

52 Things You Can Do To Improve Your Work - A Week At A Time

By

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<http://www.career-success-for-newbies.com>

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Long as he is popularly known - went through a period of disillusionment many moons ago. 'A slap and a kick' from a good-hearted cousin then woke him. He found himself graduating and having a good career. In his free time he runs <http://www.career-success-for-newbies.com> with his wife Dorena as their way of paying it forward. Download these free eBooks - Career Success Recipe for Newbies and SHINE At Work: Your 30-Minute Guide - at this website (***your site's URL***) now.

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Dedicated to:

Those Who Are Committed To Improving Themselves Daily

Foreword

I hope you will find some nuggets of suggestions in here that works. But it can only work if you work on it. I do not believe everything here works for everyone. Some suggestions you may even disagree. But the important thing is - I hope it will at least shift your mindset a little and act upon the habit that can mean changing your work life for the better.

You can speed through this book in thirty minutes. But that is not its purpose. Too often we hear about people complaining about work, work life, colleagues and work related problems and challenges. The fact that we spend a lot of time at work means it has the potential to dictate how we feel throughout the day, months or year. How often do we reflect and act upon what we can change?

If you can act upon some of the steps here diligently then you will begin a process of changing your work environment for the better. Realize that when you change, your environment changes too.

You cannot expect overnight results with things that are behavioral in nature. It can only work over time with a new mindset and continuous conscious effort.

Sure, speed through the book. But more importantly, run through it now and then through the year when the need arises. You can also opt to subscribe to the FREE newsletter that acts as a reminder for you. Every now and then when we update the site we will send you a newsletter that acts as a reminder for you and also new suggestions to keep your motivation going. It's FREE and you can unsubscribe anytime.

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It is interesting that most of us would think about our monetary investments and look for returns on those investments but we never look at investing time to better ourselves. Invest time in yourself and changing yourself for the better now, at this moment and reap its return in the year to come.

If not you who? If not now when?

Long Yun Siang
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1. **The Toughest Part - Know What You Want**

The toughest part about finding your dream career isn't about finding the dream career. It is about finding yourself. **Do you know what you want?** This is the first question you need to ask yourself. It is a seemingly easy question many answer by mentioning what they DON'T WANT instead of what they WANT. But that is not the answer that will ensure you to find your dream job.

Knowing what you don't want does not mean you easily arrive at what you want. Unfortunately, the process of elimination does not work in finding your dream career. You can go through a thousand "don't wants" and still not hit it. How to find your dream career? Start by knowing what you want!

2. **Know Your Values**

If you feel a little lost with finding what you want, start by knowing your values. Ask yourself, what do you really value? Time? That's a common answer I get and a good one too. We all want more time for family and ourselves. So, if you value time then you know the dream career you are looking for must offer more time. Is that all? List a set of values you treasure. Then things will begin to fall in place. You have defined what it is that will fit in these criteria.

3. **Know How Much You Are Willing To Sacrifice**

Do you have the [knowledge and skill set](#) that fit the needs of your dream career? If you do not, how much are you willing to sacrifice in order to add those skills set in your repertoire? How to find your dream career is easy. How much you are willing to sacrifice in order to achieve it is tough to answer.

4. **Make Learning A Key Objective**

If you are new in the work force and have been job-hopping quite a bit, my advice to you is this - truly find out what you want. Once you know that, find a company that is willing to train or how they are willing to commit to their employees' career in the long term. If they have structured training programs, join them.

Make learning the relevant [skills and knowledge](#) in that industry your key objective. The skills and knowledge that you learn will contribute to your career success in the long term. It is something that you can bring with you the rest of your life. Once you see the benefits of committing to a

company who is willing to train you for more than two years, hopefully you won't be job-hopping often anymore.

5. **A Positive Mental Attitude**

As boring as it sounds, this is important. It is probably the most important of all. As you think so you are. You want positive things to happen to you, you must first have a [positive attitude](#). That means looking on the bright side of things regardless of how tough your days, months and year is.

You dread going to work tomorrow; your day will turn out a dread just as you thought it would be. You are a master of your thoughts, not a slave to it. You feel you have lost interest; remind yourself why you found interest in the first place. Almost always it will re-ignite you.

