

# The Success Formula

Three Timeless Principles  
That Will Turbocharge  
Your Success  
And Dramatically Improve  
Your Life

**Bob Burg**

## Praise for Bob Burg's *The Success Formula*

"This is the Wisdom of the Ages boiled down into three simple principles. Use the time-proven information Burg provides and watch your success soar!"

— Paul J. Meyer, Founder, Success Motivation Institute, Inc.;  
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"The greatest and most powerful truths are simple and direct—like these—but they can change your life."

— Brian Tracy, *Success Is a Journey*

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"*The Success Formula* is a brilliant little piece—easy to read, practical and a simple but powerful message."

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InterNET Services Corp.

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— John Harricharan, *Morning Has Been All Night Coming*

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## Contents

Acknowledgments and Dedication .....	6
Premise .....	7
Introduction .....	8
<b>PRELUDE</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>It All Begins With Desire...</b>	
<i>Match Your Desire With The Success Formula</i>	
<b>PRINCIPLE #1</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Seek Out and Find the Information</b>	
<i>Follow “The System”</i>	
<b>PRINCIPLE #2</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Apply the Information Immediately</b>	
<i>Knowledge Without Action Is the Same As No Knowledge At All</i>	
<b>PRINCIPLE #3</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Be Persistent</b>	
<i>Outlast the Nos</i>	
<b>POSTSCRIPT</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>...And Just One More Thing—Belief!</b>	
<b>About the Author</b> .....	<b>30</b>

## **Acknowledgments and Dedication**

The life-changing information within the pages of this simple little booklet is the result of O.P.W.: *Other People's Wisdom*. To those who've personally shined their light of wisdom before me, and to the greats (some no longer with us) from whom I've benefited through their magnificent writings: You have inspired me, motivated me, and given me the information I need to make this the most effective, fulfilling life possible, both for me and for those whose lives I am fortunate to touch. You are my mentors, and I thank you. I also include as teachers the "difficult" people I've met along the way: Without you I would never have had the chance to grow and share this growth with others.

To my friends, family, associates and all the other special people in my life, too many to mention individually: I hope and pray you know who you are. Be assured, I do—and I appreciate you immensely!

To the Creator, The Holy One, Blessed is He: Thank You for being my Guiding Light.

As with all my books, I dedicate this booklet to my Mom and Dad. Two better and more loving parents I could not have asked for. Thank you. I love you so very much!

## Premise

At the heart of all successful action lie three core principles—three “secrets of success” humankind has sought to reveal and articulate since ancient times. Few have discovered them; fewer still have consistently used them. Yet, for those who have done so (whether consciously or unconsciously), this sequence of three principles has proven to work, time and time again, to achieve extraordinary results.

Each principle, on its own, will yield *some* positive results; but when used together, all three in conjunction, they marshal a truly unfathomable power to bring success to any aspect of your life. That three-stranded braid of timeless principles is what I call, *The Success Formula*.

The circumstances in which you may apply it change constantly—but *The Success Formula* itself has never changed, and never will. By consistently applying these three success principles in your life, you will realize the kinds of outstanding results attained only by the ultra-successful. Once you immerse yourself in *The Success Formula* and apply it with your full passion, desire and unwavering belief, you will find only one path lying before you: the one that proceeds directly toward realizing your fondest dreams, whatever they may be.



## Introduction

*The Success Formula* is based on three simple principles:

- 1. Seek Out and Find the Information.**
- 2. Apply the Information Immediately.**
- 3. Be Persistent.**

In this booklet, you'll discover how these three vital principles can help you succeed beyond your wildest expectations. My suggestion is to begin sharing these concepts *right away* with everyone you love and care about—and with anyone else you believe is open to personal and professional success.

I make this suggestion for two reasons. First, the best way to learn something, to internalize it and truly make it part of you, is to *teach it to others*. Second, true joy and fulfillment comes from giving—from *making a difference in the lives of others*. It is the only real legacy we leave when our time here on Earth is finished.

I wish you the very best of success!

Bob Burg

**PRELUDE**  
**It All Begins With Desire...**

*Match Your Desire With The Success Formula*

Whether you call it your purpose, mission, vision, ultimate goal, or by any other name, your desire is an absolutely vital ingredient to your success. So vital, in fact, that, without it (or I should say, without enough of it; anyone can have a *little* desire), even following *The Success Formula* to the letter will not get you the results you want. On the other hand, if you do have the desire, there is no way *The Success Formula* cannot work!

“Really?!” Yes, really. Whatever it is you truly desire, simply match that desire with *The Success Formula*, and you’ll have the results you want—which may include any and all aspects of your life.

For example, do you want to make more money? Perhaps you want to make a *lot* more money, but you find yourself in an entry-level position or just starting out, and don’t see how that’s possible. Just match your desire for advancement with *The Success Formula*. As you add more value to the enterprise, your position and finances will improve dramatically.

What if your desire is to be a scratch golfer? Match *that* desire with *The Success Formula*. Assuming you have the use of a working physical body, you can have that result, too. “Automatically, in mere days?” Of course not. But with effort, and over time—absolutely.

What if you want to be an expert chef, grow a better garden, get into the best physical shape of your life, or even just lose five pounds? If that’s what you truly desire, just plug that desire into *The Success Formula*. What if you want, with all your heart and soul, to be a better spouse, parent, sibling, friend or neighbor? Match that desire to *The Success Formula*, and it will happen. It *has* to. You’ll soon understand why.

As you read on and begin to absorb the three principles of *The Success Formula*, remember that everything in the following pages is based upon the presumption that you already have a burning desire: That is your bedrock, your *touchstone*. Match that desire—that mission, purpose and passion—with the information you are about to read, and you *will* achieve extraordinary results.

**PRINCIPLE #1**  
**Seek Out and Find the Information**  
*Follow “The System”*

Whatever you desire to achieve or attain has already been accomplished by others—most likely, by *many* others. And that’s good news. You needn’t reinvent the wheel, redesign the vehicle or redraw the map: It’s already been done for you! Your job is simply to *seek out the information* that will help you do the same.

If you want to get to the diamond mine, first find a map with the directions and grab onto it! In business, such step-by-step directions are typically referred to as “The System,” and we can just as well apply the idea to any pursuit, dream or endeavor.

Follow The System used by those who have already arrived where you are headed, and the chances are excellent you’ll get there, too—and considerably faster than you would have on your own.

So, what *is* a system? I define a “system” as: *The process of predictably achieving a goal based on a logical and specific set of how-to principles.*

More importantly, why is having a system so crucial to your success? Because, to paraphrase Michael Gerber, author of *The E-Myth*:

*Systems permit ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results, predictably. However, without a system, even extraordinary people find it difficult to predictably achieve even ordinary results.*

“Systems permit ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results, predictably....” If that’s true (and it has certainly proven so, many times over), wouldn’t you want to get your hands on a system that would work for you?

One of the best examples of a successful system is McDonald’s®. There’s a reason people will join a waiting list, pay a million dollars, and even uproot their families, just for the opportunity to open a franchise—knowing they’ll work very hard and likely not even see a profit for at least a few years.

Why would they do it? The reason is not because the hamburgers taste so good; it’s *The System*. McDonald’s® has a proven system: Follow it and you’ll succeed! And if you *don’t* follow it?

I was with some clients in Barbados, the night before a presentation. As we dined, I shared my System/McDonald’s® analogy, and one gentleman spoke up:

“Bob, aside from the beauty of our island and the kindness of our people [both of which I found to be true], we have one other claim to fame: We had the only McDonald’s® franchise that *never even got off the ground*. It failed within a very short period of time.”

“Well, there goes *that* theory,” I laughed.

“Not at all,” replied the man. “Everyone here knows what actually happened: The franchisees refused to follow The System as they were directed!”

Those ill-advised franchisees went directly against a system that most likely would have made them rich! Whether one intentionally resists The System, as the Barbadian franchisees did, or simply fails to take the right actions for other reasons, the results will be the same: failure. Find and follow The System, on the other hand, and you *must* succeed.

Another name for The System is O.P.E.: *Other People’s Experience*. If someone else has already done it, all you need to do is model, or duplicate, just what they did. Success is in the bag.

Consummate author and speaker Brian Tracy writes, “This process of learning and applying what I had learned changed my life. I am still amazed at how simple and obvious it is. Just find out what successful people do

and do the same things until you get the same results. Wow! What an idea.”

While there are some whose egos will not allow them to benefit from the knowledge and wisdom of others, those who are determined to become truly successful are only too happy to do so. The line that probably gets the biggest laugh at my live presentations is, “I’ve never had an original thought in my life!” And here’s the thing: I’m *proud* of that!

Don’t get me wrong: I’m not suggesting that you stifle your creativity or original thinking; just realize that your creative thinking is best built upon the fundamentals—the basic, tried-and-proven strategies for success.

Before Michael Jordan was doing double-twisted reverse slam dunks, he first had to learn how to dribble a basketball. Football coaching legend Vince Lombardi used to begin his pre-season address to his Superbowl Champion ballplayers by holding up an object in his hand and saying, “Gentlemen, this...is a football!” Champions know, success starts with the basics.

An excellent way to apply Principle #1 is to find a mentor or coach who has already prospered using The System. Let your mentor take you by the hand and show you the way. Ask for constant feedback—and utilize it! You’ll

cut your learning curve dramatically and realize the fruits of your labor in a lot less time.

The easiest places to find mentors are in books, seminars, the Internet, video and audio programs. Imagine, in the privacy of your own home or automobile, or even while exercising, you can learn from those whom you've never even met. Meanwhile, keep your eyes and ears open for a personal mentor, as well. The Sages tell us, "Acquire for yourself a teacher."

\* \* \*

*Systems permit ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results, predictably.*

— Michael Gerber, *The E-Myth* (paraphrased)

*The only difference between where you are now and where you'll be five years from now are the people you meet and the books you read.*

— Charlie "Tremendous" Jones,  
*Life Is Tremendous*

*In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but how many can get through to you.*

— Mortimer Adler, *How to Read a Book*



**PRINCIPLE #2**  
**Apply the Information Immediately**  
*Knowledge Without Action Is the Same As  
Having No Knowledge At All*

**T**he System is crucial. Without it, your learning curve extends indefinitely; with it, you are positioned for success...but that's just it. You're *positioned* for success. Now you have to *move*.

Once you've found The System that will work for you, it's imperative that you apply it—and *right away*. So many people sit on new-found knowledge, waiting until the time is “just right” to utilize it. Please don't fall into this trap. The “right time” is *right now!* Do not delay: Apply the information—immediately!

It's said that never reading a book will keep one just as ignorant as one who doesn't know how to read at all. In the same way, having knowledge *and not acting on it* renders that knowledge utterly worthless.

There is certainly nothing wrong with compiling knowledge, simply for its own sake. But knowledge, in and of itself, will have little if any real impact on what you actually accomplish.

*What?! But don't they say, "knowledge is power"?*

Yes, that's what they say...but it's not exactly true. You can accumulate an extraordinary amount of knowledge and still not accomplish a thing. Without applying that knowledge toward a certain end, absolutely nothing will happen. It simply *cannot* happen. In order to "move your world," your current reality, from where it is today to where you want it to be, it's imperative that you *act upon your knowledge*.

Now we must ask why, having the desire for success and The System for achieving it, would anyone possibly delay?

One reason might be fear. "What if it doesn't work? Then I'm really in trouble! But if I don't try it, at least I won't have to go through the disappointment of realizing I couldn't do it." True, as far as it goes. Following that logic, one would never see disappointment...and have absolutely no chance of success.

Learning a new system can take time. The great Tiger Woods discovered, after already having become a champion, that going back and absorbing an entirely new approach required a learning curve and even set his game *back* temporarily. Of course, one reason he's a champion is that he did it anyway—and now he's better than ever!

