

THE QUALITIES / BEHAVIORS THE LEBANESE PROFESSIONALS CHERISH THE MOST - A SURVEY -

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People path to success is not the same, but there are many qualities shared among the successful people.

INTRODUCTION

People have always been concerned about their personal and professional development, and their quest for the qualities they should embrace is a never ending one. The literature is abundant on the subject, directly (*such as the publications of the researches done on the subject by psychologists, self-help gurus, and alike*), and indirectly (*such as the teachings of the philosophers and the religions*).

Like many of the concerned professionals, I have read numerous articles and books on the subject, and I also had the chance of being directly exposed to the subject through my consultancy works and teachings in the past twenty-five years. In fact, I have delivered professional seminars on what I have been calling “People Dynamisation”¹ since long years, mainly in Lebanon (*though also in Syria, UAE and Nigeria*) to a large number of professionals, some of whom I also had the opportunity to coach. Moreover, I have introduced this seminar at the MBAIP² at the Business Faculty since six years.

The material used for the above seminars is developed based on my readings as well as on my personal experience, and these seminars address, among other issues, the qualities I feel the Professionals should enjoy and nourish to develop their capabilities and better enjoy their work and relationship with their working environment.

¹ Developing one’s potential and motivating people.

² MBA International Paris, a diploma co-managed by Université Paris DAUPHINE, IAE Sorbonne, and Saint Joseph University of Beirut.

Most, if not all of the qualities I address have been revealed by many of the writers on the subject, and some of them have been repeatedly advocated, though sometimes under different synonyms. Let me state some of the widely read writings on the subject, putting aside the Bible, Al-Quran and other holy books, which keep on influencing our behavior and personality.

1. EXAMPLES OF WIDELY READ WRITINGS ON SUCCESS QUALITIES / BEHAVIORS / TRAITS

1.1. The Science of Getting Rich by Wallace DeWattles (1910)³ who advocated that: *Creation and not competition is the way to success; To be rich⁴, one must never think that Supply is limited, but that there is always enough for everybody; We have the right to claim richness, and the best way to draw it to ourselves is to give thanks that we already have it; We attract riches through our desire to become rich.*

1.2 The Master Key System by Charles F. Haanel (1916)⁵ who stressed on the following qualities: *The power of imagination; The law of attraction; The fact that thought is energy; The relationship between thought, action and effect; The power of imagination.*

1.3. Think and grow rich by Napoleon Hill (1937)⁶ outlined the following 13 principles for success: *Our Desire is an accurate picture of what we will become; Faith conditions our state of mind; Auto-suggestion puts our sub-conscious mind to serve our purpose; Specialized knowledge helps us becoming efficient; Imagination helps us to conceive what we set ourselves to accomplish; Organized planning renders us effective in our objectives' achievement; Decision is our combat arm against procrastination; Persistence helps us going to the end with our tasks; Power of the "Mastermind", the very few proficient and supportive people who can accompany us in our success walk; The mystery of the Sex Transmutation⁷; The Sub-conscience mind where resides our inestimable knowledge' treasures⁸; The Brain that can bring us all what we want; The 6th Sense, this impulse or thought that is at the origin of our ideas through which we communicate without effort with our greater self.*

1.4. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey (1989)⁹ which preached the following 7 habits of successful people: *We are born to life totally dependent on our parents to survive and grow. Our early battle is" against the*

³ It was a major inspiration for Rhonda Byrne's bestselling book (2006) and film (2007): The Secret.

⁴ The concept of richness is of course not limited to wealth and encompasses abundance, self-fulfillment...

⁵ Who influenced Napoleon Hill in his writing in 1937 of his bestselling book "Think and Grow Rich".

⁶ It is the result of interviewing a large number of successful people over 20 years. Sold more than 100 million copies.

⁷ Behind every great man is a great woman.

⁸ Where our Wisdom resides.

⁹ Co-founder and CEO of a company called CoveyLink Worldwide and former President and CEO of Covey Leadership Center.

others” and aims at permitting us to gain our Independence, i.e., self-mastery. Three habits are to be acquired to gain this state: Becoming pro-active; Beginning with the end in mind, and Putting 1st things 1st. Once independent however, we start looking for gaining the acceptance of the others by waging a war “against the others”, the “Interdependence war” for which we need to master the following habits: Thinking Win-win; Seeking 1st to understand (the others), then to be understood; and Synergizing with others (using the power of others to do more and better) as no one can do it alone. While gaining the above six habits, and for the rest of our lives, we need to work on our Continuous Improvement through the 7th habit, i.e., Sharpening our Saw.

1.5. The 80/20 principle: the secret of achieving more with less by Richard Koch (1998). With a background in management consultancy¹⁰, he is also a successful entrepreneur who termed the “Law of Least Effort”. The principle is not in fact a theory, but rather an observation that calls for being 1st Effective and then Efficient that supposes: Knowing what we are good at, nourishing it, and doing more of it; Living to our potential. The big idea of the book that Koch refers to¹¹ is Joseph Ford’s statement that “while God may play dice with the universe, the dice are loaded”.

1.6. Awaken the Giant Within by Anthony Robbins (1991). Robbins argues that: by using “Neuro-Linguistic Programming” (NLP), anyone can become successful at almost anything, though many of our dreams may often be categorized as unrealistic and unfeasible by our “entourage”. He in fact puts ahead the power of Belief and Positive Thinking and the need for us to get out of our Comfort Zone to improve and prevail - In other words, he suggests that we should endeavor to be the masters of our destiny and not its slaves.

1.7. How to Think like Leonardo da Vinci by Michael J. Gelb (2000) addressing the 7 habits that made of da Vinci the Maestro he was: “Curiosita” - A Curious approach to life and a quest for continuous learning; “Dimostrazione” - A tendency to not take things for granted and to Question everything; “Sensazione” - The continual refinement of the Senses; “Stumato” (Going up in flame): A willingness to embrace Ambiguity; “Arte/Scienza” - Balancing logic and imagination; “Corporalita” - Cultivating simultaneously the physical and mental abilities; “Connessione” - Accepting the interdependence of all things and phenomena.

1.8. The 8 Traits Successful People have in common by Richard Sr. John (2010)¹² who came up with the following major qualities: Passion: loving what we set ourselves to accomplish; Hard Work: Focusing on what we do; Pushing more and more towards our aim; Coming up with innovative and good ideas; Improve: keeping working on improving our capabilities; Serving others; Persisting and not expecting quick fixes and achievements.

¹⁰ Bain & Co & BCG.

¹¹ As advanced by Tom Butler Bowdon in his book “50 self-help classics – 2003.

¹² This book has been called “the ultimate guide to success”. It is the result of a 10 years face-to-face interviews of 500 successful people like Bill Gates, Steven Spielberg, Richard Bronson...

