

**Created  
To  
*Win!***

**12 Keys To True Success**

**Kevin Baerg**

**Inspiration**  
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## Created To Win!

*12 Keys To True Success*

Kevin Baerg

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*Dedicated to the excellence that lies dormant  
within you. May God awaken it now!*

*Most of all to my precious wife, Patty, who is a living,  
shining example of unconditional love,  
forgiveness and support. I love you honey.*

*And to our wonderful children, Sarah and Tim.  
May all our dreams as a family continue to come true!*

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**T**o every person there comes that special moment when you are tapped on the shoulder to do a very special thing unique to you. What a tragedy if that moment finds you unprepared for the work that would be your finest hour.

— *Winston Churchill*

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## Introduction

“And now I will show you the most excellent way.”

**E**xcellence...is that what you really want? Take a moment to think about it. Do you strongly desire to reach your full potential? If in your heart there is a resounding, “Yes!” — then I firmly believe this book will help you in your quest.

Far too many people accept life the way it comes to them and assume it is “their destiny” instead of actively pursuing God and his purposes for their life. ‘Created To Win’ is a system of principles you can use everyday to grow into the person God created you to be and achieve *true success*.

My premise in writing this book is that first of all, I truly believe that God has a plan and a purpose for **everyone** on this planet — *and they are good plans!* Secondly I am convinced that *God really wants you to succeed!*

What is success? I believe the true definition of success is simply fulfilling the purposes for which God has created you. Of course, this requires that you discover what this purpose is and then begin to pursue it with “reckless abandon!”

Perhaps you are reading this book to become more motivated, or maybe someone else wants you to turn it up a notch! I like to tell the following story about motivation:

A man took a shortcut through a graveyard one night and promptly fell in a freshly dug grave. Try as he might, he couldn’t find a way out. He finally resigned himself to this fact and waited for morning and the possibility of some

*“Unhappiness is in not knowing what we want and killing ourselves to get it.”*

— Don Herold

assistance. Wouldn't you know it, but another guy took the same shortcut and also fell in the hole. He too tried with no avail to climb out. Finally, just as the second man was getting ready to give up, a voice came from the corner behind him.

"It's no use, you can't get out!"

But at that moment he somehow *found a way out!* The second man had entered into a new level of motivation!

I believe you too can accomplish anything you set your mind to if you'll follow the unchanging principles in these pages.

I have attempted to make this book as practical and as 'hands on' in nature as my seminar. At the end of most chapters you will find a Personal Application section for you to complete. This will assist you in assimilating the concepts into your life and help increase your retention of the material.

Like anything in life, you get out only what you put in. In order to get the most out of this book, I urge you to invest the time necessary to complete the exercises. Some have chosen to read through the entire book first and then return to work on the personal application.

I have selected a layout that allowed me to liberally sprinkle pertinent quotes throughout each chapter. When no credit is given for a quote, it simply means I am not sure of its origin. I have collected these for years and unfortunately, not everyone is quoted or credited properly.

My hope and prayer is that you will take this information and use it to achieve the true success both you and God desire.

*Have fun and enjoy the journey!*

*"No one keeps up his enthusiasm automatically. Enthusiasm must be nourished with new actions, new aspirations, new efforts, new vision. It is one's own fault if his enthusiasm is gone. He has failed to feed it."*

— Anonymous

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# 1 The Engine that Powers Your Dreams

## — Defining Your Vision

"But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations."

— Psalms

**G**od has a vision for the entire creation including a very special plan just for you!

Your vision is the foundation for your life. I challenge you to examine yourself — your behavior today, tomorrow, next week, next month and next year — in the context of what truly matters most to you.

By keeping your vision in mind, you can better ensure that whatever actions you take on a specific day are in alignment with what you have already decided is extremely important. Each day can therefore contribute in a more meaningful way to the vision you have for your life as a whole. Your life will be amazingly different when: You define what is supremely important, keep that vision focused in your mind, and take steps each day to walk in it — doing things in concert with your core values.

