

Tips for Success
On the Basics
On the Job

and

In Life



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Introduction

If you are like I used to be, you want to get ahead, but you don't know specifically what to do. I read books, I observed how others behaved, and I tried to glean information from the lives of successful people I saw on television and in the movies, but I still couldn't seem to get traction in my efforts. Although I was working hard, there were business accounts that I didn't get, promotions that were given to those around me, and opportunities that were not offered to me. I just couldn't figure out what I was doing wrong or what I was failing to do that was holding me back.

Along the way, I met a small number of people who cared enough and who were bold enough to take the time and take the risk of telling me the truth about the little things that make an enormous difference in relationships, health, peace, and finances.

I am grateful for those people and their contributions to my life, and this little booklet with the bits of advice that I've gathered along the way is my way of "paying it forward." I wish you much success in every area of your life. God bless you.



Basic Tips for Being Successful in Life

Some people had the tremendous good fortune to be born into a family of wonderfully wise, patient, loving people who took the time to explain the “ins and outs” of successful living. If you’re one of those, perhaps your time would be better spent doing something other than reading this section on basic tips for success.

For the rest of us, though, we may not realize there are some simple things we can integrate into our daily lives that will help us succeed in our relationships, in accomplishing our goals, and in living with peace, joy, and prosperity. Consistently incorporating these basics into your daily living will, over a period of time, dramatically change every area of your life.

Basic Tip #1: Eliminate complaints from your conversations. Complaining changes nothing, brings others down, and drives people away from you. Stop now.

Basic Tip #2: Be nice. Smile. Be someone whom others look forward to being with. Think about people you would prefer to avoid. It's likely that they're negative, complainers, liars, cheaters, or just plain mean. Be the opposite. Don't make the excuse, “This is just how I am.” That's nonsense. You may be irritable and you may have justification to be that way, but if you want to be successful, be resolute in your choice to change. You can do it!

Basic Tip #3: Adopt a zero tolerance policy for anything that is illegal, immoral, or unethical—period. “Just a little” does hurt your success. Don't believe me? See how close you get to your goals while engaging in illegal, immoral, or unethical behavior. Avoid these things and the people who do them, and you fast track your success.

Basic Tip #4: Take charge of your body. Develop self-control. Start with something easy like not eating one thing you would normally eat. Or have one fewer cigarette. Or substitute water for one soft drink. Once you start controlling your choices, your choices will no longer control you. Strengthening your level of control over your body is prerequisite to controlling your circumstances. If you can't control yourself with a bag of potato chips, you won't be able to control yourself well enough or for long enough to create success.

Basic Tip #5: Be a person of action. Do not procrastinate. When you become known as a person who can be counted on to get things done, opportunities will be made available to you—opportunities you would otherwise never know you had missed.

Basic Tip #6: Listen more than you talk. Make the effort to pay attention to how much you talk. Stop interrupting others. Stop dominating the conversation. Truly successful people find information and opportunities in what others have to say. You don't know what you miss when you are doing most of the talking.



Basic Tip #7: Choose carefully whom you take advice from. Consider the character of the person giving advice, as well as the level of success in his (her) life. For example, do not heed the advice of someone who uses drugs, or someone who argues all the time, or someone who can't seem to hold a job for very long. Consider motives behind the advice. Does the person have anything to gain if you take her (his) advice? This isn't suspicion; this is exercising good judgment.

Basic Tip #8: Do not borrow money if you can avoid it. The one loaning the money owns the power in the relationship. If you borrow, you give your power and freedom away. If you do borrow, pay it back on the day you say you will, with interest and gratitude to the one who loaned it. Do not look at a creditor as "the bad guy."

Basic Tip #9: Be quick to forgive. Forgiveness is for YOU more than for the person who has hurt or offended you.

Basic Tip #10: Don't mistake silence for agreement. People often make the mistake of sharing an opinion, idea, or plan with others and assuming they agree because they don't say otherwise. Be aware that many times others may have a negative opinion of you or what you shared, but they don't want to engage in dispute or "tip their hand" to you.

Basic Tip #11: Do not verbalize every thought that pops into your head. Giving voice to your random thoughts will interfere with your success. Try this: Write down rather than speak your thoughts for one day. Then go back and read through them. Did you really mean what you would have said? Do those things reflect how you want to be known? Could any of those things have disqualified you from a possible opportunity? Would any of those comments reveal something best left private?

Basic Tip #12: Be helpful. When you see someone struggling to grab something off the top shelf in the store, offer to help. When a co-worker needs help, offer assistance. When a neighbor or friend is clearly upset, offer to listen. In helping others, we feel better! Truly successful people are "others-minded" rather than self-absorbed.

Basic Tip #13: Be very deliberate about whom you spend time with. Be nice to everyone, but be in close relationship with only those who truly care about you and your best interests. A genuine friend who wants what's best for you is hard to find. If you have one, nurture the relationship. If not, make a list of the qualities you want that person to have (and the ones you don't want), so you'll recognize him or her. Eliminate toxic people from your life.

Basic Tip #14: Know your weaknesses and avoid situations that present temptation. Here are two examples: If you tend to drink too much when you're with friends, plan to meet them for coffee or at your place or at their place rather than at a bar. If you want to stop smoking, avoid spending time with smokers until you've fully kicked the habit.

Basic Tip #15: Don't be driven to negative actions by adversity. In other words, when something terrible happens, don't get drunk, become stoned, or run to someone who is toxic for you. Instead, take whatever action you can to overcome the adversity. Then get your mind off of it with good movies, positive books, work, or hobbies. Be with people who are good for you.



Basic Tip #16: When you do something wrong or make a mistake, apologize sincerely, learn from it, and do your best not to repeat it.

Basic Tip #17: Write your goals. Start with what you want to get done today. Prioritize and do the most important items first. Then create 1-year and 5-year goals. Do something every day to move you closer to achievement. When one goal is completed, replace it with another.

Basic Tip #18: Be aware of your impulsive behaviors, and learn to control your impulses. This includes spending money, going places, and spending time with people. Be deliberate rather than spontaneously buying, going, and doing in the moment. Check first with your goals. Will what you're considering move you closer to or farther away from your goals?

Basic Tip #19: Do what you say you are going to do. If you agree to do something, do it regardless of what else comes up or how you feel when the time for showing up rolls around. If you want to be successful, earn a reputation for being a person of your word, which means following through.

Basic Tip #20: Stop being offended at what other people say or do (or fail to say or do). Most people aren't even thinking of you, so don't take everything personally. Rather, assume that people are in their own worlds and are just unaware that what they did or said hurt you. Even when people do intend to hurt you with their words or actions, try to learn something from it and move on.

Basic Tip #21: Rather than thinking of what you would like others to do for you, think of something you can do for someone else today. Call someone just to let her (him) know you're thinking of her (him). Send someone a note of encouragement. Bake cookies, put a couple of them in bow-tied plastic wrap, and give them to neighbors or co-workers for no reason. You get the idea.

Basic Tip #22: Do not assume that opportunity for your success is diminished because of the economy. A down economy is a perfect opportunity for resourceful people to make their fortunes. Consider what product or service you are perfectly positioned to provide. Where there is a need or desire, there is commerce.

Basic Tip #23: Share. Share your time with people who need companionship. Share your talents with people who need what you can do. Share your resources with people who have less than you do. If you do this, you'll improve your relationships and never be alone again.

Basic Tip #24: Decide to succeed; then watch for opportunities to advance yourself. People who have clearly defined goals are more likely to recognize opportunities when they are presented. People who are determined to succeed are more likely to seize opportunities.

Basic Tip #25: Think of yourself the way you want to be. Many of us define ourselves by our weaknesses rather than by our strengths. Stop that today. Create a list of positive adjectives to describe yourself, memorize them, and associate them with your name. Decide who you are, and that's who you will be.



