

The best way to achieve success is to define it. Without clear definition, you'll likely chase other people's visions of success, ultimately leaving you feeling distracted and unsatisfied. Even if, as you go along life's path, you change your definition, at least with this document, you will have a structural basis from which to deviate thoughtfully. Below is a list of 80 questions related to 8 areas of your life. By no means does this document represent every question. So you should, by all means, address additional issues that are relevant to your life. Here are some tips for getting the most from the process:

1. This process is not supposed to be easy. It's supposed to make you uncomfortable. If it's too easy for you, you are probably not doing it right.
2. This is not a timed test. You will not get "bonus points" if you finish the 72 questions quickly. This is about getting it right, because it's your life and you only get one shot.
3. This list is not meant to be finite or permanent. This is only a beginning to get you thinking. Once you have your answers down, you will want to regularly revisit and modify because you will grow and change.
4. Sharing is caring. Once you know what success means to you, help others in your sphere of influence figure out what success means to them. If your spouse and/or business partner have a very different definition of success, you will need to work together to reconcile the visions.
5. This is not a stand-alone document. It's meant to work in conjunction with your core values, mission, purpose, and BHAG. If one of your core values is stability but one of your definitions of success is to travel all over the world and live in 35 countries by 2030, you'll need to reassess your answers to resolve the conflict.

Know that this process requires focused time and thought. I recommend doing it with someone you trust. You'll get honest feedback and you can help each other. It may require several discussions over weeks or even months. Your values may adjust and develop over time, just as you do, so embrace the change.

Best,

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80 QUESTIONS TO DEFINE SUCCESS IN 2025

I. Relationships:

1. What is the importance of your parents in your life? Your siblings? Your children? Extended family?
2. What is the right amount of interaction with your family members?
3. What is the right amount of interaction with your friends?
4. What is the right amount of interaction with your significant other?
5. How much space do you need from family, friends, and significant other, both in terms of distance and time?
6. What is the right amount of openness and sharing with your family members, friends, and significant other?
7. How important is marriage?
8. How important is romance?
9. Describe the perfect romantic partner.
10. Describe the ideal family structure.
11. What is your ideal relationship with each of your children at 10, 20 and 30?

II. Materialism:

1. How much in assets (a dollar amount) is enough?
2. How much income is enough?
3. Where do you need to live?
4. What size and type of house do you need?
5. How many houses do you need?
6. How many cars do you need?
7. What type of car(s) do you need?
8. How big a family do you need to support?
9. What toys and hobbies must you have?
10. How big should your company be in dollars? In people? In another metric?
11. What should be your position in society?
12. How successful should your circle be?
13. What should be your level and frequency of travel?
14. What should be your level and frequency of dining out?
15. What are your jewelry/bling needs?
16. How do you need to spoil yourself?

III. Emotional:

1. Describe your personal comfort zone.
2. How much pain or discomfort can you tolerate and remain happy?
3. What is your acceptable level of stress?
4. What is your tolerable frequency of negative incidents?
5. How do you view the stress of others around you?
6. How engaged do you wish to be in your emotional environment?
7. How much emotional support do you require? From whom?
8. What makes you ecstatic?
9. What entertains you?

IV. Ethics:

1. Describe fairness in your own words.
2. How do you feel right and wrong relates to the law?
3. What is your view on how right and wrong vary from country to country, if at all?
4. How far will you go to make money?
5. How far will you go to protect family or loved ones?
6. What would it take for you to perform civil disobedience?
7. How far will you risk your own security for strangers? Friends? Family? Loved ones?
8. What is your perspective on truth? On discretion? On disclosure?
9. How do you believe employees should be treated?
10. What are your religious beliefs and values?
11. What are your political beliefs and values?
12. How much would you sacrifice for your religious or political beliefs?

V. Knowledge/Creativity:

1. What level of academic achievement do you require?
2. What areas of knowledge do you require for advancement in your career?
3. Do you want to be a thought leader in a particular area? If so, which?
4. How effective are you are at expressing your ideas?
5. What areas of learning (outside work) do you wish to pursue? How much time (outside work) do you need to pursue them?
6. What level of intellectual discourse do you require with friends and/or spouse?
7. What are the creative pursuits (e.g., writing, playing music, etc.) that are important to your own growth/stimulation? How much time do you require for creative pursuits?
8. What forms/frequency of creative stimulation do you require (e.g., art, museum, film, music)?

VI. Physical:

1. What is your ideal physical appearance? What changes are required for you to achieve it?
2. What level of energy and/or physical mobility do you require (e.g., playing with your children, playing sports)? What do you want to change to achieve it?
3. How much sleep do you require to have the clarity and alertness you need during the day?
4. How healthy do you feel for your age? What weight is acceptable? What amount of smoking, drinking, and medication is acceptable?
5. How much sex do you require? How important is your mate's physical appearance to your degree of attraction?
6. How much exercise do you require? What regular exercise/sport/training do you require?

VII. Spiritual:

1. What is ideal your relationship with God if any?
2. Does your involvement with organized religion meet your desired standard?
3. What is the amount of time you wish to dedicate to religious activities?
4. What is the amount of money you wish to dedicate to religious activities?
5. What role do you want prayer to play in your daily activity?
6. How do you wish to integrate prayer and religion into your family?
7. How will your life's activities impact your expected afterlife existence?
8. How do you wish to reconcile ethical and moral views with your business behavior?

VIII. Time:

1. What time-wasters do you allow in your life?
2. Where can you accept inefficiency in your use of time?
3. Where do you demand greatest efficiency in your use of time?
4. How do you apportion time to tackle difficult tasks/issues?
5. To what extent is procrastination acceptable?
6. How much time do you require to pursue personal activities/relationships?
7. How much time do you require for your family/relationships?
8. How much control do you have in structuring and scheduling your workdays? Your non-work days?
9. What do you require in down-time/vacation? What does that look like?
10. How do you manage unstructured time?

Other Resources:

- For Kevin's Inc.com column, go to www.kevindaum.com/inc
- Download the PDF for Kevin's entire Preferred Futuring journey at www.kevindaum.com/future
- For a digital version of the 80 Questions for Defining Success, go to www.kevindaum.com/success