Dale Galloway has stated, "People never grow or go beyond their vision. Tell me your vision and I will tell you your future."

Most people truly desire to be successful and to have successful lives. Yet each one of us has a different opinion of what success means.

**I believe the true definition of success is fulfilling the purposes for which God has created you.** It is accomplishing the dreams God has had for you from before you were even born!

*"Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become. Your vision is the promise of what you shall one day be."*

— James Allen

## What is Your Definition of Success?

What is true success in your eyes? How will it look in your life? What do you really want to have happen? If you don't define what success *will* mean or *does* mean to you — then you will never know if you have achieved it. It is all too easy to be squeezed into someone else's "mold" of success. Consequently, you won't feel successful even if you attain many of the world's standards of success.

Some people are so paralyzed with the fear of failure that they basically just sit on the sidelines of life. In my mind, one of the worst things any person can do is to *waste their life by doing nothing*. It is better to move forward, and make mistakes than to look back and do nothing. It's not where you've been that's important, it's the direction in which you are going.

Whatever mistakes or failures you have had, God has given you the incredible power to **choose** to change. You can have a fresh new beginning in life every day. *Remember, it's the finish and not the start that counts.*

## For What Purpose Were You Created?

- To live with low esteem? No!
- To be negative, fearful or defeated? No!
- To waste your potential? No!
- To live in poverty? No!

You were created to be successful, to fulfill your destiny, to bring happiness to the heart of God through both the ups and downs of life.

In this chapter, it is my desire to help you clearly define your vision and begin the process of writing it down and making it clear, so you can literally 'run with it' on a daily basis. The next chapter will assist you in clarifying your

*"Vision is of God!  
A vision comes in  
advance of any  
task well done."*

— Katherine Logan

values and developing a personal mission statement. Later, you'll align your goals, plans, habits and behavior with your vision, values and mission. *This is a system that really works — when you apply it!*

## What is Vision?

Vision is the ability, or the God-given gift, to see those things which are not as though they were. To see things in your mind's eye *before* they exist. There is a strong correlation between vision and faith. Faith truly is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. Do we need faith if we can *already see* something? Faith is only required when we can't physically reach out and touch something. Faith is only needed when nothing else makes sense in the natural. In order to see clearly we need eyes of faith or 'faith-vision goggles' if you will!

One of Gutzon Borglum's great works as a sculptor is the head of Lincoln in the Capitol in Washington. He had cut it from a large square block of stone in his studio. One day, when the face of Lincoln was just becoming recognizable out of the stone, a young girl came by the studio with her parents. She looked at the half-done face of Lincoln, her eyes registering wonder and astonishment. She stared at the piece for a moment and then ran to the sculptor and asked, "Is that Abraham Lincoln?"

He replied, "Yes."

The little girl said, "Well, how in the world did you know that Mr. Lincoln was in that block of stone?"

In his book, "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People," Stephen Covey made popular the phrase, "beginning with the end in mind." This is based on the principle that everything has

*"Success is not  
where you start,  
but where  
you finish."*

been created twice. The first creation is done in the imagination — in the mind, and the second is done in the physical realm where the first creation becomes tangible. When you begin with the end in mind, you start with a crystal clear picture — a vision — of your ultimate destination.

The creation of mankind is the ultimate illustration of this principle. In the beginning God decided to make mankind in his image — in his likeness. The ‘first creation’ started in the mind of God when this wonderful idea first came to him. He pictured in his infinite mind every detail of our creation, every intricacy of being made in his image *before he spoke the word* to bring mankind into physical existence.

God is the ultimate visionary! He visualized the entire creation, mankind, the earth and the rest of the universe before it was ever created. Visions and dreams come from him. He longs to envision you with his plans for your life. A great example of this is found in the book of Genesis when God gave a vision to Abraham. He took him outside and said, ‘Look up at the heavens and count the stars — if indeed you can count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be,’ and Abraham believed! God gave him a clear picture to help him visualize the end result of the vision. God can and will do the same for you and me if we are willing to ask him for it.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “A believer is never disturbed because other persons do not yet see the fact which he sees.”

