show you that you can. Mr. Defeat will convince you that you will fail while Mr. Triumph will demonstrate why you will succeed. Mr. Defeat will prepare a brilliant case against Tom while Mr. Triumph will show you more reasons why you like Tom. Now the more work you give either of these two foremen, the stronger he becomes. If Mr. Defeat is given more work to do, he adds personnel and takes up more space in your mind. Eventually, he will take over the entire thought-manufacturing division, and virtually all thought will be of a negative nature. The only wise thing to do is fire Mr. Defeat. You don't need him. You don't want him around telling you that you can't, you're not up to it, you'll fail, and so on. Mr. Defeat won't help you get where you want to go, so boot him out. Use Mr. Triumph 100 per cent of the time. When any thought enters your mind, ask Mr. Triumph to go to work for you. He'll show you how you can succeed. Between now and tomorrow at this time another 11,500 new consumers will have made their grand entry into the U.S.A. Population is growing at a record rate. In the next ten years the increase is conservatively estimated at 35 million. That's equal to the present combined metropolitan population of our five biggest cities: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Detroit, and Philadelphia. Imagine! New industries, new scientific breakthroughs, expanding markets -- all spell opportunity. This is good news. This is a most wonderful time to be alive! All signs point to a record demand for top-level people in every field -- people who have superior ability to influence others, to direct their work, to serve them in a leadership capacity. And the people who will fill these leadership positions are all adults or near adults right now. One of them is you. The guarantee of a boom is not, of course, a guarantee of personal success. Over the long pull, the U.S. has always been booming. But just a fast glance shows that millions and millions of people -- in fact, a majority of them -- struggle but don't really succeed. The majority of folks still plug along in mediocrity despite the record opportunity of the last two decades. And in the boom period ahead, most people will continue to worry; to be afraid, to crawl through life feeling unimportant, unappreciated, not able to do what they want to do. As a result, their performance will earn them petty reward, petty happiness. Those who convert opportunity into reward (and let me say, I sincerely believe you are one of those, else you'd rely on luck and not bother with this book) will be those wise people who learn how to think themselves to success. Walk in. The door to success is open wider than ever before. Put yourself on record now that you are going to join that select group that is getting what it wants from life. Here is the first step toward success. It's a basic step. It can't be avoided. Step One: Believe in yourself, believe you can succeed. How To Develop The Power of Belief Here are the three guides to acquire and strengthen the power of belief: 1. Think success, don't think failure. At work, in your home, substitute success thinking for failure thinking. When you face a difficult situation, think, 'I'll win,' not 'I'll probably lose.' When you compete with someone else, think, 'I'm equal to the best,' not 'I'm out-classed.' When opportunity appears, think 'I can do it,' never 'I can't.' Let the master thought 'I-will-succeed' dominate your thinking process. Thinking success conditions your mind to create plans that produce success. Thinking failure does the exact opposite. Failure thinking conditions the mind to think other thoughts that produce failure. 2. Remind yourself regularly that you are better than you think you are. Successful people are not supermen. Success does not require a super-intellect. Nor is there anything mystical about success. And success isn't based on luck. Successful people are just ordinary folks who have developed belief in themselves and what they do. Never -- yes, never -- sell yourself short. 3. Believe Big. The size of your success is determined by the size of your belief. Think little goals and expect little achievements. Think big goals and win big success. Remember this, too! Big ideas and big plans are often easier -- certainly no more difficult -- than small ideas and small plans. Mr. Ralph J. Cordiner, Chairman of the Board of the General Electric Company, said this to a leadership conference: '...We need from every man who aspires to leadership -- for himself and his company -- a determination to undertake a personal program of self-development. Nobody is going to order a man to develop.... Whether a man lags behind or moves ahead in his specialty is a matter of his own personal application. This is something which takes time, work, and sacrifice. Nobody can do it for you.' Mr. Cordiner's advice is sound and practical. Live it. Persons who reach the top rungs in business management, selling, engineering, religious work, writing, acting, and in every other pursuit get there by following conscientiously and continuously a plan for self-development and growth. Any training program -- and that's exactly what this book is -- must do three things. It must provide content, the what-to-do. Second, it must supply a method, the how-to-do-it. And third, it must meet the acid test. That is, get results. The what of your personal training program for success is built on the attitudes and techniques of successful people. How do they manage themselves? How do they overcome obstacles? How do they earn respect of others? What sets them apart from the ordinary? How do they think? The how of your plan for development and growth is a series of concrete guides for action. These are found in each chapter. These guides work. Apply them and see for yourself. What about the most important part of training: results? Wrapped up briefly, conscientious application of the program presented here will bring you success and on a scale that may now look impossible. Broken down into its components, your personal training program for success will bring you a series of rewards: the reward of deeper respect from your family; the reward of admiration from your friends and associates, the reward of feeling useful, of being someone, of having status, the reward of increased income and a higher standard of living. Your training is self-administered. There will be no one standing over your shoulder telling what to do and how to do it. This book will be your guide, but only you can understand yourself. Only you can command yourself to apply this training. Only you can evaluate your progress. Only you can bring about corrective action should you slip a little. In short, you are going to train yourself to achieve bigger and bigger success. You already have a fully equipped laboratory in which you can work and study. Your laboratory is all around you. Your laboratory consists of human beings. This laboratory supplies you with every possible example of human action. And there is no limit to what you can learn once you see yourself as a

scientist in your own lab. What's more, there is nothing to buy. There is no rent to pay. There are no fees of any kind. You can use this laboratory as much as you like for free. As director of your own laboratory; you will want to do what every scientist does: Observe and experiment. Isn't it surprising to you that most people understand so little about why people act as they do even though they are surrounded by people all their lives? Most people are not trained observers. One important purpose of this book is to help you train yourself to observe, to develop deep insight into human action. You'll want to ask yourself questions like 'Why is John so successful and Tom just getting by?' 'Why do some people have many friends and other people have only few friends?' 'Why will people gladly accept what one person tells them but ignore another person who tells them the same thing?' Once trained, you will learn valuable lessons just through the very simple process of observing. Here are two special suggestions to help you make yourself a trained observer. Select for special study the two most successful and the most unsuccessful people you know. Then, as the book unfolds, observe how closely your successful friend adheres to the success principles. Notice also how studying the two extremes will help you see the unmistakable wisdom of following the truths outlined in this book. Each contact you make with another person gives you a chance to see success development principles at work. Your objective is to make successful action habitual. The more we practice, the sooner it becomes second nature to act in the desired way. Most of us have friends who grow things for a hobby. And we've all heard them say something like 'It's exciting to watch those plants grow. Just look how they respond to plant food and water. See how much bigger they are today than they were last week.' To be sure, it is thrilling to watch what can happen when men cooperate carefully with nature. But it is not one-tenth as fascinating as watching yourself respond to your own carefully administered thought management program. It's fun to feel yourself growing more confident, more effective, more successful day-by-day, month-by-month. Nothing -- absolutely nothing -- in this life gives you more satisfaction than knowing you're on the road to success and achievement. And nothing stands as a bigger challenge than making the most of yourself. Copyright © 1959, 1965 by Prentice-Hall, Inc. Read more

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