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Preparing the Ground

If you have not already read *Think and Grow Rich*, then I want to encourage you to do so. Remember, it’s not a classic for nothing. It was the result of a lifework on the principles of success and it really does contain everything you need to know about how to get rich.

When I first read the book, I remember putting it down and thinking to myself ... ‘now what exactly *is* this secret he keeps talking about?’. It turns out to be a not uncommon experience. Despite the fact that in every chapter of the book, mention has apparently been made of the ‘money making secret that has made fortunes for more than five hundred exceedingly wealthy men’, many people have reported great difficulty in actually locating the secret.

In a recent movie – *The Secret* – the underlying scientific thinking is thoroughly explored. Hype, concerning the movie, *The Secret*, is all over the internet at present; and, there is no question about it, it’s a good movie too! It will do you absolutely no harm to watch it. But – let’s be quite direct here – many people who have also watched *The Secret* movie still just don’t get-it! The reason, I think, is that the focus of the movie is the business of convincing people that there *is* a secret and that it can be trusted to work.

Napoleon Hill says that in order to receive the secret, you have to be ready to receive it; and that’s why he doesn’t give it out overtly. Rather, he allows the reader to discover it when he, or she, is ready to receive it – it is more powerful that way, he says. Well if that is the case how come we have written this little book that plainly and openly reveals the secret to anyone who wants to understand it?

It’s a good question – and one I wanted to answer right up front because the approach taken here seems to fly in the face of what Napoleon Hill has said. The simple answer is that in order to succeed in your purpose of becoming rich and living a truly abundant life, you need to move from the business of *study* to the much more profitable business of *action*.

Contained within this little book is the very same information that many millionaires have actually used to generate real wealth - and so have proved it to be absolutely correct. If you are ready to begin your journey toward riches, once you have the necessary understanding, it is time for you to move-on to *action*. My hope is that you will understand, after reading this book, that you *do* finally have all the truly important information you need to become wealthy; and that the time has now come for you to actually realize your true potential.

In his book *The Science of Getting Rich*, Wallace D Wattles spends considerable time attempting to convince his readership that it is not wrong to actually *want* to become rich. I think it is because so many people have been brought-up with the idea that the business of becoming wealthy *is* somehow wrong. Since you are reading this book, my hope is that you have already developed the understanding that it is this idea itself that is incorrect.

However, just in case there is any doubt in your mind, let me reassure you that there is nothing wrong or unspiritual about the process of becoming rich. Money itself is just information moving about in a system – that’s really all it is - and we all need money, in a developed society, in order to acquire the things we need to live normal healthy lives. So don’t think that the study and application of the principles contained in this book is wrong – and don’t listen to people who want to tell you otherwise.

Another attitude we need to be sure to dump is the idea that the *causes* of wealth are somehow beyond us mere mortals. You know, the kind of thoughts that suggest to us that wealth comes about because of specific advantages some people have, such as knowledge, social position, intelligence, location, type of business etc. This is not so: such things may be advantages, but they are *not* the causes of wealth.

This is an important point, because you need to get rid of such ideas if you want to become rich – and I certainly hope you do.

The final attitude I wanted to briefly discuss, before we get into the secret itself, is the attitude that it must be difficult to get rich. If it is not difficult, we may falsely reason, then why isn’t everybody rich? There is a simple twofold answer to this most important question – and it concerns the secret itself; and the reason Napoleon Hill has said you will receive the secret when you are ready for it.

Firstly, when you read the secret, you may be inclined to think that it cannot be so simple. If you believe this, then you may never even make the attempt to follow the instructions he provides; and thus, you will not produce the desired results. You need to beware of this kind of thinking – because it may knock you off-course for years!

Secondly, knowledge of the secret alone is just not enough: you need to commit yourself to actually *doing* what it tells you to do – you must move into *action* - and for many people, this can be quite a stumbling-block. So don't just read this book; make a decision now that you will be one of the few people who will actually follow-through and *use* the information.

To summarize, there are three things you must do if you want to become wealthy: you must first *believe* you have found the secret; then you must *understand* it; and finally, you must begin to *apply* it. And this little book has been written to help you do that!

