
Obtain the Skills to Perform Better

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INTRODUCTION

To achieve anything worthwhile, enthusiasm is essential. Those who are enthusiastic think constructively and move forward with determination and self-confidence while conducting in a way to carry people along and also making improvement in their own works. They are guided by ideals and make definite plans to put them into practice. Opportunities await those who are bubbling with enthusiasm.

Get active and busy with your work and do it well. Treat work as worship. Work for the sake of work without any selfish motive and without thinking of rewards/ appreciation. If you like the work you do, you do not get tired or bored. Results will come of their own accord even without your asking.

An attempt has been made to put together some thoughts that will help us all to work well.

TIPS FOR AN INTERVIEW

- Pick up on what they are looking for. Talk about the work you have done that is related to that.
- Don't be too elaborate with your portfolio. You should let your work speak on how creative you are, not the packaging.
- Communication is a two-way process. Go in with half a dozen good questions that you can try to get answers from.
- Don't say you can do things you can't (Honesty is the best policy)
- Be yourself while dressing, presenting and responding.

STAYING FIT

Eating healthfully and exercising frequently are the best ways to improve well-being. The following would help:

- Exercise regularly (Walk at a brisk pace for 30 minutes daily. Take the stairs instead of the elevator)
- Get a good laugh at least once a day
- Get 7-8 hours sleep every night.
- Do Yoga (It increases flexibility and strength)
- Munch a handful of almonds daily (Lowers cholesterol)
- Pray/Meditate for 20 min a day. (Lowers BP, reduces anxiety and cuts stress levels)
- Use turmeric (Protects against heart diseases and cancer)
- Eat purple grapes, apples, small amounts of dark chocolates and drink tea (They contain anti-aging substances called flavonoids. Prevent blood clots and heart attacks)

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

- Be a people's person. When with others, recognize their problems, interests and needs, and try to meet them.
- Select people who will be of help in realizing your dreams.

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- Cultivate thinking to find new ways for everything.
- Do not get disheartened with failure. Learn a lesson, search for new ways to improve and find the will to try again.
- Move with enthusiasm and attract people to your side
- Withstand feelings of despair
- Do not forget (lose control of) yourself in the excitement of victory
- Be humble and conduct yourself with humility to whatever level you may rise
- Know correctly where you stand intellectually and in understanding
- Believe that the decided goal will take you forward and resolve not to stop your efforts till it is achieved.

ANGER

The purpose of anger is to correct a particular situation or an erring subordinate. One should know how to get angry and yet not to let it change one's personality or affect one's health. One should not take it so much to the heart that the anger rises from the pit of the stomach. It should be reduced to the tongue. It should be directed at the right person. One should not get angry with the wrong person. One should control anger in view of the following:

- From anger comes delusion; from delusion loss of memory; from loss of memory the destruction of discrimination; from destruction of discrimination he perishes (Gita)
- Anyone can become angry- that is easy, but to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way-that is not easy. (Aristotle)

REACHING HIGHER LEVELS WITH INDIVIDUALITY

- Thinking big (much beyond just living)
- Seize opportunities
- Do not put limitations to your thinking. Sharpen your thinking faculty.
- Think of fields that will give greater opportunities for progress keeping in view your expertise and the possibility of acquiring/enhancing capabilities.

- In short, cultivate clear qualities of individuality. Make continuous efforts to improve capabilities. Develop a broad view, observe what is happening around, know your position and seize the opportunities.

HOW TO WORK WELL

- Be active and busy with your work
- Work is worship. Perform it as a karmayogi without a selfish motive and without desiring to enjoy the fruits of action. With such an attitude, you will not get tired and work will bring its own reward.

TO OVERCOME BOREDOM

- Make continuous efforts with synchronized body, mind and intellect to achieve a goal.
- Cultivate an absorbing hobby so that you do not have time to get bored
- Develop interest in the things and people around. Try to know new and useful things, and also tell others about them.
- Try to find better ways of living, eating etc.

MAKING FRIENDS

Making friends is an art. Such people think of others without any selfish motive. They have a genuine liking and real interest in others. Be courageous to be your own self even if others may not accept you or make fun of you. Select people whose interests tally with yours. Have the patience to be able to mix with different types of people. Appreciate the good points in them. Be a patient listener and show interest in what they say. Do not blame others for your faults. Do introspection periodically and make necessary improvements.

TO BE AT PEACE WITH ONESELF

- Try to be cheerful.
- Make inward journey
- Think of others
- Do not evaluate others for their money/assets
- Think only of the present
- Try for mental peace
- Keep good ideals and strive for them
- Do not over eat

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- Manage time well. Do today's work well with optimism and enthusiasm

TO OVERCOME BARRIERS TO TEAMWORK

- Make your people feel that they are a part of something larger than themselves and why their effort is so important to the company
- Share with your team as much information as possible
- Invite team members to share ideas for surmounting challenges. Test ideas with such questions as 'How will this idea get customers to use our products faster than before?'
- Stretch your people beyond their current skills (Challenge them to generate ideas outside their normal share of responsibility).
- Make it fun, actionable and visible (Fund their best ideas and make brainstorming actionable)
- Help people feel the challenge (Design exercises that let your team experience their challenge. Let them generate ideas to surprise and delight customers).

