

# 56 I can talk about success and failure

## A Success

JANE Maximo, your pizza chain's been a **resounding** success. How did things **turn out** so well for you? What's **the secret of your success**?

MAXIMO Well, I had a **stroke of luck** early on. I hired a talented young chef who was really keen to **fulfil his potential**, and basically he **never put a foot wrong**. We had to work together to **overcome** all the **obstacles in our way** – we nearly **came unstuck** when the first restaurant was flooded – but eventually we **made it**.

JANE You **made a big breakthrough** after you were on that TV show, didn't you?

MAXIMO Yes, we **went from strength to strength** after that. Still, you can never relax ...

### Glossary

<b>resounding</b>	very great (a <b>resounding success/defeat/win/victory</b> ).	<b>overcome sth</b>	succeed in controlling or dealing with a problem.
<b>turn out (well/badly)</b>	happen in a particular way, often unexpectedly.	<b>obstacle</b>	a situation or event that makes it hard for you to achieve sth.
<b>the secret of (your) success</b>	a way of doing things that has brought success.	<b>in sb's/the way</b>	stopping sb from doing sth.
<b>a stroke of sth</b>	an unexpected but important event (a <b>stroke of luck</b> ).	<b>come unstuck</b>	INF fail completely.
<b>potential</b>	qualities that exist and can be developed ( <b>fulfil/realize your potential</b> = use your natural abilities to achieve what you hoped to achieve).	<b>make it</b>	succeed in achieving a goal; become successful.
<b>not put a foot wrong</b>	not make a single mistake.	<b>breakthrough</b>	an important development that may lead to an achievement or agreement ( <b>make/achieve a breakthrough</b> ).
		<b>go from strength to strength</b>	become more and more successful.

### 1 Make six phrases using words from the box.

a resounding    come    the secret    turn out    a stroke    fulfil  
of luck    unstuck    of your success    your potential    victory    badly

.....  
.....

### 2 Good or bad? Write G or B.

- |                                           |                                     |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 We went from strength to strength. .... | 4 She never put a foot wrong. ....  |
| 2 There were obstacles in our way. ....   | 5 They had a breakthrough. ....     |
| 3 They came unstuck. ....                 | 6 They overcame the obstacles. .... |

### 3 Complete the sentences.

- He's very successful, but he's had to ..... various personal problems during his life.
- I passed my exam. However, I think it was a ..... of luck.
- The company struggled at first; now they're going from strength .....
- You must ask him for the ..... of his success.
- There's a long way to go, but things have ..... out well so far.
- The film industry is a tough business, but I believe she has the ..... to go on and make it.

## B Failure

- A Did Don **make a go of** the business?  
 B No, he was **way out of his depth**.
- A It's a **tricky** situation to deal with.  
 B Yes, Sue's really **up against it**.
- A I'm afraid the marriage is **going downhill**.  
 B And it started so well. That's sad.
- A So Carla **came bottom** in the exams.  
 B Yeah, and I only just **scraped through**.  
 Mum thinks we've **let her down**.
- A That boxer **is past it**, surely.  
 B Yeah, but he still wants to **make a comeback**.
- A I hear the film was a **flop**.  
 B Afraid so – an **unmitigated** disaster.

### spotlight way

**Way** can be used informally to mean 'by a large amount' or 'very far'.  
*It cost **way** over \$1,000.* = a lot more than \$1,000  
*The others were **way** ahead of me.* = a long way ahead of me

### Glossary

- make a go of sth** INF make sth succeed, especially a business or marriage.
- out of your depth** unable to do or understand sth because it is too hard.
- tricky** difficult to do or deal with (a **tricky situation/question/problem**).
- up against it** INF facing difficult problems or opposition.
- go downhill** get worse in quality, health, etc. SYN **deteriorate**.
- come bottom** receive the lowest score in an exam. OPP **come top**.
- scrape through (an exam)** only just succeed in passing an exam.
- let sb down** make sb disappointed because you haven't behaved well or done what you said you would do.
- be past it** INF be too old to do what you used to be able to do.
- comeback** If a person in public life **makes a comeback**, they start doing sth again which they had stopped doing.
- flop** INF a film, play, book, party, etc. that is not successful. **flop** V, INF. complete (used to describe sth bad). SYN **absolute**.
- unmitigated**

#### 4 Tick the words or phrases which are informal.

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Did she make a go of it? _____ | 4 He let me down. _____           |
| 2 The play was a flop. _____     | 5 I'm really up against it. _____ |
| 3 She's past it. _____           | 6 That's way too expensive. _____ |

#### 5 Circle the correct word(s). Sometimes both words are correct.

- Embarrassingly, I **got / came** bottom in the end-of-year progress tests.
- He's determined to stay and **make / have** a go of his marriage.
- The team started well but they've **deteriorated / gone downhill** recently.
- He's **away / way** too old to be driving.
- She wants to **do / make** a political comeback at the next election.
- The show was an **unmitigated / absolute** disaster; I didn't know what to do with myself.

#### 6 One word is missing in each speaker's utterance. Where does it go? Write it at the end.

- I don't like to tell him he's past. \_\_\_\_\_ ~ Hmm, it's a situation. I don't envy you. \_\_\_\_\_
- Any chance he'll make comeback? \_\_\_\_\_ ~ No, his last film badly. \_\_\_\_\_
- Did she top in the public vote? \_\_\_\_\_ ~ Yes, but she was against it. \_\_\_\_\_
- He himself down in the exam. \_\_\_\_\_ ~ Yes, he only just through. \_\_\_\_\_
- Her interview was an unmitigated. \_\_\_\_\_ ~ Yes, she was way of her depth. \_\_\_\_\_