

The Timeless Questions

You cannot stay on the summit forever; you have to come down again . . . so why bother in the first place?

Just this: what is above knows what is below, but what is below does not know what is above. One climbs, one sees. One descends, one sees no longer, but one has seen.

Rene Daumel

For the last twenty years, we have searched for answers to three timeless questions:

- How did some people find and seize the great opportunities of their times?
- What can we learn from them to help us find and seize great opportunities?
- How did great leaders help others (and organizations) to find and seize great opportunities?

In this search, we studied the lives, the works, the writings of, and the past research on many successful people, including Michelangelo Buonarroti, Winston Churchill, Marie Curie, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Galileo Galilei, Bill Gates, Abraham Lincoln, Fred Smith, Leonardo da Vinci, Sam Walton, Oprah Winfrey, and Frank Lloyd Wright. We discovered that these and other great innovators and achievers all took the same actions to find and seize the great opportunities of their times. It was these actions—rather than heredity, traits, intelligence, environment, or work habits—that made them more successful than others.

In recent years, we have been helping individuals and organizations to grow and prosper using these actions. We have proved that anyone, at any age, can use these actions to become more successful.

Those who want to believe that success can be attributed mostly to circumstances of birth, environment, or luck needn't read further. But those who want to find and seize great opportunities can learn much from studying the successes and failures of history's most successful people and organizations.