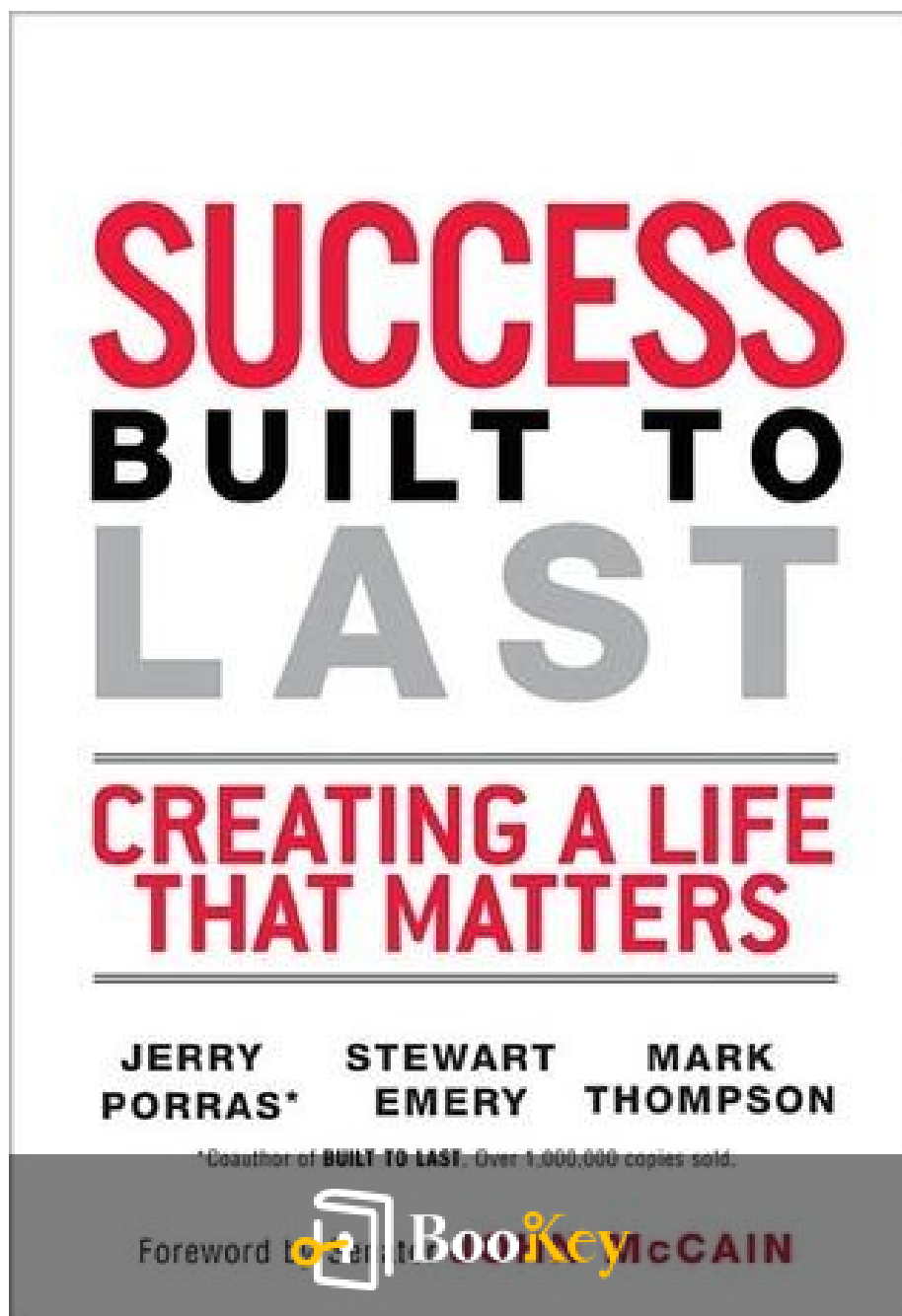


# Success Built To Last PDF (Limited Copy)

Jerry Porras



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# **Success Built To Last Summary**

Enduring Principles for Lifelong Achievement and Impact.