Charles Goodyear was a believer, even though others could not yet see what he saw. At one point in his life, he had himself thrown into jail in order to gain time to reach his goals.

*“With good vision, you not only see with your eyes but with your heart.”*

— Zig Ziglar

One of America’s ten great industrial inventors, Goodyear was a failure for years. He owed money to friends, neighbors, and relatives who had backed him. He was penniless in 1838 when he discovered the method of vulcanizing rubber. However, by that time, with his invention still to be perfected, creditors had begun to hound him. Despite his repugnance to the idea, he fled to the protection of the bankruptcy laws. Soon afterward he was thrown into jail for contempt of court and there, unmolested behind prison bars, he perfected his rubber process. He not only paid off his creditors but made fortunes for all who had kept faith in him.

Do you know that God loves dreamers? It is the dreamer who brings about changes in our world and who finds the real satisfaction of living. Dreamers have explored the earth and have charted the heavens. They have been responsible for our greatest inventions. It is the dreamer who leaves the world a better place by challenging the status quo.

When we think of dreamers in the scriptures who first comes to mind? Joseph — the cocky seventeen year old, favorite son of Jacob. Although Joseph received his dreams from God, he sure needed a lesson on tactfulness when it came time to sharing them! Sometimes God wants us to keep dreams and visions to ourself and *let him* bring them to pass in due time.

Perhaps you’re familiar with the story of how Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and ended up in Potiphar’s house in Egypt. God blessed and prospered him, but then he was falsely accused of raping Potiphar’s deceitful wife and wound up in prison. Once in prison, God again raised Joseph up to a position of leadership and influence. Finally, thirteen years

*“God brings his vision to fulfillment not through our strength, but by his strength working in us.”*

— Randy Phillips

after ‘going down’ to Egypt, God intervened in a major way.

God helped Joseph interpret Pharaoh’s dreams and he was brought out of prison and placed second in command over all of Egypt. In America today, this would be similar in magnitude to an illegal alien in prison on a rape sentence, coming straight out of prison and stepping into the Vice-Presidency — *in one day!* Are your circumstances impossible? So were Joseph’s! God is able to do the impossible in your life.

What does the book of Genesis record concerning Joseph’s relationship with God? “He was with him and gave him success in everything he did.” *May God grant the same for you and me!*

The other day I ran across the story of how a friend of another great dreamer missed quite an opportunity. One day, this friend was taken for a ride far out in the country. They drove off the main road and through groves of trees to a large uninhabited expanse of land. A few horses were grazing, and a couple of old shacks remained. Walter stopped the car, got out and started to describe with great vividness the wonderful things he was going to build. He wanted his friend Arthur to buy some of the land surrounding his project and get in on the ground floor. But Arthur thought to himself, “Who in the world is going to drive 25 miles for this crazy project? The logistics of the venture are staggering.”

And so Walter explained to his friend Arthur, “I can handle the main project myself, although it will take all my money. But the land bordering it, where we’re standing now, will in just a couple of years be jammed with hotels

*“Life expects something of you, and it is up to every individual to discover what it should be.”*

— Victor Frankl

and restaurants and convention halls to accommodate the people who will come to spend their entire vacation here at my park.” He continued, “I want you to have the first chance at this surrounding acreage, because in the next five years it will increase in value several hundred times.”

“What could I say? I knew he was wrong,” Arthur tells the story today. “I knew that he had let a dream get the best of his common sense, so I mumbled something about a tight-money situation and promised that I would look into the whole thing a little later on.”

“Later on will be too late,” Walter cautioned Arthur as they walked back to the car. “You’d better move on it right now.”

And so Art Linkletter turned down the opportunity to buy up all the land that surrounded what was to become Disneyland. His friend, Walt Disney, tried to talk him into it. But Art thought he was crazy.

*“If you can dream it, you can do it.”*  
— Walt Disney

## Why Do We Need a Vision?

Vision gives us direction, focus and stability. It is an energizing — motivating force in our lives! If I were to approach most people and ask them to show me where they have written down their vision, probably less than one in a hundred would be prepared to produce a vision statement. We need to get our vision written down!

In the book of Proverbs we read, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Or, “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint.” The vision helps you to follow God’s plan, much like guide rails are designed to keep you on a bridge, safe from falling

Without an overriding sense of purpose and mission in life, what is worth living for? People are literally dying inside because they have no vision in their lives. Deep within all of us is the desire to make our lives and what we do with them count. There is nothing like an all-consuming vision that will give you the purpose and meaning you long for.

With a vision, life is exciting! Every day becomes a new adventure. It's vision that will add enthusiasm and excitement to your life. Without a vision it's hard enough to survive, let alone thrive.

Casey Treat once said, "The way you *see* life is the way you will *live* your life. The way you *see* your future will be the way you *live* your future. If you *see* the potential, the possibilities and the exciting opportunities that are before you, then you will *experience* the blessings of that good vision. If you see dead-ends, impossibilities, and a victimized life with no opportunity then you will experience the consequences of that bad vision. If your vision is good, your life will be lit up with the blessings of God. If your vision is bad, your life will be darkened by the emptiness of the world."

The proverb says, "He who seeks good finds good will, but evil comes to him who searches for it." In other words, "You get what you look for!"

Another word from Solomon says "Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil." Kevin's unauthorized translation: "Have a vision for your life, keep it focused and directly in front of you. Prepare your surroundings and make it easy for you to follow the vision. Don't

*"If you take the train off the tracks, it's free but it can't go anywhere."*

— Anonymous

chase any hair-brained schemes, take no detours and beware of shortcuts!"

### We Need to Know Where we are Going!

In the world today, there are many people who appear to be successful on the outside, but without God's vision in their lives, they are, in reality, getting nowhere fast. As the airplane pilot explained to the passengers, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have good news and bad news. The bad news is the plane's instrumentation has gone haywire and we don't know where in the world we're going. The good news is there is a tail wind behind us and we're making good time!"

Oliver Wendell Holmes, the eminent Supreme Court justice, was on a train reading his paper when the conductor came by punching tickets. The justice searched his coat pockets for his ticket. Then he searched his vest pocket. Each time he came up empty. Finally the conductor, who recognized him said, "Mr. Justice Holmes, don't worry. I'm sure the great Pennsylvania Railroad won't mind if you send your ticket to us when you find it." With this the distinguished jurist looked up at the conductor and said, "My dear young man — the problem is not where is my ticket? The problem is — where am I going?"

Even the brightest people can have a lack of vision and be short-sighted. Here are a few examples of poor vision from the past:

"What can be more palpably absurd than the prospect held out of locomotives traveling twice as fast as stagecoaches?"

— *The Quarterly Review, 1825*

"The ordinary 'horseless carriage' is at present a luxury for the wealthy; and although its price will probably fall in the

*"Worse than being blind would be to be able to see but not have any vision."*

— Helen Keller

*"If you pursue two hares, both will escape you."*

— Greek Proverb

*“Folly delights a man who lacks judgment, but a man of understanding keeps a straight course.”*  
— Proverbs

near future, it will never, of course, come into as common use as the bicycle.”

— *The Literary Digest, 1889*

“As a means of rapid transit, aerial navigation could not begin to compete with the railroad.”

— *William Baxter, Jr. Popular Science, 1901*

“While television theoretically and technically may be feasible, commercially and financially, I consider it an impossibility, a development of which we need not waste time dreaming.”

— *Lee Deforest, Scientist and Inventor, 1926*

### How Do You Get a Vision?

The first step to receiving your vision is to simply ask God to make it clear to you. Seek the Lord, spend time in prayer, for he knows the plans he has for you, and he longs to reveal them to you. Jeremiah the prophet tells us God has “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

“But I was an accident,” I hear some people say. “Does God still have a vision for me?” Absolutely! I know this is true personally, because I too could be labeled an “accident.” My Mother became pregnant with me when she was only 15 and I’m so glad that abortion wasn’t a strong option back in 1962 (not that Mom would have even seriously considered it). The pressure to ‘take care of the situation’ wasn’t nearly the same as it is today and as a result, I have had the opportunity to live!