You don't know how to be positive? Start with a single thought. As pathetic as it sounds, say to yourself – "Look at the sun today. Such a nice day." But that is also as easy as it gets. It's tough? That's because you think it is tough. Again, it goes back to your thought. Make positive thinking part of your career planning success.

Think, feel, and do. Think happy thoughts, feel the energy and act happy. When you do it often enough you become a positive person. The same energy needed to think worrying and negative thoughts is the same that is needed to think happy and positive thoughts. Why waste that energy? Think a happy thought now.

6. **A Sense Of Purpose**

We think when people say, what is your purpose in life? The answer must surely be grand. Maybe, go to such and such country, start a charity, volunteer at a home and so on and so forth. Sure, if you know that is your calling, so be it. Go ahead and do it. But what if you do not and are still muddling through life? Is life's purpose so easily discovered? If your life's purpose were revealed to you today, would you even know it? Are you willing to pay the price for it? While you discover your purpose in life may I suggest this?

Your work is not a hindrance to that search for your grander purpose in life. If it is, you have a choice. If it isn't, do not blame your work. Get [angry](#) at it, you will drift further from your answer. In fact, your work now is part of the process of discovering your grander purpose in life. It is filled with hints, clues and challenges that point you to that purpose.

To do that, find a sense of purpose in your work now. What is your purpose at work? What role do you play? What services do you offer to your fellow colleagues to that make this a better place to work and a better world, and also through the services and products offered by your

company? Understand that role and you will understand your grander purpose better, if not discover it. This is an important part of your career planning success and a factor for career success.

7. Joyful Effort

Too many times, you hear people talk about effort. About having to [work hard](#) and how you need a combination of working hard and [smart](#). You want to make your career success journey a happy one. Remember these two words. Joyful effort. Effort itself is not enough. You must do it joyfully. Work will become a dread whether through monotony or constant challenges that comes your way. If it was just plain effort, you get tired easily.

Joyful effort gives you energy and endurance in pursuit of your goals. It keeps you from being sidetracked by laziness and challenges. It keeps you from becoming disillusioned by challenges and adversity.

How do you put joy into effort? One way is to have a strong and healthy mind. How do you have a strong and healthy mind? Think positive. How do you think positive? Seed a positive thought. The other way is to see setbacks as lessons that increase chances of success and adversity as a test of mental strength. When you see how these efforts contribute to your success and discovery of your purpose, you will do things joyfully.

8. Focus

You can be doing many things with joyous effort and yet fail because you do not focus. Being focused means to train your mind not to wander. Do not focus on one goal now only to switch goals before you even do enough for the previous one.

[Be mindful](#) and aware of everything that you do is also being focused. Detach from your ego. There is no need to be right all the time and argue for the sake of wanting to be right. Concentrate on the task at hand and single-mindedly pursue it. When you focus, you gain clarity to situations that are confusing and insights into misconceptions that feed negative thoughts to your mind. Then your career planning success has a higher chance of coming to fruition.

What does this mean? For example, if you have a project that everyone has agreed to pursue but half way someone outside the group criticizes it. Focus. Those comments only bring confusion to you if you do not focus and allow your ego to get into that situation. You will become [confused and distracted](#). Gain clarity by focusing and you will know those comments aren't important to the pursuit of your [goals](#). Focus is an important factor for [career success](#).

9. **Right Ethics**

Big words but it really just means in the things that we say or do – we abstain from lying, abstain from using harsh words, abstain from [gossiping](#), abstain from using divisive speech and abstain from being malicious.

Always think win-win at work (and in life). You have to believe that there is such a thing as win-win. Do not scheme and plot your career success. There are no such things. Even if it happens by such means, it wouldn't last. If you put in the right effort, good things will happen to your career soon enough. Your career planning success is really as simple as that.

Of course it is tough practicing this principle, but the more you are able to do it the more freedom you will feel. The more [self-discipline](#) you have in doing it, the less you will be caught up in confusing situations and it frees you from malice and wrong views. Being nice is really just that easy. Practice the right ethics.