Basic Tip #26: Find the good qualities and characteristics of the people around you and tell them again and again what's good about them. If you don't talk about their positive identity, they may allow what they take in from radio, television, or the Internet to define who they are. This is especially important with the children within your influence.

Basic Tip #27: Once you decide on a goal, stay focused. Distraction leads to discouragement. Ask yourself if what you're doing is moving you toward your goals. If it is not, adjust your course and move forward.

Basic Tip #28: Stop expecting others to care about your needs or to serve you. It's nice if they do, but they have their own needs. Rather than expecting others to serve you, do your best to identify and meet the needs of others. When they see how much you care, they'll be drawn to you. Bottom line: treat others the way you want to be treated.

Basic Tip #29: "Look on the bright side" and "Keep your chin up" aren't just trite old expressions. They are real weapons to use to fight depression! Focus on what can be good about your situation. And keep your eyes up—literally. When you do that, it helps you keep from crying and literally refocuses your mind from sadness to solutions.

Basic Tip #30: Own your behavior. In other words, take an honest look at what you do, say, and even think. Do your actions and words reflect who you want to be? If not, change today. Don't make excuses or ignore this. Successful people admit when they have done wrong, and they determine to do better.



Tips for Success on the Job

I first entered an insurance office at the age of 15. I knew the difference between the typewriter and the enormous calculator on the desk, thanks to my high school business teacher. But other than that, I didn't know up from down. Because of the abusive, chaotic environment in which I was raised, I also didn't know right from wrong. Of course, I knew I was supposed to avoid criminal behavior, but I'm referring to those somewhat elusive rules of conduct in the workplace and etiquette in life in general that didn't exist where I grew up.

If I enumerated for you the many basic things I had to learn while on the job, you'd think I was raised by animals in the wild. As I learned from co-workers, bosses, and clients not to eat with my hands and lick my fingers and the myriad other basics required to maintain a minimally acceptable level of decency in the workplace, I realized that there are others in the world who, like me, didn't learn these essentials as children. The sad truth is that many people rarely encounter those who are willing to offer a suggestion, recommendation, or advice. Rather than take us aside and give us their wisdom, many pass judgment about us, ignore us, or make snide remarks to others behind our backs.

If you have ever wondered why you didn't get the job or why you were passed over for advancement or pay raises, it could be because there is something you're unaware of that is holding you back. We don't know what we don't know. So consider the possibility that you've missed something, and incorporate the following employment tips into your workplace conduct. As a result, you may be the one who is hired for a coveted position, the one who receives the promotion, or your business will be the one that prospers while others are struggling.

Employment Tip #1: Understand that a person's disagreement with your opinion is not a rejection of you. And even if someone rejects you outright, so what?

Employment Tip #2: Do something to help those who can do nothing to you or for you.

Employment Tip #3: When I was 14, a teacher told me to pay attention to what was being taught well enough that I could teach the subject to someone else. Because of that teacher, I have always taken copious notes and asked questions for clarification so that I could accurately relay information from meetings. Do that, and you will develop a reputation as a valuable source of information.

Employment Tip #4: In every area of life, if you don't ask, you will never know if the answer might have been "yes." If the answer is "no," you haven't lost anything, so just ask...for the job, for the promotion, for the partnership, etc.



Employment Tip #5: NEVER go to a meeting without an agenda. If possible, get or create the agenda several days in advance so that everyone involved can be prepared with answers. This maximizes what can be accomplished at the meeting.

Employment Tip #6: Never leave a meeting without clearly defined next steps and timelines so that all attendees know what the expectations, responsibilities, and authorities of everyone involved are. If you can't get the information from the people who called the meeting, they may not be serious about the subject of the meeting.