1.9. 14 Things Every Successful Person Has in Common by Dan Schwabel (2013)¹³. Dan has interviewed over 1,200 successful people (CEOs, politicians and other kind of celebrities) during several years and noticed that these successful people shared the following 14 traits: *They know when to stay no and when to leave; They do more than what's asked of them; They are willing to fail in order to eventually succeed; They know that they make their own luck; They set real goals that they can accomplish; They take accountability for themselves and their actions; They make change instead of being affected by it; They are able to adjust to changes in the marketplace; They can communicate their story effectively; They ask the right questions to the people who can deliver the right answers; They are life-long learners who push themselves out of their comfort zones; They know who they are and their place in the world; They are more excited about the journey than the payout; They create instead of just consume.*

1.10. Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell (2011) who by examining different studies and theories puts forward the idea that people very often succeed to circumstances, over and above their inner abilities. He advocates: *The effect of what the sociologists call the "accumulated advantage"¹⁴ - the 10,000 Hour-Rule to master any field one sets himself to excel in; The fact that intellect and achievement are far from being correlated; The importance of practical intelligence without which intelligence per se is less valuable in terms of achievement in life.*

1.11. Mastery by Robert Greene (2012). Following his research done for his previous four books¹⁵ that helped him understand some of the traits that made the great people, and his further examination of the lives of other great historical figures (such as Charles Darwin, Mozart, and Henry Ford) and contemporary leaders (such as Paul Graham and Freddie Roach), he assembled in this book the traits that he discovered made these people great and categorized them in six main endeavors: *Discover your calling: the life's task; Submit to reality: the ideal apprenticeship; Absorb the master's power: the Mentor dynamic; See people as they are: social intelligence; Awaken the dimensional-creative mind: the creative-active; Fuse the intuitive with the rational: Mastery.*

The list can go on and on. However, I believe that from the eleven writings introduced above, some key principles of success emerge. To these some other ones can be added with sufficient assurance as they have been commonly highlighted by some other books that are considered as an authority on the subject. For instance, Tom Butler-Bowdon announces in the introduction of his acclaimed book **50 Success Classics**¹⁶ (2004) the following traits of the successful

¹³ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/danschawbel/2013/12/17/14-things-every-successful-person-has-in-common/#206900f43c74>.

¹⁴ The Matthew Effect: For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken even which he hath – Matthew 25:29

¹⁵ The 48 Laws of Power (1998); The Art of Seduction (2001); The 33 Strategies of War (2006); The 50th Law (2009).

¹⁶ 50 Success Classics is a 'bite-sized' guide to 50 books considered by the author as having inspired

people: Optimism; A definite Aim, purpose or vision; Willingness to work; Discipline, An integrated mind; Prolific reading; Risk taking; Realizing the power of expectation; Mastery; Well-roundedness.

2. THE CARRIED OUT SURVEY ON “THE QUALITIES LEBANESE PROFESSIONALS CHERISH THE MOST”

In order to find out which of the qualities¹⁷ I have been stressing on in my seminars are considered the most relevant to the Lebanese professionals, I have addressed in December 2016 an online questionnaire to around 800 professionals comprising these qualities (refer to Appendix 1¹⁸). The questionnaire contained 20 questions covering more than 50 qualities, some of which are complementary or synonyms to some others. After soliciting the profile of the respondents, the questionnaire was divided into two major parts:

- Part 1: covering questions 1 to 3 and addressing the important qualities the respondents thought successful people enjoyed,
- Part 2: addressing many other traits and behaviors dealing with complementary issues, i.e. motivation, self-development, planning and time management, and ending up in its question 20 with a series of 30 qualities of which the respondents had to select the best 5 that successful people embraced.

2.1. The profile of the respondents

More than 350 professionals responded to the questionnaire, out of them 313 completed the first part (questions 1 to 3), while 276 answered the questionnaire in full¹⁹:

millions of their readers on the subject of success. Among these books are the following famous ones: Benjamin Franklin *The Way To Wealth* (1758); Henry Ford *My Life and Work* (1922); Frank Bettger *How I Raised Myself From Failure To Success in Selling* (1947); Florence Scovel Shinn *Secret Door to Success* (1940); Muriel James & Dorothy Jongeward *Born To Win* (1971); Catherine Ponder *The Dynamic Laws of Prosperity* (1962); Brian Tracy *Maximum Achievement* (1993); Jack Welch *Jack: Straight From the Gut* (2001). In his introduction to his book, the author listed

17 Qualities, traits and behaviors.

18 The Questionnaire, as well as the detailed analyses of the respondents' answers contained in the Appendices referred to in this article are not joined to this article to avoid encumbering the readers with details they may not be interested inspecting. These appendices can be downloaded from the FMG webpage.

19 Which is a good response rate noting that the questionnaire was lengthy and required around 30 minutes for completing its two parts online. I believe that the major part of those who did not answer the second part of the questionnaire did not do it because they did not notice the presence of the second part due to the way the questionnaire was laid down. At least this was the feedback I got from some of them after their phone contact, though, I admit, some did not do it judging the questionnaire was unfairly long and time consuming, which I admit, kindly asking these respondents to excuse this shortfall of the survey. (But I wanted to be as exhaustive as possible in covering the qualities I was addressing in my seminars).

RESPONDENTS WHO	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Have sufficiently answered the questions of part 1 and part 2	154 ^f 90%	122 ^f 86%	276 ^f 88%
Have answered only questions 1 to 3 (part 1 only of the questionnaire)	17 ^f 10%	20 ^f 14%	37 ^f 12%
Totals	171^f 100%	142^f 100%	313^f 100%

Appendix 2 “Respondents profile” gives the profile of the 313 respondents, showing among others the following:

SELF EMPLOYED OR EMPLOYED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Employed	119 ^f 70%	129 ^f 91%	248 ^f 79%
Self-employed	51 ^f 30%	11 ^f 8%	62 ^f 20%
Undeclared	1 ^f 1%	2 ^f 1%	3 ^f 1%
Totals	171^f 100%	142^f 100%	313^f 100%

SPREAD OF RESPONDENTS PER AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
< 35 years old	25 ^f 15%	50 ^f 35%	75 ^f 24%
35 - 49	83 ^f 49%	72 ^f 51%	155 ^f 50%
50 - 64	50 ^f 29%	19 ^f 13%	69 ^f 22%
65 and over	13 ^f 8%	1 ^f 1%	14 ^f 4%
Totals	171^f 100%	142^f 100%	313^f 100%

I trust that the respondent’s number and profile is representative and permits to carry out the analysis of the answers to the survey in a meaningful manner, especially that the sample comprises an acceptable number of Self-employed and of senior professionals²⁰.

2.2. Reporting the Analysis over more than one paper

Because of its length and the fact that it covers more than one important subject, the analysis is split over three articles:

- The first article addresses the Qualities that in general the respondents believe a successful professional should enjoy: this covers part 1 of the questionnaire, i.e. questions 1, 2 and 3, as well as question 20²¹ and is the object of this paper.
- The second one, which will be published few months after the publication of this current one, will address Motivation and Self-development, and will cover the following topics:
 - Motivation²²
 - Positive thinking and personal development: Discover your purpose²³ ; Positive Attitude²⁴ ; Fear and Failure²⁵ ; We are the Masters of our

²⁰ 26% respondents are older than 50 years, and 33% earn a monthly salary greater than LBP 10 million.

²¹ Which covers 30 qualities by itself.

²² Questions 7, 14.1.

²³ Questions 19.8, 19.9

²⁴ Questions 14.9, 14.10, 19.3

²⁵ Questions 19.10, 19.11, 17

Destiny²⁶ ; Serving the others²⁷ ; Building Competence²⁸ ; Care for self²⁹ ; Reading Books³⁰.

- The third one will address the remaining topics of the questionnaire, i.e. Planning³¹ and Time Management³², and will also wrap up the results of the totality of the survey.

3. FINDINGS PERTAINING TO THE “THE QUALITIES LEBANESE PROFESSIONALS CHERISH THE MOST”

This analysis is based on questions 1, 2 and 3, as well as on question 20 of the questionnaire.

3.1. Analysis of the answers to questions 1, 2 and 3

Question 1 is an inducer and is meant to lead the respondents to start visualizing the qualities that they believe successful people enjoy the most. As such, the twenty listed names have no real interest on their own and were selected among celebrities the respondents could easily identify with, avoiding contemporary politicians and sectarian celebrities to evade susceptibilities.

Question 1: SELECTED CELEBRITIES								
(Up to 3 per Respondent. Average # of selections per Respondent: 907/313 = 2.9)								
CELEBRITIES	MALE (171)		FEMALE (142)		TOTAL (313)		Relative weight of celebrities	Accumulated weight of celebrities
	No. of selections	% among 3 most important	No. of selections	% among 3 most important	No. of selections	% among 3 most important		
Mother Teresa	73	43%	92	65%	165	53%	18%	18%
G. Kh. Gibran	49	29%	63	44%	112	36%	12%	31%
M. Ghandi	45	26%	52	37%	97	31%	11%	41%
B. Gates	48	28%	40	28%	88	28%	10%	51%
A. Einstein	53	31%	26	18%	79	25%	9%	60%
N. Mandela	37	22%	32	23%	69	22%	8%	67%
S. Jobs	44	26%	22	15%	66	21%	7%	75%
L. da Vinci	35	20%	20	14%	55	18%	6%	81%
C. de Gaulle	32	19%	15	11%	47	15%	5%	86%
N. Bonaparte	18	11%	9	6%	27	9%	3%	89%
W. Buffet	22	13%	4	3%	26	8%	3%	92%
Alexander the Great	11	6%	6	4%	17	5%	2%	93%
J. F. Kennedy	9	5%	5	4%	14	4%	2%	95%
H. Ford	11	6%	3	2%	14	4%	2%	97%
A. Nobel	4	2%	7	5%	11	4%	1%	98%
G. Abdel Naser	3	2%	3	2%	6	2%	1%	98%
J. Caesar	3	2%	2	1%	5	2%	1%	99%
B. Hannibal	5	3%	0	0%	5	2%	1%	100%
W. Allen	1	1%	1	1%	2	1%	0%	100%
D. Eisenhower	0	0%	2	1%	2	1%	0%	100%
	503	-	404	-	907	-	100%	-

The respondents were asked to select 3 celebrities among the 20 listed ones as being their most valued ones. The result for the 313 respondents is shown in the

26 Questions 13, 14.3, 14.11

27 Questions 14.2, 14.7

28 Questions 9, 12, 14.6, 19.2, 19.5

29 Question 8

30 Question 18

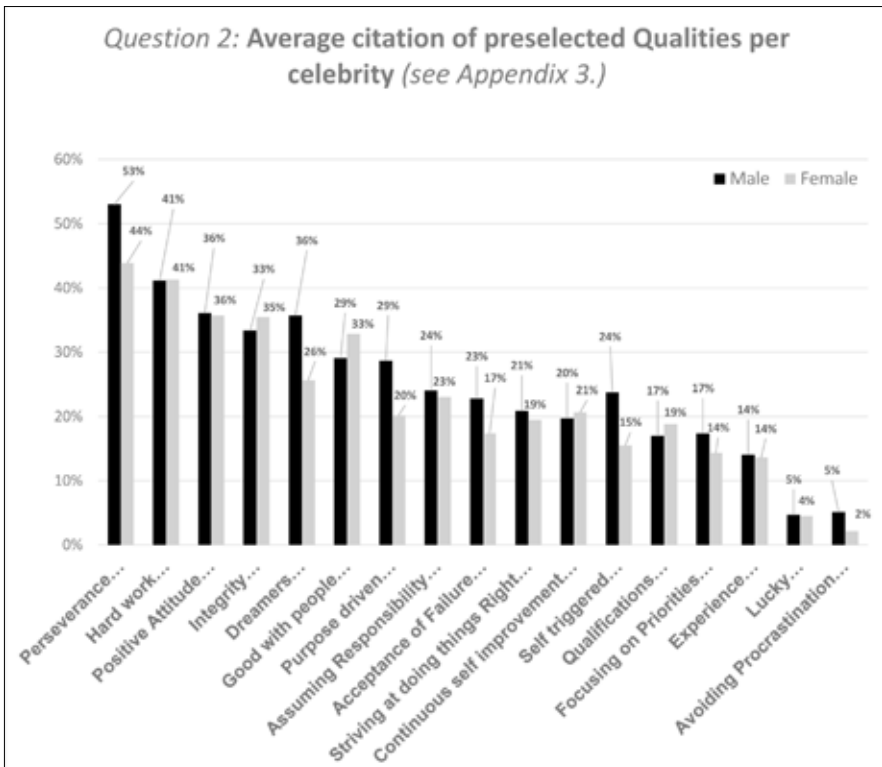
31 Questions 10, 11, 14.4, 14.8, 15, 16, 19.1, 19.4, 19.6

32 Questions 4, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6

table “Selected Celebrities”. The only issue that might be worth signaling here is the high retention rate of Mother Teresa (53% for all Respondents, with 65% for the Female respondents), maybe because of the humanity she was renowned for³³, a quality that may have also influenced the preference of the respondents for Kh. Gibran and M. Gandhi.

In order to come up with the qualities the respondents cherished the most, two questions were used in a complementary manner.

In **Question 2**, Respondents were asked to select the 3 qualities that characterize the most each of their three retained celebrities from a list of 17 qualities that were considered by the survey as being among the most important ones³⁴. Their answers are analyzed in **Appendix 3: “Prelisted qualities checked by the 313 respondents (Question 2)”**, which is summarized in the following graph, and which calls for the following annotations:



- **Perseverance** and **Hard work** have the upper hand (respectively 49%³⁵ and 41% for all the respondents), while **Qualifications** scored only 18% and

³³ Which shows maybe to which extent the Lebanese professionals cherish the soft qualities of people.

³⁴ Almost all of which are retaken in question 20 of the questionnaire under alternative names to validate the findings of this part of the study.

³⁵ With 53% for Perseverance for the Males.

Luck 5% - good for our professionals who accept the fact that one reaps what they sow and that “overnight” success is a fallacy as reaching one’s potential requires long years of continuous effort.

- **Integrity** came up with 34%, backed by a 24% for **Assuming responsibility**, which is to please us in a country that is ranked among the most corrupted ones, proving that the Lebanese professionals keep hanging to the good values.
- **Experience** scored only 14% among the respondents while **Positive Attitude** secured itself 36%, denoting that the respondents attach importance to the soft skills.

In **Question 3**, the Respondents were asked to complete the list by mentioning up to three additional qualities they believed their selected celebrities enjoyed and that were not covered in question 2. The highest ranked qualities were **Creativity** (including innovative, agent of change), which was cited by 29 out of the 313 respondents (i.e. by around 9%), and **Leadership** which was cited 27 times.

THE 313 RESPONDENTS RETENTION OF THE "CREATIVITY" QUALITY			
Description	Total No. of Respondents	No. of times quality was selected	% of Retention
Female	142	11 ^f	8%
Male	171	18 ^f	11%
Totals	313	29^f	9%
Employed	248	23 ^f	9%
Self-employed	62	6 ^f	10%
Totals (3 undeclared)	310	29^f	9%
Less than 35 years old	75	5 ^f	7%
35 to 49	154	13 ^f	8%
50 to 64	70	8 ^f	11%
65 and over	14	3 ^f	21%
Totals	313	29^f	9%

THE 313 RESPONDENTS RETENTION OF THE "LEADERSHIP" QUALITY			
Description	Total No. of Respondents	No. of times quality was selected	% of Retention
Female	142	9 ^f	6%
Male	171	18 ^f	11%
Totals	313	27^f	9%
Employed	248	23 ^f	9%
Self-employed	62	4 ^f	6%
Totals (3 undeclared)	310	27^f	9%
Less than 35 years old	75	5 ^f	7%
35 to 49	154	12 ^f	8%
50 to 64	70	7 ^f	10%
65 and over	14	3 ^f	21%
Totals	313	27^f	9%

Concerning both **Creativity** and **Leadership**, Males scored more than the Females³⁶, and the higher the age bracket of the respondents, the higher their appreciation of these qualities.

The other qualities that were named were selected by much less respondents each³⁷. They are mainly the following by order of importance: **Self-Confidence** (< optimist, determined), **Courage** (< risk taker, ambitious), **Intelligence** / wise, **Human** / generous, **Spiritual**, **Passionate** / patient, **Inspirational** / motivator, and **Charismatic**.

