

Associate with Losers and You're Courting Failure

By John Madden

You will be the same person in five years except for the people you meet and the books you read ... Charlie Jones

Think back and see if you can remember, by individual, all the people who had an influence on your life – good and bad. Do you find that the bad ones stick out like a sore thumb? And why is that?

We are told that failure is sometimes good because we learn from it. I believe true failure is when we don't learn. If you continue to associate with people who are unreliable, are complainers, are unethical, or self-serving, there's a strong chance you'll catch some of those traits and become what they are.

Why do we hang out with these loser types anyway? Well, some of them are friends and we all need a friend or two. Some are work or business associates, while others are clients; and then there may be a relative or two in there. Some of us have a strong need for the company of others, so we spend time with losers if we don't have any winner friends.

**How do you identify those in your life that should be avoided like the plague?
Consider these:**

1. People who constantly complain about their company, their job, their spouse, the government, their neighbor, etc.
2. People who are totally self-focused and rarely inquire about your day, your life interests, or your challenges - business or personal.
3. People who promise to call on a specific day, or agree to meet you but rarely keep their word, and frequently cancel with vague excuses.
4. People who promised to take care of something for you more than once, but didn't.

5. People you don't feel comfortable with due to their pompous and inconsiderate behavior toward service people.
6. People who've persuaded you to invest money in their enterprise, and you later discover their lack of ethics.

But, you ask, "Surely some of those people can be changed with a little encouragement and some of my positive influence?" The simple answer to that is RARELY! It's like having a bad employee who is talented but non-performing and a troublemaker. So you give him a raise to motivate him to better performance – which lasts for a day or two, then it's back to normal. The correct solution? Get rid of him!

A large portion of your success and happiness in life will be determined by the quality of the relationships that you develop in your personal and business activities. The more people you know and who know you in a positive way, the more successful you will be and the faster you will move ahead

Five steps to meeting the right people - the winners – and avoiding the wrong people – the losers

1. Be aware. Keep your eyes and ears open to read people quickly and know if he or she is someone with whom you'd like to associate. Hang out with positive people, who are optimistic and happy, who have goals, and who are moving forward in their lives. Get away from negative complaining people. As someone wise said, "If you want to soar with the eagles, you cannot scratch with the turkeys."

2. Have a mindset of giving service and adding value to everyone you meet.

Very successful people owe their success to the contribution they made to the success of others – even in some small way.

3. Build and maintain a network of high-quality relationships. Networking is the great habit of the success-minded businessperson. Do that by joining your local chamber of commerce and your trade and industry association, and go to all the meetings and get involved in the groups' activities.

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