

# Socrates' success



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

My aim of this paper is to illustrate Socrates' criteria of a good definition by trying to define what "success" is. I will start by explaining Socrates' three criteria requirements of a good definition. First a good definition must define all and only cases, so that it covers the general ideas but also the exceptions to these cases. Secondly a good definition must be clear so there is no misinterpretation and easy to understand. Lastly a good definition should be explanatory, it should be state if and what its requirements and explain why they need to be present.

Now knowing what makes a good definition I will construct three separate definitions that will fail one of Socrates' three criteria. I will start by giving you an example that fails Socrates' first criteria of all and only cases.

Success is achieving fame and honor. This fails the requirements of a good definition because it fails to cover only cases. It fails to include times when people are successful but fail to receive fame or honor or even both. Many women and men become volunteer firefighters, paramedics, and other rescue personnel to help others.

They put their lives in danger to help others which is an honorable thing to do, but many of these men and women never receive any recognition. You can also obtain fame in many ways including dishonorable ways. Take professional athletes who use performance enhancing drugs as an example. They choose to use illegal ways to gain success in their craft and in many cases are rewarded because of their skills that they possess. However, they know performance enhancers are not allowed and would be penalized for using them if they were ever caught.

Their desire to achieve success to avoid appearing incompetent and to avoid receiving negative evaluations from others forces them to achieve it in dishonorable ways. The definition I have given as an example fails to include cases when people gain success but fail to achieve honor. Now I will give you an example that fails the second requirement of Socratic definition. Success is having a prosperous job and the attainment of wealth. This fails the requirement because it is not a clear definition. First one person's idea of a good job can be greatly different from another's idea; an example of this could be a police officer.

Some would consider this a prestigious job that comes with dignity and respect, it allows people to help others and do well for their communities. Police officers also receive good benefits which people associate with good jobs. However, others may see this as a bad job to hold. To be a police officer you take on risks that many people would not choose to put themselves in. Police officers know they face a greater risk of violence and harm towards them than do most jobs. The necessity to carry a gun and other weapons for safety may not be appealing to many either.

Second success is the attainment of wealth is unclear too. That is unclear because a lot of money to some can be a small amount to others. Some men think that having lots of money where they can buy a big house, fancy car, and expensive jewelry is when they have become successful. Others think having enough to provide for their family is enough to consider themselves successful. The definition that success is having a good job and making lots of money is not satisfactory according to Socrates' criteria. Here I will give a definition that fails to meet the last of Socrates' three criteria; explanatory.

Success is always being the top performer in your giving area of work or craft. This definition fails this requirement because it does not explain why you must be the top performer. To achieve success you must also be realistic in the goals you are trying to achieve. Take running a marathon for an example, many people who chose to participate know they will not win the race. However, they have other goals than winning the race which can be to just to run a certain distance, or to just finish the race no matter the time or place they come in.

Many people will say that they have failed to succeed in terms of the race because they did not win or may even perform poorly in the overall standings. In actuality they could have met the goal they set so they would be successful. Success can be achieved in many ways and usually it's gained on a personal level rather than in the spotlight of others. The definition I have given fails to incorporate that success can be achieved through personal goals though others may see it as a failure. Lastly I will attempt to construct a definition of " success" that meets all three criteria.

Success is being satisfied with your own individual performance and outcomes of the decisions you make towards reaching your goals in life. A person is truly successful when he can look back at their life and be proud of the things they have done for themselves and others. I believe the definition I have given meets all requirements of a Socratic definition. It gives a clear definition that explains what success is and how it is achieved. I believe my definition covers all and only cases by illustrating that success does not have to be achieved in the eyes of other, rather through self satisfaction.

In conclusion, I have learned that success cannot be measured based on society's general belief that you gain success if you do better than others, have a good job, and become rich and famous. To many people in the world these things are meaningless and superficial. The way success is viewed varies from country to region to person. Success also changes within a person through different stages of their life. When we are young and infantile success can be learning to walk and talk, as we get older it can come from our jobs to raising a family.

This assignment has not made me change my views on what is "success," but it has caused me to recognize how an individual can be successful. Though you may strive to become wealthy and famous you can still be successful if you have achieved neither of these. I think I could continue to revise my definition of success in the future by gaining a better understanding of things people are proud to accomplish. Many people may never receive fame or fortune on grand scale but are happy with the choices in life and I believe they are the ones who truly gain success.