But what about, “I’ll just wait until...I have more money ...I have more time...I receive my tax refund...my kid graduates...summer (autumn/winter/spring)...” or all the other excuses?

One trademark of successful people is that they don’t let excuses deter them. They determine what it is they need to do—and then do it.

*Successful people do it now.* They know that otherwise, they could fall victim to “The Law of Diminishing Intent,” which states:

*The longer you wait to do something you know you should do now, the greater the chances are you’ll never actually do it.*

In other words, what’s most important is that you take the initial step. *Begin now!* Don’t promise yourself, “Well, I’ll begin tomorrow.” Tomorrow never comes: It always turns into today—and you didn’t promise to begin “today,” you promised to begin “tomorrow”!

The good news is, this action doesn’t have to be perfect; it just has to be *something*. Naturally, the better you learn and more closely you stick to The System, the quicker you’ll achieve the results you desire—but *practically any action is better than no action at all.*

Preeminent author and speaker Zig Ziglar says, “Anything worth doing is worth doing *poorly* until you learn how to do it well.” Of course, he doesn’t mean to purposely do something sloppily or haphazardly—simply that taking action is the key; excellence will come in its time. What’s more, knowledge, when internalized through repeated action, becomes wisdom.

In his classic *The Science of Getting Rich*, author Wallace D. Wattles writes, “Do not wait for a change of environment before you act. Cause a change of environment through action. You can act upon your present environment so as to cause yourself to be transferred to a better environment.”

That sums it up perfectly!

\* \* \*

## *The Success Formula*

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*Information is not power. It is nothing more than unorganized data. Knowledge is nothing more than organized information. Neither brings us true power, or true success. To succeed today, we need wisdom. Wisdom is the true power! I define wisdom as "information and knowledge that is organized, aligned, and acted upon in accordance with universal principles and laws."*

— James Ray, *The Science of Success*

*Do not wait; the time will never be "just right." Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you may have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along.*

— Napoleon Hill, *Think and Grow Rich*

*Nothing is more powerful than a person who knows his destiny and has chosen now as the time to pursue it.*

— Jim Stovall, *You Don't Have To Be Blind To See*

**PRINCIPLE #3**  
**Be Persistent**  
*Outlast the Nos*

**Y**ou know there is a System, a road map to follow, and you are eager to begin right away, today. Now, what happens when you fall down along the way? And by the way—you will.

Here is where the rubber meets the road. There is one last vital Principle, without which no success of any significant measure can ever be attained, and that is *persistence*. Let's look at how this third principle of *The Success Formula* can help put you over the top in accomplishing your goals.

In his famous poem, “Persistence,” Calvin Coolidge declared that talent, education and genius are not enough to succeed. “Persistence,” said Coolidge, “has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race.”

The Sages tell us that “the *righteous* [in this case, *successful*] person falls down seven times, but gets up eight.” Since that was written many thousands of moons ago, we can safely assume that top achievers have been falling down and getting back up pretty much since the beginning!

Indeed, there are so many sayings along these lines, and so many historical examples, one would think the concept is self-evident. Yet how often do we hear of people who quit before their labors even begin to bear fruit—or worse, those who persist for a time, only to quit *just* as the momentum they’ve worked so hard to build is about to manifest?

In his classic *Acres of Diamonds*, Russell H. Conwell teaches us the quintessential lesson about the vast riches that so often await just inches past where we stop digging. Giving up too soon is an insidious tendency to which we’re all susceptible. Resisting that tendency can make all the difference in the world.

Of course, some people will always point to “luck” as the reason the other person is successful while he or she is not. Achievers know that luck has very little to do with it. Talk with those who have made it to the top levels of their chosen fields and earn tremendous incomes, and ask them how they got where they are. They’ll tell you it’s because they *learned The System* (Principle #1) and *applied the information immediately* (Principle #2).