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## About the book

"Success Built to Last" by Jerry Porras delves into the secrets of enduring achievement, exploring how visionaries and organizations create legacies that withstand the test of time. Drawing on extensive research and interviews with iconic leaders and innovators, this groundbreaking work challenges conventional notions of success by emphasizing purpose, values, and the relentless pursuit of a meaningful mission. Porras invites readers to rethink their own definitions of success, urging them to cultivate resilience and foresight in pursuit of lasting impact rather than fleeting accolades. Discover how to transcend the superficial markers of success and build a life and career anchored in principles that foster not just momentary triumphs, but a flourishing legacy that inspires generations to come.

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## About the author

Jerry Porras is a distinguished professor emeritus of organizational behavior at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, renowned for his extensive research and teaching on leadership, innovation, and the dynamics of effective organizations. He co-authored the bestselling book "Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies," which has become a mainstay in the fields of business and management. Porras's insightful work draws from years of academic rigor and practical experience, making him a respected thought leader in creating lasting success within organizations. His expertise not only shapes corporate strategy but also emphasizes the importance of values and purpose in forging sustainable achievements.

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## Chapter 1 Summary: 1

In the opening chapter of "Success Built to Last," the narrative begins amidst the unexpected encounter with Nelson Mandela at the World Economic Forum. Here, Mandela, despite his turbulent past and years of imprisonment, radiates a spirit of resilience and commitment to peaceful transformation, embodying the essence of enduring success. His journey from an activist lawyer to a Nobel Laureate serves as a compelling backdrop that ignites the authors' curiosity about what drives individuals to achieve lasting impact amidst adversity.

Central to this exploration is the idea of what constitutes enduring success. The authors, inspired by Mandela's transformative journey, invite readers to consider personal definitions of success—one that transcends fleeting victories and is rooted in deep, meaningful contributions. They emphasize that success is not merely about achieving societal benchmarks but involves an intrinsic motivation to pursue what truly matters to an individual.

The authors conducted interviews with over 200 individuals from various fields and backgrounds—assembling a diverse tapestry of perspectives on what makes success enduring. This demographic included everyone from business leaders and Nobel laureates to educators and creative luminaries. Through these conversations, they observed a fundamental principle: enduring success derives not solely from the adoption of optimal strategies

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or models, but from understanding and pursuing personal significance.

As they label these extraordinary individuals, referring to them as “Enduringly Successful People” or “Builders,” the authors highlight the core characteristic that differentiates these Builders from traditional role models. Builders are those who envision a legacy beyond their immediate accomplishments; they engage in creating structures (both metaphorical and literal) that outlast their own existence and foster growth and change in society. These Builders often emerge from humble beginnings and face significant challenges but are ultimately driven by a relentless passion for improvement.

Moreover, the interviews revealed an intriguing contradiction: every individual featured has encountered failure, sometimes facing personal or professional setbacks that could have derailed their journeys. However, what sets them apart is not solely their successes but their remarkable ability to learn from failures, embody resilience, and respond proactively to challenges. They harvest lessons from adversities, using them as fuel for continued growth instead of allowing setbacks to define their path.

The authors also critique the contemporary fixation on fleeting celebrity and instant success, advocating for appreciation of sustained performance and impact over time. They argue that true success lies in the long-term capacity to make a difference, cultivate personal fulfillment, and create a legacy that

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contributes positively to society.

Through their collective experiences and insights gained from interviews and thorough analysis, the authors frame a three-part theoretical framework for understanding the attributes shared by these Builders. They suggest that cultivating a meaningful life involves an integration of personal values and passions, leading to a lasting model of success. The overarching message is one of empowerment—encouraging every reader to recognize their potential to enact profound change in their lives and the lives of others.

Ultimately, the authors aim to foster a new kind of dialogue about success—one that encourages exploration and self-definition rather than adherence to a prescriptive model. They invite readers to find inspiration in the stories of Builders, providing a roadmap towards embracing one's highest aspirations in the pursuit of a life enriched not just by achievements, but by contributions that matter.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Enduring success is defined by personal significance rather than societal benchmarks.

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine standing at the crossroads of your life, where the fleeting allure of quick victories beckons you, but you decide to forge your own unique path instead. Embracing the essence of enduring success means prioritizing what truly resonates with your core values and aspirations. Just like Mandela, who transformed his trials into a legacy of peace and resilience, you too can redefine your journey by focusing not on accolades but on the meaningful impact you wish to make. Allow this insight to fill you with the courage to move beyond conventional markers of success, and instead, cultivate a life that is richly fulfilling, driven by passion, and leaves a positive mark on the world around you.