³⁶ I would have expected the Females to score more because of their presumed higher sensitivity!

³⁷ Making them irrelevant to comment.

3.2. Analysis of “Integrity” not covered by question 20

At the time of the formulation of the survey, the qualities covered by question 2 of its questionnaire, as well as by its Part 2³⁸ were summed up in question 20³⁹, to which were added some additional qualities to cover all of the qualities the author has been addressing in his works.

THE 313 RESPONDENTS RETENTION OF THE "INTEGRITY" QUALITY

Description	Total No. of Respondents	Potential No (No. x 3)	No. of times quality was selected for the 3 celebrities	% of Retention
Female	142	426	151	35%
Male	171	513	171	33%
Totals	313	939	322	34%
Employed	248	744	247	33%
Sel-employed	62	186	71	38%
Totals (4 undeclared)	310	930	318	34%
Less than 35 years old	75	225	59	26%
35 to 49	154	462	162	35%
50 to 64	70	210	81	39%
65 and over	14	42	20	48%
Totals	313	939	322	34%

As cross-referenced in **Appendix 4 “Coverage of question 20 of qualities cited in questions 2 & 3”**, all the questions addressed in **question 2** were covered in question 20, except for **Integrity**⁴⁰, which was mentioned by 34% of the 313 respondents who addressed the issue for their 3 celebrities.

At a time the average retention rate of this quality is 34% for both Females and Males, it stands at 38% for the Self-employed and goes crescendo with age – from 26% for the younger to 48% for the older – as if telling us that we learn about the value of Integrity with age out of what we experience in life (the felt guilt of dishonesty and the joy of integrity).

3.3. Analysis of the answers to question 20

(260 respondents covered comprehensively question 20)

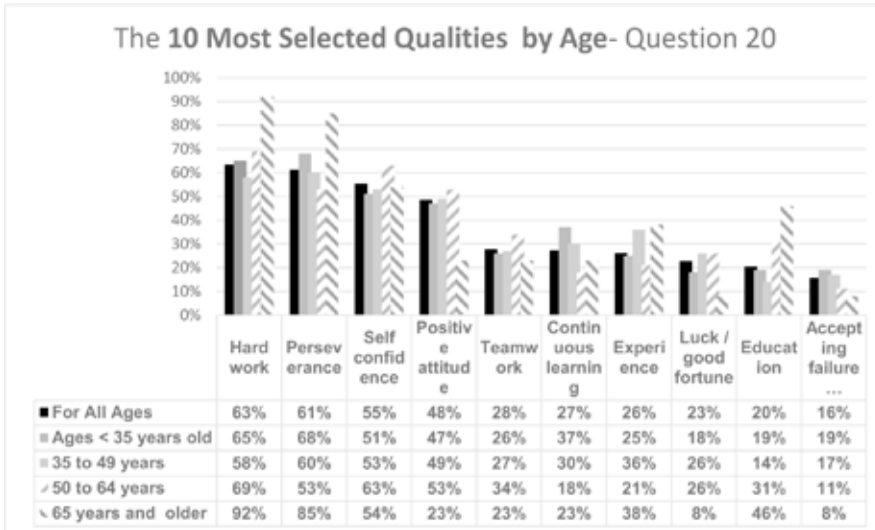
The qualities that are not covered in question 20 of the questionnaire and that are worth mentioning have been addressed separately in the above paragraph 3.2. as it was not advisable to analyze them jointly with the qualities of question 20 due to their different approaches *(for Integrity, the respondents were solicited to select in question 2 all of the 17 qualities they believe characterized each of*

³⁸ Questions 4 to 19.

³⁹ By the same name or using equivalent ones.

⁴⁰ By involuntary omission.

their 3 celebrities; in question 3, the respondents were requested to state up to 3 additional qualities for each of their 3 selected celebrities; while for question 5, the respondents had to select 5 out of the 30 predetermined qualities for the successful professionals).



Concerning the 30 qualities addressed in question 20, the most selected qualities are shown in the adjacent graph that calls for the following annotations:

- **Hard work**, (63%), **Perseverance** (61%), **Self-confidence** (55%) and **Positive attitude** (48%) were selected by the majority of the respondents, remotely followed by the other qualities.
- **Hard work** And **Perseverance** were especially selected by the older people, alongside **Education**⁴¹ (46%) that scored only 20% for the total sum of the respondents.
- **Hard work**, **Perseverance** and **Positive attitude**⁴² were also highlighted among the most selected qualities in question 20 of the survey. **Dreamers** (corresponding to Imagination in question 20⁴³) is the only quality which popped out in question 2 and that was not underlined in question 20 of the survey. Moreover, **Self confidence** that rated third with a retention of 55% was not stressed on in question 2.

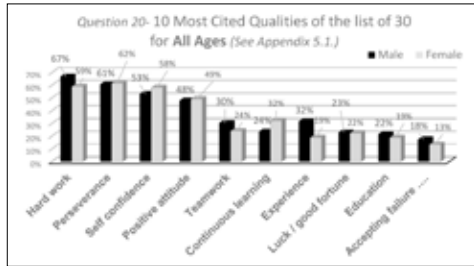
Appendices 5.1. to 5.5. “Qualities/traits selected by respondents from question 20 as characterizing successful people” analyze the 30 qualities of question 20 by Category of Age for each of the Females and Males separately. The following

41 (Si jeunesse savait): as if the older professionals were saying to the younger: “If you only knew, the way we experienced it, how much Education pays”!

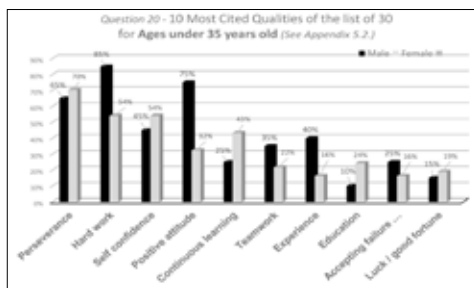
42 Integrity was involuntarily omitted from the 30 qualities of question 20 as mentioned earlier.

43 Which scored 13% in question 20.

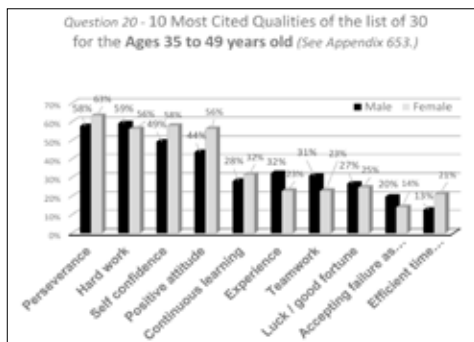
graphs summarize their findings for the 10 most cited qualities by category of age and by gender:



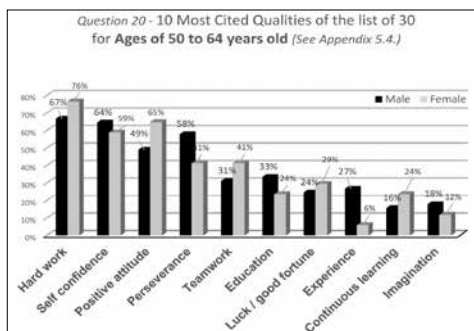
- For all ages, **Hard work** and **Experience** enjoy more relative weight for the Males than for the Females, while **Self-confidence** and **Continuous learning** are more important to the Females than for the Males.



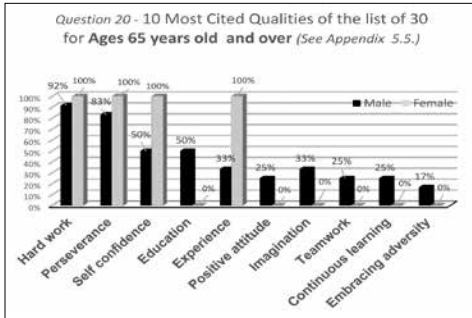
- For the younger professionals, the Males gave more importance to **Hard work**, **Positive attitude**, **Teamwork** and **Experience**, while the Females gave more importance to **Self-confidence**, **Continuous learning** and **Education**.



