

Chapter 9:

The Four Rules for Success

Slightly over a decade ago, I was fortunate enough to be asked to speak at British Mensa's Annual Gathering, being held in Chester that year, on the subject of giftedness. The audience was made up of Mensans of all ages and from all walks of life. I gave a very early version of the presentation I use in today's seminars, then left some time at the end for questions and discussion. The conversation came around to higher education, and I asked the group – roughly 50 people – how many of them had been to university. All of them raised their hands.

Next, I asked how many of the group had finished university, coming away with a qualification. This time around, fewer than half of them raised their hand. I was astounded to think that institutions that were supposedly meant to nourish and grow the talents of our very brightest individuals were failing to create meaningful connections with those who had potential to excel, and wanted to know why. As our discussion continued, four main causes began to present themselves as answers.

What I learned on that day, followed by the research and additional reading I undertook as a result of the experience, formed the basis for what I call my Four Rules for Success. They are as follows:

