

THE INVISIBLE ELEPHANT IN ACADEMICS: (THE SECRET BEHIND ACADEMIC SUCCESS)

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Abstract: Whichever way you want to view it, academic success will always be a positive transformation that students experience. Students tend to look at academic success in different perspective. There are those who define it as being able to earn marks, while others are of the opinion that it entails getting a successful career or being able to gain university admission. Academic success goes hand in hand with academic failure and both will always stand as an option for students to choose from. Failure brings shame to those who are ashamed to fail while success leads to everlasting joy. Academic success is far beyond earning school grade point or gaining university admission, it's more of actualizing a positive outcome towards ones' dream. Academic success is not a magic, it's about knowing which game to play and how to play it well. This article reveals the secret behind academic success.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article divulges academic tips and guide which relates to academic breakthrough and life everlasting success. The power of dream, key to academic excellence will be disclosed in this article. This write-up will also grant us the opportunity to know the best career part that fits with our personality type. After reading this article, students will understand the spirit behind exam and how to excel on it. Franklin B. once said that "for the best return on your money, pour your purse into your head" (Franklin, 2008). To be successful academically, you need to know the tips, which are made known in this review.

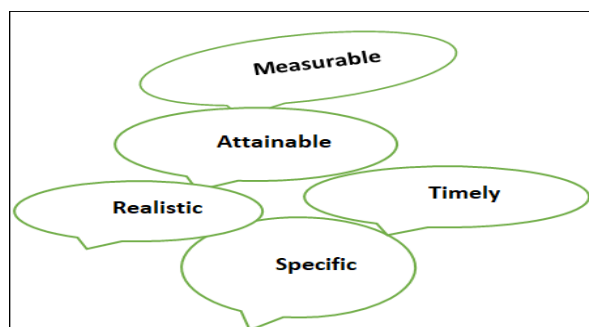
2. POWER OF DREAM

A dream is like a goal, aim, imagination, a vision or an illusion that someone envisioned.

In life, achievement starts with a dream, not just a dream but a dream with a desire, believe and determination. Determination, however, makes it much easier in turning a dream into reality. Dream is the key that will first unlock your mind to see the picture of life. The first step towards actualizing any success in life is to have dream and set a goal.

Setting a life goal is very crucial for a student that yearns for academics success. When you lack the ability to vision, your existence becomes miserable, the road becomes so rough and life gets harder and tougher. "If you don't build your dream, someone will hire you to help build theirs" (Jr., 2016). Dreams should go with action because visions become pointless without a deed.

❖ When setting a dream, ensure it is;



3. TIPS FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

1. Self – Confidence

This is about a person relying on his ability or judgment. No matter what you do, believe in yourself; believe you can do it without depending on anyone, be courageous enough to accept your thought in order to avoid disappointment.

✓ **Benefits of Self-reliance**

- Boost of academic performance
- Enable one to hold the steering of his destiny
- Less disappointment from people

2. Creative

Today's world has become a survival of the fittest. And for one to compete, he needs to be fit. He needs to be creative enough to run and win the race. Don't be afraid to try something new. Always endeavor to be creative and invent something unique. Lack of creativity will limit your chance of academic success.

Albert Einstein once said that “insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different result”. Trying something original leads to creativity and creativity brings uniqueness that leads to success.

3. Study Plan

Research has shown that “study plan is an effective way to help a student navigate through their education in an organized way”(Phan, 2018). However, it is very crucial for students to create study time table. Find days when you have fewer personal commitments to squeeze your study time.

Note: it is not how long you spend studying that matters but how dedicated and active you are while studying. Creating a personal study guide is the first step towards achieving academic excellence. To have an edge over your classmates, it is advisable to adopt a personal study plan because it will always propel you to advance your research skills. Home study guide has been proven to be the most critical factor that enhances students' academic performance.

4. Procrastination

Procrastination is a killer of dream. It is the act of keeping away from doing something which needs to be done at a specific period of time. Procrastination can cause lack of proper exam preparation which will automatically result to a poor academic performance (failure). The practice of procrastination is a disease and if not properly addressed, it might lead to academic failure. Getting things done on time is the best thing to do to avoid deferral.

