



PREPARING FOR YOUR FUTURE SUCCESS

Ready for opportunity when it comes!

Preparation mixed with faith and activated by opportunity leads one to a life of meaning and influence.

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'Success came to me when I consciously decided where my path should begin and where I wanted it to end'. Cynthia McKay

'If a person does not prepare for his success, when his opportunity comes, it will only make him look foolish'. Earl Nightingale

Preparing for your future, is about preparing yourself. Abraham Lincoln when he was a young lawyer said 'I will study and prepare myself, and someday my chance will come'. He prepared himself for his future to one day be President of the United States. He stood many, many times for political positions before he finally succeeded and became a man who changed a nation.

Your future will be successful only when you have prepared and paid the price to be ready for your success. Are you in a position to take advantage of your opportunities when they arise?

When you decide to travel overseas, there is a lot of preparation involved – tickets, passports, accommodation, insurances, redirecting your mail etc. If all of these steps are not completed your travel will either not take place or be chaotic.

A school leaver attends university to prepare for a career. They commit themselves to all the learning it will take, so that when the time is right and the opportunity for employment comes along, they are ready. You cannot become a doctor without the preparation of medical school.

Your life is no different – an unordered, unprepared life becomes a wandering generality – an arrow aimed with no bullseye within shot. Life is a journey that requires preparation for the milestones and events along its way. Opportunities happen around us all the time, but if you are not prepared when they come, you have little to build success on.

Our preparation has been in our life journey, the knowledge and skills we have learnt along the way, and the character that we have developed. However this is untapped potential until the moment that we activate it to produce something in our lives – it maybe a career, a business, a role in the community, an invention, a book, a ministry etc.

Let me explain. All of my life I have been interested in the area of personal growth and development both as a Christian and non Christian. Over the years I have read a huge number of books and untold articles on many different aspects of personal development. I love to know what makes people tick. Even when I am reading the Bible, I am looking for the life changing principles that people can apply to their lives to bring hope and change. Up until two years ago I didn't have a lot of opportunity to use that knowledge, but when I took the opportunity to be coached and find out what my passion and purpose was, and started a coaching business, it became very apparent how important all that reading had been. Also when I decided to complete a Life Coaching Diploma it was very easy because I already had most of the knowledge I needed.

Imagine if you had always wanted to write a book, but you're still a one finger typist. What if you wanted to start a business, but lack the most basic computer communication skills. Maybe you've always wanted to get a job in the elderly care industry, but you've never done any reading, or volunteer work or formal study in this area. Suddenly the job you've always wanted in that industry pops up in the paper. The person who has done their preparation is more likely to get employed before you and your opportunity is lost.

There are a lot of people in the world 'wishing' they had a better job or career, a ministry or business, but they've never done the preparation and their life remains in a rut.

'Get good, then get better, then aim to be the best'

There are several things that you can do to become ready for success. All of these activities require self-discipline and faith and that's because the most normal and natural thing for people to do is try to get by without preparation. They don't take the time and the effort to be ready for their chance when it comes. They waste time in fruitless activity and then try and 'wing it' or even con themselves or others into believing they have all they need to succeed. The unprepared person just ends up looking silly and incompetent.

Faith is required because none of us knows in advance that our preparation will pay off. We need to have a mindset that everything we do is useful and constructive in some way. The principle of reaping and sowing will outwork

itself in our lives somewhere along the way. So if you sow preparation it will produce its harvest. This is a journey you take with the Lord. It must not come from a place of striving but of rest in Him, listening for His voice and direction.

So here are some strategies to help you prepare:

1. *Have a healthy spiritual life.* Get up an hour earlier and read your Bible or meditate on good things, or begin your day with something positive, uplifting and enlightening. It is in these times that you will develop much more clarity about your life and where you want to go, you will build positivity into your life, receive ideas and strategies, and so much more. This time sets you up for the rest of your day – it's like having a high protein meal rather than a breakfast full of candy. You will be more positive and optimistic, calmer, confident and relaxed as you go about your day.
2. *Spend every day wisely.* We talked above about not wasting our time on unfruitful activities – excessive TV watching, endless socializing, computer games etc. Make each day count – you don't know when your opportunities are going to come. Make a plan for each month to learn or do something that develops you in some way. Each morning plan your day, decide how you will deal with distractions, decide on your priorities. High achievers discipline themselves to start at the top of the list and to work on the activities in order of importance, without diversion or distraction. Remember, nothing is wasted!
3. *Have a realistic view of life.* What I mean by a 'realistic' view of life is to realize that life has challenges, things go wrong, we make mistakes and people let us down. Life is just full of ups and downs, and while we are *not to expect them* or be afraid of what is to come, we are to build into ourselves fortitude and wisdom so that when the ups and downs come we are able to negotiate them and maintain our peace.
4. *Develop your character.* A person of good character who has a great attitude, consistency and reliability, self discipline, authenticity, integrity, and honesty etc in their lives will attract favor, opportunities and success around them. Build good character into your life. Live your life according to high morals, values and principles. Living this way makes you an attractive person to be around, and you will find that more opportunities come your way than for others.
5. *Prepare yourself mentally.* That means focusing on the positive, having positive expectations, replacing wrong mindsets with positive and good ones.