Employment Tip #7: Know who you're dealing with. It's easier now than ever before to go on the Internet prior to any phone call or meeting and learn what you can about the people you will be meeting with. Who are they? What do they stand for? What have they accomplished? What boards do they sit on or where do they volunteer?

Employment Tip #8: Listen more than you talk. Ask questions of others and really listen to their responses. Most people will tell you all you need to know about them if you will ask the right questions and really listen to the answers. If you're in a meeting, do contribute but only if you have something relevant to say. Otherwise, listen, take notes, and learn.

Employment Tip #9: DO NOT LET EVERY THOUGHT IN YOUR HEAD DROP OUT OF YOUR MOUTH. This is true in every area of your life, but especially so in business. You may think the boss is a jerk, but keep this, and every other opinion, to yourself. If you are asked for your opinion on a specific topic, do give your honest thoughts, but stick with the subject. Resist the temptation to go off into every other ill you believe exists with the company and its staff.

Employment Tip #10: Do not share intimate details of your personal life with anyone at work. It WILL come back to bite you. Besides, you are at work to contribute to the efficiency and profitability of the company, NOT to find a social worker to hear your problems. Leave your problems at home and go to WORK to WORK. This may sound harsh, I know, but if you want to be successful, DO THIS!

Employment Tip #11: When you take a job, you sell your time to your employer. The employer effectively owns you for the time the company has purchased. Therefore, spending time on personal matters while you are at work is stealing back the time you've sold. If you want to be successful, focus solely on bringing maximum efficiency and profit to your employer while you're there. When YOU own the business, you will want that from your employees.

Employment Tip #12: You don't know what you don't know. You will never know who didn't ask you out, who didn't offer you the job, or who chose not to consider you as a business partner because of something they would never tell you. For example, gossip, a dirty joke, unprofessional appearance, use of profanity, or a tattoo can disqualify you without you ever knowing it. Conduct yourself in the way you want to be known. This is how you attract, rather than repel, opportunities.

Employment Tip #13: Most people avoid unnecessary conflict in their lives. Most people won't take the time to tell you the truth about what you're wearing or something you've said or



done that put you in a bad light. So, if you want to be successful, imagine having a mentor or coach standing next to you and giving you advice on what to wear, how to act, and what to say. Then follow the good advice you imagine.

Employment Tip #14: Don't make an appointment with someone unless you are reasonably sure you're going to be able to keep the appointment. Time is our most valuable commodity, and successful people treasure it. When you book people's time and then cancel, you've robbed them of the opportunity value of that time to schedule something that will move them closer to their goals.

Employment Tip #15: When you ask someone for a meeting or take his (her) time on the phone, KNOW IN ADVANCE YOUR DESIRED OUTCOME. In other words, be clear about what you hope to accomplish. Are you asking for a meeting? Are you asking for the sale? Are you offering to help? If you know your objective, you will be better able to communicate clearly that objective to the other person. Never book a meeting with someone with no specific purpose for the meeting. Successful people are clear and concise, and they are goal-oriented.

Employment Tip #16: Confirm meetings no earlier than the day before and no later than an hour prior. Restate the time and location to avoid misunderstandings and wasted time. Ask for the other person's cell number and offer yours in case there are any challenges or delays. With the hectic schedules many people keep, it's easy to double-book or forget an appointment. If you don't confirm, you could find yourself waiting for someone who is never going to show up.

Employment Tip #17: DON'T BE LATE. With online maps, there is absolutely no excuse for not allowing enough time to arrive at your appointment early. Time is the most precious commodity we have, so unless there is truly some completely unavoidable situation, do not waste anyone's time by being late. Develop a reputation for being the first one to arrive at meetings. If you are unavoidably late, apologize and drop it. No one wants to hear excuses and explanations.

Employment Tip #18: Be very slow to be offended when you feel others are ignoring you. Remember that people are probably not intentionally snubbing you. More likely, they are busy with their own work and lives. So, be assertive (not aggressive) about asking for what you want, be clear about what you're asking for, and give a reasonable time before you follow up—but DO follow up.

