

Masha Ibeschitz

# **Success reloaded**

Use the power of authenticity  
to drive success

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# Intro

## An integrated perspective

Is this book just another career guide? At first glance, yes. But on closer inspection, this book is an invitation for self-reflection. A reflection with the objective of being able to live your unique version of success! You are the expert for your long-term success – as soon as you embark on a journey and focus your attention on more than merely the short-term issues that may be a temporary focus at the time: What have you achieved so far? How have you achieved it? Where do you want to go next? How relevant are your past success strategies for your future course, and what can you change? Which roles have you filled so far, and how? Who is vital for your progress? How happy and satisfied are you with your own life, and is there room for improvement? Are you already the person you want to be? Are you on the right path? Or do you have doubts sometimes?

If you are like most performance-oriented and exceptionally successful people, you will always reach a point in your career where you need to take a huge step forward. At the same time, you may realize that your old shoes no longer seem to be a good fit for your future path. Something's pressing. Frequently it is only mild discomfort. You may feel more stressed. It could be because communication with the team is no longer running as smoothly as it used to. Or you are standing with one foot in a crisis and discover that you are no longer in control of things. But based on self-reflection, you can manage to adapt ways of thinking, patterns of behavior, and communication habits, so that you don't just look like you have it all together. You will also feel more satisfied on the inside, have enough energy, and significantly reduce your stress.

This book is primarily intended for individuals who want to take the next step in their professional career or path or those who

have done so recently and are now discovering that many things are suddenly very different from what they had expected. It is also suitable for anyone who wants to plan their future career and life path with a clear view of the future and reflect holistically to express themselves better, reduce stress, and become more relaxed and satisfied. So, what am I offering you in this book? You will receive helpful models and useful, practical tools and many thought-provoking suggestions and insights to help you determine your position and help you make consequential decisions for your future. Simply choose what appeals to you in the following chapters. What allows you to identify connections and ultimately leads you to action. Delight in stories and ideas. Allow yourself to take a little time away from the daily grind. Not so much for this book. But for yourself!

Using examples, it becomes remarkably easy to identify the bigger picture. That is why you will read the stories of three fictional characters in this book, all of them making a career move and, at the same time, growing on a personal level. In other words, these people are not entirely fictional. They have real role models in my coaching practice. But names, companies, industries, positions, countries, and regions have been altered, and individual situations were added. All other individuals who serve as examples in the chapters are also kept anonymous. Gender equality has always been a concern of mine. Although I may use the male gender at times, I hope that my female readers can live with this compromise because it is easier to understand. An integrated perspective on success means considering the past, present, and future. Accordingly, this book is divided into three parts. I prefer books where the chapters can be read in any desired order. That being said, I recommend that you read this book from beginning to end anyway – because the stories are based on each other and unfold from chapter to chapter. I will simultaneously introduce the Process Communication Model® (PCM) over several chapters and later provide some statements

based on this. You will find hints for a more in-depth study of the PCM and other models and tools presented in this book's annex.

Dear readers, I hope that this book will contribute to your success. Or rather: that this book contributes to your self-reflection – and that you will be as successful as you want to be!

Yours,

Masha Ibeschitz



Part I

**The Past**



# Chapter 1

## Background: The origins of your success

**This chapter is an invitation to reflect on what has significantly influenced all of your previous accomplishments. If you understand your background, you gain a better understanding of yourself and can decide and act more deliberately. Nothing defines us more than our early development and the basis of our personality throughout our lives. Are you ready for a journey back to the beginning?**

*Patrick closed the front door behind him and left it unlocked. His wife, Laura, hated him for it. Holding a duffle bag in his hands, he approached his red Ford Mustang V8, parked with the front wheels casually turned in front of the two-car garage. The Sales Director for Central and Eastern Europe of a global glass manufacturer drove the most striking company car at the entire Vienna site. But Patrick was far too successful for his colleagues, boss, or boss' boss to dare to blame him for this extravagance. The others can drive their "taxis" – this is what Patrick called the dark grey and black limousine monotony in the company parking lot. He preferred to have a little fun in the streets. After all, life was short.*