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## Chapter 2 Summary: 2

Chapter 2 of "Success Built to Last" delves into the profound notion of redefining success, arguing that true fulfillment transcends conventional metrics like wealth, fame, and power. The chapter opens with the struggles of Ed Penhoet, an entrepreneur who faces overwhelming pressures of maintaining his startup amidst financial struggles. His journey illustrates that the drive to succeed isn't born from a desire for traditional accolades, but rather from a deeply held purpose that gives life meaning.

1. **Redefining Success:** The chapter emphasizes the need to redefine success, noting that many Builders—those who create a lasting impact—do not measure their achievements by societal standards. Traditional definitions of success revolve around fame, wealth, and recognition, failing to include themes of meaning, fulfillment, and lasting relationships. Builders pursue personal significance, often dedicating themselves unwaveringly to their missions, which leads to genuine, sustainable success.

2. **The Pursuit of Meaning:** True success is described as having a life where work is meaningful and relationships are impactful. Builders are driven by personal causes that resonate deeply with their values, as exemplified by Penhoet's commitment to cancer research. They experience a sense of dedication that leads them to persist through hardships, fueled by their personal definitions of what success should be.

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3. **The Symptoms of Misaligned Aspirations:** The chapter warns against the disillusionment that comes from chasing externally imposed definitions of success. Many people achieve societal accolades but find themselves unsatisfied and devoid of purpose. This disconnect can lead to dissatisfaction, depression, and a further void, as they realize that achieved goals did not fulfill their inner needs or desires.

4. **Three Essential Elements of Lasting Success:** The authors identify three critical elements that create a foundation for success built to last: Meaning, ThoughtStyle, and ActionStyle. These elements must align in an individual's life to achieve deep fulfillment.

- **Meaning** entails personal passion and connection to work that resonates on a profound level.
- **ThoughtStyle** is characterized by a unique perspective that encompasses accountability, audacity, and responsible optimism, which supports the individual in navigating challenges.
- **ActionStyle** revolves around the effective execution of ideas, acknowledging that ideals may not perfectly translate to reality but must be pursued nonetheless.

5. **The Importance of Alignment:** For enduring success, these three elements need to work together harmoniously. The intersection of Meaning, ThoughtStyle, and ActionStyle can create a powerful target for achievement,

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leading to sustained success over time. The narrative encourages constant reflection on what matters most and urges readers to take proactive steps to align their actions with their internal definitions of success.

**6. Lessons from Builders:** The chapter recounts inspiring examples of individuals who have successfully integrated these elements into their careers, such as Jane Bryant Quinn and Hector de J. Ruiz. Their stories illustrate how their personal definitions of meaning guided them through obstacles, enabling them to achieve what they deem success while making impactful contributions to their fields.

**7. Calling for Self-Reflection:** The authors conclude with a challenge to the reader to examine their own definitions of success. They stress the importance of aligning personal values with professional pursuits to avoid falling into the trap of empty achievements. This self-exploration is critical for constructive and lasting fulfillment.

In summary, Chapter 2 of "Success Built to Last" offers a transformative perspective on success, urging individuals to focus on meaningful pursuits rather than conventional accolades, thereby fostering a richer, more enduring form of success. The interrelated elements of Meaning, ThoughtStyle, and ActionStyle provide a framework for individuals to build lives that not only succeed in the conventional sense but resonate deeply with their personal values and aspirations.

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## Chapter 3: 3

In "Success Built To Last," Chapter 3 emphasizes the vital connection between passion and lasting success with key insights that any aspiring builder or leader should consider:

- 1. The Importance of Love in Work** Engaging in work that you love is not just a luxury but a necessity. The bitter truth is that if you don't pursue what you love, others will who do, which puts you at a competitive disadvantage. Love fuels perseverance and determination; without it, you risk being outperformed and overlooked.
- 2. Personal Capital:** Job security is nearly obsolete in today's global economy. Your most valuable assets are your skills, talents, relationships, and enthusiasm—termed "personal capital." This capital must be supported by love and passion to withstand challenges and ensure continued success.
- 3. Balancing Life and Work** Building a successful career shouldn't come at the expense of personal satisfaction. Many successful individuals attest to

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## Chapter 4 Summary: 4

Chapter 4 from "Success Built to Last" explores the concept of having a portfolio of passions rather than striving for a nebulous notion of life balance. The narrative intricately weaves together the lives of notable individuals, primarily focusing on Maya Angelou, Richard Branson, Muhammad Yunus, and others, to illustrate how their diverse passions contributed significantly to their enduring success.