CULTIVATE THE HABIT OF EVALUATION

By questioning, mental development and knowledge improve. In the highly competitive days of today, in order to succeed; proper effort, the ability to think from different angles, evaluate the plus and minus points and take a proper decision are required. Reading the biographies of famous and successful people will not only give inspiration but also give clues as to how to go about it.

TO MAKE A MARK

Be optimistic. Have confidence in yourself. Think always in a positive way. Undertake the work with a spirit of dedication. Seize every opportunity that comes your way. Observe keenly, to learn and improve all the time, from the experiences of others as far as possible, and also your own. In whatever situation you are, think how best you can make yourself comfortable and move forward with enthusiasm, self-confidence and greater vigour adopting improved methods. Read good books. Have a goal that you should conduct yourself in a way that you become a good role model for others to emulate. Those who

work hard sincerely and conscientiously will shine and achieve success whatever may be the field.

HANDLING SUCCESS

- Do not let success go to your head and make you arrogant and rude.
- Cherish your friends and give them their due
- Spend quality time with your family members.
- Be yourself. Be good and nice to people.
- Introspect and find out new ways to improve yourself.

LEADERSHIP

Inculcating the following would enhance leadership qualities :

- Strong belief and faith (Faith in oneself initiates confidence)
- Positive thinking and control over your emotions (With that, you can deal with any situation with confidence and a composed mind)
- Sense of justice and fairness in your dealings
- Discipline in life
- Courage and fearlessness

SUCCESS IN LIFE

Performance at academic level often bears little relation to performance in life. It requires strategic planning, positive attitude, hard work, practice and persistence. Apart from academic skills; general attitude, time management skills, planning and motivation are also needed. The ultimate goal in life is not just to succeed, but to continue to improve. Whenever you desire something so deliberately that you won't take no for an answer, you are sure to succeed. People who are most successful are those who are willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. It means to achieve, you should make a list of things you are prepared to lose. The following would help:

- Fill your mind with words and thoughts which energise and motivate you to succeed (I can, I will, I am going to)
- Enjoy what you are doing
- Persistence, determination
- Learn through failures as they show

imperfections which need improvement

- Live more, love more and laugh more (Laughter from within works like a healing therapy)

TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP INSTINCTS

- When tasks pile up, pick up the ones that are the most difficult
- Do not mind criticism from others as it gives a feedback to improve
- Feel excited when given an important responsibility
- Like supervising others
- Appreciate good points in others to cheer and motivate them. Do not exaggerate
- Have clear goals for yourself for both the short and long-terms
- To make important decisions, gather the facts and act on your logical judgment
- Be organized in your work
- Feel proud when you receive recognition at work
- While communicating with others, be very attentive and clear
- Write simply and clearly
- Use your organizational ability, communication skills etc to solve problems.

IMPROVING HUMAN RELATIONS

- Talk to people and enquire about their welfare
- Greet others with a smile
- Address by name
- Be friendly and extend a helping hand
- Talk and act whole heartedly
- Develop a liking for others for what they are
- Be lavish in praise but careful in criticism
- Have consideration for others' problems
- Think of others' opinions. Try to understand them. For every issue, there are three perspectives. They are -yours, others, proper
- Be active in helping others.

BECOMING A WRITER

Whatever may be your avocation, becoming a writer helps you to become versatile, think afresh and express your thoughts clearly. Keeping the following points in view would help in becoming a good writer:

- Write in your own words. Undertake with determination and courage while gradually improving the ability.
- Cultivate reading habit. Read biographies/ writings of great people to get inspiration and new ideas.
- Develop the habit of keen observation
- Before actual writing, imagine a thing in your mind and jot down points as to how you want to handle it. Question: Why? How? Where? to get a overall picture
- Search and examine, collect material, think of construction and adopt your own style. Keep the sentences short. Express clearly.
- Keep the readers in view while writing. Write for their sake. Think that the reader should get an impression after reading that there is something interesting and useful in the article and is worth recapitulating.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CO-WORKERS

Forming a united front, Re-enacting the behaviour of the person to enable him to see his own behaviour, Using humour, Being subtle, Being vigilant etc. can help. To improve the quality of work, the following are some ways to handle particular type of people :

1. People who blame others.
Say 'Why is it always someone else's fault?' to make your point
2. People who take credit for your work or ideas.
Put your name on any document you develop. If someone swipes your idea at a meeting, point it out using humour if possible. Later tell him not to do that again.
3. People who constantly interrupt.
Say coolly, but firmly, 'Please wait while I finish'.
4. People who embarrass you publicly.
Say Later, 'I am sure you did not intend to embarrass me, but you did'.
5. People who don't follow through.
Tell them that you will inform the boss if they don't start pulling their weight. Then do it.
6. The office gossip who spreads rumours. Confront him directly when it is about you. Or enlist your boss's help.