- For the category of age 35 to 49, Males gave more relative importance to **Experience**, **Teamwork** and **Accepting failure**, while Females appreciated relatively more **Self-confidence**, **Positive attitude** and **Time management**.

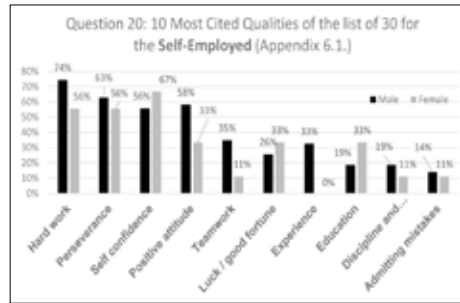
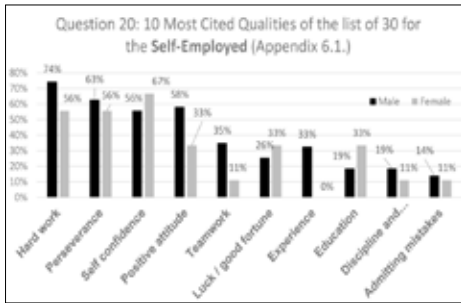


- For the professionals aged 50 to 64, Males focused relatively more than Females on **Perseverance**, **Education** and **Experience**, while for the Females the qualities that they focused more relatively on were **Positive attitude**, **Teamwork** and **Continuous learning**.



- The discrepancies in the relative importance given by the Males and Females for the elderly people are much more accentuated than for the other categories of ages. Males stressed much more than the Females on the last listed qualities, while Females cherished more than the Males **Self-confidence** and **Experience**.

Appendices 6.1. and 6.2. reveal for each of the Males and Females their ranking of the 30 qualities addressed in question 20. The analysis of the **10 most selected qualities** stands as follows for the **Self-employed** in comparison to the **Employed** respondents:



While the Males and females had a very comparable appreciation for the 10 most cited qualities for the employed professionals, the differences between the appreciations of the two genders for the Self-employed worth mentioning are the following:

- The Males gave more relative importance to **Hard work**, **Positive attitude** and especially **Experience**,
- The Females went more for **Self-confidence** and, **Luck and Education**.

From the above, we can note the following appreciation differences:

- Males favored more than Females **Hard work** and **Experience**, while
- Females favored more: **Self-confidence**, **Education/Continuous learning**.

The above differences look to be supported by the difference in character and by the time relatively devoted to work between the two genders.

3.4. Crossing the answers to question 20

Among the list of the 30 preselected qualities, the respondents were asked to select the 5 most important ones.

The 30 qualities were ranked in Appendix 5.1. as per their relative importance to the respondents. **Hard work** ranked number 1 as it was the most selected quality by the respondents (165), followed by **Perseverance** (159 votes), etc. In order to determine the other 4 most cherished qualities by those who checked each quality, the selections of the respondents were cross-tabulated in Appendices 7, 8 and 9 “**Crossing the 5 selected qualities by the respondents among the 30 preselected ones – question20**”⁴⁴.

3.4.1. Crossing of the answers for the most important qualities for both genders

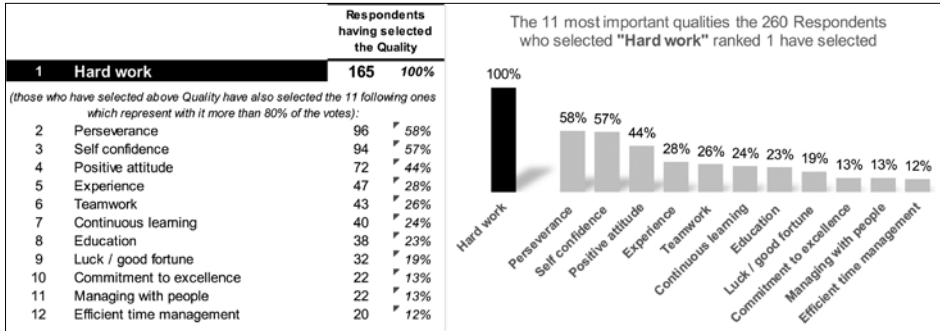
As it is set, the number of votes in Appendix 5.1. came to 1,300 (260 x 5). When cross-tabulated for the 260 respondents, the number passes to 6,500 (1,300 x 5) in Appendix 7, with 30% covered by the 5 first qualities, and 67% by the first 12 ones as shown in the following table:

No. of respondents who selected the Quality among their 5 ones		165	159	144	126	72	71	68	59	53	41	39	37	1,034
Rank in importance of the secured score		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
The No. of the Qualities as per Question 20		1	5	3	4	24	27	9	2	8	11	20	28	
The 12 most selected qualities	Hard work	165	96	94	72	43	40	47	32	38	18	20	22	687
	Perseverance	96	159	82	77	38	39	31	30	32	24	22	22	652
	Self confidence	94	82	144	76	32	27	37	26	29	23	17	17	604
	Positive attitude	72	77	76	126	32	31	24	25	18	21	18	12	532
	Teamwork	43	38	32	32	72	17	14	15	10	10	13	7	303
	Continuous learning	40	39	27	31	17	71	18	10	14	5	8	10	290
	Experience	47	31	37	24	14	18	68	16	17	3	11	8	294
	Luck / good fortune	32	30	26	25	15	10	16	59	12	8	7	3	243
	Education	38	32	29	18	10	14	17	12	53	3	2	6	234
	Accepting failure as the way to learning	18	24	23	21	10	5	3	8	3	41	3	7	166
	Efficient time management	20	22	17	18	13	8	11	7	2	3	39	5	165
	Commitment to excellence	22	22	17	12	7	10	8	3	6	7	5	37	156
	Totals		687	652	604	532	303	290	294	243	234	166	165	156

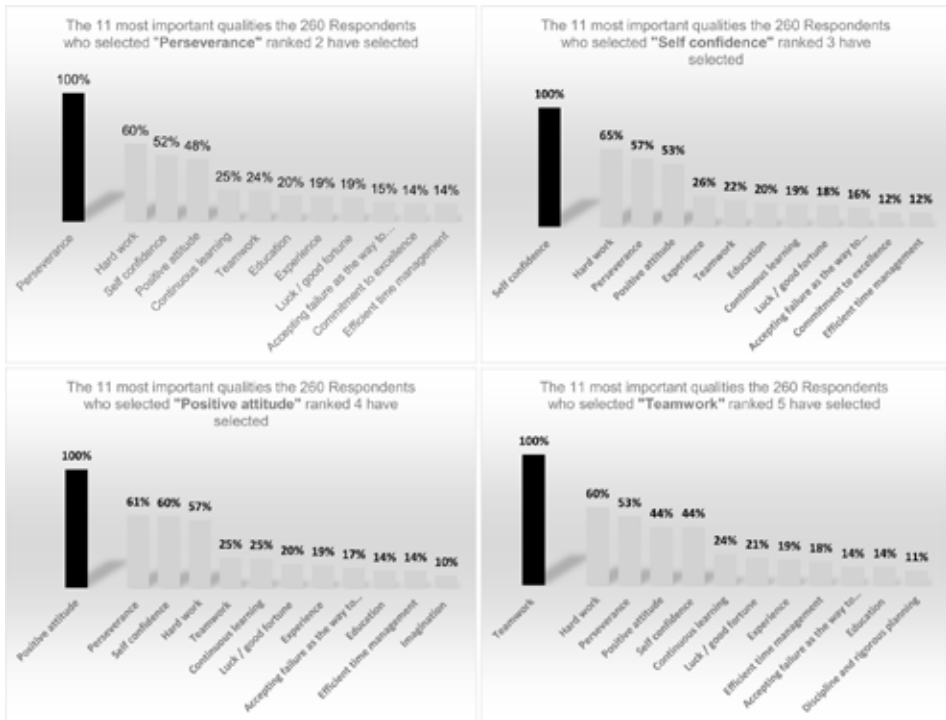
Black area = 30% of total scores for 30 questions Black & Gray area = 67%

Appendix 7 permitted determining the 4 other qualities that were selected by those who selected each quality of the 30 preselected ones. More than 2/3 of the votes were secured by the 12 most important qualities, and it looked interesting to highlight for each of the 5 first qualities the 11 other most selected ones. It is good to note here that the votes given to the first 12 qualities covered for each of them more than 80% of the votes. For example, for the quality number 1 **Hard work**, the result came as follows:

⁴⁴ Appendix 7 for the 260 respondents, Appendix 8 for the 112 Females and Appendix 9 for the 148 Males.