- 1. The Power of Passion:** Finding success lies in recognizing the intersection of personal fulfillment and societal needs. As noted by Maya Angelou, one must perceive life from multiple perspectives to overcome obstacles and remain resilient. Engaging in passions broadens one's creative outlook and leads to personal wisdom.
- 2. Reward in the Process:** Angelou emphasizes the importance of valuing the act of creation itself over external validation. For her, true success is not defined by public opinion or accolades but by the joy and satisfaction derived from one's work. Many successful individuals focus on what matters to them personally, resisting the pull of outside distractions.
- 3. Rejecting the Myth of Balance:** The chapter argues against the conventional wisdom that life must be balanced across predefined categories like work, family, and leisure. According to Keith Ferrazzi, the

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idea of balance is misleading; instead, individuals should strive for a rich and meaningful portfolio of passions. Each individual's experience of 'balance' can be unique and evolves over time.

**4. Embracing a Wealth of Interests:** The text highlights that many successful figures have explored multiple interests that may seem disparate. For instance, Richard Branson uses his varied interests in entrepreneurship, adventure, and social justice to drive his business ventures. The notion that one should pursue a single passion is overly simplistic; instead, diversifying interests often leads to more profound satisfaction and success.

**5. Impacting Others with Passion:** Having a portfolio of passions is not only beneficial for personal fulfillment but can also create opportunities to uplift others. Bill Strickland's work with at-risk youth through art illustrates how cultivating passions can change lives. He emphasizes that nurturing creativity is essential for mental and emotional health.

**6. Peripheral Vision for Innovation:** The notion of peripheral thinking—taking a step back and allowing one's mind to wander—can lead to valuable insights and creative breakthroughs. People often find innovative solutions while engaging in unrelated hobbies or activities, suggesting that creativity flourishes in diverse environments.

**7. The Role of Experimentation:** The chapter encourages embracing

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experimentation as a vital part of nurturing passions. Successful individuals like Bill Nye have highlighted how exploring multiple interests enabled them to discover their unique paths and eventual success.

**8. Corporate Encouragement of Passion Projects:** The example of Google's policy encouraging employees to spend time pursuing personal projects emphasizes that organizations can also play a role in promoting diverse interests. When companies allow employees the freedom to explore their passions, they often foster innovation and growth.

**9. Transforming Adversity into Opportunity:** Muhammad Yunus's story of launching micro-lending exemplifies how personal experiences with poverty led to innovative solutions that transformed communities. His success rooted in social entrepreneurship demonstrates how turning challenges into passions can yield significant societal change.

**10. Integrity and Meaning:** Ultimately, the chapter asserts that the common thread among successful individuals is their commitment to integrity in pursuing what truly matters to them. Unlike transient success based solely on external recognition, enduring success aligns deeply with personal values and a desire to impact others positively.

In conclusion, Chapter 4 of "Success Built to Last" argues that understanding and cultivating a portfolio of passions not only contributes to

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personal fulfillment but also creates ripples of impact that extend into the wider world. Maintaining integrity to one's passions and finding joy in the journey, rather than merely the destination, emerges as a key tenet of lasting success.

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## Chapter 5 Summary: 5

In "Success Built to Last," Chapter 5 titled "The Silent Scream—Why It's So Damn Hard to Do What Matters," Jerry Porras explores the often intimidating journey toward achieving personal success amidst competing voices that discourage pursuing one's passions. He argues that many individuals face both internal and external challenges that make the pursuit of their dreams arduous. The following key points summarize the chapter's core themes and insights on overcoming these hurdles:

**1. Internal Struggle and External Pressures:** Individuals often grapple with self-doubt and insecurity while encountering dissuasion from those around them. Prominent figures in various fields acknowledge that despite achieving success, they have also dealt with significant internal turmoil, exemplifying that the journey is rife with emotional and psychological challenges.

