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| **Take Action**The worlds belongs to those who reach out and grab it with both hands. It belongs to those who do something more than wish and hope and plan and pray, intending to do something someday, when all conditions seem just right. Successful people are not necessarily those who make the right decisions all the time. No one can do that, no matter how smart he or she is. But once successful people have made a decision, they begin moving step-by-step toward their objectives, and they begin to get feedback or signals to tell them when they're on course and when course corrections are necessary. As they take action and move toward their goals, they continually get new information that enables them to adjust their plans in large and small ways. It's important to understand that life is a series of approximations and course adjustments. Let me explain. When an airplane leaves Chicago for Los Angeles, it is off course 99 percent of the time. This is normal and natural and to be expected. The pilot makes continual course corrections, a little to the north, a little to the south. The pilot continually adjusts altitude and throttle. And sure enough, several hours later, the plane touches down at exactly the time predicted when it first became airborne upon leaving Chicago. The entire journey has been a process or approximations and course adjustments. Of course, there are no guarantees in life. Everything you do — even driving to work — is filled with uncertainty. You can never be completely sure that any action or behavior is going to bring about your desired result. There is always a risk. And where there is risk, there is fear. And whatever you think about grows in your mind and heart. People who think continually about the risks involved in any undertaking soon become preoccupied with fears and doubts and anxieties that conspire to hold them back from trying in the first place. At Babson College, a 12-year study was conducted to discover the reasons for success. The researchers concluded that the difference between the successes and the failures in their study could be summarized by one word: *launch!* Successful people were willing to launch themselves down the track of opportunity without any guarantee of success. They were willing to risk uncertainty and overcome the normal fears and doubts that hold the majority in place. And the remarkable thing is that as you take risks in life, new opportunities emerge all around you. However, you would not have seen those opportunities if you had not taken action. They would not have materialized for you if you had waited for some assurance of the outcome before acting. The Confucian saying "A journey of a thousand leagues begins with a single step" simply means that great accomplishments begin with your willingness to face the inevitable uncertainty of any new enterprise and step out boldly in the direction of your goal. If you want to be more successful faster, just do more things. Take more action; get busier. Start a little earlier; work a little harder; stay a little later. Put the odds in your favor. According to the law of probability, the more things you try, the more likely it is that you will try the one thing that will make all the difference. I've found that luck is quite predictable. If you want more luck, take more chances. Be more active. Show up more often. Tom Peters, the bestselling author of In *Search of Excellence* and other business books, found that a key quality of the top executives was a "bias for action." Their motto seemed to be "Ready, fire, aim!" Their attitude toward business was summarized in the words "Do it, fix it, try it." They realized that the future belongs to the action-oriented, to the risk taker. Successful people know, as General Douglas MacArthur once said, "There is no security on this earth. There is only opportunity." And the interesting thing is this: If you seek opportunity, you'll end up with all the security you need. However, if you seek security, you'll end up with neither opportunity nor security. The proof of this is all around us, in the downsizing and reconstructing of corporations, where thousands of men and women who sought security are finding themselves unemployed for long periods of time. There is a "momentum principle" of success, which is derived from two physical laws, the law of momentum and the law of inertia, and it applies equally well to everything that you accomplish and fail to accomplish. In physics, the law of momentum says that a body in motion tends to remain in motion unless acted upon by an outside force. The law of inertia, on the other hand, says that a body at rest tends to remain at rest unless acted upon by an outside force. In their simplest terms, as they apply to you and your life, those laws say that if you stay in motion toward something that is important to you, it's much easier to continue making progress than it is if you stop somewhere along the way and have to start again. Successful people are very much like the plate spinners in the circus. They get things spinning, knowing that if a plate falls off, or something comes to a halt, it's much harder to get it restarted than it is to keep it going. Once you have a goal and a plan, get going! And once you start moving toward your goal, don't stop. Do something every day to move yourself closer toward your goal. Don't let the size of the goal or the amount of time required to accomplish it hold you back. During your planning process, break down the goal into small tasks and activities that you can engage in every day. Every day, every week, every month you should be making progress by completing your predetermined tasks and activities in the direction of your clearly defined objective. And here's where the rubber meets the road. One of the most important single qualities for success is self-discipline. It's the ability to **make yourself do what you should do, when you should do it, whether you feel like it or not.** Let me break down that definition of *self-discipline*. First, "the ability to make yourself." This means that you have to use strength and willpower to force yourself into motion, to overcome the power of inertia that holds you back. Second, "do what you should do when you should do it." This means that you make a plan, set a schedule, and then do what you say you'll do. Do it when you say you'll do it. Keep your promises to yourself and to others. The third part of this definition is: "whether you feel like it or not." You see, anyone can do anything if he feels like it, if he wants to do it because it makes him happy, if he is well-rested and has lots of time. However, the true test of character is when you do something that you know you must do whether you feel like it or not — especially when you don't like doing it at all. In fact, you can tell how badly you really want something, and what you're really made of as a person, by how capable you are of taking action in the direction of your goals and dreams even when you feel tired and discouraged and disappointed and you don't seem to be making any progress. And very often, this is the exact time when you will break through to great achievement. As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "When the night is darkest, the stars come out." Your ability to endure, to continue taking action, step by step, in the direction of your dreams, is what will ultimately assure your success.To learn more about Brian Tracy and his bestselling program [*The Psychology of Achievement*](http://www.nightingale.com/p~productIDN~5031.asp), visit [www.AdvantEdgeMag.com/Tracy](http://www.nightingale.com/a~AuthorID~123.asp) today. |

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