

1. Read the following article, looking for big ideas.
2. Write the RDW response at the bottom.
3. Keep this AoW—this article, with your questions, comments, and goals **will be an assignment**. It should be filled with ideas!

### Fail Your Way to Success

Mark up the margins with questions and comments.

Failure is part of the recipe for success. Strive for those learning opportunities of failure so you get to success quicker. Work hard, then work even harder after things don't work out as planned. Stop viewing failure as something completely bad.

Imagine the results if we each committed to do one thing that spikes our fear of failure. Imagine if you were able to complete this statement with a modicum of confidence:

**In the next three months** I will face my fear of failure and take the following steps to achieve (fill in the blank with a goal that conjures up the fear of failure.)

**Step one:**

**Step two:**

**Step three:**

Now imagine what it will feel like in three months when you've actually done it! (Feels good, right?) So what's stopping you?

The fear of failure is one of the biggest obstacles to success. Yet every successful person I've ever spoken with has battled this fear. What separates them from the rest? Why is it that some of us have the ability to look our fears straight in the eye and others carry the burden of failure without ever giving their dream a chance to develop?

You must give yourself the gift of failing fast and failing often.

"People who are afraid of failure have confused failure with mistakes," says success psychologist, Ann Vertel. "Mistakes aren't failure, they only feel like failure. True failure is in quitting or not learning, everything else is part of the process of learning and growing."

We have to make mistakes in order to understand what does and doesn't work. And we must continue to push through our barriers to see what we are truly capable of. Vertel gives the example of professional athletes who, she says, take themselves right out to the edge of failure—on purpose. "They do this in order to discover their breaking point," says Vertel. "Then they train to that point over and over, slowly moving it further and further out. This is called mastery. You can't know your level of success if you don't know how far you can go."

And Michael Jordan is the perfect example, as demonstrated in this popular statement: "I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And, that is why I succeed." If Michael Jordan wasn't afraid of being judged, why should we be?

CrowdSPRING co-founder, Ross Kimbarovsky is no stranger to failure. When he and his partner, Mike Samson, launched the crowdsourcing site in May of 2008, their users were frustrated by the crowdSPRING experience; not a problem that a start up, or any other company, wants to face. Poor technology forced them into low budget, temporary fixes on the site and ultimately the entire content management system had to be rewritten, but not before major losses were incurred.

“Successful people are successful for many reasons,” says Kimbarovsky. “Successful people look at mistakes or failures as opportunities to learn. People who fear failure rarely have such learning opportunities. And very often, even if they do, the fear of failure completely paralyzes them.”

The co-founders learned that failure educates and motivates, and cost-cutting measures didn't save them time or money in the long run. We've all heard the famous Henry Ford quote: “Failure is the opportunity to begin again more intelligently.” And that's exactly what Kimbarovsky and Samson did. Today crowdSPRING positions itself as the world's No. 1 marketplace for crowdsourced creative services.

So what if you were to actually give yourself permission to fail, recognizing that nearly every other entrepreneur in the universe has made mistakes and learned valuable lessons from them? And, that those lessons are what they cite as the reason for their unlimited success? Wouldn't you be willing to experience a new learning curve if you knew that success lies ahead?

“To be uber-successful ,” says Vertel, “you must give yourself the gift of failing fast and failing often.” So why not return to the beginning of this article, fill in the answers to my questions and give yourself the gift of a few big, bold failures? You will find that the act of learning from your mistakes is far more rewarding than doing nothing at all.

**RDW #1:** Write a response to this article—begin with TAG and a *concise* summary of the big ideas.

Next, respond to the article. Consider the following questions when you write:

- what are some areas in which you are afraid to fail? (Write about your Step 1,2, and 3 goals)
- do you think this author is saying that we should purposely try to fail, or that we should look for the good things, like lessons we learn, when we do fail.
- do you agree or disagree with this author? Why?
- what do you think about the ideas in this article?

\*Highlight at least three short, choppy sentences for emphasis.