5. Tutorial Class

A tutorial is a small class conducted by a tutor and it normally last between one to two hours. Extra moral lesson is very essential as far as student success is concerned.

✓ **Benefits of tutorials**

- It helps to master a subject
- It helps for better understanding
- It assist in staying up to date with current affairs
- It helps to gain extra knowledge
- It's also a framework in building personal relationship with others

6. Teaching

Teaching is the ability to impart knowledge on others. As a student, teaching is very momentous because it helps one to boost his teaching skills. It might sound awkward but it is obvious that teaching enhance ones knowledge.

Study shows that self-confidence can be improved through teaching and the student teachers tend to score high in a test compared to non-student teachers. A student who enjoys teaching seems to understand the subject, recall it more accurately and apply it more effectively than those that do not. You don't need be perfect in a particular subject before you teach others; the brain behind teaching is that you learn from it.

7. Friendship

Friendships are mutual bond between individuals. It's more like having a second family.

There will be no success story without mentioning a friend. S.E. Hinton once said that "If you have two friends in your lifetime, you're lucky but if you have one good friend, you're more than lucky."

Good friends are stepping stones and they also determine how far a person will go in life. No doubt, keeping good friends will positively influence one's life.

✓ Benefits of friendships

- Information sharing
- Helps in difficult situation
- Increase ones happiness
- Platform for networking

8. Social Network

This is a forum for online communication where people spends time talking with one another. Research has shown that the number of people that uses social network increases at daily basis and majority of those were seen to be students. They spend lot of time chatting on social network (Doward, 2017). Internet chatting has become a phenomenon among youths. Don't get me wrong, social network has its pros and cons. All depends on how you operate them.

As a student, internet is the best for research. Write good academic papers and stay connected with family and friends. If you care about your academic performance, you should limit your time on internet for chatting, dating or gossiping.

✓ Pros

- Stay connected with family& friends
- Up to date with latest information

✓ Cons

- Time wasting
- Lack of privacy
- Decrease in moral value
- Exposure to pornography

9. Humility

Humility is all about simplicity and simplicity brings integrity. There is no harm in being simple. In fact, people with simple personality tend to appreciate things. It is also true that humility brings self- respect and trustworthiness. Society tends to trust and like those with a simple personality. As a student, you should respect and value anybody around you, treat everyone the same as you should treat yourself. Never disrespect anybody that comes your way irrespective of their family or religious background. There is a popular quote which made us believe that we should benice to people we meet on our way up because we I'll meet them on our way down(Ranger, 2012).There is no greatness where there is not simplicity, goodness, and truth. Ability to remain humble and kindness has a positive impact in a person's academic success.

10. Failure

As far as I am concerned, there is nothing like failure. 'Failure only exists when you fall and refuse to stand'. When you give chance to failure, it will consume you but when you repudiate failure, it will add flavor to your success story. Lack of courage or self-confidence is a license to failure. A person who is scared to fail will always be a victim of failure.

Failure has caused more harm to those who have low self-esteem.

Nowadays, there is large number of school dropouts due to failure. Students have ceased pursuing their dreams just because of failure. A lot of people have been mocked today just because they accepted a defeat.

Coco Chanel once said that "Success is most often achieved by those who don't know that failure is inevitable." You can't avoid failure if you yearn for success because failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor (**Capote, 2017**). If you haven't failed once, you won't have the taste of success.

Don't let a failure scare you away, don't let it be an excuse for school dropout. If you fail, stand up and keep trying.

✓ **Note: worrying about failure;**

- Can't change anything
- Will cause more harm than good
- Will kill your dream

11. Sleeping & Studying

'Sleep, wake and study.' sleeping for at least six hours per day is very necessary for the brain.