10. **Embrace Setbacks**

There are no failures in life. Only setbacks. In your career planning success do not ever believe in failures. And you truly only fail when you give up. So long as you continue to try and do and focus on your goals, you will still be in the running for success. Learn to embrace setbacks. They teach you what not to do the next time and they [test your patience](#). It is also a test of your resolve.

You are not born to know how to do such and such. Hence, everything is a learning process. As with all learning process, there are bound to be setbacks. Even if you know how to do something there is no guarantee of [success](#), as we are prone to forget. Setbacks can be just that. A reminder of what we have forgotten. Include this factor in your career planning success.

When faced with setbacks, know that they are just that – setbacks. You can still spring forward. Learn from it, plan and activate what you have learned. You need not beat yourself over it. Cut yourself some slack, so to speak. Minimize the [anger](#) and sadness and move on.

11. Teamwork And Support Group

No one can teach you everything. No one can know everything. No one can do everything. You need to know the value of teamwork and the process to [forge teamwork](#). You increase your own success when you help the team succeed. The team's goals are intrinsically weaved into your own goals. Just as your goals at work are weaved into your personal goals. The more people you help succeed, the faster you succeed. Include others in your career planning success and you will succeed faster and easier.

Create a support group of positive people in the office and outside to [motivate](#), encourage or just to slap some senses into you when you need it. This support group can be made up of individuals who are your friends whom you meet often. It need not and is not meant to be a formal meeting. The important thing to remember is to have [POSITIVE](#) people. When you are down and negative you do not need more negative energy infused into you.

You need to remember not to be a positive energy drainer as well in such situations. Do not go to your friends and expect to be convinced to be positive. You must allow others to make you positive. Positive people have a tendency to avoid negative people who drain them too often.

12. There Is Nothing Positive About Anger

Accept the fact that there is nothing positive about anger. There is also nothing positive about expressing anger. As long as you feel anger as an emotion is positive and brings benefit, then you would not feel a need to change. After all, why would someone want to change something that brings benefit?

Some people feel that anger is constructive. They feel that when someone irritates, offends, or inconveniences them, they have the right to be angry. Somehow, they feel anger is justified. Well, it doesn't.

Accept the fact that anger is negative. Does anger bring any positive [emotions](#)? Are you happy when you are angry? Do you feel joy when you are angry? When we are angry we end up saying things we do not mean, we act irrationally. We end up regretting it later. The most important component in this anger management tip is accepting the fact that anger is negative. Then you begin a journey to correct that [bad habit](#).

13. **Make A Decision That Control Is Possible**

All behavioral changes start from one thing. The decision, acceptance and commitment in your mind that you want to make that change. In this case, self-control is possible albeit a long and gradual process. Only you can make the decision on how to control your emotions.

Remember that **YOU** hold the key to your own success as your behavior can threaten your [career success](#). The idea is that you want to avoid extreme emotional responses for example in the case of [anger](#) – rage and hate.

14. **Identify The Emotions You Need To Control**

Chances are you already know which emotions you need to control. The first step is to identify which emotion. Based on personal experience and observation in the office, these are the few I can identify – anger, anxiety, fear and enthusiasm.

You may say, “Wait a minute, isn’t enthusiasm a good emotion? Why should we control it?” Well, remember that we are talking about excessive expression of that emotion. Ever met a colleague who shows too much enthusiasm on a particular project that it just gets in the way of other team members?

15. **Get Rid Of The Stupid Excuses**

We often hear colleagues acknowledging that they have a certain problem but that there is no point in changing their behavior. These people like to admit their mistakes expecting you to excuse them but at the same time you are to accept that they won’t make an effort to change.

It is crucial to get rid of the stupid excuses that make you think you don't have to control your emotions. In this case again, we are referring to excessive expression of emotions in the office.

If you truly want to know how to control your emotions, then take a step to get rid of these commonly used excuses:

“I am being true to myself, why should I change?”

“I am young - I can afford to be foolish.”

“Well, if they are good colleagues/friends, they just have to accept me for who I am.”

16. Positive Change Should And Can Happen

When I hear these excuses, it always makes me wonder if these people know who their true self is? Is the 'true self' static? Aren't our beliefs, attitudes and actions constantly changing? If that is so, then why can't one choose to change for the better?

