

## “Just surviving” is not Justifiable

A guy walked in to a gym. First he did some stretching, walked on the treadmill for 20 minutes and then used the exercise bicycle for 15 minutes. He spent another 10 minutes on a rowing machines, 20 minutes with weights and another 10 minutes each on a leg and arm machines before he went for a quick shower. Then he left the gym.

Another guy walked in to the same gym. He got into his gym attire and went around the gym to see who else is there today. He stepped on to a treadmill and started it slowly while talking to a friend on the phone. He was still on the treadmill when he saw a good friend of him walking in to the gym. He stopped the treadmill and went to greet his friend and had a small chat. When he returned to the treadmill he noticed that someone else is on that the treadmill. So he went to the exercise bicycle. He was paddling the exercise bike for 5 minutes when he realized the television set above him is not working. He stopped and got out of the bicycle and went to the reception and asked the manager to fix the television. He was having a chat with the manager for the next 10 minutes where he was told that they are in the process of planning to get pay TV facility soon and all there TVs are being fixed. So the guy went back to continue his workout and realize that there are so many new people in the gym and most of them are young people. He was walking around wondering how nice it is to see a lot of people taking their health seriously. As he started doing some weights, a call came through to his mobile. When the call finished he realized that he had already spent more than one- and-half hours in the gym and so he walked around to say good bye to his friends. Then he left the gym.

### Reap the harvest



The first guy would start noticing changes in him, both physically and mentally, after a few months, whereas the second guy would notice that he is not achieving his fitness goals. The second guy would also notice that not only he is not losing weight or becoming healthy but also he is gaining weight and would feel sorry for himself. He will be so disappointed in himself.

Even after paying the membership fee for a full year, he would quit going to the gym because for him “going to the gym” is a waste of time. . He would give up his plans to lose weight and will end up hopeless and depressed.

You may have heard the saying- “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there”. What matters is not what you “achieve” at the end, but what you “wanted to achieve” and your results. It is perfectly fine to go to the gym, hang around and spend time talking to friends IF THAT’S WHAT YOU WANTED TO ACHIEVE in the first place. But if getting fit and healthy was your goal, you cannot but feel disappointed in yourself when that goal was not reached.

We see many people feeling sorry for themselves as they claim not to have achieved much in their lives. They see others around them take progressive steps and feel worse about their inability to reach significant milestones in their own lives. The main reason why many feel failed and lost is because they didn’t have a clear goal to begin with and the discipline to see it through!

## A Snapshot



Let’s take a snapshot of what a worker experience in a modern office. What we see in the snapshot fall under three categories: **Routine experiences**, **Negative Experiences** and **Positive Experiences**.

Everything a worker does on day-to-day basis such as attending meetings, planning, achieving targets, KRAs evaluations, recruiting, inquires and complains come under Routine Experiences. The stress and pressure of the routine work, interpersonal conflicts and rivalries, stagnation, work/life imbalance, disappointment and mundane tasks come under the Negative Experiences of a modern worker. The social recognition and prestige of having a job, financial rewards, work experiences, work-recognition, career developments, colleagues and new opportunities fall under the Positive Experiences of a worker. This snapshot is true and valid for an overwhelming majority of workers in Sri Lanka and around the globe.

If this is an inevitable reality, the real question is – how well are you balancing these experiences and how these experiences are influencing your goals and your journey?

## Are you merely surviving?



There are three possible outcomes for all workers in a workplace: **Perish**, **Survive** or **Thrive**. Some people 'Perish' because they cannot handle the work pressure and challenges. A combination of routine pressures and negative experiences push them off the ladder.

Most people do better than the 'Perish' group. They don't quit but they merely 'Survive'. This group tends to sit in their "comfort Zone" and would not take any risks or challenges that would stretch them and push them to the next level. Workers in this group tend to stay in the same position for 10 - 15 years, keep complaining about their situation but yet resisting to change.

The third group of people sees challenges as opportunities to shine. They 'Thrive' under pressure and rise above the negative experiences. They take chances; they keep on updating themselves; they compete with themselves and get better at what they do. They are the ones who go to the gym with a clear objective, move from treadmill to the exercise bicycle and then to the next, finish the workout as planned and move on. This group hardly complains about their situation if it is out of their control. Instead, they focus on what is needed to be done by them, have clear personal and career goals in mind and as a consequence get results!

Some people look at them and say "they are very lucky". May be they are. But most importantly they are focused, goal oriented and hardworking. These qualities are proven to attract "luck"!

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