What Exactly is The Secret?

For a long time, I thought that the secret might be that there is **no** secret! Like many others I was convinced that Napoleon Hill had said the secret could be found in every chapter of the book; and just like so many others I scoured the book only to find no one *common thing* in each chapter. If the secret were within each chapter, then I couldn't see it for myself. I first began to think 'there is **no** secret' – and then, later, that *is* the secret i.e. that there is **no** secret to success; you just have to get on with it! You have to stop looking and start working towards it. That message is certainly consistent with the spirit of the book; and – as valuable a lesson as it is in itself - I have gradually come to believe that it is *not* the secret to which Hill refers.

The secret is certainly mentioned within each chapter of the book; though there are two chapters in particular in which the secret is quite plainly stated. One reason so many people fail to recognize it right there is because they are looking for something more profound. That's probably why you need to read the book more than once.

The whole matter turns on whether or not you can believe what he says. Belief is the most important thing in this early stage because if you can't believe what is being put forward, then you won't try it; you won't discover its power; and you will miss the secret for good. But if you are prepared to give it a try – and that means by following the instructions

to-the-letter – then you open up the possibility of making a really life-changing discovery.

Napoleon Hill says that his own son was able to identify the secret simply from Reading Chapter 2 of the book, so we do know it's right there in Chapter 2. That chapter is about *Desire* – the 'starting point of all achievement' as he puts it.

A cursory reading of Chapter 2 reveals his simple formula. Now in subsequent chapters, he does elaborate upon those steps, but right there you have it in its most simple form.

The method by which DESIRE for riches can be transmuted into its financial equivalent, consists of six definite, practical steps ...

Napoleon Hill, *Think & Grow Rich*, Ch 2

We will first take a look at how Napoleon Hill presents these steps and then we will go through each one in turn. So here are those six steps. Here is Napoleon Hill's Awesome Secret ...

First. Fix in your mind the exact amount of money you desire. It is not sufficient merely to say "I want plenty of money." Be definite as to the amount. (There is a psychological reason for definiteness which will be described in a subsequent chapter). Second. Determine exactly what you intend to give in return for the money you desire. (There is no such reality as "something for nothing.") Third. Establish a definite date when you intend to possess the money you desire. Fourth. Create a definite plan for carrying out your desire, and begin at once, whether you are ready or not, to put this plan into action. Fifth. Write out a clear, concise statement of the amount of money you intend to acquire, name the time limit for its acquisition, state what you intend to give in return for the money, and describe clearly the plan through which you intend to accumulate it. Sixth. Read your written statement aloud, twice daily, once just before retiring at night, and once after arising in the morning. AS YOU READ— SEE AND FEEL AND BELIEVE YOURSELF ALREADY IN POSSESSION OF THE MONEY.

Napoleon Hill: *Think & Grow Rich*, Ch 2

And now that you know the secret, there comes the most difficult part: making it happen. I don't mean to imply that it is a difficult thing to make happen or that you are incapable of making it happen. The real

difficulty lies in your conscious mind accepting – once and for all – that you do actually have the secret right there!

There is nothing more you need to find out – there is something you actually need to *do*. You must follow those six steps for yourself if you actually want to make the secret work for you.

Ok, now let's go through each of these steps in turn ...

Step 1

First. Fix in your mind the exact amount of money you desire. It is not sufficient merely to say "I want plenty of money." Be definite as to the amount. You need to be *specific* about the amount. Napoleon Hill says there is a 'psychological reason' - that reason concerns the plan that your own subconscious mind will produce. So come-on do it now – it's not complicated – how much money do you want? Think of a figure right now and write it down.

You don't need to worry about not being able to understand where it is going to come from – just write it down. I suggest that you write down a figure that is perhaps two to ten times your current annual income. The reason for this is simply so that you get a goal down on paper that you will believe is a *possibility* for you.

I don't want to limit your thinking at all, but you do need to be able to *believe* in what you are doing; and, when you find that this process actually works, you can do it again – and next time you won't have any trouble thinking bigger.

Step 2

Second. Determine exactly what you intend to give in return for the money you desire.

You see – he suggests you are actually going to have to *do* something to get the reward. In particular, notice he uses the word *give*. So, what exactly is it that you can give?

Now, there *is* something you can give! You may need to invest some time thinking about what it is! But really, my friend, inside you already know the answer to this question, so think about it deeply.

Is it ...

- Time
- Expertise
- Goods
- Services
- Creativity
- Talent
- Effort
- Money (investment)
- Or Something Else

Step 3

Third. Establish a definite date when you intend to possess the money you desire.

Again, the issue of *believability* raises it's head here: you might think tomorrow would be nice, but is it *believable*? This is important because without *believability*, you will not be capable of firing-up your mind with that burning desire he talks about.

Remember you are to conceive of a plan and then *execute* it to receive your reward, so you need to attach a *believable* timescale. I would suggest that you work on a period of six months to one year. Once again, I am not trying to limit your thinking in any way. Remember, you can return to the process, again and again, once you are convinced that it works.

In the future, you can attach whatever time you want to whatever goal you want, but the *believability* factor must not be violated in so doing.

Step 4

Fourth. Create a definite plan for carrying out your desire, and begin at once, whether you are ready or not, to put this plan into action.

Here we get two steps for the price of one: essentially - create your plan; and execute it – ready or not!

You might wonder why he suggests doing the plan after setting the timeframe. Perhaps especially because there are people who do advocate doing exactly the reverse. The reason is an interesting one: it will actually affect the plan your subconscious mind will conceive.

In conceiving of the plan, your mind is really providing a specific answer to the question: how can I generate x amount of money in y amount of time? The answer you will get will, in part, depends upon those two factors. If you are prepared to think *big* - and also think *believable* - you are already on the road to hatching your plan. Then, almost without pause, he says: get on with it! And he also says: whether you are ready or not – just get on with it. Now that's an important point because after you start, you may well adjust your course along the way. There is nothing wrong with that – you are not changing the goal; just changing the route. Such decisions are just *course-correcting* activities; and you can only make them at that place in the future which you don't even yet know about. So start – right away!

Step 5

Fifth. Write out a clear, concise statement of the amount of money you intend to acquire, name the time limit for its acquisition, state what you intend to give in return for the money, and describe clearly the plan through which you intend to accumulate it.

Don't skip it – you need to get this all down in writing. There is a reason for it, so don't think you can get away with carrying this stuff around in your head. Remember that thousands of millionaires before you have done exactly this – so write it down. It won't take you long when you have completed the previous steps properly.

Step 6

Sixth. Read your written statement aloud, twice daily, once just before retiring at night, and once after arising in the morning. **AS YOU READ— SEE AND FEEL AND BELIEVE YOURSELF ALREADY IN POSSESSION OF THE MONEY.**

Napoleon Hill says this step is absolutely crucial – and notice, he uses upper-case here for added emphasis.

Find somewhere you can do this – read it ...

- Twice a Day
- Aloud (if possible)
- Just Before Going to Sleep

- Just After Rising

Notice – he emphasizes ...

- See it!
- Feel it!
- Believe it!

Now – as with each of the steps – there is a reason: in modern NLP terms, he is suggesting evoking the three representational systems:

Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic. This procedure will so impress the goal on the subconscious mind as to call forth the necessary *plan* and continual *course-correction* that will propel you to your target.

My friend you have Napoleon Hill's secret – I would now like to add a Step 7. This is not to suggest that there is anything missing from the above steps, but rather to emphasise what I consider to be the reason why so many people in possession of the secret still never manage to generate the abundance it promises.

Step 7

Take action and commit to staying in motion. Every day, make sure you take at least one step towards your goal.

Some days you will take big steps and some days you will take small steps, but everyday, ensure you take some step towards that goal.

If you do this repeatedly, you literally cannot fail. You might not get there by the optimum route, but you will get there; and when you do, you will know that you have found the real secret at last.

And then ...

Something wonderful happens: once you know you have the secret, you go back to the beginning of the process, but this time your believability factor has been increased by the positive experience of going through the process successfully the first time.

Now you are ready to dream those really big dreams and plan those big plans. Now there is nothing to stop you!