While the above analysis can be easily done by a simple reading of Appendix 7, the following graphs chart the above analysis for the other four qualities of the 5 most important ones:



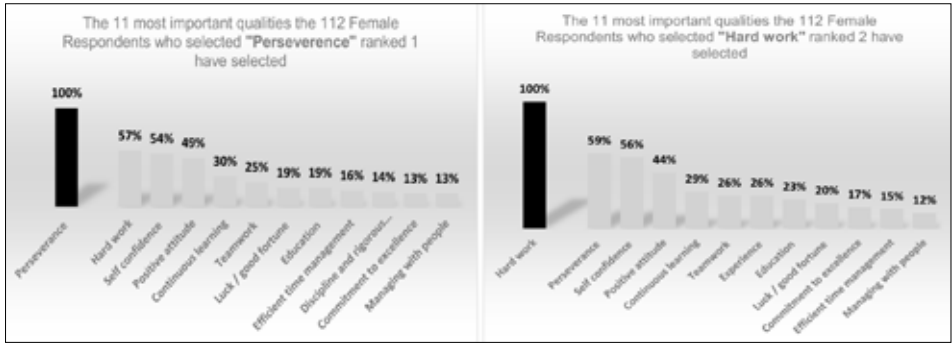
It is worth noting from the above graphs that the preferred quality and the three other following ones came to the same, i.e. **Hard work**, **Perseverance**, **Positive attitude**, and **Self-confidence**. Moreover, when you count these four qualities for the respondents who named the most important 12 qualities, the count comes as follows respectively: 12, 12, 12, 9. These results are commonly shared by both genders of the respondents as can be clearly seen from paragraphs 3.4.2. and 3.4.3. below.

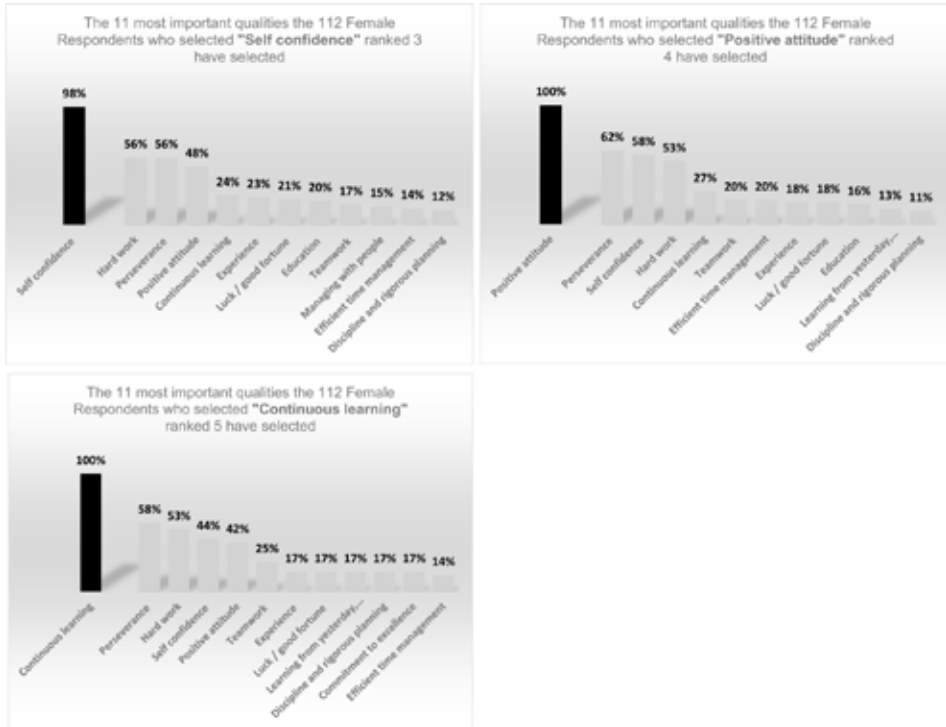
3.4.2. Crossing of the answers for the most important qualities for Females
 Appendix 8 crossed the answers for the 30 questions of question 20 for the 112 females with 2,800 checks (112 x 25). 33% were covered by the 5 most cited qualities and 65% by the first 12 qualities:

No. of respondents who selected the Quality among their 5 ones		69	66	65	55	36	27	25	21	21	21	16	16	438			
Rank in importance of the secured score		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12				
The No. of the Qualities as per Question 20		1	5	3	4	24	27	9	2	8	11	20	28				
NO. of respondents who selected the Quality Rank in importance of the secured score No. of the Qualities in Question 20	The 12 most selected qualities																
		Perseverance	Hard work	Self confidence	Positive attitude	Continuous learning	Teamwork	Luck / good fortune	Education	Experience	Efficient time management	Discipline and rigorous planning	Commitment to excellence	Totals			
	69	1	5	Perseverance	69	39	37	34	21	17	13	13	5	11	10	9	278
	66	2	1	Hard work	39	66	37	29	19	17	13	15	17	10	5	11	278
	65	3	3	Self confidence	37	37	65	32	16	11	14	13	15	9	8	6	263
	55	4	4	Positive attitude	34	29	32	55	15	11	10	9	10	11	6	9	227
	36	5	27	Continuous learning	21	19	16	15	36	9	6	5	6	5	6	6	150
	27	6	24	Teamwork	17	17	11	11	9	27	4	2	2	7	4	3	114
	25	7	2	Luck / good fortune	13	13	14	10	6	4	25	5	3	4	3	1	101
	21	8	8	Education	13	15	13	9	5	2	5	21	4	0	3	4	94
	21	9	9	Experience	5	17	15	10	6	2	3	4	21	6	2	2	93
	21	10	20	Efficient time management	11	10	9	11	5	7	4	0	6	21	3	1	88
	16	11	19	Discipline and rigorous planning	10	5	8	6	6	4	3	3	2	3	16	2	68
16	12	28	Commitment to excellence	9	11	6	5	6	3	1	4	2	1	2	16	66	
438				278	278	263	227	150	114	101	94	93	88	68	66	1,820	

Black area = 33% of total scores for 30 questions (2,800) Black & Gray area = 65%

The following is the analysis of the crossing for the 5 first qualities, indicating for each one of them the other 11 most important qualities the respondents selected among the other 29 qualities of question 20:

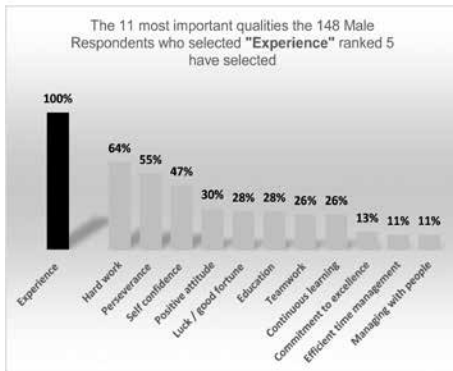
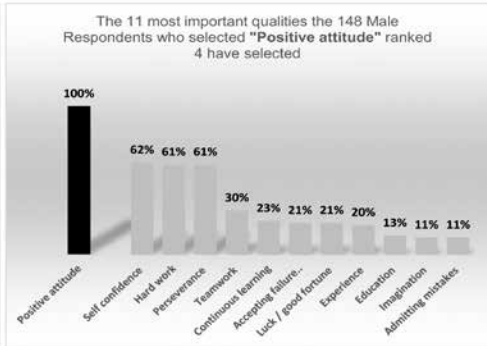
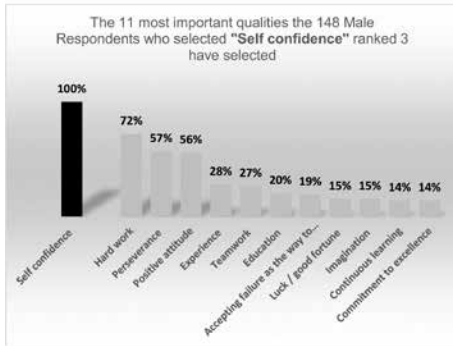
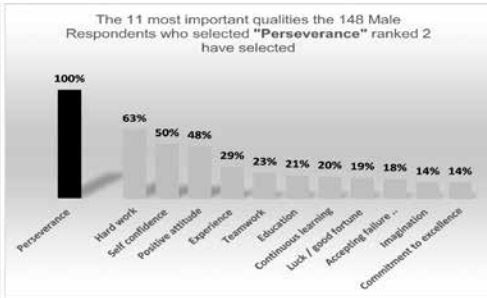
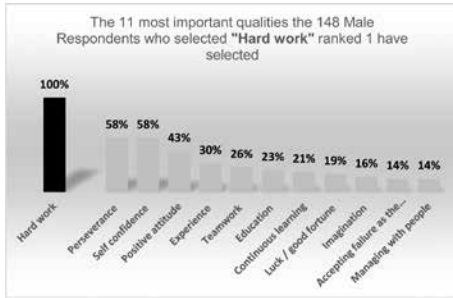




3.4.3. Crossing of the answers for the most important qualities for Males

Appendix 9 crossed the answers for the 30 questions of question 20 for the 148 Males with 3,700 checks (148 x 25). 31% were covered by the 5 most cited qualities and 69% by the first 12 qualities:

No. of respondents who selected the Quality among their 5 ones		99	90	79	71	47	45	35	34	32	26	24	21	603
Rank in importance of the secured score		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
The No. of the Qualities as per Question 20		5	1	3	4	27	24	2	8	9	20	19	28	
No. of respondents who selected the Quality	Rank in importance of the secured score	The 12 most selected qualities												Totals
		Hard work	Persistence	Self confidence	Positive attitude	Experience	Teamwork	Continuous learning	Luck / good fortune	Education	Accepting failure as the way to learning	Imagination	Commitment to excellence	
No. of the Qualities in Question 20		99	57	57	43	30	26	21	19	23	14	16	11	416
90	2	57	90	45	43	26	21	18	17	19	16	13	13	378
79	3	57	45	79	44	22	21	11	12	16	15	12	11	345
71	4	43	43	44	71	14	21	16	15	9	15	8	7	306
47	5	30	26	22	14	47	12	12	13	13	2	4	6	201
45	6	26	21	21	21	12	45	8	11	8	6	4	4	187
35	7	21	18	11	16	12	8	35	4	9	4	2	4	144
34	8	19	17	12	15	13	11	4	34	7	5	3	2	142
32	9	23	19	16	9	13	8	9	7	32	1	1	2	140
26	10	14	16	15	15	2	6	4	5	1	26	7	4	115
24	11	16	13	12	8	4	4	2	3	1	7	24	4	98
21	12	11	13	11	7	6	4	4	2	2	4	4	21	89
603		416	378	345	306	201	187	144	142	140	115	98	89	2,561
Black area = 31% of total scores for 30 questions														
Black & Gray area = 69%														



3.5. The importance of Accumulating Advantage, the “Matthew Effect”

The importance of what the sociologists call the **Accumulated advantage**⁴⁵ is due to the “Matthew Effect”⁴⁶, which was first coined by sociologist Robert K. Merton in 1968⁴⁷. The Matthew Effect advocates that the **Rich get Richer and the Poor get Poorer** as those who accumulate qualities are much more likely to secure themselves even more qualities.

45 See paragraph 2.10. which refers to the book of Malcolm Gladwell that advocates the importance of the “10,000 Hour” rule to mastering any skill.

46 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath.

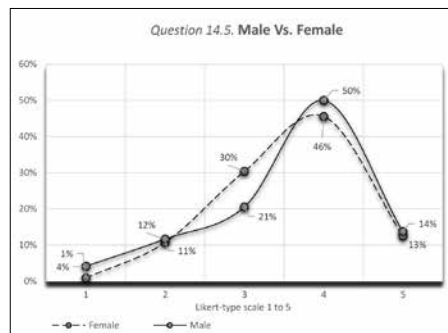
47 Source: Wikipedia.org.

The importance of accumulating advantage stems from the fact that the more qualities we have, the more we can leverage on, and thus the more we can speed up our accumulation of additional qualities. This is wishful as one can expect excellence to take time - Thomas Edison once said, “genius is one percent inspiration and 99% perspiration”, letting us trust that good things come to those who wait. By keeping on doing more and better of what we do, we honor **the role of patience and time** in creating our success, journey during which we need to keep on Sharpening our Saw⁴⁸ so as we become less Pavlovian dogs and chose better our reactions to the happenings of life.

Because of the importance of the above, and due to the fact that **success is a journey and not a destination** - in that sense it accumulates and never culminates - the survey addressed question 14.5. to find out to which extent the following statement was accepted by the respondents: **“Those who have advantages are much more likely to be given even more advantages”**⁴⁹. The answers to the question are documented in Appendix 10 and came up with an average grade of 3.6 on the scale of Likert⁵⁰, with 48% of them selecting the score of 4, reflecting thus the high importance granted to the Matthew Effect by the respondents:

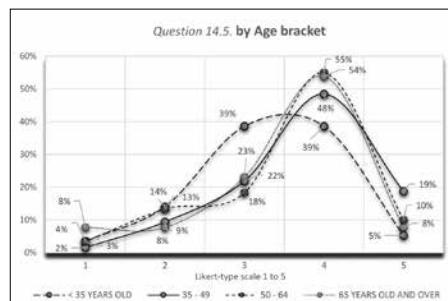
• **Male Vs. Female:**

- Both genders scored 3.6.
- Females went relatively more for the score of 3 and less for the score of 4 than the Males.



• **By Age bracket:**

- The highest score was given by the professionals with an age between 35 and 49 years where the grade of 4 was the most granted one in comparison to the other age categories.
- The above grade 4 was granted by more than 50% of the respondents aged 50 and over.



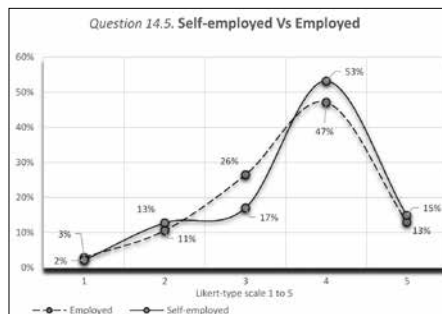
48 Habit No. 7 of Stephen Covey book “7 Habits of Highly Effective People”, which discusses self-renewal, self-care, self-respect and self-improvement...