TO HONE YOUR PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS

- Try to know the interests, presuppositions and values of your audience
- Unless someone is being intentionally disruptive, there is very little you need to control
- Along with using lucid language, humility and humour will make the talk entertaining
- Some preparation is useful. Over preparation will cause fear.

Be concise and brief. Use short sentences. Where appropriate, support these with examples.

FOR BETTER PERFORMANCE

Have an open and caring work environment that is driven by performance, innovation and creativity. Ethics should be part of work culture. Values should be based on respect for people and uncompromising integrity. Quality of work, leadership direction and the element of fun in the work place will keep employees ticking.

TO IMPROVE PEOPLE SKILLS

- Make the first move and reach out (Do not wait for someone else to say hello)
- Have a good eye contact. Look in a pleasant way.
- Smile, be pleasant and say hi to people.
- Learn to be a good listener. It makes them feel good.
- Look friendly and act friendly
- Practise a few questions like TV programmes, office meeting, his hobbies etc to start the conversation.
- Don't expect everyone to be just like you
- Don't bug people by following them. Move on if someone doesn't want to be your friend.

CONCLUSION

Nothing is impossible. Success requires persistence, determination and a never-say-die approach. There is no other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. Our level of persistence needs to be so high that it does not allow our enthusiasm to be dampened by

the discouragement that must inevitably come while pursuing a goal. Always tell yourself that the greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is to try one more time, each time with improved methods after learning from the earlier experiences. One should persevere to attain the goal. Never let fear or doubts enter your mind while prodding. Tell yourself that great works are performed not by men of strength but men of perseverance. With extra-ordinary perseverance, even a man of ordinary talent reaches his destination. Often, people give up when they have almost reached their goal; while others obtain victory by exerting more vigorously than ever before. It is quite natural to encounter defeats on the way. But one should not get disheartened because the human spirit never finishes when it is defeated. It finishes when it surrenders. You are not defeated until you admit it. The moment you admit it, you are down and out.

To be effective, one should be a Karma Yogi i.e. dedicate all actions to God, perform one's duty sincerely and conscientiously without caring for the results/ benefits. This requires an attitude of gratitude i.e. being thankful to God, nature and society for whatever we are provided. We are just the medium through which God wants to get His plans executed. This attitude reduces our expectations from others because we do not expect anything in return. It also helps reduce our ego. Observing polite manners, conducting respectfully with others, being good to them, extending a helping hand should all become a part and parcel of our nature irrespective of the person, time or situation.

Persistence pays. Consistent efforts bring the best results. Genius is 90% perspiration and 10% luck. There are so many people in this world whose persistence and hard work have brought immense reward and good to the world. Persistence helps you tread immeasurable steps. It helps you change your life and that of others.

Fate smiles on the steadfast. We have to strive to uplift our lives. Six steps are human effort, the seventh is divine grace. When obstructions come on our way to success, we could overcome them by our own sincere struggle; by arousing the inner spirit which is latent in all.

We should never be annoyed and depressed by the hardships, failures or challenges that come our way or curse one's luck or blame God. Many times we get irritated when we encounter minor problems. But may be these happen for good and are God's way of helping us or teaching us some lessons. Like success, our failures also don't go waste. We may not be able to achieve our objectives due to failures but these certainly teach us lessons, which guide us through life. Whatever happens, happens for good.

To err is human but greatness lies in correcting oneself. One should not let success enter his head. Pride spoils the future. One should disregard even if others criticize or make fun of him but should carry on one's duty conscientiously and steadfastly. If one has made a mistake or misbehaved with another, he should readily admit it, apologise and make amends. These are small acts that will carry us very far in the journey of life. In conclusion, the following words come to mind:

- Opportunities multiply as they are seized
- Each work has to pass through these stages- ridicule, opposition and then acceptance (Swami Vivekananda)
- God is with those who persevere
- Pragmatism should not be confused with indolence
- I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy (Rabindranath Tagore)
- It is no use looking up to heaven with too

much faith and too little struggle.

- The grass may be greener on the other side, but it is just as hard to cut.
- Stay focused on your goals, not your immediate problems. To get the most out of each day, establish clear priorities before you start work. Put passion, zeal and enthusiasm into everything you do.
- Uncertainties of the future and fear in our minds should not keep us worried. Rather we should concentrate on our present and

Continue to work to the best of our abilities. Our deeds will speak for us and our present makes our future.

Having the desire to learn and improve, asking questions to solicit advice from others on how to get better and being a good listener will make a person successful.