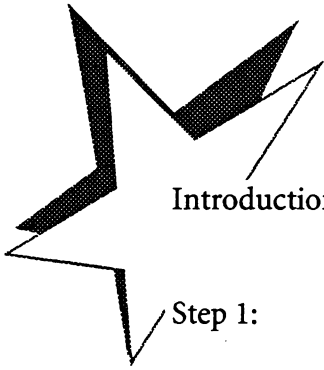
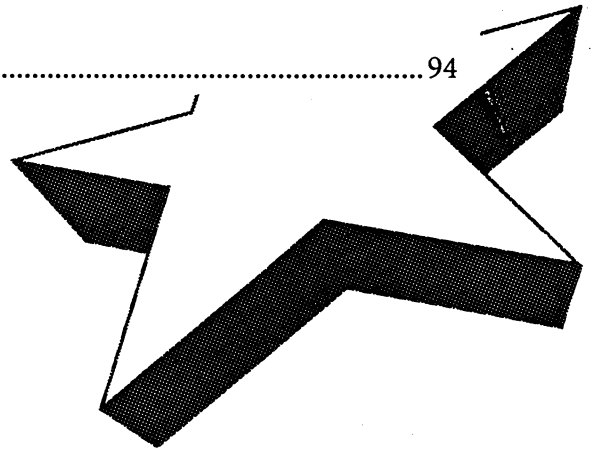

Table of Contents



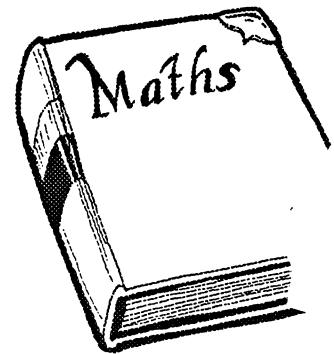
Introduction	4
Step 1: Self-confidence	10
Step 2: Goal Setting	21
Step 3: Motivation	32
Step 4: Time Management and Organisation	44
Step 5: Study Skills	57
Step 6: Dealing with “The System”	89
Bibliography	94



Introduction

Thoughts on Becoming an Achiever

“Another ‘D’... I hate maths tests! My life would be a lot better without any schoolwork at all.”



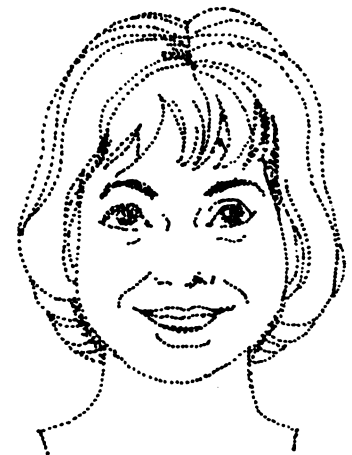
“My parents want me to achieve more at school. I’d like that, too, but that means work. It means carrying books home and writing essays and doing my homework. It means memorising a lot of stuff I think is boring. Is it really worth it?”



“People are starting to ask me what I want to do when I finish secondary school, if I want to go to university and what career I want to have. To tell you the truth, I just want to be rich and have an expensive car. The way to do that is to win the lottery!”

“I used to brag about the fact that I got good marks on my tests and I never studied. And that was true. In primary school, I already knew all of the things they were teaching us. I didn’t even have to pay attention. But now...I should study but I don’t know how.”

“Sometimes I pretend that I’m not smart at all. If I get a good mark and a boy asks me about it, I just say, ‘Oh I didn’t do very well.’ I don’t want the boys to think I’m smarter than they are. Then I wouldn’t be very popular.”



“I really want to do well at school, but my family doesn’t think education is important. When I get home from school, I have to cook dinner and look after all my little brothers and sisters. My dad says school is a waste of time. He is looking forward to my sixteenth birthday because then I can leave school and get a full-time job.”

All of those quotes come from real students – students who are discouraged about school, students who don't like to study, students who want to be popular rather than brainy, students whose parents don't see the value of getting a good education. Everyone's story is a little different, but they all have one thing in common. They all are *intelligent students* who could do well and be high achievers at school.

