



## Champions Take Action

IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO SET GOALS; CHAMPS TAKE ACTION.

BY ANDREA RICHARDS SCOTT

**1. Act Now.** On your mark, get set...go! You'll never win the race if you never leave the starting line. In order to become successful, you must choose to act. You can set lofty goals and develop complex plans, however, without execution all you really have are foggy dreams and dusty hopes. A well executed plan is the key ingredient that helps you get ahead. Most people think about, dream about and talk about what they want to do. Champions visualize, plan and do. Knowing what they want, they are willing to do what it takes to secure it. Champions are usually well out in front of everyone else. Even if they make mistakes, they usually have sufficient recovery time. They take action knowing that each step takes them closer to the prize.

**2. Challenge yourself.** Everyone takes action, but the real question is, "will those actions will lead to goal attainment?" It's important to recognize the activities that are worth your time and effort. When taking action, it is essential that you do not settle for the easy and comfortable tasks. Stepping outside of your comfort zone will enable you to stretch and grow. It will build your endurance and prepare you for even greater opportunities. A champion weighs very carefully the things that they will spend their time on. Meaningless and mindless activities (such as watching television or gossiping on the telephone) are shunned in favor of more productive and challenging goal oriented activities.

**3. Take Responsibility.** Quite often champions are required to make decisions and take action with very little information. They use everything at their disposal while being responsible for the outcome of their actions. Champions use good judgment to make quick decisions. However, they are willing to own up to their mistakes – always leaving room to understand the lesson that was learned from the experience. Instead of blaming the outcome on the nearest scapegoat, a real champion is open, honest and accountable. Champions are responsible for their actions, they accept the role they played in the outcome and they make no excuse. They don't point fingers at anyone (including themselves) because they realized that blame is destructive, especially when it is turned inward. Instead they take responsibility by focusing on using the data gathered to perfect a future solution. They incorporate lessons from past failures as they gear up to take action again.

**4. Innovate** Often when taking action, a champion will have very little company. This is because they seek out innovative ideas and concepts – things that are not even on most people's radar screens. They are essentially mavericks on the bleeding edge. They are the ones that test new ideas and concepts even in the face of opposition. By the time most people catch up, the champion has worked out the kinks and has moved on to the next exciting project. They are risk-takers and they seem to rebound from set backs. Champions do not wait for other's opinions, they develop test and launch prototypes that others simply accept as the defacto standard. It's common for a champion's successful technique or strategy to be adopted by the entire organization.

**5. Overcome Obstacles** One way to overcome an obstacle is to understand why it is being presented in the first place. Champions ask, "What can I learn from this situation?" The numerous lessons that result from roadblocks and

challenges are invaluable. Champions use obstacles as a powerful asset for winning. Taking action in the face of an obstacle ensures long-term success. Champions send a message that nothing will stop them from taking action. They understand that obstacles are placed in their path to build character, provide resistance and produce growth. Weight training provides resistance required to build muscles; obstacles provide resistance required to build character.

**6. Never, Never Quit.** There are challenges that were specifically designed to deter you from your goals. Champions confront adversity and push right through until they get to the other side. On the other side of a storm is bright sunshine. Similarly, on the other side of a disappointment is joy; on the other side of adversity is strength. Champions expect adversity at every corner. Yet, with this keen awareness of challenges and dangers, they press forward to the mark. Champions realize that the important thing about adversity is how it is handled. Champions respond to adverse situations instead of reacting to them. They may re-chart their course when they've drifted off, however, they make conscious decisions to never, never quit.

You can become a champion today by taking action on something that you have been putting off. No matter what the challenge, take the responsibility right now for your actions. Think about it a little differently – be innovative. Don't get caught off guard by obstacles – expect them, overcome them and never, never give up.

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