I take great comfort in the Psalm that so beautifully states (the Psalmist is speaking to God) “...your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”

### Look Beyond the Present

The second key to defining your personal vision is to look beyond your present set of circumstances and fix your gaze into the future. A friend of mine once told me a story that perfectly illustrates this point. Joe Ellis grew up in a poor family. They tended a large garden to help put food on the table. Joe’s dad loved to get the plow and carefully carve out rows as straight as a taut rope while his children planted seeds behind him. He was extremely particular with the accuracy of the furrows. One day Joe asked him, “Dad, can I try plowing the rows?”

His father turned to him and said, “You can sure give it a try, but remember it looks easier than you think to keep the rows straight.” Joe was excited to get this opportunity so he took hold of that plow and fixed his gaze directly in front of his feet in order to keep the row straight. It didn’t take long for Joe to look back at the row to see how he was doing. The row was crooked! It meandered this way and that way despite the careful attention he had given to the direction. “Dad, how can I make the rows as straight as you do?”

Joe’s dad walked out to him and proceeded to tell him his secret, “Son, when I start a row I line up the plow with a fence post in the distance and I never take my eyes off it till each row is completed. I use it as a guidepost to keep me on track.”

A vision should be just that, a guidepost that keeps us on track with God’s plan for our lives. We do a poor job of staying on course if we only look in front of our feet, day by day. The key to reaching your goals is to look beyond the present, beyond where you are currently, and with the Lord’s help, focus on the future vision

*“Why innovate? Because we’re human. After all, we didn’t stop at the wheel, did we? What does innovation take? Vision!”*

of what *can be* in your life!

You know what happens when you fix your gaze directly in front of your feet? You're liable to bump into things. I speak from experience — *I've done it on at least three occasions!*

The funniest of these (at least in my wife's eyes) happened in London while on a Youth With A Mission (YWAM) outreach. Patty and I were engaged at the time and we enjoyed frequenting a local park for our after dinner walks. One blustery evening, the rain started pouring down in sheets so we decided to make a run for it back to the house where we were staying. We were running along, hand in hand, laughing and gazing into each other's eyes, only occasionally checking our bearings as to what lay before us.

*"Great minds have purposes; others have wishes."*

— Washington Irving

Now for some reason that I haven't quite figured out, the English have a bad habit of setting their light poles in from the street one third of the sidewalk's width. Needless to say, because I wasn't looking far enough ahead (actually looking sideways) I smacked right into one of those mean, eight-sided, washed aggregate concrete poles while running at a pretty good clip.

All of a sudden Patty looks over to see me bounce off the pole, catch my glasses in mid-air and end up flat on my back! Every part of my right side that came in contact with the pole was bruised or bleeding and guess what her reaction was? She started to laugh hysterically — I should have called off the engagement right then and there! I did indeed forgive her and we were married in El Paso, Texas on November 28, 1981. We have enjoyed almost 18 years of marriage together at the time of this writing — *and the best is yet to come!*

## Guidelines for Your Vision:

As a believer in God, you will want your vision to be in alignment with these points:

### 1. In alignment with your faith.

God has had a plan for your life since the very beginning — make sure your vision is in alignment with it. Your faith should confirm your dreams and vision, not conflict with it.

### 2. Must be balanced.

God is balanced and he desires us to live in balance. Your vision should take into consideration every aspect of your life without sacrificing one area for another. For example, God obviously doesn't want you to get so focused on your *vocation* that you forget about taking a *vacation* with your family!

### 3. Must be part of your heart — have a passion for it.

If your heart is not in something, I would question the Lord long and hard before pursuing it. If God wants you to do something big for him, I believe he'll give you a passion and a drive to see it through. This is not to say it'll be easy or that you'll have a continual excitement about it.

