Article FAMILY-12



# In the race for Numero Uno



Neil Armstrong: The first man to walk on the moon.

***To be successful is no doubt a big thing but to become numero uno is the ultimate dream one cherishes. Here are a few useful tips to help you achieve the goal. ■ by D. P. Sabharwal***



Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay were the first ones to scale Mt Everest.

Everyone wants to succeed in life. The desire for success is a basic requirement which forces a person to put in extra effort. The word "success" is in fact a stimulant. It puts each one of us on a lofty pedestal. Therefore, most of us are quite satisfied if we succeed in our endeavours. Most of us, most of the times, do not even think or realise that success is not the end of the road. There is something ahead of it too!

To be successful is no doubt a big thing in itself. But to be the best amongst the successful contemporaries is undoubtedly the ultimate in life. This special aspect of "being the best" is what the whole game is about: the pinnacle of success, the dream moment of being number one, the *numero uno*.

History is full of such people who reached this summit of success in their endeavours. Even after centuries, Columbus is known as the first one to go around the earth. Many men and women have succeeded in scaling Mt Everest, but hardly anyone would remember their names. Yet, everyone remembers that Tenzing and Hillary were the first ones to set their feet on it.

Who can forget Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the invincible moon? Records have been broken and will be broken in future as well, but little master Sunil Gavaskar shall ever remain the first batsman in the world to have scored 10,000 runs in test cricket.

Well, the list is endless, but the fact is short and sweet: numero uno in any field is a respected and revered individual. Such people attain virtual immortality. And that is the ultimate reward for the numero uno.

And it is this recognition, a place in the history books that has propelled men and women ever since the human race has evolved, to be number one.

It is common knowledge that hard work is required to be number one in any field. No one ever doubts it. But that is not all. In fact, there is no simple formula to become number one in any field. A study of biographies and autobiographies of such great achievers throws light on various aspects of their personality and training, in addition to the sweat and toil they put in.

Discussed below are the main points that emerge from the insights into the lives of a few of such all-time greats.

## A vision of the future

"It is a rough road that leads to the height of greatness," said Seneca. No doubt about that. At times, however, the situation can be even worse. There might not be any road at all to start with! In fact, there was no defined route to the Mount Everest the first time.

The Wright brothers, the pioneers of aircraft flight, did not have any scripted knowledge about flying; and Shahjahan did not have any Taj Mahal type of structure to inspire him. Yet, these luminaries succeeded and reached the numero uno position in their chosen areas.

Well, all such people did have something special yet something basic — a vision; the aim to reach the well-defined goal. So, it is necessary to have a vision. Then think and chalk out the route you are going to take before you actually take the first step.

Hard work is essential for success, but perseverance will take one to the numero uno lamppost. Once you have decided to be in the race for the number one position, go for the goal in a steadfast manner. Keep striving for it.

It is said that the courage to start and the willingness to keep at it are the requisites for ultimate success. Year after year, toppers in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) exam confess that the main thing behind their success is perseverance of effort.

## Burning fire

It is not sufficient to just have the goal of being number one pasted on the wall. Let it not happen because so long as you are looking at it, you are reminded of it, but the moment you are out of the room, you lose sight of it. It has to be in front of you at all the times.

Let it be like a burning fire, which you should be able to see as well as feel at all times. It was such a burning fire that enabled Kapil Dev to become the highest wicket taker of the day.

Everything being equal, it is the killer instinct that decides who will stand tallest on the victory podium. Approach every hurdle with a "do or die" attitude. Arjuna was oblivious of everything around him and could only see the eye of the bird at which he had taken aim.

It is the moment of concentration of all energies, the moment when others around you should not matter at all. It is the moment to go all out. This, unfortunately, is one area where we Indians are known to have a soft belly.

It is quite often stated that we lack the killer instinct. Living examples of sufferers from the lack of this vital quality for being number one are athletes Milkha Singh and P. T. Usha, who missed Olympic medals by fractions of a second.

Before starting, ensure that you have everything you will require on your way up as well as while being on the summit. Be fully equipped, as they say.

Ensure that the foundation on which you are stepping to go up is strong. Make sure you will not have to come down from halfway to fetch something you had not thought of or had left behind. In such a case, you are bound to miss the race for being number one.

In the race for numero uno, it is no disgrace to finish second. But if that happens, then there is a lesson in it. Try to find out what and where you lacked vis-a-vis the winner. Get over these shortcomings so that the next time is your time.

In your endeavour, be fair and honest. Remember that once you get to the top slot, you are bound to get into the public glare and scrutiny. Any wrongdoings will eventually come out in the open. What follows next is simply disgrace.

Try to recollect the 5 Olympic medal-winners of Sydney, who were later dethroned and stripped of their medals. What a humiliation!

No one is perfect. Everyone is likely to make mistakes. But once you make a mistake, learn to accept it for only then can you correct it. Putting your failures to others' account will not help. Don Wilder has rightly said, "Excuses are the nails used to build a house of failures!"

While climbing the ladder of success and number one position, recognise and remember all those who had



**Pete Sampras: He stayed at the top position in tennis for a longer period.**

given you a helping hand. The good words spoken by you will spread and, as a result, many more will be there to help and cheer you up all the way.

In every aspect of modern life, records are being bettered almost every day. Thus, you must have a clear idea as to how long you are going to be in the race. In today's world, the "try, try again" approach may not be the ideal solution.

## Retentive power

Change is inevitable. It is easy to reach the top, but very difficult to stay there. This law of nature must be understood and respected. All energies must not be exhausted in reaching the top and all efforts must not stop once being there.

Remember, others are trying all the time to occupy the numero uno



**P. T. Usha: She narrowly missed the Olympic medal.**

position. So, be guarded and be fully prepared to stay there, once you reach there. The great tennis player Pete Sampras is an ideal case to follow in this aspect.

"Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and, above all, confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something, and that this something, at whatever cost, must be attained," said Marie Curie.

Well, this describes the best way to attain the numero uno position. Explore yourself. Find out your strongest area, the area in which you feel you are gifted.

Once this is accomplished, you are already halfway to the top slot, having covered the most difficult part. The next half will not pose insurmountable problems. ■