

## Success Redefined

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The story of the tortoise and the hare was intended to teach us not to be overly confident in our advantages, or it becomes a weakness that can be our undoing. It also taught us that slow and steady wins the race. That is true, however, if we are only concerned with our own personal success. Success in life means expending focused, patient, and methodical effort in a sustained manner, or at least that is what the tortoise's success was meant to teach us. However, applying the same philosophy to the success of your businesses, community, or organization will ensure you fail.

The sprint versus marathon analogy is completely ineffective because it only applies to individuals running their own race. For success in organizations, the better analogy to use would be a baton race. In a baton race, someone from the team carries the baton at some point in the race, for some length of time. Successfully running in a baton race means that each person runs their maximum pace for their length, and when that leg of the race is over, the person who ran it is completely spent and passes on the baton to someone else. That is the metaphor you need to remember if you want your organizations, community or business to be successful. Success is not a race run by one, but by many.

When we plan for success in a community, a business, or an organization, we often forget how that success is made, and invest too heavily in one person to carry the entire race. Sometimes when failure hits us, it is because we expected one person to carry the baton the entire race for us; sometimes it is because the one holding the baton refuses to pass it on; but mostly it is because we didn't plan and prepare while understanding the kind of race we were running.

Corporate success requires succession planning. It means preparing the next person to take the baton in this race, right now. I don't mean some fancy strategy of preparing the next generation for "their time", I mean preparing them now for their leg in this race, this time. It also means that leaders can and should want to leave a legacy, but they must also do so with the understanding the organization can and will go on without them. Your time will come to an end, but the race will not be over. If you want to ensure your community, your business, or your organization has enduring success, your legacy must be about how well you ran your leg, and how strongly you passed on the task to the next strong runner, because the race doesn't end with you.

In the baton race there is a role for hares, and a role for tortoises. In your organizational structure you may be the hare, or you may be the tortoise. The most important thing to ensure success is to remember the kind of race you are in.

*This syndicated content is provided by Doug Griffiths, best-selling author and chief community builder at 13 Ways, a company with a mission to push communities to face their challenges to find their unique path to success. For more information visit [www.13ways.ca](http://www.13ways.ca), or we can start the conversation at [info@13ways.ca](mailto:info@13ways.ca).*