

# Success, Failure & Luck - From Bhagavad Gita

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## ABSTRACT

For the success or failure, many factors are responsible like, knowledge, skill, and overall ability with right actions. The wisdom and skill take significant role in achieving the task. Most important factor is the performance of the doer and the performance is derived from many other sub-factors which brings success or failure. Usually, if we do not get success, we feel, it is our bad-luck and if we achieve, it is our good-luck. However, in Bhagavad-Gita various factors are explained by Krishna and all those factors are responsible for any success or failure. All these factors are described herein with relevant verses of Bhagavad-Gita and are useful for a performer to take up any task and to succeed.

**Key words:** Success, Failure, Luck, Bhagavad-Gita, Murali Krishna

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## INTRODUCTION

Always, we all make efforts to achieve success in our work. No one wants failure in any task. However, it is not sure, that we always get success. If failure takes place, we then think that we do not have luck and hence we did not get the success. In Bhagavad-Gita, the factors are explained those are responsible for our success or failure. The knowledge is essential to take up any activity. Ability to handle the task is also important. To drive the activity, the determination and focus on the job are essential. The mental stability without any confusion and acting on task with determination leads to success. We observe few get the success and few do not get and the reason behind is the difference in their performance. For performance the knowledge and ability are essential. Because of the differences in performance, the result varies though the task is same for all. The person, who does not work with full efforts believes on luck. The activity in our hand, we should perform and luck is not in our hand. Many times, to cover up our inability, and we say, it is our bad-luck. Actually, our efforts are not full to deal the task and hence we end up with failure. Many factors are described herein for the success or failure based on the verses of Bhagavad-Gita to pursue various endeavors.

### Wisdom & Action:

Wisdom and quality in our actions primarily are responsible for our success. In the verse 18.78, it is explained that:

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः।  
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्धुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम॥ (18.78)

“Wherever, there is Lord Krishna, master of all mystics, wherever, there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will be opulence, victory, extraordinary power and morality”

The inner meaning of this, is the need of the qualities of a person like of Krishna and the need of the dynamic actions of a person like of Arjuna to have the fruitful results at everywhere. It means the mind which can think rightly along with skillful and dynamic action can chase the task and that leads to fruitful results. In all wisdom and the quality action are required to achieve the success and to achieve the good in all fronts. Here, Krishna denotes the wisdom and Arjuna denotes the action.

### Factors responsible for success or failure:

Krishna explained various factors responsible for the success or for the failure in the verses 13 to 18 of chapter 18 in Bhagavad-Gita.

Krishna told that, there are five factors responsible for achieving the fruits of the actions. They are body, doer, senses, endeavors, and the super soul. These are the factors operating towards the accomplishment of actions.

पञ्चैतानिमहाबाहोकारणानिनिबोधमे।  
सांख्येकृतान्तेप्रोक्तानिसिद्धयेसर्वकर्मणाम्॥ (18.13)

“According to the Vedanta there are five causes for the achievement and for the fruits of all actions. Now you can learn about these factors from me”

अधिष्ठानंतथाकर्ताकरणंचपृथग्विधम्।  
विविधाश्चपृथक्चेष्टादैवंचैवात्रपञ्चमम्॥ (18.14)

“The factors operating towards the accomplishment of actions are the body, the performer, the various senses, the different kind of endeavors and finally the Super soul”

With common understanding, if we analyze each factor:

- 1) Body: Physical fitness to handle the things right.
- 2) Doer: Performer and his or her ability (Knowledge, skill, and personality characteristics)
- 3) Senses: Effectivity of using senses to pursue the action to achieve the task
- 4) Endeavor: the task or assignment targeted for success.
- 5) Super soul : this is the ultimate power, who judges our actions and attitude. In normal way we think, it is our luck if success takes place and bad-luck, if failure takes place.

In the verse 29 of chapter 9 of Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna said that he is impartial to all. He is the super-soul, presents equally in all beings and treats all equal.

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः।  
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्॥ (9.29)

“I am equally present in all beings. I hate no one and I favour no one. However, whoever renders service to me in devotion -is in me and I am also in them”

In all, we take any task/ assignment (endeavor) and we work on it to achieve success. The super soul is impartial and therefore, we need to work mainly on other factors body (physical fitness). Senses (utilization of them effectively) and the performance (How doer performs/acts) to achieve the success. Krishna explained further that,

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्मप्रारभतेनरः।  
न्याय्यंवाविपरीतंवापञ्चैतेतस्यहेतवः॥ (18.15)

“These five are the contributing factors for whatever right or wrong actions that a person performs by body, mind or speech”

तत्रैवंसतिकर्तारमात्मानंकेवलंतुयः।  
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्नसपश्यतिदुर्मतिः॥ (18.16)