You might then ask, “Well, sure...but a lot of people have done that. Why are *you* such a huge success, and not them? What’s *really* the determining factor?” Here’s what they’ll tell you:

*Those of us who've made it to the top have simply gone through the process of doing what's necessary, more times, with more people and in more situations, than those who have not yet succeeded. We've fallen down more times and been told "no" more times—and thus we've gotten more "yeses."*

Notice the last part of that explanation. They've heard more "nos" (and some have been "NO!!s")—but like The Little Engine That Could, they just kept chugging along...not to be denied!

Yes, sometimes the "nos" are so many and so consistent we're reminded of the song, "Land of a Thousand Dances," which begins, "No no no, no no nononono, no, nono, nono, no no, no, no, nononono..."! It's easy to get discouraged and quit when that happens; in fact, it's about the most natural thing to do. After all, the wish to *avoid pain* (and "no" can be a very big pain) is a strong motivator.

What's the solution? Your *touchstone*.

Ahh...remember? Your touchstone, your bedrock...that prime ingredient to which you can return every time you get discouraged and want to quit. This is where we came in. That touchstone is *your desire*—a desire bigger than any "no" could ever possibly be...a desire so huge, so all-encompassing, so mighty that you can always count on it to



refuel your level of persistence—to make you ten feet tall and bulletproof.

What is your particular touchstone? Is it financial freedom for you and your family? The ability to live where you want, in a huge, beautiful home? The choice to contribute generously to the religious and charitable causes in which you believe? To travel the world, to visit faraway, wonderful and fascinating places—and always First Class? To be able to send your child to the school of your choice? Or is it simply a belief in what you're doing, in how it will affect your life and the lives of others—how it will change your world?

I don't know what your touchstone is—*but you must*. I do know that in order to stay persistent and outlast the nos, most of us need something bigger than ourselves... a cause, a goal, a belief, that ineffable and undeniable *something* that will pull us back up that eighth time after we've been knocked down for the seventh.

What is *your* touchstone? Invest as much time as you need to determine what that is.

My friend and client, Dave Brandt, Divisional Vice President of G.E. Financial Advisors, often walks the beaches of Southern California in the early morning and studies the waves. Dave says what fascinates him most is their persistence:

“It’s amazing. They’ve been coming for thousands of years, exactly the same way—and they keep coming, day after day, year after year, century after century, millennium after millennium! That is the consistency a person needs in order to be successful in anything he chooses—to just keep coming, continually, no matter what.”

With a big enough “why”—your ever-present and always-motivating touchstone—you too can manifest the enduring tenacity of the world’s oceans.

\* \* \*

*Never give in! Never give in! Never, never, never, never—in nothing great or small, large or petty: Never give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense.*

— Winston Churchill

*I have failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.*

— Michael Jordan

*Perseverance opens up treasures which bring perennial joy.*

— Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi

**POSTSCRIPT**  
**...And Just One More Thing—Belief!**

**R**abbi Yaakov Salomon tells the story of the lawyer arguing a case for his guilty defendant, who was on trial for murder.

The one challenge in the prosecution's case was that the body had never been found. However, the abundance of expertly presented circumstantial evidence was more than compelling. Everyone in the courtroom, jurors included, knew that the man was guilty—so in his closing argument, the clever defense attorney decided to go for broke .

He pointed grandly toward the courtroom doors and declared, “Ladies and gentlemen of the jury: In exactly 60 seconds, the so-called corpse, the man you *believe* to be dead, is going to come walking in right through those very doors. We can begin counting now.”

The time ticked by: one second, two seconds, three seconds, ten seconds, 20 seconds, 45 seconds, 55 seconds, 56, 57, 58, 59...and then, at *exactly* the one-minute mark, in walked...nobody at all. Certainly not the corpse.

The lawyer addressed the puzzled jury: “Ladies and gentleman—I apologize. I told you something that obviously did not come true. However, the mere fact that you looked at the doors as you did showed me—and shows you—that you had *some measure of doubt*. And of course, if you have any doubt, any doubt at all, you must—you *must*—return a verdict of Not Guilty.”

And with a triumphant flourish, he returned to his seat.