Remember this, if you want to know how to control your emotions, [positive change](#) should happen. Self-improvement has nothing to do with 'true self', age – young or old; and friends and colleagues accepting who you are. Self-growth has everything to do with you and not others.

Positive change **should** and **can** happen once you think about the career success it can bring.

17. Step Back. Walk Away

When you are sensitive and recognize the triggers, it is time to step back and walk away. When you feel your blood boiling due to the presence of these triggers, step back or even walk away. Go to the washroom. Take a break from the situation instead of giving into the primal impulse to retaliate.

18. Post A Reminder

Post reminders for yourself. Have it in front of your mirror, somewhere you can see before you go to work. It can even be in your car or right in front of your computer monitor. But remember not to let it become a blind spot. Make it a point to read the reminder EVEN if you are not angry. It can be a phrase, a quote or plain two words – e.g., [Keep Calm](#) or [Have Patience](#).

19. Practice Calmness and Patience

Look for opportunities to practice calmness and patience. Recognize the benefit of practicing it. It is tough but once you start you will want to do more of it. If you are like me living in a city where gridlocks or traffic jams are common, it is the best place to practice calmness and patience. Traffic can be one of the most testing things in the morning. Tell yourself to remain calm and patient. After all, no amount of shouting or slamming on the steering wheel will get you any further. When you stay calm and unfazed in such a simple situation you will start to reap the benefits. That experience can be transferred to your anger management at the workplace.

20. **Be Positive. Be Professional.**

Be [positive](#) about things and people. Most times your anger can be triggered by negative thoughts about people, situations and processes. Think positive about these situations. You waste a lot more time, energy and effort by being angry than calm.

Know that you need to be professional at work. And getting angry all the time is very unprofessional. How do you expect to gain that promotion and make a good impression when you are angry often? Realizing the need to be positive and professional is a way to anger management in the workplace.

21. **Give In**

Learn to give in and be concerned for others. When someone is genuinely concerned for others, it lessens the triggers to be angry. When you care for others you will also realize the effects of your [temper](#) on your colleagues. Give time, effort and energy to help someone.

Refrain from harsh words, divisive words, lies and gossips. These feed negative energy into your already angry self. When you stop all these, anger management in the workplace becomes easier.

22. **Don't Beat Yourself Over It**

Anger management in the workplace isn't easy. But with practice you will be calmer. When you do not succeed initially, continue to practice. Do not beat yourself over it even with all the reminders and recognizing the triggers. Remind yourself that you will do better the next time. [Reflect](#) on what and how can you do better the next time.

23. **Pride**

I know this is a tricky word. It connotes arrogance especially when one has too high an opinion of oneself. Personally, in defining my attitude - "Pride" is taken to mean self-dignity. Pride prevents you from doing just enough to get by. If you know everything you do at work has your name and signature on it, then you will give it your best shot and nothing less.

24. **Passion**

Just a simple plain 'interest' in any work or career you choose isn't enough to bring you through the tough times. And trust me, there will be tough times. It could be an unreasonable client or an impossible timeline. However, a burning desire will pull you through these. An intense enthusiasm for all things worth doing will pull you through the toughest times.

25. **Belief**

In order to generate that passion, it is important to believe. Only a deep belief will create the vigour and force that gives you the fuel to charge. Know that you can achieve all that you set out to do for yourself. You only need to start believing in yourself.

26. **Pride And Skills/Knowledge**

Pride in my personal definition as a positive attitude in the workplace is taken to mean self-dignity. It means the realization that everything you do has your personal signature on it. When you realize this, you give everything assigned to you your best shot.

However, there is a danger here. That danger is excessive pride without the necessary skills and knowledge is arrogance.

So, **Pride – Skills/Knowledge = Arrogance**

This equation of positive attitude in the workplace has to go hand in hand. It has to be in good balance. What about doing your work with just skills and knowledge and with no pride? Well, you end up with mediocre work. You get it right but it wouldn't be the best. Is this your attitude in the workplace?

Hence, **Skills/Knowledge – Pride = Mediocre Work**

When you add this set of positive attitudes in the workplace together, pride and skills/knowledge – what do you get?