**2. Listening to the Whisper:** Each person has an innate voice—often referred to as "the whisper" or "silent scream"—that communicates their deepest desires and passions. However, this voice can be drowned out by external expectations and fears. Builders, those who succeed by following their dreams, emphasize the importance of listening to this internal call, as it leads to personal fulfillment.



3. **Challenges to Pursuing Dreams:** The chapter identifies four main traps that hinder individuals from pursuing their passions:

- **Trap #1: Worthiness Perception** Society often questions the validity of careers rooted in passion, pushing individuals to choose security over fulfillment.

- **Trap #2: Material Distractions** The pursuit of “Bright Shiny Objects” often distracts from what truly matters, leading individuals to conform to societal pressures rather than nurture authentic desires.

- **Trap #3: The Seduction of Competence** Many settle into careers simply because they are competent, ignoring what truly excites them. This seduction can lead to mediocre accomplishments instead of exceptional achievements.

- **Trap #4: Tyranny of the OR** Individuals feel pressured to choose between serving themselves or serving others. Successful people, however, manage to combine personal passion with service to broader causes, creating a "Genius of the AND."

4. **Value of Persistence and Vulnerability** The text highlights that builders often face rejection and need an unwavering commitment to their cause. Personal stories, like those of Norma Hotaling and Roberta Jamieson, demonstrate that embracing one’s history and vulnerabilities can become a source of strength and motivation in creating change.

5. **Deep Knowledge as Empowerment:** The chapter emphasizes the need



for depth in understanding one's passions. Lifelong learning and expertise foster opportunities and sustain commitment despite challenges. This deeper knowledge is not only a personal goal but also serves a larger purpose within communities.

**6. The Role of Cause in Creating Charisma:** Personal passion for a cause can elevate a person's presence and confidence. As exemplified by various leaders, genuine commitment to their cause transforms ordinary individuals into inspiring figures, effectively drawing support and facilitating change.

**7. Self-Esteem Through Action:** Porras challenges the notion of waiting for self-confidence before embarking on a journey. Instead, he advocates that self-esteem is built through experience and ongoing dedication to one's ambitions. The journey involves trial, error, and the continuous striving for excellence.

**8. Purpose Beyond Popularity:** Lasting success is often disconnected from societal validation. Notable figures demonstrate that genuine fulfillment arises from service and dedication to meaningful work, rather than the pursuit of popularity or fame.

Overall, this chapter serves as a motivational guide that urges readers to acknowledge their passions and push through obstacles, affirming that while

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the path to success may be challenging, it is ultimately rewarding for those willing to listen to their inner voice and persevere despite external discouragement.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Listening to the Whisper

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine standing on the precipice of your dreams, surrounded by the cacophony of doubt and fear—both within yourself and from the world around you. In this moment, you can choose to tune out those dissonant voices and instead, focus on the quiet whisper inside that beckons you to pursue what truly ignites your spirit. Embracing this innate voice is not just about chasing fleeting passions; it's about forging a path to genuine fulfillment. As you dare to listen, you recognize that the journey towards your dream, though fraught with challenges, is ultimately a courageous act of self-discovery. This chapter lights a fire within you, urging you to defy external expectations and embrace the vulnerability of following your heart. By doing so, you not only carve out a unique path for yourself but also inspire others to break free from their own chains of conformity, transforming fear into empowerment and making meaningful contributions to the world.

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## Chapter 6: 6

In this chapter, "The Tripping Point—Always Make New Mistakes," the authors, Jerry Porras, delve into the necessity and inevitability of making mistakes as part of the journey to lasting success. They underscore the importance of embracing failure as an integral part of growth. Successful individuals, referred to as Builders in this context, are distinguished not by their avoidance of mistakes, but by their adeptness at learning from them.

**1. Experience as a Teacher:** Experience is often an unforgiving educator, presenting challenges before offering lessons. The authors illustrate this concept using the story of a seeker who, despite facing multiple failures along his path, learns that true success lies just beyond the point of those 'splat' moments—times of failure or embarrassment.