The jury went into deliberations—and just *five minutes later* came back out to render their verdict. The foreman stood up, faced the judge, and said they declared the defendant...*guilty!*

The defense attorney was enraged. “How could you?!” he demanded. “I saw all of you watching that door!”

The foreman replied, “Yes, sir, you are correct: We were, in fact, watching the door. But we were also watching you and your client—and *you did not* watch the door. *Your client* did not watch the door, not even for a moment. And that’s because you both knew there was not a chance in the world that anyone would be walking through it.”

The lesson? *Don’t expect anyone else to believe something you don’t believe yourself!*

## *The Success Formula*

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You can follow, to the letter, *The Success Formula* you've just learned. But if you don't believe in the complete and total worthiness of your personal mission or goal, you are in trouble.

This does not mean you should come on too strong or act in inappropriate ways, forcing yourself and your pursuit on others. But if you don't believe in your heart of hearts that you are doing the world a service through the pursuit of excellence in your chosen endeavor, then you simply won't be nearly as effective nor productive as you could be.

And perhaps most important of all, if you don't believe *in yourself* as a good, honest, kind, ambitious and worthy person who bases his or her actions on sound principles of integrity, you'll never *allow* yourself to prosper. And that would be a shame indeed, for to so prosper is your birthright.

Work on yourself continually. Know that *success is an inside job*. Wealth, reputation, loving friends and family—these are simply the outward manifestations of that which you create within yourself in the passionate pursuit of that which you love.

And here is the best news of all: Given that you're reading these words, I know without question that you *already*

*have* the necessary belief! (How do I know? If you didn't, you would not have read this far.)

Come back to this booklet and read it over and over again, whenever you feel you need a boost; and remember always that your desire, that compelling why, and your belief in yourself, your business and your dreams, are the irresistible force behind the magic.

Now go put the three timeless principles of *The Success Formula* into play—and you're on your way to turbocharging your success and dramatically improving your life!

## About the Author

BOB BURG is the author of five books, including *Endless Referrals: Network Your Everyday Contacts Into Sales* and *Winning Without Intimidation: How to Master the Art of Positive Persuasion*. Each has sold well over 100,000 copies. He has earned acclaim for an entertaining presentation style that combines humor with hard-hitting, practical, profit-generating information.

Bob has shared the platform with some of the world's best-known speakers, including Zig Ziglar, CNN's Larry King, Coach Lou Holtz, Mary Lou Retton, Brian Tracy, Tom Hopkins, radio legend Paul Harvey, Dr. Joyce Brothers, Les Brown, Dr. Denis Waitley, Harvey Mackay, Mark Victor Hansen, the late Og Mandino, former U.S. President Gerald Ford, and many others.

As a speaker at major sales and corporate conventions, Bob shares information on three topics vital to both business and personal success:

- *The Success Formula*: An expanded version of the principles in this booklet.
- *How to Cultivate a Network of Endless Referrals*: Never run out of new prospects again!
- *Winning Without Intimidation*: How to master the art of positive persuasion.

If you'd like information on having Bob speak at your company convention, or ordering his books, booklets, audio or video programs, please call or write:

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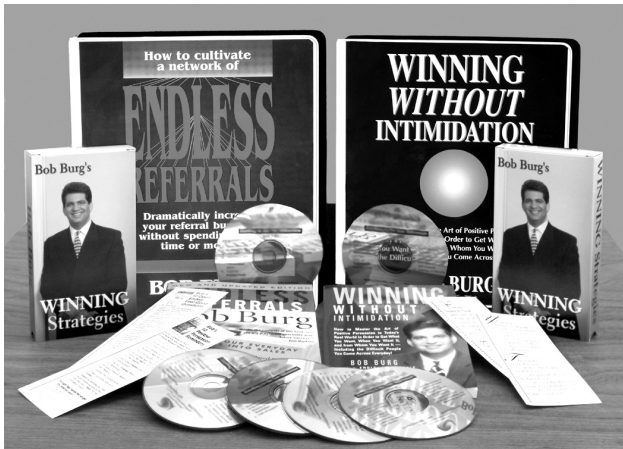
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