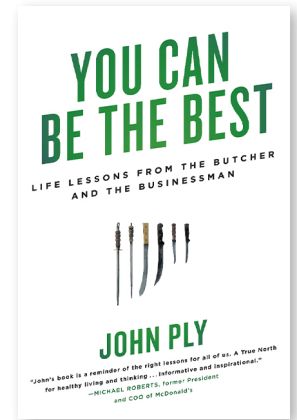


You Can Be the Best

Life Lessons From the Butcher and the Businessman

by **John Ply**



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THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

We all have different ideas of success. We even take different paths toward success. But those who are truly successful have one thing in common: they know how to be the best.

The book *You Can Be the Best: Life Lessons From the Butcher and the Businessman* lays out a fascinating exploration of what constitutes success, the journey that can be taken to reach it, and the measurements to confirm it.

Author John Ply opens his heart to share with us valuable personal stories about his and his father's life journeys. By laying out a clear roadmap toward becoming the best, the book helps us unlock our true potential and become the best version of ourselves.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to become the best.
- How to pursue your passion by using your tools.
- How to always find a way.
- How to be kind, grateful, generous, and never give up.

Introduction

“What is success?” This seems like a simple question to answer but people often get it wrong. Our idea of success has been distorted. Because of this, people waste time and energy chasing the wrong things. You need to know two things about success:

- Success is not about financial wealth
- Success is not absolute

Success is about total happiness. It is also about accomplishment and achieving your dreams and goals. Everybody has a different starting line toward success, which is why success looks different for everybody.

But how do you achieve success? The answer is simple: be the best. Don't try to measure yourself up compared to others. Instead, reach your full potential and be the best you.

Chapter 1: Become the Best

One of the first lessons I learned from my father was to be the best. For him, no matter the job, there was never a reason to do it less than your very best. If you are going to do something, you should do it 100 percent and shift all your focus to a single goal.

Sometimes, we may pick the wrong goals. The goal we set for ourselves is not the goal we actually need to succeed. We underestimate what we're capable of and limit our potential by setting our sights too low. But if you strive to become the best, you give yourself room to unlock and discover your true potential.

When it comes to achieving your goals, however, there are no guarantees. You may or may not reach your ultimate goal on that long and bumpy road. But that's not the point. The point is to see how far you can go. You don't want to go through life not trying, because one of the worst things you can do is lead a life of regret. Even though there are no guarantees, it's important to strive to become the best because your goal is your compass that will guide your decisions.

It doesn't matter where you start. We're all dealt different cards in life. You might wish you had been dealt a better hand, but life doesn't come with re-deals. But wherever you are in your journey, whatever cards you've been dealt, you can become the best. When you continually focus on becoming a better version of yourself, the exterior parts of

your life have a way of improving. Be the best “you,” and everything else tends to take care of itself.

Chapter 2: Pursue Your Passion

Success is defined internally. Only you can decide what it means for you. That's why it's so important to pursue your passion. Make your passion your career. Look within yourself, and you'll find the path you're meant to follow.

While it's important to pursue your passion as your career, it's equally important to not allow your career to take over your identity as a person. We don't have one singular passion in life. We have passions, plural. If you identify yourself based on your career, even if that career is a passion for you, you're limiting yourself. You're not giving yourself room to pursue all your passions and live your most successful life.

But sometimes, people lose their passion, and that's a sad thing to watch. If a person has lost their passion, it means, somewhere along the way, they've forgotten how to have fun. If you've lost your passion, take the pressure off yourself. Stop worrying about the external results and just have fun.

Passion and drive are closely connected. If you lost your passion, you'll lose your drive and if you're driven by wrong things, you'll end up killing your passion. To keep passion in your heart, you have to be driven by the right things. When you're struggling, all you have to do is listen to your heart and trust your gut. You know best the right path for you.

Chapter 3: Use All Your Tools

There are some who believe an artist is only as good as their tools, while others believe blaming the tools is merely an excuse. The truth, however, is somewhere in the middle. Talent and skill will take you far. But if you don't build a deep understanding of all the tools you use, you will never live up to your full potential for success.

In life, you start with commitment, get closer with strategy, overcome obstacles with recovery, and bring it home with consistency, ending with the completion of your goal: achievement. These are your tools for success. Three of the most important strategies in life include:

- Measure your results to figure out what's working and what isn't and adjust accordingly.
- Incentivize performance so you don't lose motivation and stay focused on working towards your goals.

- Assess and adjust because no matter what you achieve, there's always room for improvement. Ask yourself two questions, "Do I need to do anything differently?" and "What can I do to get even better?"

Use your life's tools again and again, keep sharpening them consistently, and success will come.

Chapter 4: Never Give Up, No Matter What

When you're faced with challenges and you're thinking about giving up, ask yourself, "What do I have to lose?" If you think about that question, the answer is usually nothing. And don't forget to ask that all-important second question: "What do I have to gain?" If you give up halfway, you'll never find out.

Anything new you take on is going to be challenging. If you let something push you down, and you stay down, then you're making a choice at that moment. But if you choose to get back up every single time you get pushed down, you're making the choice to believe in yourself and your ability to learn, grow, and improve.

