

Harvey Mackay's Column This Week

Believe in yourself even when no one else does

By Harvey Mackay

"Some people succeed because they are destined to, but most people succeed because they are determined to."

When Henry Ford said those oh-so-true words, he wasn't just talking about himself -- even though he is the epitome of determination. He went belly-up several times, but never lost sight of his goal. He believed in himself and in what he was doing. In the end, he was so right.

Don't ever let anyone tell you that you can't accomplish your goals. Who says you're not tougher, better, harder working, smarter and more able than your competition? It doesn't matter if *they* say you can't do it. The only thing that matters is if *you* say it. If you believe in yourself, there's hardly anything you can't accomplish.

Most actors fail before they succeed. Gene Hackman and Dustin Hoffman were both voted by their acting classmates as the "Least Likely to Succeed." And how many of those classmates can boast an Academy Award? Woody Allen failed in both the motion picture production classes he attended in college. Lucky for him, his film audiences gave him better grades. Harrison Ford was told by movie executives that he simply didn't have what it takes to be a star. Of course, he proved them wrong by starring in the *Star Wars* trilogy, the *Indiana Jones* series, and a string of movies that have grossed over \$6 billion!

Some of the most successful singers in history have overcome bumpy starts as well. Diana Ross and the Supremes were flops on their first nine records, but the tenth took them to the top of the charts. After only one performance, Elvis Presley was fired in 1954 by Jimmy Denny, manager of the Grand Ole Opry, who told him, "You ain't going nowhere, son. You ought to go back to driving a truck." One recording company executive told The Beatles, "We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out."

What part of "no" didn't these people understand? The part that said "no confidence." They had every confidence that they could achieve and succeed.

Business legends are no different. We all know about inspirational success stories like Bill Gates, Col. Harlan Sanders and R.H. Macy.

But do you know about Soichiro Honda? Many of you have driven his cars, used his lawn mowers and ridden his motorcycles. Honda was turned down by Toyota Motor Corporation for a job as an engineer, so he started making scooters and finally started his own company. Honda Corporation says: "We see the world not as it is, but as it could be. We see the world through the eyes of dreamers. Because we are a company founded by a dreamer. And we are a company built on dreams."

As I've said so many times, if we want to triple our success ratio ... we might have to triple our failure rate.

Surround yourself with top-quality people and truly listen to their input. Don't wait until it's

too late to change. Start to take the true measure of your success now. What do you possess that you can offer to other people, to your community, to the world?

To simply ask the question, "How can I make a difference?" is to answer it, because the answer is to never let yourself stop *asking* the *question*.

I've asked myself that question hundreds of times. Maybe thousands. And any time I feel like quitting I just look at a framed poster I have hanging in our office:

- He failed in business in '31.
- He ran as a state legislator and lost in '32.
- He tried business again in '33 and failed again.
- His sweetheart died in '35.
- He had a nervous breakdown in '36.
- He ran for state elector in '40 after he regained his health.
- He was defeated for Congress in '43, defeated again for Congress in '48, defeated when he ran for the Senate in '55 and defeated for vice presidency of the United States in '56.
- He ran for Senate again in '58 and lost.

This man never quit. He kept trying till the last. In 1860, this man -- Abraham Lincoln -- was elected president of the United States.

Mackay's Moral: You must believe if you want to achieve.