### 4. Must be concise, clear and simple — yet exciting and compelling.

The more complicated and unfocused your vision, the less apt you will be to stay on track and follow it through. The prophet tells us to make the vision simple (easy to grasp) and to 'inscribe it' or write it down!

*"A vision is a guidepost that keeps you on track with God's plan for your life."*

— Kevin Baerg

## How to Keep the Vision

1. **Write it down** and think about it often — read it out aloud daily.
2. **Thank God for it** and the privilege of following his vision for your life.
3. **Remember the vision** when you encounter obstacles and challenges — God gave it to you *before* the problems came!
4. **Imagine how many lives will be touched** by your vision, your life, and the relationships you develop along the way.

You will find true success when you do what the proverb says. “In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.”

Your dreams won't necessarily come to you on a silver platter. Don't wait for the 'seventh wave of success' to carry you to the shore. Don't sit around waiting for your ship to come in if you haven't sent one out! Your destiny isn't automatic and you aren't on automatic pilot. You still fly your own 'jet' even though God knows your destination and every mile of your journey.

Perhaps, part of the problem is an improper belief system. It's hard to balance the truth that God is sovereign — what he says goes, and the seemingly opposite truth that man has been given complete responsibility for his decisions and behavior.

Somehow, I believe that God knows every choice you will make, but he doesn't choose for you. Your ultimate destiny is decided through the millions of daily choices you make over a lifetime. Yet God in his greatness already knows what you will choose.

We must not sit back, relax and think that

*“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”*

— Psalms

God's will is automatically done in our lives and in the world — *it isn't!* We can, however, get our plans and decisions in alignment with his best for us by taking time to ask God in prayer. With God as our strength, we can take responsibility for our actions and enjoy an exciting life of excellence.

### **Personal Application:**

What is true success in your eyes? How will it look played out in your life? What do you really want to have happen? Writing this down is a powerful action step. When you write things down you are literally making a commitment.

Former Chairman and CEO of Chrysler Corporation, Lee Iacocca stated it well, “What do you want to do? What do you want to be? What do you want to have? Where do you want to go? Who do you want to go with? How do you plan to get there? Write it down. Go do it. Enjoy it. Share it. It doesn't get much simpler or better than that.”

Obviously this sort of thing could be several pages in length, but I'm asking you to capsule your thoughts in a simple statement you can rally your life behind. Before you get started, I'd like to share my personal vision with you.

*To be a source of inspiration and hope to all of God's people, challenging them to achieve excellence while actively pursuing God's purposes for their lives.*

So take the amount of time necessary — right this moment — and write out what you believe to be the vision and purpose for your life. Choose your words carefully, yet don't worry about perfection. You can always tune it up later. *Do it now!*

*“Some people see things as they are and say, ‘why?’ I dream things that never were and say, ‘why not?’”*

— George Bernard Shaw

### **My Personal Vision**

*“What you commit yourself to become, determines what you are.”*

— Tony Campolo

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### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Kevin Baerg founded Inspiration Press in 1994 to be a source of inspiration and hope for all people. His books have sold over 40,000 copies. He has presented the ‘Keys to True Success’ before thousands of people around the United States and Canada.

His ‘training’ started with seven years of service in Youth With A Mission (YWAM), teaching and working with people in Europe, Mexico, Canada and the United States.

He followed that with six years in the business community, including four years with one of America’s leading human development training firms, Edge Learning Institute.

In 1993, Kevin accepted the call back into the ministry with an eighteen month interim position as an Associate Pastor of one of the fastest growing churches in the Northwest United States.

He has also recently served as the Executive Director of Marriage Plus and is the host and a guest teacher on Ray Mossholder’s “Singles Plus” television series.

Kevin currently is involved in several business ventures and teaches seminars around North America, challenging people to fulfill their potential in every area of life.

You’ll enjoy his special blend of enthusiasm, humor and sincerity as he partners with God to impact people with powerful, life-changing principles as an author and a presenter.

Kevin and his wife Patty, along with their teenage children, Sarah and Tim, reside in beautiful Washington State.