

# The definition of success

Business



“ The favorable or prosperous termination of attempts or endeavors; the accomplishment of one’s goals,” – via dictionary. com I’m a second semester senior in high school, and by this time most of the people that I’ve spent the last four years with know where they’re going to college. All of the clubs, sports, honor societies, AP classes, test scores and many, many tears of junior year have played themselves out and the realization of their worth has come. With that said, the general consensus of second semester seniors is that the rigor level of what you’ve done in high school determines the direction in which your life will go; I’m surrounded by people who are sizing each other up and watching each others decision-making like a vulture watches roadkill die. My question is simple: for what? In a recording of John Mark McMillan’s Live At The Knight, he talks about what he thinks makes a person successful and whole, and how it’s not all of the shows he’s ended up playing or the places he’s ended up going, but sitting on a porch with the people he loves and sharing a community with them. At the end of the day, that makes him successful.

(If you don’t know who or what the heck I’m talking about, look him up and thank me later.) I’m no stranger from making judgements of the decisions of others, and I’m willing to bet mine have been judged a few times too.

However, my accomplishments and theirs could be perceived differently, so who on earth am I to look down upon their endeavor to receive the same feeling that I want from my future success? My pursuit seem insane to some: I want to leave Florida, go to the University of Tennessee, and eventually open my own direct trade company. Even more recently, I’ve thought of all of the potential obstacles to this: money, distance from people I love, living

in a place I've never even seen yet and knowing absolutely no one, and I've thought about how what I want is radically different from what most people I'm surrounded by want, but I'm sure of it and I'm sure of destroying the doubts that stand in my way. Which brings me to my hatred of the most common excuse I hear: it is what it is. I can't pass this class, but it is what it is.

I didn't get into this college, but it is what it is. This person treats me like this, but it is what it is. IT IS NOT WHAT IT IS. If people get nothing else from reading this, I want them to get this: it is what you make it. Life and ambition and success is exactly what you make it. If you don't believe me, here are a few of my favorite examples: JK Rowling, who didn't need a college degree to write the Harry Potter series, which got turned down by multiple publishers for years.

The 1975, a band that formed as teenagers but were ignored by record labels and locals. When the lead singer was 23 and working at a Chinese restaurant, their manager decided to put out their music himself. They will play at Red Rocks on May 2 this year. Ryan Reynolds, who fought to keep Deadpool rated R so he could portray the character to the best of his abilities. The movie broke box office records this weekend (rightfully so; it was amazing).

Howard Schultz, who got turned down by banks 242 times. He founded Starbucks. My point is, these are all very different ideas of success and they were all hard-fought. Blair Waldorf was right when she said that destiny is for losers because it's just a stupid excuse to wait for things to

happen instead of making them happen. In fact, that quote is currently the background on my phone.

I'm a believer in things happening for a reason. I'm a believer in sometimes having to give up control and accepting that some things are beyond my capability to handle them. But above all else, I'm a believer in making things happen for yourself because at the end of the day, your ambition is just as terrifying as it should be – that's how you know you're doing it right.