Learn to think through things and use wisdom rather than react out of the first thought that comes into your mind. Learn to control your thoughts – don't let your brain or your emotions tell you how to react when you face challenges. Ask yourself what is the right thing to do. If you live a faith based life – what does the Bible say?

6. *Prepare yourself physically.* Exercise and eat your way to success. That means keep fit and eat a healthy diet – your mind and your body will appreciate it. Eating junk turns you into a slow moving swamp. Eat fruits, vegetables and grains, eat more protein than carbohydrates and avoid processed foods as much as possible.

7. *Learn technical skills.* Do you know how to type quickly, use the internet and social media, and have basic computer skills. When we were employing staff for our business these were necessities for the warehouse person as much as the salesperson. If you have a passion to be a chef can you identify different knives and cooking implements, do you know how to cook basic dishes and identify a wide range of cooking ingredients? What can you learn now? Use the internet it is a valuable resource for your personal growth and development in any area you're interested in.

8. *Gain knowledge.* Learn, learn, learn. Watch videos, read books, volunteer in your area of interest, talk to people who do what you want to or love to do, take a course and practice, practice, practice.

9. *Determine to be your best.* Make a decision that you are not going to waste your life, that you will be someone who practices self discipline and commitment towards goals. Make excellence (not striving) your goal in all that you do and do everything to the best of your ability.

10. *Practice good choices.* Learn wisdom. Be informed about the things that affect your world. Don't let your values and opinions be determined by the loudest or most persuasive voice in your ear. Learn to make good choices about how you live your life, spend your money, spend your time and who you spend it with. Right choices produce positive, fruitful and constructive results.

Learn to work through possible consequences of the decisions you make. That doesn't mean we don't make a decision or move forward, but make sure you are prepared for all outcomes. How will your decisions affect the people

around you. Don't exchange short term quick fixes for long term gain that might cost you a little pain.

11. *Be financially prepared.* If there is one thing from my youth I wish I had done differently, it would be to exercise more wisdom and preparation for the future with regard to my finances. I remember admiring a friend who at the age of 21 had bought his own house. He had saved since the day he started working with that one goal in mind. Plan now for your retirement and other milestone life events. If you want to own your own business one day, start saving for it now. Be fiscally responsible for your family's welfare – spend wisely, teach your children financial wisdom, give a hand up to others less fortunate than you, and learn all you can about good financial stewardship.

If you are loaded down with unproductive debt, get rid of it as soon as possible. Your opportunity may come and you won't have the financial resources to take advantage of it. Save and pay cash for things.

12. *Network.* Get out in your community, meet people. Get to know who the pioneers, forerunners and experts are in your areas of interest. Keep up to date with them on the internet. Join forums and groups, ask questions.

15. *Serve others.* Have heart attitude to serve others and you'll be amazed at what opportunities open up to you. We reap what we sow, and investing in the lives of others will reap a harvest in your life.

Remember:

Everything counts.

Everything you do is either moving you toward your goals
or moving you away.

Everything provides you with the opportunity
to become a better person

Nothing is neutral.

Everything counts.

There is nothing that you cannot achieve if you invest the time and the effort to get yourself ready for the success that you desire and for the purpose that you were created for. There is nothing that can stop you but your own lack of preparation. Your possibilities are endless and your potential is unlimited.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow put it like this:

Those heights by great men won and kept
Were not achieved by sudden flight
But they, while their companions slept
Were toiling upward in the night.



Have you been frustrated because you feel your dreams are still unfulfilled, or you know you have a specific assignment, project, life purpose but have no idea how to achieve it? Perhaps you lack understanding and self awareness of what you carry in you from God, or how to bring together your gifts, skills, talents and abilities to make a difference and be an influence.

Fiona provides coaching to help you on the journey of discovery and self development to achieve your dreams and goals, and build a satisfying, meaningful, influential life full of purpose.

We all of us want to be able to say at the end of our days, 'I did what I was meant to do'.

Visit our website for more information on personal coaching with Fiona, find out who Fiona is, and for resources and events at <http://www.spiritedwomen.nz>.

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