Employment Tip #19: When you need a response from someone, be sure to communicate clearly a specific date for the response. You may even include a statement such as, "If I don't hear from you by Tuesday, I'll assume you're okay with me moving forward." Use wisdom when employing this bold move.

Employment Tip #20: There's an old saying in business that goes something like this: "It's better to apologize than to ask for permission." Be careful with this one. Before you go off to do something outside your specified authority, be sure that you have approval of the people in charge. If you decide to take matters into your own hands, make sure what you're doing is aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the company so that you can defend your actions if called upon to do so.



Employment Tip #21: When you're making a relatively "cold call" to someone, DO NOT try to persuade the person over the phone to buy your product, hire you, partner with you or anything else. Ask only for a meeting at a specified time when you can explain why it would benefit him or her to do what you're asking. If you fail to heed this advice, chances are the answer will be "no."

Employment Tip #22: Never, never, never, never, never appear desperate. Even if you are, don't act that way. Optimism, hope, and eager anticipation of a bright future are what you want to portray if you want the job, the promotion, the partnership, the collaboration, the date, the friendship, etc. Desperation comes from fear. Optimism comes from believing that you are valuable. Believe it—you are!

Employment Tip #23: When things don't go your way, resist the temptation to get frustrated or angry. Step back and reconsider other possibilities. There may be a better plan right in front of you, but you won't see it if you are emotional. A cool mind works better than a hot one, so cool down and think your way through to a good outcome.

Employment Tip #24: There is an old saying in business that goes, "Never let them see you sweat." Even if you're so nervous that your knees are knocking together, ACT as confident as possible about what you're there to do, and get the job done as best you can. Self-assuredness (not arrogance) and a "can-do" attitude are attractive. The job will get easier as you go.

Employment Tip #25: Resist the temptation to get discouraged. You may get turned down twenty-five times, but then you may get the order, get the job, or make the deal on the twenty-sixth time you try. Winston Churchill said, "Never, never, never give up." Many successful people have been knocked down. What differentiates us from others is that we keep getting back up. Get up and try again.

Employment Tip #26: Every day identify the top five things you want to accomplish the following day. Then do nothing else until those five important things are done. Urgent items may temporarily interfere, but don't let overflowing toilets or desperate friends derail your plans completely. Deal with the urgency and turn back to your agenda.

Employment Tip #27: Eliminate profanity, vulgarity, and gossip from your conversations. Using inappropriate language or engaging in gossip (true or not) does not make you appear "in" or "part of the group." It does, however, make you appear vulgar, ignorant, and judgmental.

Employment Tip #28: Check your movements. Do you fidget, pick your cuticles, adjust your glasses, move your hair out of your eyes? Those kinds of unconscious movements demonstrate nervousness. Stop now. Adopt a confident posture and practice it until it comes naturally.

Employment Tip #29: Check your speech. Do you use "speech fillers" like "uhhhh, ummmm, hmmm, ya know," etc.? Some people have a habit of adding a word or two onto the end of nearly every sentence. For example, "We were playing basketball *and that*." The words *and that* are not necessary to the sentence and are distracting. Practice eliminating "fillers." Successful people mean what they say and say what they mean.



Employment Tip #30: GET ORGANIZED. Keep track of where you're supposed to be, how long it takes to get there, directions, and what you'll need for the meeting. Do your homework before every meeting. Know some relevant facts about the person, the company, the industry or the issues so that you can make relevant conversation.

Employment Tip #31: If you have a hard time getting going or staying focused, set a timer and try to see how much you can get done in that period of time. Hopefully this will help you get focused and stay with a task until it's done.



