

FROM THE VAULT: How To Get A Return On Failure

“Learn your lessons in the valley and make your decisions on the mountain.” —John Maxwell

Failure is inevitable. A critical component of effective leadership is knowing how to leverage success from those failures.

The biggest disservice a leader can do to their team is NOT talk about their failures. When you're open about your mistakes with your team, it will foster a culture of learning and resilience.

Improve Your Relationship with Failure

1. Write down three past failures. _____

a) What did you learn from them?

b) Do you see any patterns in how failures have helped you grow?

2. Write down three past successes. _____

a) Are there any hidden weaknesses that could inhibit future success?

b) What made these successes possible?

3. After every project or initiative that has elements of failing, ask, *How can I adjust and move forward?*

"Cycle of Success" Plan

Progress always requires a process. Everything worthwhile is uphill; and when we move uphill, there are more challenges and, therefore, more potential for failure.

The best way to be successful is to anticipate failure and work through it.

- 1. Testing:** Try something you've never tried before.
- 2. Failing:** You won't get it right on the first try.
- 3. Learning:** The fruit of failure is learning, and the fruit of learning is improvement.
- 4. Re-Entering:** Progress is an upward cycle; after you improve, you repeat the cycle at a different level.

Identify one area in your leadership to apply the test-fail-learn-improve-reenter process and record your progress.

Area or idea to test:

Testing Goal: What am I trying to accomplish with this idea?

Failing Findings: What did my failure show me?

Learning Adjustments: Based on what I learned, what do I need to change?

Level of Re-Entering: At what stage am I starting now?