Pride + Skills/Knowledge = The Best Work Each Time

27. **Passion And Direction**

Passion as a positive attitude in the workplace is the burning desire and love for the work that you do, which will pull you through the tough times. It is an intense enthusiasm that all things worth doing are worth doing well.

However, like the previous set of positive attitudes in the workplace it needs to be balanced by another factor - Direction. Your enthusiasm and burning desire must be harnessed to focus on the objectives at hand for it to show positive results. Passion without direction would just mean wasted energy.

Passion – Direction = Wasted Energy

What about Direction without Passion? Well, what if you know where you want to go but do not have the fuel for it? It just means success takes longer to achieve, if ever.

Direction – Passion = Success Takes Far Longer, If Ever

When you add direction and passion as positive attitude in the workplace you get goals galore!

Passion + Direction = Goals Galore

28. **Belief And Action**

My last equation of positive attitude in the workplace involves belief and action. The more your personal belief is aligned to the organization you are attached to the better your chances for career success. A deep believe in yourself will create the vigor and force that fuels your journey of seeking career success.

This belief must be balanced with action. Action means making your plans work. It means doing. Working. A believe that is not backed by a plan of action is just fantasies.

Belief – Action = Fantasies

What if you work your plans without a belief? Anyone without believe in themselves and their dreams but continue to work their plans is a fool at work.

Action – Belief = Fool at Work

When you are able to synergize believe and action into one, your dreams come true!

Belief + Action = Dreams Come True

29. **Do What Others Won't Do**

The first attitude for career success for the new executive is to [volunteer for assignments](#). Especially work that others won't do. You are new at work and should demonstrate your willingness to learn and chip in. Do not feel that you are being exploited or feel stupid when you do work that others won't do. What you are really showing is that you are the company's [competitive advantage](#). When you do work that others won't do, you have an attitude for career success.

30. **Do More Than Talk**

Another attitude for career success you can adopt easily is to DO. [Act upon things](#). Make sure that plans aren't just plans on paper. Every step should have an action plan and the person to do it. When you are that person, make sure you deliver what is supposed to be delivered. This world is full of people who [procrastinate](#) and talk all the time. When you are someone who acts upon things and delivers, you have an attitude for career success.

31. **Learn To Multitask**

Do not become a one-project person. Learn to handle more than one project at one time. In the current competitive landscape, companies are forced to deliver more with less. Learn to multitask. When you do that, you not only become an asset to the company but you will also end up learning more. That contributes tremendously to your career. To learn to multitask, learn to [manage your time](#) efficiently. Be effective when you tackle your task.

32. **Do Not Take No For An Answer**

But do not be rude. As a new executive at work, there is a tendency for people not to take you seriously. They will try to get away with things with you. Do not take no for an answer. Learn that timing is an important element in any of your requests or questions. Something that is not granted now can be granted later. Know when to push and when to pull back. When you do not give up easily, you have an attitude for career success. This doesn't just work when you are a newbie. It even applies to the veterans in the workforce.

33. **Be Truthful**

To have an attitude for career success also means to be truthful. Take [personal responsibility](#) for your work. Do not push blame and do not look for excuses for tasks that are not completed to satisfaction. Own up to your mistakes. At the same time, do not hog the limelight when something is right. Learn to [share credit and give praise](#) to those who have helped you.

34. **Avoid Office Politics**

If you have nothing good to say, shut up! Do not go around sharing gossips, starting gossips and fanning ill will. Nothing kills your career faster than being a rumormonger early on in your career. Avoid [office politics](#) at all costs.

35. **Value People**

When you value people, you have an attitude for career success. Valuing people doesn't just mean your peer or your colleagues. It means everyone you work with in your company. They can be your bosses on top, your peers and those of other departments. [Believe in people](#) and how they can help you. More importantly, believe how you can help them by giving them hope, [confidence](#) and convenience in the things that they do.

