

Contents

Take responsibility for yourself ...	9
Contribute to others' success ...	10
Put customers first ...	11
Be a “team player” ...	13
Volunteer ... and show some initiative ...	14
Follow the rules ...	15
Work the hours you're paid for ...	17
Exceed expectations ...	19
Keep your commitments ...	20
Get with change ...	21
Be considerate of others ...	23
Don't “whine” or spread negativity ...	24
Give, and earn, respect ...	25
Embrace diversity ...	28
Keep learning ...	29
Ask for feedback ...	30
Be patient ...	31
Be appreciative ...	32
Think “safety” ...	33
Think “health” ...	35
Look your best ...	36
Keep the boss informed ...	37
Act like an “owner” ...	38
Focus on “the big 2” ...	39
Perform with ethics and integrity ...	40
How Successful Am I? A Self-Assessment ...	42
Closing Thoughts ...	44

Take responsibility for yourself

If you were like most teenagers, you couldn't wait to grow up. Betcha you wanted the freedom and privileges that come with adulthood just as fast as you could get them. "Treat me like an adult," "Let me come and go as I please," and "You need to let me make my own decisions" were probably just a few of your rallying cries. Right? Sure! That's natural. But then here's what undoubtedly happened: You grew up (age wise, at least) and found that attached to those freedoms and privileges were a ton of responsibilities. There were *more* rules to follow, not less. Suddenly, the rest of the world was holding YOU accountable for your behavior and decisions (instead of those who raised you) – AND STILL IS.

Here's the straight scoop: Unless someone is holding a gun to your head, everything you do in life is your choice. And that's especially true at work. You *choose* how you conduct yourself; you *choose* how you treat others; you *choose* your "attitude," and how you respond to stress and adversity; you *choose* the levels of honesty and integrity that you display. Ultimately, you *choose* whether to take your personal responsibility seriously or to shirk it like some "deadbeat."

The kicker to remember here is that there are consequences to each choice you (we) make. Bad choices usually have bad ramifications. And blaming others for your poor choices is a waste of time. The "It's someone else's fault!" victim mentality is a sure path to nowhere.

Want to be truly successful? Take responsibility for yourself and your choices. And choose well.

You are what you choose to be!

Contribute to others' success

Imagine this scenario: You're struggling to get your work done. Next to you is a coworker with a little extra time who has the knowledge and skills to help. Do you say to yourself: *He doesn't need to pitch in. It's not his job to help me do mine?* Or, are your inner thoughts more like: *He can see I'm falling behind. You'd think he'd offer to help bail me out!* No doubt, you'd be thinking and feeling the latter – hoping for, and perhaps even expecting, a little help. After all, you're all on the same team ... you're all “in this together” ... helping a coworker is ultimately serving the customer, and that's what you're there for. Right? Right!

Now reverse the story. *You're* the one with the ability to help, and next to you is a coworker who's struggling. What are you more likely to do? Answer honestly now. Are you more likely to offer help or to look the other way? Hopefully, your first instinct would be to pitch in. And if that's the case, you're a “team player” – one of the key characteristics of a successful employee. Congratulations!

So if you're looking to get noticed, appreciated, and perhaps even promoted, look for opportunities to contribute to the success of the people around you. Share your talents and your time to help others learn, grow, and get through tough situations. Just make sure that helping others doesn't prevent you from getting your *own* work done.

By the way, if you happen to be the kind of person who *would* look the other way when someone needs assistance, consider changing your habits. Or at least fasten your seat belt – because what goes around will most definitely come around ... backatcha. And you truly will be deserving of all the help you *don't* get!

Put customers first

Put *your* customer hat on for a minute and do a little reflection. Have you ever stood in a business, waiting to be served, while the person who's supposed to be waiting on you completes some paperwork, makes a phone call, performs some other duty – or worse yet, chats with a coworker? If you have, you know how frustrating it can be. That employee is putting his or her business before yours. The wrong person is doing the waiting. And saying “I'll be with you in a minute” doesn't cut it.

That's just one of many examples of business people failing to realize that customers are supposed to come first. And if you intend to be successful at work, you'd better not fall in that same trap.

Maybe you're thinking: *This doesn't apply to me ... I don't deal directly with our customers.* Well think again! Fact is, EVERYONE has customers – whether they be members of the general public who patronize your business or other employees within your organization for whom you provide services. Your job exists because those customers exist. Fail to serve them properly – put your needs before theirs – and they just might take their business elsewhere. And then elsewhere is probably where you'll be working. Not good!

Remember: The only reason a customer should wait for you to serve them is because you're serving another customer. Even then, they shouldn't have to wait too long.

Words to Remember

*For true success ask yourself these four questions:
Why? Why not? Why not me? Why not now?*

~James Allen

The only thing that separates successful people from the ones who aren't is the willingness to work very, very hard.

~Helen Gurley Brown

Success is a journey not a destination. The doing is usually more important than the outcome. Not everyone can be number one.

~Arthur Ashe

The elevator to success is out of order. You'll have to use the stairs ... one step at a time.

~Joe Girard

The only place you find success before work is in the dictionary.

~May V. Smith

Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.

~Robert Collier

The road to success is lined with many tempting parking spaces.

~Source Unknown

Be a “team player”

So I was watching my favorite pro sports franchise lose a must-win game on television last night. They’re out ... they’re history ... the season is over. “How in the world can that happen,” I ask myself, “with all the talent we have?” Then, the coach answers my question in a post-game interview: “We’re loaded with superstars, but today, we just didn’t work together ... as a team.” What a loss – what a lesson.

Business, like many of the games in athletics, is a team “sport.” You have a collection of individuals who must work together to accomplish a common goal. While the players contribute in varying degrees, no one person can produce a victory on his or her own. Each member of the team has a role – a position. And each position has a variety of responsibilities: sometimes you shoot, sometimes you assist, sometimes you block ... sometimes you’re in the spotlight, sometimes you’re in the trenches. And two things are for sure: 1) Everyone on the team ends up being an equal winner or an equal loser, and 2) Limelight-grabbing ball hogs don’t last very long.

Are you a team player at work? Do you give your best effort regardless of the role you play? Are you willing to do the things that are needed to help the group succeed? Do you work at being cooperative and communicating well with your coworkers? Are you considerate of others? Do you accept and value others’ ideas – especially when those ideas are different from yours? Can you be counted on to carry your share of the load?

If your answers to the above questions are all “yes,” success is definitely in your future. More interested in only being the star? Just remember that even *they* get traded when teams lose!