*When Patrick threw his duffel bag in the back seat, got behind the wheel and closed the driver's side door, he grabbed his smartphone to listen to his favorite playlist on the infotainment system. At the same moment, he thought of Laura. She had said goodbye to him early in the morning and let him sleep in, Patrick pulled up WhatsApp and typed: "Have a safe flight to Seattle, honey! I'm headed to my parents' house now. It's going to be a lot of fun. My mom will miss you. Don't work too hard ;) Kisses, P." Then he drove off. On the way to the southern highway, he turned the music so loud that neither the engine nor the turn*

signal's ticking could be heard. Then suddenly, the music faded in the middle of a song. An incoming call: Sheila, Patrick's boss. What did she want on a Saturday morning? Patrick answered. Sheila got straight to the point: "Listen, Patrick: First of all, this phone call never happened. Second, you got the job. The board made a decision tonight, European time. I expect you'll be officially notified by the end of next week. In the meantime, start learning Japanese – your office will be in Shinagawa. In other words, in the Business Class of a Boeing. By the way, congrats. Patrick hit the steering wheel with his right hand and shouted, "Yeah!" His boss's boss told him to have a lovely weekend. "Thanks, Sheila," Patrick said quietly, but she had already ended the call. The music resumed its best-of-best playlist on random playback.

Patrick turned the volume even louder. The windows were shaking. The next song started with a guitar solo before the bass and drums kicked in like an explosion: "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana. When he began hearing Kurt Cobain's husky voice, Patrick felt as if the song punched him in his stomach's pit. Next thing he knew, he had tears in his eyes. That was his song at the age of 15, his anthem! And now, just before the ramp to enter the highway, on his way to his parents in Styria, he felt like he was 15 again.

It was the exact feeling he had back then: Patrick against the rest of the world. His life was supposed to be wild and dangerous and never, ever dull! At 15, Patrick had written a letter to himself. He had not thought about it for years. Now he saw himself sitting in his cramped room again – a townhouse in a workers' estate – his walls covered with posters, his desk a mess. He saw himself writing. He had promised himself never to become a slick career guy in that letter. "Fuck the system," he had written back then. Patrick turned the music down, signaled right, and drove into a parking lot. He got out, leaned against the car, closed his eyes, and inhaled the cold air: Where the hell was he now? He had been push-

*ing forward in the last few years, rushing up the corporate ladder and married the greatest woman in the world in between – who mostly worked when he happened to be home. Just like he worked when she was home. And now the big job at HQ in Japan. His big goal will soon become a reality! Global competence, colossal responsibility, appointments on all continents. But all he saw was 15-year-old Patrick. And he was screaming. Not "Here we are now, entertain us!" But: "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"*

## **When the time comes to reflect on your background**

Patrick's 15-year-old version of himself is asking a legitimate question. What is he doing? Or rather: How thoughtful or inconsiderate is Patrick about what is happening in his career – and his life in general? And how consciously or unconsciously does he decide to take it to the next level? Most people don't think about their lives always. This is a good thing because life needs to be lived and not frequently thought about. In crises – be it personal crises, such as a divorce, or global crises, like the Corona Pandemic – many people start to reflect for the first time. Not only during crises but also when major success is just around the corner. The victory for which you may have been working for years. And as soon as you get a call like the one from Patrick's boss, the celebration is often surprisingly brief. After that, a queasy feeling sets in. Or maybe the thought of the family and what the next level will mean for your loved ones. Or the pictures and feelings from your past appear. This is actually quite common.

## **Acting out of greater self-awareness and consciousness**

Many of the people I work with hardly ever talk to anyone in their professional environment about what concerns them on the

inside. Mainly when a career leap is about to take place. Some don't even talk to their partner or family about it. But through my work with people in growth situations, I have been able to experience and accompany many internal processes. This is beneficial for you, dear readers because it enables me to write this book. In turn, this allows you to reflect throughout the book and eventually get clarity about what you need to do to take the next step in your career. I am not referring to what you need professionally, because you already know that. Instead, I am talking about what you need to understand yourself better and act out of greater self-awareness. To help you approach things in a way that corresponds more closely to your personality type in the future. Essentially, this entire book is an invitation for you to reflect on yourself and develop a greater level of awareness with a greater sense of complexity.

In this chapter, I am going to start with where your success comes from. Where you come from – because one cannot be separated from the other. Have you ever taken a closer look at your background? If the answer is no, you're probably part of the majority. Everyone comes from somewhere, but most of us simply shrug it off. So, let me ask you this: What is the first thing you think of when you hear the keyword "origin"? Your mother, your father, maybe your siblings and your hometown? The happy days of your childhood, or the terrible ones? Or are you one of those people that quickly become a bit metaphysical when it comes to the topic of "origin"? According to the motto: Who am I, and if yes, how many? Do you think about God when it comes to your origin because you are religious? Or do you think, "I don't know who or what brought me into this world – evolution, my genes, the Flying Spaghetti Monster – but I'm here now and I'm making the best of it?"