36. **Do The Best You Can And Tell Yourself The Best Has Got To Be Good Enough**

How much better can we do a job? I believe, as long as we do the best we can, within the situation we are in - the work will take care of itself. There will always be critics who will come off as what I call *'fake perfectionist'*. People who seem to know how best to do a better job without understanding the limitations you have to work with. Let them be. These people just like to take on the persona of a *'perfectionist'* in order to criticize.

37. **Things Aren't As Bad As You Think They Are**

I remember reading a research article once that said only 4% of our worries come true. And the 4% are usually very small worries. When things seem to go bad for me and I start to worry, I remind myself of this. You are better off focusing your energy on your work.

38. **Think Positive, As You Think So You Are**

['Think Positive'](#) is probably one of the most cliché terms that you have heard but worth repeating over and over again. You can call it *'count your blessings'* or whatever term you want to use. It's the truth, when faced with challenges sometimes we need to ask ourselves, what can be worse? Get out of the *'Poor 'Ol Little Me'* syndrome because that isn't going to help your cause. Especially when you are trying to complete an important assignment.

39. **Take Personal Responsibility**

Believe that you have a personal responsibility for your own career success. You need to realize that you are in [charge of your own destiny](#). If something bad happens, do not blame anyone else. Remember each time you point your finger at someone - 3 points back at you. You have 3 times more responsibility to whatever blame you want to assign others.

40. **Nothing Is Impossible**

Believe that nothing is impossible in your career success path. Every position and every project is within reach. If only you set out to do it. Believe you can do it and ask for it. Don't just sit and talk. [People who are successful at their careers](#) are people who believe they can do it.

41. **Failure Is The Best Teacher**

Believe that as long as you learn from your mistakes then it is not a wasted mistake. There will be setbacks in your [career success](#) path. So long as you learn from them then it makes you a better worker. Your attitude towards failure will determine how successful you become in your career. Do not lament over your mistakes. Learn from it and move forward.

42. **Do Not Scheme**

Which brings me to my next advice on how to move up the corporate ladder. Do not scheme. Please, whatever you do and however tempting – do not scheme. The amount of time you take to plot your moves and plan your strategy is better used for generating ideas, working hard and improving yourself. Doing all these [positive things](#) has more long-term benefits than you know.

Now that is not to say you should not have a career plan. Yes, plan your career path. What you need to learn, skills to improve, maybe even places to be transferred to should be carried out in order to [reach your goals](#). What I am referring to here is scheming when to do what, who to see, what important meeting to impress whom and plotting it all the way. When you plan to outsmart, impress and compare, you will run out of stamina. Such behavior is not sustainable without it taking a toll on real performance. When you scheme people will notice, higher ups will notice too. They will find it hard to trust someone like that at the top. Think about it. Is it worth it playing games?

43. **Humility**

Be humble when conducting yourself in the office. This is an often-overlooked attitude that can bring you far in the corporate world. Be courteously respectful of people in the office no matter what their rank and designation.

Do be cautious about fake humility when improving on this attitude. There are people who fake humility in order to draw attention to themselves. [Sincerity](#) is an important aspect of humility. Be sincere when you are trying to improve this attitude.

44. **Be Professional**

Being professional is a whole topic on its own. But for career newbies, be very conscious you need to have a professional working attitude. For starters, [dressing correctly](#) is part of a professional work attitude. Do not carry the casual dress code to the limits. Most workplaces have a clearly defined dress code.

45. **Never Say Die**

This is similar to the earlier tip. The difference between this cultivating a good general work attitude and the previous is that it takes it further. You are bound to face some form of setbacks and failures with your projects at work. When you are faced with setbacks – never say die. Never give up. Failure only happens when you give up.

When you never say die you continue to slog against all odds. That effort will pay off regardless of the [success](#) of the project. Others observe the good attitude, especially bosses and superiors. Develop a never say die attitude at work and you will be cultivating a good general work attitude that is a [competitive advantage to your team](#).

46. **Do Not Complain**

Complaining is a common ‘disease’ in the workplace. Somehow, two co-workers get together and the possible topic would be complaining about something. Complaining is a bad habit and can be detrimental to your career success. Cultivating a good general work attitude means stopping the [habit of complaining](#).