“Without considering the five factors if a person considers himself as the doer only, that person cannot realize things as they are”

यस्यनाहंकृतोभावोबुद्धिर्यस्यनलिप्यते।  
हत्वापिसङ्माल्लोकात्रहन्तिननिबध्यते॥ (18.17)

“The person, whose mind is free from the sense of doer-ship and free from false ego is not affected by worldly objects and activities. Such person does not really kill, even having killed the people in this world and does collect any sin by his action”

ज्ञानंज्ञेयंपरिज्ञातात्रिविधाकर्मचोदना।  
करणंकर्मकर्तृतित्रिविधःकर्मसंग्रहः॥ (18.18)

“The knower, knowledge and the object of knowledge are the three motivative factors for the action. Even so, the doer, the organs and activity are the three constituents of any action”

### Determination & Focus

Determination and concentration are essential components for chasing any task. If one has innumerable desires and innumerable aims, one gets confused and cannot focus on any of the aims and ultimately ends up with failure.

Therefore, one must act with complete determination and focus on a single goal to achieve the result. This is explained in the verse 41 of the chapter 2 in Bhagavad-Gita.

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन।  
बहुशाखाह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम्॥ (2.41)

“In the Yoga of Karma, the person with determination, aims towards one purpose. Whereas the undecided and ignorant person moves by desires and wanders in all directions with innumerable aims”

That means, on the path of action, one should be firm and fix concentration on the goal. Otherwise, one can easily be distracted with own wavering thoughts. It is an important aspect, while we make our goals and act upon. When we have number of thoughts or ambitions in mind, we always in the state of confusion and we cannot come to a decision on any of the thoughts but we try to achieve all and that leads to failure in all fronts. Because, we work with no focus and no clarity in mind. In all, prioritization and filtration of our jobs and thoughts is important to work upon for success. In the above verse, Krishna said that, one must firmly focus on a single aim and must work with complete determination.

Qualities essential to achieve the goal are:

- ❖ Determination
- ❖ Aim towards one purpose
- ❖ No confusion
- ❖ No desire
- ❖ No innumerable aims & thoughts in mind
- ❖ Firm decision

As per the above shloka, the person, who is undecided and holds many desires and moves directionless, is called Ignorant. It means, he is not wise and cannot accomplish his work with determination.

The factors described above are important to know as they are the responsible factors to pursue and achieve the task. One should follow own duty according to the modes of nature and the work associated with them. By performing that, one can achieve the highest perfection. Karma Yoga is the path of unselfish action. A lot is described in Gita about this yoga. It teaches that one should act according to dharma, without being attached to the fruits of the actions and without thinking of the consequences. By doing so, one can purify the mind and can act with a very positive attitude. Here the role of a performer is very important. The performer can be a student appearing examination or a professional at his/her work place or a doctor during treatment of patients or any other performer, who seeks success in the task. If he or she lacks the wisdom, knowledge, control on senses, physical fitness, the targeted task cannot be accomplished and even the super-soul cannot support the performer to achieve the task. It means, it must be our interest to correct ourselves and continuously upgrade our knowledge and skill with right senses to perform well and to get higher chances of success in our endeavors. Because of the lack of knowledge and ability and because of the ineffectiveness in the factors explained above, though the task remains same for all, some may get success and some may get failure. The difference in marks or ranks of the students is because of the variance in the efforts and difference in their ability though the syllabus is same and the teacher is same. Similarly, few doctors get success in their surgeries and few fail and that is because of lacking in all above factors. However, no one agrees that they do not have the knowledge or ability. Many believe on luck rather than on own performance. But performance of the doer is key factor for achieving the goal. Success or failure is dependent on performance of the individual.

These are the contributing factors for whatever right or wrong actions that a person performs by body, mind, or speech. Krishna said that, without considering these factors, if a person considers himself as the doer only, that person cannot realize the things properly. For the action, the motivating factors are the knower, knowledge, and the object of knowledge. The doer, the organs and activity are the three constituents of any action. The knowledge and the action are essential and the person who utilizes the senses effectively and acts on the task with right knowledge, can achieve the task successfully. In that case, the supreme is there to give you success without partiality. In all, the performance is the key factor to achieve the task as the performer must possess the right knowledge and skill and must utilize the senses effectively. In all, success or failure depends on all above factors and mainly on own ability, knowledge, and performance.

## CONCLUSION

Success or failure depends on many factors but most important are the doer and his or her performance. The performance depends on knowledge, ability, and the determination with complete focus on the job without

wavering thoughts. The success depends on own performance and failure happens if the performance is not as desired. Multiple aims and multiple thoughts usually lead to failure. The person believes on luck cannot perform rightly and the person performs with control on own senses and utilizing them effectively can accomplish the task and achieve the results successfully.

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