

Roadmap To Success

By RJ DiDonato

When I was asked to collaborate with Ken Blanchard and Deepak Chopra on a new book titled “Roadmap to Success” I had to give quite a bit of thought about my own success in life and business.

I thought about my career and why I was successful with some companies and not others. My most successful career was reporting to a great manager, mentor and coach. Not all of us have that opportunity where that manager really wants you to be successful.

I always knew that a mentor was important, someone you could talk to, someone who would listen without prejudice, someone who would steer you in the right direction and hold you accountable.

As I looked back on my career, I was the most successful in my first job out of college with a major computer company, Digital Equipment Corporation, out of Boston, MA.

After three or four months of training I was assigned to a manager, Irwin “Jake” Jacobs. I realized I really didn’t know anything about business. I had a college degree, from Northeastern University, in Electrical Engineering and I was going for my MBA but schooling didn’t help very much in this industry. Jake was one of the best managers I ever had in my life. He was not only interested in making me successful but he was interested in my life and my family. He helped me buy my first house, he gave me some stocks in our company, taught me about the stock market, and showed me how to read a financial report. Every day I was learning something and I felt great when I went home. I couldn’t wait to get into work the next day. He was the kind of guy you could talk to, you could say anything you wanted, you could even say that last night I got drunk and really didn’t do the work I was supposed to do. He’d say, “Okay, you goofed up but let’s get back on track; here’s what we need to do today.”

So he was my coach for years. We’ve remained friends for more than thirty years; he died a few years ago unfortunately. I felt very good that we had kept in touch and we visited each other at least twice a year. I went to his memorial service. There were hundreds of people there all saying the same thing about how Jake changed their lives, how he wanted everyone to be successful, and how you could tell him anything.

Although it takes hard work to become successful, a good coach will hold you accountable for getting the work done right and on time. It occurred to me that athletes

have coaches. Football players have several coaches. Musicians and singers have coaches. Why not us.

A mentor or coach is essential in today's business climate. Many of us work out of our homes and are alone. Some cannot trust their managers to confide about what is going wrong or discuss strategies. A good coach will also help you communicate better which is one of the most important tools that you need to master.

Thanks to DEC I have found a new career in Sales Training and Coaching. On one of our DEC trips to visit all the offices in Europe, to introduce the new PDP 11, we were video taped by someone in the German office. After returning home and converting the tape to USA standards we were shocked at how bad the presentation came off. We then decided to get a coach to teach us how to present our products and message without putting people to sleep. This Endeavour turned out to be pivotal in our careers. We learned techniques that would serve us well for the rest of our lives. Good communication skills will help you to put your message across to others and persuade them to get what you want out of life. To succeed in today's business climate you must act, look, and communicate like a leader.

To obtain a copy of the book go to www.rjdidonato.com. Read this book and start your Road to Success.