**2. Humor and Acceptance:** While Builders may seem resilient, they, too, grapple with failures and difficulties. Embracing one's flaws and maintaining a sense of humor can ease the process of navigating setbacks. Understanding that hurt is a natural part of this journey allows individuals to

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## Chapter 7 Summary: 7

In Chapter 7 of "Success Built to Last," titled "Earning Your Luck—Preparing for Serendipity by Using Big Hairy Audacious Goals," the author Jerry Porras emphasizes that the journey towards enduring success is often characterized by serendipity, but it is not merely a matter of luck. Instead, it is a process of preparation, significant effort, and the pursuit of meaningful goals. He draws upon the fable of the princes of Serendip, who, despite facing adversity, exemplified how those who remain alert and engaged can turn fortunes to their advantage through their preparedness and skill.

1. Builders Earn Their Luck: The chapter underscores that high achievers, referred to as "Builders," find success through a combination of passion, meaningful work, and meticulous preparation. They do not rely on mere chance; instead, they cultivate their ability to recognize opportunities by gaining deep knowledge in their fields. Builders often describe their journeys as filled with unexpected challenges, where a prepared mind and an open heart enable them to capitalize on sudden turns of fortune.

2. Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAGs): Porras discusses the concept of BHAGs introduced by Collins and Porras, describing them as bold, visionary goals that align closely with core values. These goals serve as unifying focal points that motivate teams and mobilize collective effort. A

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BHAG has the power to engage and inspire individuals by providing a clear finish line, thus driving ambition and innovation. Rather than working against one's authenticity, BHAGs provide a meaningful framework through which passion and purpose can manifest.

3. **The Myth of Authenticity:** The author warns against misinterpreting the call for authenticity in leadership. While it is vital for leaders to demonstrate genuine connection to their goals, excessive honesty about personal vulnerabilities can detract from the mission. While expressing authenticity is valuable, Porras suggests that leaders should focus on articulating their commitment to their goals rather than exposing every personal struggle.

4. **The Explorer Mentality:** Builders embody an explorer mentality, which involves a willingness to adapt and pivot as circumstances unfold. Porras exemplifies this through stories of various visionary figures who did not allow rigid plans to stifle their creativity. Instead, they learned to navigate uncertainty, embracing the journey even when the outcome diverged from initial expectations.

5. **Embracing Ambiguity:** The chapter highlights that most people resist ambiguity, craving certainty; however, Builders thrive in uncertain environments. They take calculated risks characterized by small, iterative steps that allow for adjustments and learning along the way. This capability to embrace the unknown is rooted in a blend of audacity and accountability.

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6. **Measuring What Matters:** Porras emphasizes the importance of measurement in the pursuit of goals. Feedback helps Builders to adapt and improve. However, he cautions that it is vital to ensure that goals are genuinely meaningful and aligned with personal passions to avoid setting oneself on a fruitless path. Measurement is crucial, but so is reflection on whether one is heading in the right direction.

7. **The Secret Life of Goals:** Goals can sometimes take on a life of their own, determining success based on external expectations rather than personal values. The chapter narrates examples, such as Jack Welch's experience with GE, illustrating how leaders can become trapped by their own lofty aspirations. The need for periodic reality checks ensures that goals remain relevant and aligned with what truly matters.

8. **The Importance of Integrity in Goals:** Builders use their intrinsic values and meanings to guide their goals, enabling them to navigate life's unpredictability. When their BHAGs embody core principles, they are more equipped to leverage opportunity as it arises. The take-home message reflected through the story of successful Builders is that the path to obtaining good fortune lies not in chance but in preparation, commitment, and a readiness to seize fleeting opportunities.

Overall, Porras encapsulates the theme that while luck can play a role in

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success, it is the groundwork laid through hard work, meaningful goals, and adaptability that truly determines the outcomes of resilient, enduring achievers.

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## Chapter 8 Summary: 8

In the journey toward enduring success, engaging in what is termed "naked conversations," or constructive contention, stands out as an essential practice among successful leaders. From the reflections of notable figures such as Warren Staley, the chairman and CEO of Cargill, and Mike McGavick, former CEO of Safeco, the importance of fostering an environment that embraces open discussion and differing viewpoints is emphasized.

**1. Embrace Contention as a Constructive Tool** Successful people often seek out disagreements not as personal conflicts but as opportunities for growth. Contesting ideas in a controlled environment, where feedback is constructive, leads to well-rounded solutions and the emergence of innovative ideas. The essence is to prioritize issues over individuals, aiming to ignite passion and creativity without allowing personal animosities to take focus.

