

# How Women Can Determine Which Men Will Be Successful in Life

“What are your long-term goals in life?” is a typical question posed by employers to job applicants. It’s a question many people hate answering.

But a young college-age friend of mine has the best answer I’ve ever heard. Without batting an eye, she regularly responds: “Be a trophy wife.”

She has so much talent and ambition that this line comes off to those who know her as a hilarious joke. But I wonder if many women, given the chance, would blurt out, “Of course! I’d love to marry for money! Just think how easy life would be!”

I say that because this line of reasoning has been around for centuries. In a [collection of essays](#) published in 1790, Noah Webster reserves a section to speak to young women about their conduct, particularly in relation to suitors. Webster, who ironically would later go on to reform 18th century English spelling with his famous dictionary, writes:

*Money iz (sic) the great object of desire with both sexes; but how few obtain it by marriage? With respect to our sex, I confess, it iz (sic) not much to a man’s credit to seek a fortune without any exertions of hiz (sic) own; but the ladies often make a capital mistake in the meens (sic) of obtaining their object. They ask, what iz (sic) a man’s fortune?*

Instead of trying to find husbands who are already rich, a commodity in short supply and great demand, Webster encourages women to look for those who may be poor now, but who exhibit

traits destined for success. These include:

**1. Business Sense** – Webster appears to place great value on practical experience. He encourages young women to consider men who get their hands dirty and build on their business knowledge. Those who sit on the laurels of an inherited fortune or easily acquired money never have the chance to learn the ropes of business. They will likely continue through life rather clueless.

**2. Natural Talent** – Experience is helpful in acquiring business acumen, but Webster also believes a hint of natural talent is involved in success. Those with this talent will look for ways to use it to their best financial advantage, while also recognizing the value of taking time to rest and enjoy life occasionally.

**3. Diligence** – Webster encourages young women to look for a man of “persevering industry.” Those who avoid choosing an idle mate have “a better chance for a fortune in middle life and old age.”

**4. Money Management** – Finally, Webster advises women to look for a young man who is a wise money manager. Such a man will operate within a budget, will have a reasonable spending plan, and won’t throw money away on foolish purchases.

I would be remiss, however, if I failed to mention one more thing that makes a man successful. As Webster implies, it takes two to tango. A man can be a hardworking, multi-talented person who brings home a decent paycheck. But unless his copilot is adept at helping manage those funds wisely, their mutual project is likely to go down in flames.

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