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7 Secrets of Personal Development

You're ready to take your career and your life to the next level. Now what?

If you haven't heard of Dale Carnegie, you've probably lived in Siberia for your entire life. Welcome to life.

Dale Carnegie Training was founded on the principles of the famous speaker and author of [*How to Win Friends and Influence People*](#). Today, the company offers leadership training to help businesses and individuals achieve their goals.

I asked Celia Wang from Dale Carnegie Training to share seven secrets of personal growth with us. Take it away Celia...

When it comes to taking your career and life to the next level, many people don't know where to start. The following seven “secrets” of personal development can help you learn how to find success and stay positive through your struggles and triumphs. Read on to see insights and tips from Dale Carnegie Training, which specializes in leadership training, to help you go further this year and beyond.

Secret 1: Only you can take charge of your personal development.

Taking charge of your personal development depends solely on you; it's not a process that can be done for you by anyone else. The aspiration, intent and power to change yourself all come from within, so focus on your goal and don't get distracted by others. Likewise, you can't develop anyone else, except for yourself.

Secret 2: Development is a personal process.

Just as every individual is unique, there is no standard “process” for personal development. Develop into an improved form of your current self, rather than trying to turn yourself into someone else. Keep these words from Jean-Jacques Rousseau in mind: “I am not made like any of those I have seen. I venture to believe that I am not made like any of those who are in existence. If I am not better, at least I am different.”

Secret 3: Success often occurs in places where you least expect it.

Sometimes, no matter how hard you try to do something right, things don't work out as planned. Nobody can predict the future, but continuing to work hard at something will almost always pay off in the end. If you fail at first, don't get discouraged--success can be reached by constantly trying, and it often happens under unexpected circumstances.

Secret 4: Focus on the little things around you, not just the bigger picture.

How to Win Friends and Influence People - Dale Carnegie

If you haven't read this classic yet, it's time. It's THE book on influence, networking, and creating lasting relationships.

Changing your day-to-day habits can go a long way in developing as a person. Whether you make small changes to your attitude, goals or the people you surround yourself with, taking change one day at a time will be an effective method for development. Doing little things slowly can seem frustrating, but all successful people are doing the same thing. Pay attention to the little things and you'll find yourself making progress.

Secret 5: Improving your listening skills will make you a better communicator.

How you communicate with others has a great impact on your relationships and interactions. Effective communication includes not only speaking, but listening too. The more you listen, the better you will be at communicating. Listening before speaking can also ensure your conversations go smoothly, and will help you to better understand and motivate others.

Secret 6: Never stop learning new skills and practicing basic ones.

This is an absolute necessity in the process of development. No matter what you want, you must push yourself to enhance your current skills and learn new ones that will allow you to grow. Remember that you can't do better before you have mastered the skills necessary to get there.

Secret 7: Success starts with failure and is a “trial and error” process.

Even if you desire to succeed, remember that not all adventurers can get to their destinations. Worst case scenarios happen, and it's always a smart idea to prepare for worst case. Just remember that you will learn and grow from these situations, and that you should always keep trying.

What are your secrets to personal development? Which of these is the most challenging for you?