**2. Encourage Open Dialog:** Leaders like Mike McGavick stressed the significance of allowing all voices within an organization to be heard. Silencing dissent can lead to a culture where compliance overshadows creativity. Open discussions not only prevent the festering of issues but also harness collective intellect, tapping into the wealth of ideas that employees bring to the table, thus avoiding a corporate culture of "kissing up and

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kicking down.”

**3. Create a Safe Environment for Contention:** Builders facilitate a safe space for airing differences. As highlighted by Gloria Fox from the National Black Caucus, providing productive outlets for contention is vital. When people feel empowered to express their views on relevant issues, it leads to greater engagement and reduces toxicity. Meetings dedicated to honest communications can shift the focus from personality conflicts to impactful problem-solving.

**4. Establish Ground Rules for Healthy Debate:** Setting clear guidelines for discussions helps maintain focus on constructive outcomes. For instance, Cargill’s mantra “Discuss, Decide, Support” demonstrates a commitment to collective agreement and accountability, ensuring that once decisions are made, the team moves forward united to realize those outcomes.

**5. Align Meaning and Action:** It is crucial for successful individuals to align their actions with their values. As illuminated by Senator John McCain's experiences, integrity lies in adhering to what one knows is right and admitting when one does not have the answers. This alignment reflects authenticity and builds trust within teams, fostering a deeper connection to the collective mission.

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**6. The Power of Meaningful Relationships:** High achievers focus on building relationships that last. They see potential collaboration in everyone they meet, nurturing connections that resonate with shared goals. This belief enables them to engage with a wide network of people long after their professional paths may diverge.

**7. Be Open to Learning and Adapting:** Facilitating a culture where questioning and learning are encouraged allows teams to navigate challenges efficiently. Creative contention surfaces valuable perspectives, fostering a spirit of collaboration rather than competition. Listening to diverse viewpoints enhances collective progress.

**8. Transform Discontent into Development** Engaging with discontent and transforming it into actionable insights can drive innovation. When conflict is viewed not as a barrier but as a pathway to greater understanding, it unlocks potential solutions that propel organizations forward.

**9. Create an Ecosystem for Success:** Success is not just about individual effort but the alignment of various components in an organization, including culture, systems, and individual behavior. When all elements support the overarching goals, teams flourish.

**10. Prioritize Meaningful Endeavors:** Ultimately, enduring success is built upon engagement with meaningful pursuits. Builders who consistently

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align their intentions, thoughts, and actions with what matters most cultivate an environment that not only encourages personal growth but also contributes positively to society.

In conclusion, the principles of engaging in naked conversations, championing constructive contention, and fostering supportive relationships form the bedrock of sustaining long-term success. These approaches enable leaders to navigate the complexities of leadership while inspiring their teams to innovate and excel.

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## Chapter 9: 9

In "Success Built To Last," the authors, including Jerry Porras, embark on a journey of exploration to understand the principles behind enduring success. The research comprises two major studies that reveal insights into successful individuals across various occupations and areas of life, showcasing their behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs.

1. The foundation of this research is rooted in both qualitative and quantitative methods. The first study involved ten years of interviews with diverse, successful people, often referred to as "Builders." These individuals came from various sectors—corporate, nonprofit, artistic—providing a rich tapestry of insights. These discussions illuminated how they define success, how they navigate challenges, and the behaviors that propel them toward enduring achievement. The interviews were exploratory and unscripted, allowing for genuine dialogue and in-depth understanding.

2. The secondary study, the World Success Survey, validated the findings from the interviews. In 2006, a global survey was administered via an online

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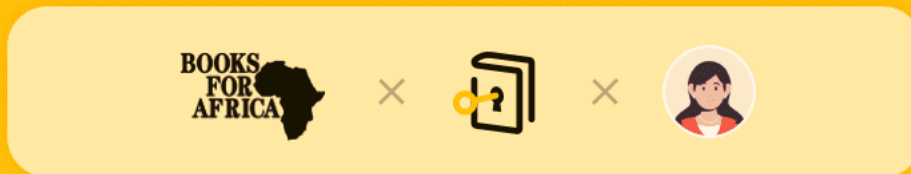
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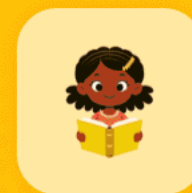
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