My Own Story

As an example of how it works, here's my own story. N.B. Napoleon Hill's secret is sometimes referred to as *The Law of Attraction* ...

For years self-help guru's have taught about The Law of Attraction – the idea that you can get what you want simply by creating a clear mental picture of what you desire and using your imagination to see it with your mind's eye. It all sounds very tempting doesn't it – but is there really any such thing as the Law of Attraction? Well, I would like to share with you a little about my own experience learning about and then using this principle.

It all began one day when I was driving along listening to a tape; and, although I had heard the basic message many times before, on this occasion, it really struck home. I remember hearing the words, '... how can you achieve a goal you have not even set? ...'

And for once those words found real resonance within me. I thought to myself, 'if I were to set some really big goals, and if those goals did not come to pass, only I would know' ... so there would be absolutely no reason to *not* give the process a try. It was the little push I needed at the time.

So I took myself off to Clevedon and sat at the end of the pier with a flask of soup, a notebook – the old-fashioned paper-type - and pen. I was there for about three or four hours asking myself those deep questions about what my own life is about and what is most important to me. At the end of the session, I had quantified four really big goals; the first of which was to become a Personal Development consultant within three years.

Now my career had, up until that time, been in IT; and I had no idea how to change not just my job, but my career, but this is what happened ...

The company I was working for at the time was taken over by a larger organization and I felt the new company did not really understand my role, which was in pre-sales support, so I started looking around for another opportunity. I saw a company advertising for a Technical Author; and I thought it might help me to hone my writing skills – which would be an important aspect of achieving my goal – so I applied and I got invited for an interview.

There I was sitting in the interview being interviewed by two people and one of them asked me a pretty standard interview question ...

‘Where do you see yourself in five years?’

Now I don’t know how I would have answered prior to doing all that thinking, but what I said was,

‘Well ... I see myself as a writer (still trying to get the job) and by that time I would like to think I will have written a successful book.’

He asked what subject I would be writing about; and I had no hesitation in explaining all about my passion for Personal Development.

“That’s very interesting”, he replied!

He left the room; returning a few minutes later with three course outline documents which he showed me.

“We are just diversifying into that field ourselves – could you teach these courses?”, he asked.

Well I nearly fell off my chair! Here he was offering me the opportunity to do exactly what I wanted and had imagined back there in Clevedon only a few months earlier.

To cut a long story short: I got the job. I started immediately after working out my notice and so began my new career as a

Personal Development Consultant. It still amazes me today to think about how it all happened – but it did! My own belief is that opportunity surrounds us every day of our lives but we tend to miss most of it simply because of what our minds are focused on. That is the power of creating your vision and imagining it as fulfilled.

Finally

Well, we have come to the end of the book, but not the end of the story – *your* story. Your story is really just beginning; and what a wonderful story it might be. Your whole life is in front of you – ready for you to shape by implementing the information you have, now you are in possession of Napoleon Hill’s Awesome Secret.

Remember, you now have that secret; the same secret that many millionaires have used to generate huge fortunes. Of course, we have Napoleon Hill to thank for interviewing those hugely successful people and documenting what they said in his best-selling and classic book *Think and Grow Rich*.

Personally, I carry my statement around with me on a small card I keep in my wallet; and I also have a copy of it written on a leaf of flipchart paper which is stuck to the back of the door to my study. The real benefit of this procedure, I believe, is to get your mind focused on a definite, short-term goal.

You will simply be amazed at what your subconscious mind is capable of conceiving. Just remember the importance of the believability factor each time you use the secret. In Napoleon Hill’s own words ...

“Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve”

Now is the time to start making your future happen.

About the Author



Will Edwards is the founder of [White Dove Books](#) - the internet's leading website for Self Improvement and Personal Development. A graduate of the University of Birmingham (UK) he develops and teaches Personal Development workshops and he is a published author.

Within its first three years, White Dove Books was recognized as one of the internet's leading sites for self help and personal development; breaking into the top 100,000 sites on the internet at the end of 2005.

The INSPIRATION newsletter was started in 2005 as a way of providing helpful information including tips, articles and free inspirational ebooks to our visitors.

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