Never giving up is about attitude. Keeping a great attitude and thinking positively is crucial for a winning mindset and success. If you can go through life with a positive and enthusiastic attitude – whatever it is you're doing or whoever you're with – it's infectious. Positive things tend to happen to people who think positively and all that leads to the ultimate definition of success. So stay positive and never give up, no matter what.

Chapter 5: Find A Way

No matter your goals, there's always going to be some kind of obstacle blocking your path. Success never comes easy, nor should it. The important thing is to always find a way.

In my nearly four decades of entrepreneurship, I've met countless people who say they dream of launching their own businesses. But they never do it. Why? They're afraid to give up their comfortable jobs and steady paychecks, and who can blame them? They're stuck because the security is too risky to give up. They're fearful of the unknown and afraid of what they could possibly lose.

If you really want to start a business of your own, be prepared to sacrifice. Finding a way also means you don't wait

for opportunities to come to you. You take action to create your own success. Doing this can be uncomfortable, but that's simply what it takes.

Opportunities hit us smack in the face every day but of the 1 percent who see an opportunity, 99 percent will not act on it. To take advantage of opportunities, you have to keep your awareness level up and remain open to life's possibilities, and you must be willing to act.

Remember, life owes you nothing. If you expect something from the world around you, you will almost always be disappointed. Instead, recognize that life owes you nothing, so whatever you want out of this life, it's up to you to find a way to achieve it.

Chapter 6: Be Honest and Trusting

Life and success ultimately come down to relationships, and relationships are built on honesty and trust. Your word is everything. If you make a promise, keep it. People can't trust you if they can't trust your words.

Honesty is fundamentally about trust and trust is a two-way street. Aside from receiving trust, you will need to give trust as well. If you go through life withholding trust, then you're going to eliminate hundreds of great possibilities. You'll end up closing yourself off to relationships and opportunities that make life so interesting and richly rewarding. But if someone behaves dishonestly, it's time to take the trust away. Remember, the measure of your honesty is how you act when it gets difficult.

Dishonesty can stick with you for a long time. Sure, none of us are perfect human beings. Yes, you'll make mistakes. But what matters is how you own up to them. You may not always be able to correct your mistakes, but you can always learn from them. It's never too late to start being honest and doing better.

Chapter 7: Be Kind

The philosophy of kindness should be deeply ingrained in our lives. Being kind doesn't have to be as extreme as sacrificing your life for another. It can be as simple and easy as keeping our mouths shut.

Avoid tearing other people down not only for their sake but for your own. Those who say unkind things about others tend to have something in common: they're not happy.

When you voice unkind thoughts aloud, you're just feeding into negativity, and reinforcing your own unhappiness.

The first step in being kind is to focus not on others, but on yourself – specifically, on your mindset. Whenever you feel inclined to say something unkind about a person, ask yourself why. Focus on getting rid of the negativity so you can treat yourself and others with kindness.

A successful business must treat three groups well: its employees, its customers, and its suppliers. Think of it as a three-legged stool. If one leg is missing, the company is never going to be great. If two legs are missing, the company will most likely not succeed. And if all three legs are missing, well, you're basically doomed. The same lesson can apply to any career or even your personal life.

Chapter 8: Be Grateful

True success cannot be measured externally. It is something internal, a feeling of satisfaction and pride in one's life. Being grateful and showing gratitude along your own journey to success is how you will become and feel like your very best self.

Most people are unhappy or dissatisfied simply because they don't appreciate what they have and what they've achieved. The secret to fulfillment isn't to keep acquiring more things. It is to be grateful every time. Gratitude is simple: you need to want less and do more.

No matter where you fall on the wealth spectrum, there's always someone with far less or far more. Ultimately gratitude is a choice. You can choose to complain, or you can choose to be grateful, and being grateful will always bring you more joy and happiness.

Chapter 9: Be Generous

Life can be hard and lonely. We all have times when we could use a little help, and you never know much a small moment of kindness and support could mean to someone.

When we think about generosity, our minds typically go straight to money. If you have money to spare, then, by all means, be generous with it. Generosity, however, is about so much more than just money. The most valuable thing we all can give of ourselves is our time and our spirit. You don't have to be rich to make a difference in people's lives.

True success is being able to look back on your life and recognize that life is not measured by material possessions or the money you've accumulated, but by the joy you've brought to others. If you can do good to just one person, then you should consider that a success.

Chapter 10: Do Good

Doing good is rewarding in and of itself. It is also our duty because none of us make it through life without receiving help. Helping each other is the greatest tradition of our species. This is the thing that sets us apart from all other life on Earth. When you do good for others, you do good for yourself. Someone helped you, so you help others, and they will help yet more people in the future, and on and on!

Conclusion

I made you a big promise at the start of this book. I told you that you can be the best. I truly believe that, and I hope by now you believe it too. Because the thing about that promise is that I'm not the one who can keep it. You are. I've shared the lessons with you, and now it's up to you to put them into practice. You can do it. One day at a time, far and sure, you can be the best!



John Ply built a company from scratch that became the best in the industry--twice. First with Priority Food Processing, a service provider to the food industry, then with Insight Beverages, a company he started to become a customer of his first! John was determined to build these companies to “be the best” because that was the first lesson he learned from his father. And now he’s teaching others to be their best.

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