You might be something like one of these students. You may be really smart but you're not doing very well at school. Some of your teachers may have referred to you as an "underachiever". That means a student who has the *ability to do better* than he or she is doing.

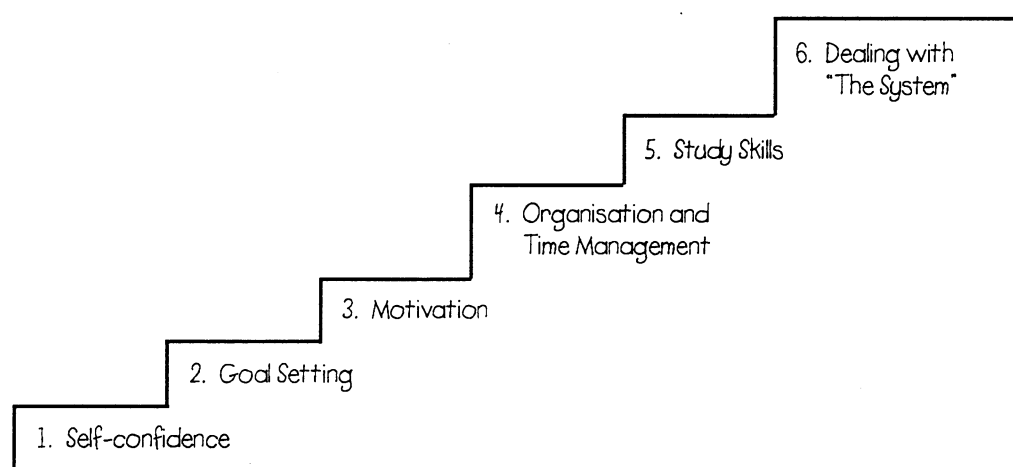
You may have been handed back an assignment or test where the teacher has written, "**You could do better**". If any of these situations describe you, and *if you think you could do better*, then this book is for you.

Becoming an Achiever: How is it Done?

You probably know someone in your class or your school who seems to succeed at everything. He or she always gets A's, always knows the answers in class and always gets the awards at the end of the school year.

Everyone can't succeed at everything, but everyone *can* become an achiever! There are no secret formulas. It takes some work on your part. The choice is yours. But if you are willing to try, this book will show you *how*. Then the choice is yours *to try*. Here are some of the main ideas this book will explore:

STEPS TO SUCCESS



STEP 1

Self-confidence

“The art teacher came to our year one classroom once a week. My first memory of doing something in art was a picture we were to draw of the water, a tree, clouds and the sun. This teacher wanted our picture to look ‘just like’ hers. I was overjoyed at the prospect of using a paintbrush and paints! But the art teacher hated my painting. She held it up to the entire class as an example of how not to paint. I was so embarrassed I wanted to die. I hated art and thought of myself as a failure at art for a long time.”

You might think that story was told to me by a year five or six student. After all, it is a story about something that happened in year one, and the person is remembering back. Actually, a teacher told me that story, and it had happened to her more than 50 years ago!

I’m telling it to you to show you a little bit about self-confidence. Self-confidence doesn’t come *only* from our ability to do things. It also comes from how we feel about ourselves based on what *other* people have told us. The things other people say about us can be very powerful messages. In this story, the message was so powerful that the teacher remembered it for 50 years! When I asked her what else she remembered about year one, she couldn’t remember a thing! The art teacher really made a negative impression on her and weakened her self-confidence.



Positive messages about ourselves work in the same way. Consider this story:

Susan is in year eight. She never thought that science was her best subject, but her science teacher seems to think so. When they started discussing science projects, Susan wasn’t too thrilled. She had never done a good project like some of the “scientific geniuses” at school. But her teacher encouraged her to do some ecological experiments with plants. Susan enjoyed working outside, and her teacher kept encouraging her, telling her she was making good progress, and giving her suggestions that really made sense.

At the school science fair, Susan received a second place ribbon. Her teacher was proud, her parents were proud and Susan felt good about herself. She feels more confident about science, and thinks she may be an achiever at secondary school science after all.

