

Top TED Talks to success

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

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Everyone's sauntered off for the holidays and you're left at the office posing for selfies and trawling the web for entertainment. Don't waste all that extra bandwidth on Twerking for Dummies or Babies Taste Lemons, rather be inspired by Steve Jobs et al in some of the top-rated TED Talks on success. (video)

The key to success? Grit

First up is [Angela Lee Duckworth](#), assistant professor in the psychology department of the University of Pennsylvania. According to Duckworth, you don't have to have the IQ of Albert Einstein to be successful (though I'm sure it wouldn't hurt ...) - the key to success, according to her research, is grit. Yes, good old fortitude should do the trick.

"Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint." - Duckworth.

How great leaders inspire action

Leadership expert and author [Simon Sinek](#), a few years back, discovered a pattern amongst great leaders and innovators - a pattern that unravels the equation to success. Say hello to the Golden Circle of why, how and what - sounds pretty primordial, but according to Sinek, his discovery is grounded in biology. Using examples of Apple, the Wright brothers and Dr Martin Luther King, Sinek explains how, at the end of the day, the goal is to do business with people who *believe* what you believe.

"We follow those who lead, not because we have to, but because we want to. We follow those who lead not for them, but for ourselves." - Sinek

How to live before you die

Steve Jobs, rest his soul, needs no introduction. As commencement speaker at a 2005 graduation ceremony at Stanford University, TED curators picked up his speech, adding it to their Best of the Web collection. Sharing three pertinent stories from his life on connecting the dots, love & loss and death, Jobs' speech culminates with the inspiring words he found on the back cover of the final issue of The Whole Earth Catalogue: "Stay hungry. Stay foolish."

"Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma, which is living with the results of other people's thinking." - Jobs

Your body language shapes who you are

Are you sitting at your desk arms folded, hunched over, legs crossed? Did you know your body language determines how people see you and how you see yourself? Sure, you may already know this, but did you know that the way you carry yourself can actually affect your physiology - as in testosterone and cortisol levels in your brain - two chemicals that have a direct impact on your confidence levels. [Amy Cuddy](#), professor and researcher at Harvard Business School, unfolds the science behind what she calls "power posing" and how you shouldn't fake it 'til you make it, but rather fake it 'til you

become it.

"Our bodies change our minds, and our minds change our behaviour, and our behaviour changes our outcomes." - Cuddy

The happy secret to better work

Saving the best for last, this is my favourite TED Talk! The secret to success, would you believe it, is happiness. [Shawn Achor](#), in relaying the story of his little sister the baby unicorn, among other quirky anecdotes, reveals the essence of positive psychology. CEO of Good Think Inc, Achor posits the Happiness Advantage - the brain performs significantly better when one's positivity levels are raised - as opposed to a brain at negative, neutral or stressed. It's time to rewire our brains, and Achor has a means to do so.

"If happiness is on the opposite side of success, your brain never gets there." - Achor

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