Common Sense Tips for Daily Life and Business

In the first two sections, I've shared with you tips for being successful in daily life and tips for being successful in employment. But there are some things that are simply common sense to most successful people. The *Cambridge Online Dictionary* defines *common sense* as "the basic level of practical knowledge and judgment that we all need to help us live in a reasonable and safe way." However, if our knowledge and judgment are skewed because of the way we were raised or because of the negative influences we've been subjected to, we may not have the common sense to make us successful in our daily life and in the workplace. The good news is that common sense can be learned, and it's never too late to incorporate these tips into our lives.

I do not mean to imply that I have all the answers—I don't. But these tips, along with the tips on the previous pages, have helped me succeed as a person, as an employee, and as an employer. If you will consistently implement these common sense tips into your everyday life, eventually every area of your life will improve exponentially.

Common Sense Tip #1: DO NOT be influenced by the people in your life to do something you know isn't right. You're strong enough to say "no."

Common Sense Tip #2: LISTEN MORE THAN YOU TALK. You won't believe how much you will learn and what opportunities are available when you just pay attention. When you develop a reputation for being a good listener, your relationships will improve too!

Common Sense Tip #3: Do NOT argue. Listen to other people. If they're wrong, educate them. If they are not persuaded, agree to disagree. Why waste your valuable time arguing? Besides, it could be that there is more to the issue than you are aware of.

Common Sense Tip #4: Empathize with others. This means that before we take offense or judge the words or actions of others, we must take the time to consider what they're going through and where their head is at the time. Are they hurt? Grieving? Have they been wronged?

Common Sense Tip #5: To be liked and respected, you simply have to do these three things consistently: Be forgiving. Be kind. Be truthful. Period. It isn't always easy, but it is simple. Decide to start today. Once you've incorporated these traits into your life, you'll never want to live any other way.

Common Sense Tip #6: Take care of yourself. I know this is cliché, but it's true that you cannot fully accomplish much if you're not healthy. So start today to drink water, eat fresh foods, and move more. Don't make excuses. Just do it. I did, and lost over 30 pounds.

Common Sense Tip #7: Be reliable. Don't agree to be somewhere or do something and then change your mind. Even if you don't feel like doing it when the time comes, be a person of your



word and follow through. Your ability to exercise self-control in this manner will earn you respect and opportunities.

Common Sense Tip #8: Don't do anything that you wouldn't want to appear on Facebook. Be the person you want to be in public and in private. Being the same person with every set of people in your life (friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc.) builds character. Character is necessary for true success.

Common Sense Tip #9: Manage your expectations so you don't go from one disappointment to the next. That doesn't mean not to be hopeful for good things, but it does mean that people are going to let you down occasionally. Don't let these minor bumps in the road destroy your good attitude.

Common Sense Tip #10: Learn to replace negative thoughts with positive ones. For example, instead of joking or making a snide remark about what someone is wearing, intentionally replace that thought with a compliment about the person's character. Find something good to focus on.

Common Sense Tip #11: WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE? We all have myriad reasons why we don't take the steps necessary to change our lives. Too busy, not enough money, etc. I wrote my first book from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. before starting work every morning for three years. Others have gone to school at night for years to get their degree. If you want it bad enough, you'll figure it out.

Common Sense Tip #12: To create, first think up an idea, then speak of your idea, then act on it. The first step in creating a business, composing a song, or planning a party is to have an idea. Second, speak of it (plan). Third, take steps to make it happen. Think, speak, do. What are you waiting for?

Common Sense Tip #13: Think about what you're thinking about. Change negative thoughts like you change the channel on the television. Changing your mind is "thought management," and successful people do it. Train yourself now and eventually it will become automatic.

Common Sense Tip #14: Never mistake silence for agreement. While some unload every thought that pops into their heads, others listen and nod. The listeners may be thinking, "What an idiot" or "You're dead wrong" or "No way I'm going out with you," but don't give voice to those thoughts. Never assume that you know what a listener is thinking.

Common Sense Tip #15: Before you can reach your goals, you MUST know the specific goal. Step 1: Get clear on what you really want. Step 2: Determine what's necessary to get it. Step 3: Decide if you're willing to pay the price necessary to have your goal. If not, go back to Step 1.