## **Welcome to your incarnation! Unfortunately, we've lost the manual ...**

A while ago, I read a novel that I enjoyed because of its quirky humor. It is called "*Miseses Karma*" and was written by the German author David Safier. The story begins on the anniversary of the death of TV presenter Kim Lange. She is killed by debris from the disused Russian space station Foton M3 when it crashes into Western Europe due to a miscalculation of Baikonur's control center. Her comment on this from the otherworld: "The day I died was not much fun. And that was not only because of my death. To be more precise: "It barely made it to sixth place in the worst moments of the day." Kim is reincarnated as an ant after a brief trip into the light. Without any prior explanation from a higher being as to what this was all about. She suddenly finds herself in an ant's body and has to navigate through the world of ants. This situation is "the number one of the worst moments" of her death. Shortly after that, she meets a "fat" ant, with a "kind voice" who introduces herself as "Sid-dhartha Gautama". Better known as Buddha. This ant promptly provides her with an explanation for her reincarnation as a Hymenoptera: "Because you deserve it!" Bad karma? Yeah, I guess. But not as lousy as the karma of dictators. According to the Buddha ant, they're reincarnated as intestinal bacteria.

The best way to find out how this bizarre story unfolds is to read it for yourself if you are ever in the mood for stimulating entertainment. I ask myself concerning the topic of this chapter: Is a reincarnation as a human being that much different from reincarnation as an ant? We have landed somewhere on planet earth without explaining the reasons and without a manual for guidance. We grow up in Styria, in Chhattisgarh, in the San Fernando Valley, on Shikoku or in Ayacucho. Was it karma? Or pure coincidence? Maybe we have already met our parents in a previous life. Or perhaps we haven't. Either way, we have to get

along with them, because we depend on them while we are children. Some of us don't even get to meet their parents. Or only one parent (Fate? Coincidence?). Religious, philosophical, or scientific authorities come into our lives – like the ant called Siddhartha – and have seemingly plausible explanations for all the significant connections in life. But it is up to us whether and to what extent we accept these explanations.

## **This isn't about the mysteries of the universe. It's about you!**

Why am I telling you all this? How you answer the great metaphysical questions of the universe, or whether you are interested in them has no bearing on you reading this book. This is about you, your personal development and your success! I would like you to consciously pursue a professional career path that satisfies you and maybe makes you even a little bit happy. In other words, preferably extremely happy, of course. Perhaps you belong to most people who imagine the path to happiness to be something like one of those endlessly long staircases to a Japanese Shinto shrine. These people always want to take one step at a time. For others, the path to success is more like a highway, where the most important thing is to keep your foot on the accelerator whenever possible. Others believe in affirmations and visualizations and expect the universe to supply them with what they want one day. Whatever your path: After my long experience with people in leading positions, it is always worth reflecting on your origins at a certain point in your career. The bigger the upcoming step in your career, the more you benefit from knowing your origins.

Why is that? The success you have enjoyed thus far is always a result of your imprints. The more you know about these imprints, the better you understand which of them can be used as resources for your next step – and what you can let go of. I will get to the subject of letting go later in this book. First of all, I

want to invite you to accompany Patrick on the journey back to his roots. Patrick represents all those that I encourage to return to their origins – to the family, local, social, and cultural imprints that we all will probably never thoroughly shake off before leaping to the next level. All human paths are unique. And maybe that makes us a little different from ants in the end.

## **Discovering and appreciating your imprints**

*Right past the place-name sign, Patrick took his foot off the accelerator, but only stopped short of the speed trap. For the past 20 years, it had been visible on the side of the road, just behind a gas station and just before the parking lot of a discount store. The bright summer sky flattered Patrick's hometown, in which everything looked functional and hardly anything seemed merely beautiful. Apart from the Catholic church, the baroque town hall and the foundations of a medieval castle, there were no sights to see here. This was not Styria for tourists, but that of workers. For a long time, the mining industry had provided for the village. Most of the workers' estates originated from that time. Patrick's grandfather on his father's side still worked in the mines. His mother's family had once immigrated from Italy because of mining. But his parents had already been forced to look for other jobs: Patrick's father, a skilled locksmith and recently retired, had last been caretaker at a housing company after decades in a small factory. His mother had worked as an accountant for a car repair shop for 25 years.*