49 The question was answered by 258 respondents.

50 Where: 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither agree nor disagree, 4= Agree, and 5= Strongly agree.

• **Self-employed Vs. Employed:**

- Self-employed went more for the grade of 4 (53% Vs 47%).
- Employees went more for the grade of 3 (26% Vs 17%).



4. SUMMING UP THE SURVEY’S MAJOR FINDINGS

Over and above the importance of the need to **ACCUMULATE ADVANTAGE**, the carried out survey reveals that **Hard work, Perseverance, Self-confidence, Positive attitude**⁵¹ and **Integrity**⁵² are the 5 qualities that the respondents selected the most.

These qualities can be divided into three interdependent categories:

- **HARD WORK AND PERSEVERANCE**⁵³: Success does not seem to the Lebanese professionals as being the result of Education and Experience (not even of Talent) as much as it is of Hard work and Perseverance. Hard work and perseverance permit us to gather steam to enable us then to run full speed. We in fact need to start by lifting veal, to end up lifting beef. We need to work and learn, and success will come in a surprising way.
- **SELF-CONFIDENCE AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE**: The respondents gave little consideration to luck/coincidences. They believe the successful professional is like a magnet that attracts opportunities⁵⁴ (capable of doing miracles). After all, what is better to say in this respect more than “Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you” – *Matthew*.

Self-confidence is the power against which failure cannot stand. Norman Vincent Peale advocated that nothing is impossible for those who believe in themselves⁵⁵.

- **INTEGRITY**: Our qualities will take us as far as our Integrity permits. Integrity is what makes our success endure. It is what lets the others have confidence in us and be ready to support us and seek our support. It is what at the end

51 Covered in both questions 2 and 20 of the questionnaire.

52 Covered in question 2 and involuntarily missed out in question 20.

53 i.e. Persistence in spite of adversities.

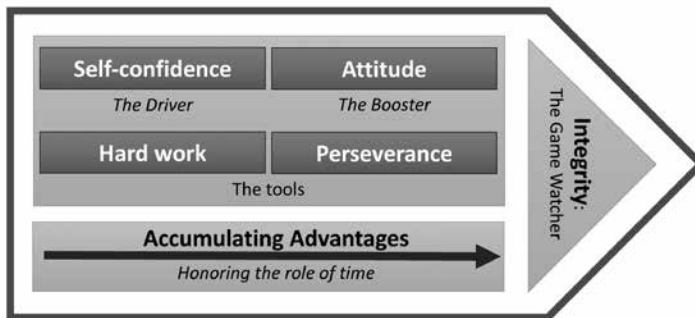
54 Capable of converting sand into gold – as the Lebanese saying goes.

55 The Power of Positive Thinking – 1952 – a book that sold over 20 million copies (written in 40 languages).

of the day will permit us to prevail. As Zig Ziglar insinuated, we need to keep doing what is right, and not what is necessarily easy. In the final count, Integrity is the most important persuasion tool that the professionals would have in their arsenal.

Based on the above, the survey induces the construction of the following model to illustrate our journey towards success:

The Journey Towards Success



5. EXPANDING THE MODEL

Reviewing the above model, I feel that it can beneficially be expanded on by incorporating the following additional three attributes:

KNOWING ONE'S DESIRE: Setting a burning desire will help professionals determine where they are going (fixing the ultimate thing they want to achieve). This is their perception of their destiny that they trust they can achieve (otherwise they would not have made it their daily dream). This has to be the starting point of success as, without it, professionals would act helplessly as a ship without a compass.

WORKING ON GETTING LUCKY⁵⁶: We are brought to believe that working harder will infallibly merit us success. But, what does working hard mean? A machine operator working on regular basis overtime to feed his or her family works very hard; So does a taxi driver working two shifts a day; So is our household assistant... Are they however successful by our common understanding of the word? Did they self-fulfill themselves? Did they see their dreams come true?

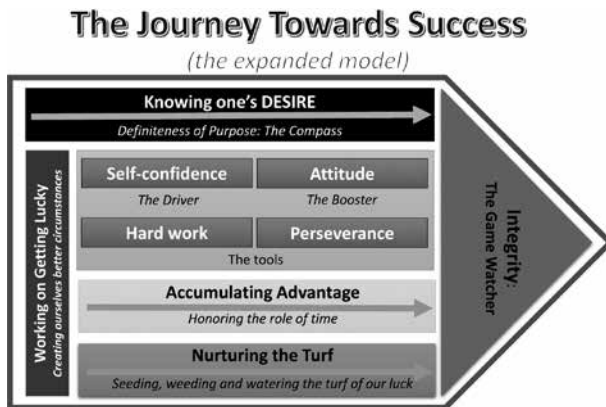
Let's admit it, where one comes from (country, family, century...) has a great impact on their success journey. We all easily admit that the son

⁵⁶ Luck ranked number 8 among the 30 qualities addressed by question 20 with 23% of the respondents retaining it.

of a renowned and respected politician, especially if wealthy, will make it in life more easily than a refugee child living in a camp? Chance does not favor them equally, the former seeing more opportunities coming his or her way than the latter... We need to accept that working hard is more of a requirement than a reason to success. Yes, the harder we work, the luckiest we get to be, provided the other success requirements are secured. Of course, though we normally admit that luck exists, we should not wait for it to happen to live and succeed. We need to foster our own luck by creating ourselves better circumstances to succeed, i.e. being clear on what our goals and objectives are, keeping an open mind and a positive attitude to spot opportunities, having what it takes to seize the opportunities that we attract and exploiting them.

NURTURING OUR TURF: Accepting failure as the way of learning, and thus taking risks, is a quality that was picked up by only 16% of the respondents and ranked number 10 among the 30 prelisted qualities of question 20. However, we can improve on our luck by securing ourselves a better turf, which will permit us better mastering our destiny. We can do that by seeding, weeding and watering our turf, i.e. expanding on our personal network and working on being at the right place, at the right time and with the right people.

Considering the above, the expanded model would look as follows:



CONCLUSION

This study highlighted the qualities / traits the Lebanese professionals believe condition most their success based on an online survey addressed to few hundred professionals of various fields, age and education, covering both employed and self-employed seniors.

The most important qualities / traits that were advocated are the following ones:

- **SELF-CONFIDENCE** that drives the professionals towards success by allowing them exploiting optimally their capabilities and competencies, and against which failure cannot stand,
- **POSITIVE ATTITUDE** that boosts the professionals and permits them fulfill their dreams, rendering them a magnet capable of attracting opportunities, which helps them succeed what often seems impossible to their peers,
- **HARD WORK AND PERSEVERANCE** that form the tools that allow the professionals to gather steam and run full speed in a consistent manner,
- **ACCUMULATING ADVANTAGE (QUALITIES)** that allows the professionals to secure themselves even more qualities while honoring by their patience the role of time in their success journey and improving on their reactions to their happenings of life,
- **INTEGRITY** that makes the success of the professionals endure by acquiring them the support of those who they come across, leveraging then their efforts.

Moreover, the following three qualities / traits were added to render the success model more significant and comprehensive:

- **KNOWING ONE'S DESIRE:** The propeller that will keep pushing you in the right direction of your ultimate purpose; the compass that will guide you in your journey towards success in a consistent manner.
- **WORKING ON GETTING LUCKY** by creating ourselves good circumstances, rather than waiting for luck to happen to live and succeed (by being clear on what our goals and objectives are and by keeping an open mind),
- **NURTURING THE TURF** by seeding, weeding and watering our turf through expanding our personal network and working on being at the right place, at the right time and with the right people.

Important note: As mentioned earlier in this article, readers wishing to receive the Questionnaire addressed in December 2016 for the survey, as well as the survey's Appendices referred to in this article are kindly requested to download them from the page "Liens utiles" at the end of the section "Accueil" at: www.fgm.usj.edu.lb