Common Sense Tip #16: As simple as this sounds, you can improve your day and your life if you will get in the habit of smiling. Most of us go through life with a blank look or a scowl on our faces. A smile attracts opportunities for friendship and business. It costs nothing. SMILE.



Common Sense Tip #17: Make sure your actions in every area of your life consistently reflect your core values. For example, if you believe that honesty is a core value, don't lie. Period.

Common Sense Tip #18: Delay your response to upsetting situations. When you are angry or disappointed, DO NOT communicate with the person who upset or disappointed you until you've given yourself time to calm down and see all sides of the situation. Even then, give others the benefit of any remaining doubt.

Common Sense Tip #19: Gratitude is a “secret password.” Gratitude lifts your mood, alleviates your depression, and literally makes you more attractive. If you feel you have nothing to be grateful for, you're taking a lot for granted. Start by listing your eyesight and ability to read this and go from there.

Common Sense Tip #20: Be the person in your world who makes others feel wanted. Many people (sometimes the grouchiest among us) feel unwanted and unloved. You can change the world around you by commenting on what you value about others and by asking them how they're doing. It costs nothing, but it can mean everything.

Common Sense Tip #21: Get up at least 15 minutes before you have to. Leave for appointments a few minutes before necessary. Those little chunks of time will help you to avoid some of the pressures of the day. It costs nothing and can make a huge difference in the quality of your life.

Common Sense Tip #22: PREPARE yourself for your big break. Have a 30-second speech ready. Have your best outfit ready. Get up every morning and get ready with eager anticipation of the good that is on its way to you—even if nothing is on your calendar.

Common Sense Tip #23: Mr. Tom Monaghan, billionaire founder of Domino's Pizza, challenged me to ask myself, “What's the most important thing I can be doing?” His answer was that with all the good things a person can do in this life, the most important thing is to help others choose eternity in Heaven rather than hell. So, accept your free ticket from Jesus, and let's get to collaborating with Him on an awesome life!

Common Sense Tip #24: Don't allow a silly thing like not being able to find your keys make you late. Keep your keys and other necessities in exactly the same place every day so you won't waste a moment of time that could result in you being the runner-up rather than the one with the opportunity.

Common Sense Tip #25: List your natural abilities. Now review the list. Are you using your abilities on a regular basis? If not, figure out what you can do to use them. **WHAT YOU ARE ABLE TO DO, YOU WERE CREATED TO DO.** When you do what you're gifted at, you will earn success in every area of your life.

Common Sense Tip #26: Recognize that everything does NOT have to go your way. Choose your battles for the times when bad results will be consequential. Smile and let everything else go. The peace you will have in your life is much more valuable than temporary victories.



Common Sense Tip #27: Before committing to anything (including a job, a marriage, or any other monumental commitment), be sure you are clear on the expectations of the person(s) or company involved. Clear expectations ahead of time help to avoid conflict later. This is proactive peace-keeping.

Common Sense Tip #28: Use caution when revealing personal information. Too many people share information about their intimate relationships, the medications they take, a diagnosis they've been given, etc., with people who may not be true friends. Remember that what you share in confidence could wind up on Facebook, thereby eliminating possible opportunities.

Common Sense Tip #29: Do not overcommit. Promising more than what we are physically, emotionally, and financially able to do is an enormous source of unnecessary stress. Before you promise to do anything, check that activity against your life's mission statement. If it fits, do it. If it doesn't, then politely decline.

Common Sense Tip #30: BE RESPONSIBLE...for what you do, say, and think. Decide to be the best friend, the best employee, the best student, the best neighbor, etc. It costs nothing to make eye contact, to listen to what others say, to be helpful, and to smile. Do this one thing, and your life will change in ways you may not be able to imagine now.



I'd like to hear about your suggestions for life improvement and your successes.

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