When you complain, nothing positive comes out of it. You are merely voicing your dissatisfaction. That’s it. If what you complain falls on the wrong ears, it may even hurt your [career](#). Instead, discuss the issue if you really feel that it is affecting your work. When you discuss there is a next step in what you can do about the situation. This then is cultivating good general work attitude.

47. **Work Hard**

The fourth tip in cultivating good general work attitude is – [working hard](#). Now I know, would probably think whoever works hard anymore in this modern age? There has been so much talk about working smart that many people neglect the importance of working hard. There are no short cuts to success. If there are, then there will be a lot more successful people in this world.

If you are serious about [pursuing career success](#) then you cannot neglect working hard. When cultivating good general work attitude, consider working hard. It means doing extra to make sure a job is done with pride. To make sure that it surpasses the basic qualities as it has your name and reputation on it.

48. **Be Organized**

The last quick tip in cultivating a good general work attitude is to be [organized](#). If you are organized, you will become efficient. Thus allowing your superiors to consider giving you more important assignments. This is because they know you would be able to complete them on time and make more efficient use of your productive time.

49. **Self-discipline**

The value of [self-discipline](#) in a first jobber is often underestimated. Now that you are in the working world you think to yourself, “Is self-discipline overrated?” I will tell you, no. It is not overrated. I have often found new staff with good self-discipline doing better than those who are poor in it.

Let me use a simple example to demonstrate this, assuming it’s a Friday and the rest of the department is planning to go out for a fun night. You have an important document to be completed for the coming Monday. What do you do? Give the fun night a pass and complete the work? Or join the fun and hope that you will find time to finish it over the weekend thus leaving you little chance to perfect it before submission?

Part of self-discipline is also about **sacrifice**. When you have strong self-discipline, it is inevitable that you would need to sacrifice some fun time to [focus on your goals](#). If you are interested in [advancing your career](#) you may take some courses, or even read books to increase your knowledge. All these activities come with an opportunity cost. It could very well mean less time for leisure activities.

50. **Know Your Bosses’ Style**

Do you know how does your boss work best? Is she an evening person, which means in the morning she is probably grouchy and cannot process information? Or she has a tendency to make impulsive decisions at a certain time of the day maybe because she is handling something else at that time?

Know her schedule; are there periods of time when she will be stressed out? For example, some bosses are [stressed out](#) right after a management meeting. For obvious reasons, you do not plan to get that all-important signature from her at that time.

How does your boss like to be updated and when? Is an email summary enough? Or is she the kind that likes formal daily reports? She dispenses all these and is happy with a verbal debrief? When you learn your boss’s style, you learn how to keep your boss happy.

51. **Communicate**

This sounds easy enough but a lot of newbie at work forget the most important thing on how to keep your boss happy is to [communicate](#) with him. Let's start by asking. Do not assume anything. For example, in the next meeting are you expected to prepare the agenda or your boss? Well, the best way to know is to **ASK**.

Be honest with your boss, keeping your boss informed no matter how far you have climbed the corporate ladder is important. It is even more important to be honest with good and bad news. Do not hide bad news and do not make things seem trivial when in fact they need your boss's attention immediately. No matter how bad the news is, your boss needs to know. It's better for you bring it to him than for him to find out from someone else.

Be [reliable](#), always under promise and over deliver. I have seen juniors at work who are so afraid to disappoint the bosses that they promise deadlines that cannot be delivered. Not being able to keep your promise often cast doubts on your capability.

Be there when the unit needs you and volunteer for additional work when the opportunity arises. Learn to be reliable if you want to know how to keep your boss happy. Down right to small things like making it to work on time!

52. **Be Willing to Grow And Pay The Price**

This means you are willing to be [groomed for a higher position](#). And not only are you willing to be groomed, you are willing to pay the price too. What price? Well, the price for professional growth is struggle and sacrifice. If you work under the right boss – and we all hope you do – your boss will want you to grow professionally.

Take personal responsibility for your own career growth too. While one expects the boss to [coach and mentor](#), you must be willing to work hard. You must be willing to [sacrifice time](#) and put in that extra effort that winners are made of. How to keep your boss happy? Have a winning attitude at work and take personal responsibility for your own growth too. Your boss can guide and facilitate, but ultimately you need to do your part.