

THE INNIS REPORT

HOW PEOPLE SUCCEED

By Karyl Innis

A PERSONAL STORY

In the early 1970's, I was penniless. . . a student working on my Master's Degree. I had won a research assistantship. Since I was poor, I jumped at this chance to work and be the "gopher" graduate assistant for a professor about seven years into his tenure. He was a young, raw-boned, farm-boy intellectual. Every day he wore a plaid work shirt and steel-toed work boots; he used Vitalis in his hair and had huge muscles. He also had a grant to study the job satisfactions of working women.

It took me just a short while to figure out why *his* studying working women irritated me. He assumed the job satisfactions of working women would be different than those of working men. He assumed those things that satisfied women at work would be social or peer-recognition-oriented, not achievement-oriented. I knew even then this couldn't be right.

HOW IT HAPPENS

Why do some people succeed and others fail? How does it happen . . . the measure of achievement that soars, that is remarkable because it exceeds others' achievements? The real answer is that no one knows for sure why some people excel. The answer becomes even more vague if the question is restricted to women. Every reason, from enlarged brain parts to heightened testosterone, to superior intellect has been put forth as a reason why successful women succeed.

Our company, The Innis Company, was born to aid corporations and individuals manage their career issues. I've been studying this issue for over 20 years now. I've worked with thousands of working and executive-level men and women, and I'm still fascinated by the issues of work satisfaction and success. I would like to share my observations with you on "why people succeed."

WHY PEOPLE SUCCEED

First of all, Woody Allen is right. He has not been right about much lately, but he's right on this: "90% is just showing up." Then showing up again and then again and again. **Persistence** is an under touted, overlooked trait. Imagine if Thomas Alva Edison hadn't tried that 1001st mono-filament of cotton thread. We might not all be sitting in the dark, but *he* wouldn't have invented the light bulb.

Persistence isn't all it takes. The mate to Persistence is **Resiliency**. It takes a special make-up to still be positive after 100 "no's," to keep on coming after a year of setbacks. Persistence without Resiliency is like a rubber band without its snap. The rubber band keeps stretching, but eventually it breaks. Resiliency, the ability to keep coming back ... to snap back to center, is an alloy; when added to persistence makes an average person into a remarkable one!

The next ingredient that belongs in the Karyl Innis Chemical Soup of Success is an ingredient I call **Impact**. When women fail they've usually tripped on one of the "Impact land mines" littering the work fields of America.

I was called this Spring by a client company. They had two Fortune 50 company executive coaching assignments they wanted me to study. Both women were highly valuable to the company. The company wanted to keep them. One they described as bright, smart, a good worker and invisible. She had no Impact on the organization. The second individual was described as bright, smart and powerful. She did make an Impact; she made a difference in the organization, but she left bodies in her wake.

Being *willing* to make a difference and making a difference *in a way that works* is the measure of one's Impact. Persistence, Resiliency and Impact are not enough. Like soup without crackers, Persistence, Resiliency and Impact are unfinished without the final ingredient. That final ingredient -- a **Sponsor**. Everyone needs one. Virtually all successful people require a Sponsor: a friend -- a business friend -- who suggests your name at a critical meeting; invites you into conversations; shows you the way, actively supports you; boosts you up when it's necessary. Every



Karyl Innis
Chairman & CEO
The Innis Company

As owner and Chief Executive Officer of The Innis Company, Karyl has become known as the Executive's Secret Weapon for career success. She knows how people succeed and when they fail how to help them.

Her firm, The Innis Company is known nationally for its expertise in career trends and issue. As part of the world's largest career consulting partnership, OI Partners, they provide their clients with 208 offices worldwide.

successful person has at least one. Most have several. After working with thousands and thousands of people, I recognize these are the traits that make a difference. The Factors creating successful women and men are Persistence, Resiliency, Impact and a Sponsor.

Chief among these, I believe, is Persistence.

In our headquarters at the Galleria, we have individual offices for the daily use of our outplacement clients -- clients looking for a new job. In each office is a mahogany frame, boxing golden and black calligraphy letters with these words:

*Nothing in this
world can take the place of
persistence. Talent will not; nothing
is more common than unsuccessful men
with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded
genius is almost a proverb. Education will not;
the world is full of educated derelicts.
Persistence and determination alone are
omnipotent. The slogan 'Press On' has
solved and always will solve the
problems of the human race.*

--

- Calvin Coolidge