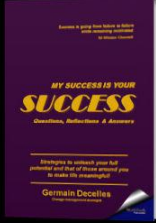What is necessary
to change a person
is to change
is awareness of himself.

Abraham Harold Maslow (1908 -1970)
American psychologist who was best known for creating Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a theory of psychological health predicated on fulfilling innate human needs in priority, culminating in self-actualization.

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THE NEEDS OF LIFE

To do this, let's look at Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Abraham Maslow was a mid-20th-century American psychologist working in the field of humanistic psychology, who introduced the concept of self-realization, highlighting our innate need for fulfillment.

According to Maslow's theory, an individual begins by focusing on the lower order needs of physiology and safety.

A person who has just started their career will be more concerned with physiological needs such as a stable income and security needs. Once these basic needs are met, she or he will now focus on social needs.

Once these needs are met, she or he will want to meet higher-level needs such as self-esteem needs.

These needs are linked to the person's image and their desire for respect and recognition from others. Even if the person doesn't want to move into a higher role, they probably don't want to continue doing the same job for their entire life.

Maslow's theory is based on five basic types of needs. Often represented, as levels in a pyramid, the needs residing in the lower levels must be satisfied before those of the higher levels can be met.

1. Physical: the need for air, water, food, sleep.
2. Security: the need for security, shelter, stability.
3. Social: the need for intimate relationships, to be loved, to belong.
4. Self-esteem: the need for self-esteem, prestige, recognition of achievements.
5. Self-realization: the need to develop, to be creative, to realize one's full capacities.

The first four levels are considered « deficiency needs. » If we lack any of these levels, we can become distracted, anxious, or depressed. If all these needs are met, we are free to explore our « growth needs » or our unique human need to grow as individuals.

1. *Physical Needs:* our biological needs « air, water, food, shelter » are simple, but vital for survival, and when they are not met, put all other needs on hold.

   For instance, you must take a lunch break, but you are delayed for half an hour at the end of a meeting. Your body and brain react biologically and emotionally to the need to eat.

   When you are « hungry » your ability to focus on your work steadily decreases as the urgency to meet your hunger increases.

2. *Security needs*: security can mean feeling physically secure, but it can also mean a desire for stability, order, predictability, and control regarding, for example, in the workplace, pay, working hours, structures, team building, workload and performance monitoring, to name a few.

   All these circumstances lead to feelings of conflict, instability, and a lack of confidence in the ability to meet needs.

3. *Social needs*: the ease with which we feel welcome in a group or in finding people « like us » has a huge impact on our performance at work and in life in general.

   Feeling like an outsider means, you're less likely to engage, offer ideas, or go the extra mile for fear of being ridiculed.

   When we feel welcome, we are more likely to trust those around us and trust ourselves to be ourselves. Our ideas and efforts are validated, motivating us to do and be better.

   If you can't express yourself authentically and adapt to it, it may be best, to leave the environment altogether.

   The goal is not to have everyone get along with each other all the time. The important thing is to find harmony within your group while allowing individuals to be themselves to form an engaged and motivated group.

4. *Needs of self-esteem:* when we learn to ride a bike, we start with training wheels for support and balance. We build self-esteem by mastering this task.

   Once we mastered the technique, the training wheels come off and a steady hand on the back of the seat helps us learn to balance the bike while moving. Eventually, that hand lets go, and you ride alone.

Like riding a bicycle, to meet the needs of our ego both at work and socially, we must develop self-esteem through an ability to perform tasks independently.

We also need a support system that helps us achieve our goal and a recognition system that validates our accomplishments.

For example, to motivate ourselves in this way at work, we need to look for work that showcases our abilities while challenging us to master new skills.

However, it is suggested to place at the top of your list, the mastery of observing the people around you as well as your communication skills.

5. *Needs for self-realization*: Maslow defined self-realization as the desire to « become all that one is capable of becoming. »

The need for self-realization can materialize when you have « harnessed » all the experiences and knowledge in each circumstance, but you know that you can do more, and you can do better. The awareness of this needs to grow comes to the fore because all other needs have been met.

Free from distractions, you can take a broad look at the sum of your efforts and decide what really makes you feel fulfilled. This level of freedom has its own motivating power, making it easier for you or the people around you to take the next step on a personal development journey.

To support this, find continuing education opportunities, higher-level certifications, or resources that help pursue these passions.

Over time, you will recognize that your needs overlap or change in importance based on individual circumstances.

Awareness and constant communication around your needs and those of the people around you are the essential component to meet these needs, whatever their order.

Here we all need to remember Dr. Maslow comment, « what is necessary to change a person is to change is awareness of himself. »

Find out more about « A meaningful life » with *My Success Is Your Success*. The book through questions, quotes and reflections provides the necessary elements to explore all about motivation so to shape your success and help those around you do the same. Remember that success is all about team efforts!
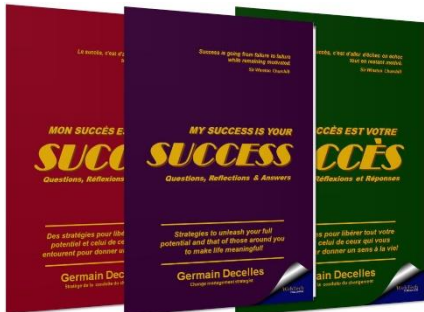
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About the Author

In addition to writing, Germain Decelles acts as Change Management Strategist. He has over 40 years of business and consultation experience with local and international markets, including sectors such as retail trade, distribution, information technology and communications, transportation, manufacturing, financial services, and government organizations.

Other publications: ISO Pour Tous – Le manuel d'information ISO – Le guide de préparation ISO – La gestion du changement en affaires – La gestion de projet d'affaires – Le changement POUR TOUS – Change your future, now! – Mon succès est votre succès.

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