



Stanford eCorner

Luck and Success

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1466/Luck-and-Success>

"The harder I work, the luckier I get", says Seelig. Get out there and put yourself in a position to make yourself lucky, she adds.



Transcript

The harder I work, the luckier I get. This is something my very wise father told me as I was growing up. It's something I heard a lot. This is about the fact that you need to put yourself in a position to make yourself lucky. People often look at others and say wow, that person was so lucky, but if you really look at the story, they have done a tremendous number of things to make themselves lucky. You have to meet a lot of people. You have to read a lot of interesting things. Go to fascinating lectures. Travel all over the place. Turn around to the person next to you, figure out something that you have in common.

It is remarkable the number of things that happen when you put yourself out there. I have a colleague of mine who Chile who told me that he tells his students that if you go somewhere and you do not meet someone new, you are at the minimum lost the opportunity to make a friend or at a maximum, you've probably lost a million dollars. So you need to think about that. In fact, on my way to West Point a couple of weeks ago, I was reading Scientific American on the airplane and I was incredibly lucky that I opened it up because there's a whole article here, maybe some of you read it, called As Luck Would Have It, and it's about are some people luckier than others? I want to tell you this is exactly what I was saying. I'm going to read to you a couple of quotes from this article so you don't just have to believe me, here's what it says. It says lucky people smile twice as often and engage in more eye contact than unlucky people do which leads to more social encounters which generates more opportunities. Lucky people tend to be more relaxed than most. They're more likely to notice chance opportunities even when they're not expecting them. Lucky people are open to new experiences in their lives. They don't tend to be bound by convention and they like the notion of unpredictability.

Finally, but even in the face of adversity, lucky people turn bad breaks into good fortune. That again leads back to the turning problems into opportunities. I have to tell you I was extremely lucky to find this article.