*Patrick passed by the Italian ice cream parlor that belonged to relatives of his mother. For a moment, he thought about stopping there and having an espresso. But his parents were waiting for him and he did not want to keep them any longer. Two streets further on, he passed by the factory where his father had worked. The warehouses had been empty for a few years now. After the local government had tried to set up a start-up center*

*there and then abandoned the attempt due to a lack of founders, a purchaser for the building was sought. The car repair shop where his mother had been employed – part-time, because a full-time employee in the accounting department would not have been profitable for the owner – had already been sold. It was located on the main road, behind a slight right turn. An entrepreneur from Graz was now having old Harley-Davidson motorcycles restored here. More or less as a hobby, as it was rumored in town. Even though a buyer for one of the massive old bikes could be found now and then, it seemed to be a losing battle.*

*As Patrick was driving through the village center and passed the church, he smiled. "Meier Moden" still existed! It had always been the most exclusive shop in town. When Patrick was a child, his parents had taken him and his brothers and sisters here, although they really couldn't afford "Meier Moden". Each year before Easter and at Christmas we had something new to wear. In church on Sundays everyone was supposed to see that the children were well taken care of. Patrick turned left. Behind the doctor's office, which had also been there for ages, the almost one-hundred-year-old miners' settlement with its rows of identical row houses began. Patrick briefly considered parking his car under a tree on the village's outskirts, but finally decided to park in front of his parents' house. He was aware of the looks some of the neighbors gave to his flashy car with the Vienna tag. But his father looked at his son's vehicle with pride. For him, a car couldn't be large and powerful enough. He stepped out of the house. He had probably been standing by the window for an hour waiting for his son to arrive.*

## **Self-reflection starts with observation, not judgment**

Patrick drives through his hometown like a silent observer. He notices things. And he remembers how things used to be. But he

isn't always quick to judge everything. He doesn't say, "I'm finally home," nor does he think, "What a miserable dump!" Patrick accepts the place where he grew up and the time he spent here as something that has shaped him irrevocably. This attitude of a curious observer, who does not judge hastily, is what characterizes positive self-reflection. We are used to judging ourselves and others too quickly. Many individuals in business are also used to thinking in terms of status and image. Does my parental home make an impression on other people? Or would it be best not to draw too much attention to my origins? Self-reflection begins when you no longer care what others think about you and your background. This is about your own unique life and your origins. If you can examine your imprints without judging them, it will make you that much stronger.

If Patrick is doing well on his chosen career path, then his rural working-class upbringing is not even a concern. He doesn't need to continually point out to everyone that he is a working-class child, but he also doesn't have any reason to withhold this fact. There may even be specific strengths related to his social background. His family was not always able to afford everything. But his parents took responsibility for their children and made sure that they were well taken care of. Part of his family has a migration background and had to work their way into a small town's social fabric. The structural change in the region has put a strain on many families. Patrick's father didn't give up, always tried to find a new job, and found one. What can Patrick take away from this today? What strengths come to mind when you think about your own background? How did your family deal with difficult times and how did they deal when times were more relaxed? With scarcity or with abundance? What did you receive, simply because you were a child or an adolescent and could not yet take care of yourself?

## **You have the opportunity to read this book? You must be doing pretty well!**

I have no idea where you grew up, what shaped you and what family relationships you may have experienced – or even sorely missed. Your company car (if you have one) may be more discreet than Patrick's – or an even bigger statement. And your parents – assuming they raised you – may have been blue-collar workers, too. Maybe they are professors, artists, farmers, entrepreneurs or office workers. I'm unable to know all this. But one thing I do know for sure: If your situation allows you to purchase this book and deal with its contents, then you already belong to the super (successful) rich of this world! Most individuals still have far too many existential concerns to allow themselves the luxury of comprehensive self-reflection. Would you agree with my assessment that you must already be doing quite well for yourself?

And 99 percent of previous generations' members can only marvel at the intellectual pursuits we focus on today. This also applies to women, among others. At least in the economically prosperous countries of recent decades (which have consumed most resources in the process), an increasing number of women are finally sitting at the table when the cards are shuffled and dealt. Your hand, dear reader, is certainly better than most people at any point in history. Now, make something of it! As a side note: Maybe you are even a little thankful – or even very thankful – now and then for all the opportunities and possibilities that less than one percent of humanity has been given access to.

## **Understanding your family of origin and being at peace with it**

When you look at your parents now, what do you see? (Assuming you have gotten to know your parents sufficiently.) When