Eliminate the habit of dozing and studying. It doesn't work. It's not healthy and effective to study and doze simultaneously. The amount of time spends studying is not vital but rather, the activeness shown while studying. Don't force yourself to study when you have to sleep. Dedicate your time and mind to study when it is time for that and sleep when your body needs it. Doing both at the same time is wasting of valuable time. Remember, two birds can never be killed with one stone and it's not how far but how well.

✓ **Benefits Of Sleeping**

- Physical fitness
- Brain effectiveness
- Performance improvement

12. Organization

This is act of organizing something. It might sound awkward but it's critical to academic success. Organization helps one to stay focus and work in economized way. Again, being organized leads to flexibility and creativity.

Students should always endeavor to be systemized because that will lead to motivation which in turn will contribute to intellectual achievement.

13. Networking

Networking in this context is interacting with people to exchange information and develop personal contact.

In this modern society, labor market has been saturated and getting employment is now very competitive. However, educational qualifications are no longer a guarantee for employment opportunity.

In some countries, getting a job is no longer base on merit but whom you know (personal connection). It might be a friend that will recommend or grant you a job offer. Who knows?

✓ **Benefit of Networking**

- Personal contacts
- Learning from others

- Knowledge sharing
- Career development
- New opportunities
- Personal growth

The gain from networking is enormous but it's only the wise will understand it's significant.

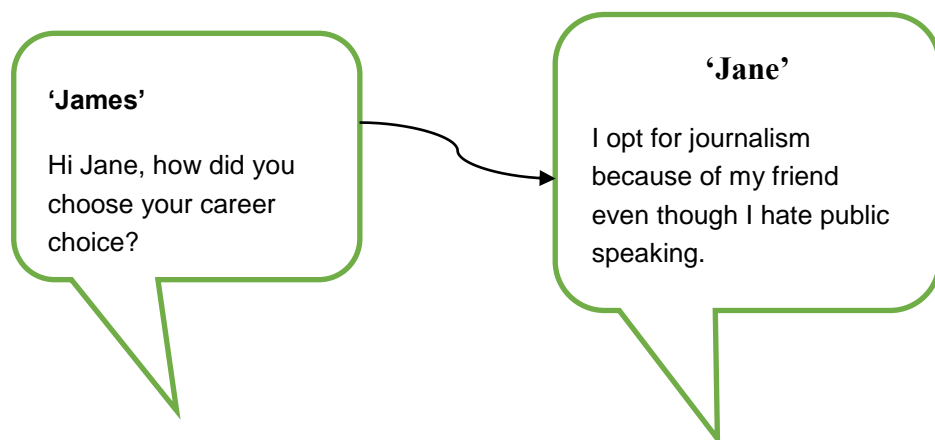
4. CHOSSING A CAREER

Career is an occupation or profession one undertakes for a life time period. However, it is very crucial for students to make wise decision when it comes to career. Think before making a decision. Don't just jump into a conclusion without looking at the two sides of the coin. Some choices are irreversible when it's made. Decisions can easily be made but its consequences are dangerous.

Forms of career

- Education
- Business
- Science
- Religion
- Arts e.tc.

How did you choose your career?



(Frances, 2018).

The decision of selecting a career is something that requires one's own thought. There shouldn't be any external influence. Relatives or friends shouldn't have much influence on your decision making when it comes to career choice. The ball is in your court, it is only you that knows your strengths and weakness. Go for a career that you know you have a passion at. When your parents decide a career, persuade them if you are not comfortable with it. Don't keep silent because it's life time decision that might take long to be reversed.

✓ Career Determinants

Your career decision must reflect the listed factors:

- Passion
- Skills
- Personality
- Reward

a) Passion

This is the most important factor to be considered when making a career decision. As far as happiness is concerned, love should be prioritized when selecting a profession. The bottom line is, if you don't love what you do, you may not put in what is required to become who you should be.

b) Skills

Skills are ability to do things accurately. It is a critical factor to be considered before selecting a profession. In this case, it has gone beyond having a passion but choosing what you are good at.



