

Job Excellence – It may mean as much to your health as it does to your work

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Your life is the sum total of your actions. In the end it's about what you have done with the time you have been given. Would you want this postscript on your epitaph?

“PS: I wish I woulda...”

Our actions define who we are and demonstrate our philosophy in life. There are many things we can't control; however, doing our best is one we can.

When you were young, people were always telling you to do your best. What they didn't tell you is that doing your best may be one of the healthiest things that you can do for yourself.

Many studies have correlated good health with positive job satisfaction. One of the best ways to accomplish this is by doing your best at *whatever* you do. Doing your best and knowing that you are really good at your job makes you feel good. It gives you confidence and pride. It reduces stress by releasing chemicals in the brain that have a positive affect on your health. Anyone who has ever made something, waxed a car, created a garden, landscaped a yard, or closed a big order, has glowed as they surveyed the finished accomplishment. Some of the best smiles have come from a job well done.

It's not only good for you; it radiates out and touches others as well. It's a contagious energy that separates successful people and companies from the herd. But it doesn't just happen by itself. It has to be part of the culture, encouraged and recognized.

Many products and services are becoming commoditized. In any city at any time there can be dozens of competitors waiting to undercut your fee and promising greater service. The only differentiating factor is your believability and history of consistent quality service. Do what you say. Make it easier and better than you promised.

So what gets in the way?

A study some years ago determined that one of the top causes of employee job dissatisfaction was in not knowing exactly what is expected of them. Constant crisis management, lack of planning and not feeling appreciated or encouraged to contribute were right up there too.

Everything starts with a thought, a desire, and an intention. So think! How can I do my job better? It's estimated that 1 minute in planning saves on average 12 minutes in execution. Start with the end in mind. Which should be; how do we as a team and I as a member do a better job of profitably serving our clients? Don't be afraid to focus on enjoying the process as well. Ask yourself or your team leader what needs to be done and how you can help. Communication is essential. Together establish procedures and simplify.

If people are asking for the 3rd or possibly the 100th time “how should we...?” You need a system. Ray Kroc didn’t create the greatest hamburger. However, he did create one of the greatest systems the world has ever known - and people keep coming back! People like predictability, not surprises.

In the book, “The One Minute Manager”, authors Kenneth Blanchard & Spencer Johnson suggest you take just one minute before you act and ask, what is the outcome or the goal of this undertaking? You will be amazed at how it zeros you in on the objective and helps you to communicate more effectively with others. Find ways to save the client or your co-workers time, money, or heartache. Don’t just meet expectations, exceed them.

What does your best mean to the organization?

Dr. Rice, Texas A&M University, points out that errors and reworks cost 30-100% of the profit from a typical order. Customer loyalty expert and author Frederick Reichheld says that a typical U.S. corporation loses 50% of its customers every 5 years. The cost of acquiring new ones is 5-12 times that of keeping an existing one. A 5% increase in customer retention can increase organization profits by 25-100%. Dr. Rice noted a tweak in the right place can make an enormous difference.

If you’re not always doing your best - no matter what it is you’re doing - maybe that’s the right place to tweak for an enormous difference in *your* life. By simply giving your best in every situation and circumstance, you will realize a greater level of success, better health, and a richer life experience.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.” – Aristotle

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