If you love something, you should have what it takes to get it. For instance, if you love nursing but you can't pet a cat, then nursing is not for you. If you love finance, then, you should know how to deal with numbers.

c) Personality

Personality is an individuals' character. Know your personality type, and make a career decision that is suitable for it. A decision should be made to suit your personality because character can influence your profession.

What are personality types?

- Extroverts [Type A personality]
- Introverts [Type B personality]

<i>Extroverts</i>	<i>Introverts</i>
Talkative	Quiet
Openness	Inwardness
Musician	Artist
Speak, then think	Think, then speak
More confidence	Low prestige

From the table above, it is not advisable for a type B personality to go for a journalism career because it is a profession that requires a lot of public speaking.

d) Rewards

Reward in this context is money. Money is important for everyone, no doubt. We all love money, we want to earn high salaries but this shouldn't be a priority when embarking on life time career decision. All is not about money but love.

5. EXAM TIPS

Students' failure sometimes is not lack of intelligent but inability to tackle exams. There is special power in exam. It either it hits you or you hit it. Intelligent is not a guarantee for exam success. Therefore, you don't have to be super intelligent in order to pass exam. The only license for exam success is by knowing the strategies and tactics. Below are the tips;

Tip # 1:

✓ **Advance Preparation:**

This is the first key to exam success. It is obvious that majority of students are victims of this. They don't get ready until they are told to do so. No doubt, advance composition is an avenue to build self-confidence which is needed to overcome exam fear.

Benefits

- Eliminate exams mistakes
- Achieve maximum outcome
- Minimize the level anxiousness
- Increases self-confidence

Tip# 2:

✓ **Follow the rules**

'If you don't obey, you can't be obeyed'. Very simple! Rules are the regulation that governs the conduct of examination, therefore, don't rush when it comes to reading exam rules. Read exam instructions carefully because that will help you to stay safe.

Benefits

- Prevent victimization
- Eliminate exam failure

6. SKILLS ENHANCEMENT HOBBIES

As a student, it is very crucial to engage in activities that will boost your skills and knowledge. Participating in an activity that will make you learn something new is an added advantage.

News Update

To be current with information, you should learn how to make listening or reading news your hobby. No doubt, engaging in news will;

- Improves your vocabulary
- Enhance your listening skills
- Familiarize with current events
- Boost your knowledge of the society
- Leads to academic success

Movies

Good movies are great platform to advance ones knowledge. It's like learning in a fun way. Don't get it wrong, not all movies can boost ones knowledge.

Movie is like a teacher, it can either influence you positively or otherwise. This is why you should be selective in making a choice of movie to watch. Research further revealed that watching Harry Potter films could make young children more creative (REPORTER, 2012).

It is equally important to know that comics' movies can enhance a person's health condition. For instance, when we laugh, it helps us to reduce stress.

For a non-native English speaker, seeing an English movie will boost one's English listening skills.

Exercise

No matter what you do, the fact remains that you can't do without exercise. Exercise is health and health is wealth. An absent of exercise limit our life span and present of exercise activate our brain to function effectively.

'When sitting in a classroom your daily routine, it's equally advisable to make exercise your daily activity'. No doubt, physical exercise is very significant for one's health, it helps the brain for effective functioning which leads to academic success.

❖ Important of exercise

- It makes one stronger and healthy
- Helps to reduce obesity and enhance body fitness
- Good for mental cognition which has a positive impact in one's academic success

7. CONCLUSION

Education is the key to success. The road to academic success is rough and to scale through life, you must set a goal; you must take action and avoid procrastination.

Don't be afraid to fail because failure is one of the hallmarks of success.

Dedicate more time to exercise and try to be careful on what you take as a hobby because it will have an influence on your academic performance.

Lastly, you should be careful when it comes to decision making because when it is wrongly made, it can cause a huge damage to ones' life. Don't allow friends to influence on your career decision.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I want to give thanks to almighty God for the gift of life. I wouldn't have been privileged enough to write this book if not because of God's grace. My thanks also go to my family (Okafor's family) who made this dream possible. Words will never be enough to emphasize my gratitude.

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