IT’S CALLED WORK FOR A REASON

Your Success Is Your Own Damn Fault

LARRY WINGET

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MAIN IDEA

If you aren’t achieving all you’d like to in business, look in the mirror rather than looking for external reasons why. Most people simply goof off too much at work, and that is the reason why their results are below expectations. If you want to achieve more, stand up, square your shoulders and work harder. Take responsibility for your own success because nobody else will.

Purely and simply your results always reflect the quality of your performance. To generate great results, you need to perform consistently well. There are seven specific things you can do to bridge that gap between poor and great results:

1. **Work hard and don’t fudge**
   If you’re brutally honest with yourself, you probably only spend a small proportion of your work-day actually doing what you are paid to do. The rest of the time you’re goofing off. Stop lying to yourself and find practical ways you can work faster, smarter and harder. Focus on your results, not your activities.

2. **Sell whatever you have to offer – it won’t sell itself**
   The only two ways to be profitable in business are to reduce expenses or increase your income. The easiest and surest way to increase your income is to get better at selling. In the final analysis, everything has to be sold so you might as well accept that fact and get better at selling.

3. **Amaze your customers so they will do business over and over again – and they will tell their friends**
   If you really want to destroy your competition, stop believing in them. Instead, you should focus on what makes your company or your offering unique and find ways to project and then exploit your uniqueness to maximum effect. Anyone can compete with your products but nobody can compete with your uniqueness.

4. **Hire carefully**
   It’s tough to hire the right people, especially because nowadays you can’t legally ask those telling questions which separate the wheat from the chaff. The best you can do is trust your gut instincts, which won’t be infallible. Try to hire good people and then train them to do what needs to get done. When you get a group of great people together, there’s not much you can’t do.

5. **Fire people quickly**
   If you do need to fire people, don’t beat around the bush and hope they will get the hint and fire themselves. Instead, be brutally blunt and easy to read. Bad employees can kill your business if left unchecked so you actually owe it to your quality people to move the dead wood out periodically.

6. **Have fun, but do what you’re paid to do**
   Love what you do so much you willingly pay the price to be great at your job. If the passion just isn’t there, quit and find something else. Remember, you aren’t being paid to like your job. Instead, you’re being paid to do your job. If you get in a rut, come up with some ideas to spice up your job by all means but don’t for one second lose sight of the fact you’re paid to get results, not to be entertained.

7. **Remember results are everything – they never lie**
   Focus on generating results that you’re proud of. Results never lie – they are the true litmus test of what you’re worth. If you can make yourself worth more than you cost, then you have reasonable grounds to feel good about the future come what may. If, on the other hand, you actually cost more than you generate for your employer, then there is a problem that sooner or later needs to be addressed. It’s your responsibility to deliver results, not anybody else’s.
Success in business really doesn’t need to be complicated. In fact, if it starts feeling complex, you should stop and reevaluate things. Very often, there will be a simple way to get better which you need to identify and then do. To get better at things, you’ll more than likely need to take some action on some very obvious ways to get better. Fortunately, there is also crossover into your personal life because the things you need to do to be successful in business will be the same kinds of things you need to do to be successful in life.

The fact is you’ve probably heard the main keys to being successful all your life:

- Take personal responsibility.
- Things always change, so be flexible.
- Work smart and work hard.
- Be nice to others.
- Stay optimistic, even in the face of temporary setbacks.
- Have goals – reach for something which is big and audacious.
- Always keep learning new things to do.
- Becomes excellent in your chosen field of endeavor.
- Trust your gut instincts.
- If in doubt, get into action and everything will work out.
- Earn all you can. Save your money. Give something back.
- Enjoy what you’ve got, not what other people have.
- Above all: keep it simple!

There are no new secrets. The key is to get out and actually do what you’ve been told to do all your life.

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.”

- Thomas Edison

“People would rather be nice than right, rather be sensitive than be true. Well, being nice and sensitive are important, but they’re not more important than being right; they’re not more important than the truth.”

- Bill Maher

“Don’t ever let anyone tell you that success in any area of life or business is complicated. Use your head. When it starts feeling complicated, just stop. Stop and evaluate what you are doing. Ask yourself why it seems to be so hard. Ask yourself if there is any way that you can drop some steps out of the process. Ask yourself if what you are doing is just busywork or whether you are really moving closer to your goals. I keep it simple. Very simple. If a person can’t summarize his thoughts on success in business into a handful of bullet points, he doesn’t know what he’s talking about. And he’s scamming you. Don’t be a sucker.”

- Larry Winget

“Throw away all of the little tablets that say ‘Things to Do’ at the top. Get rid of your leather planner with the To-Do List on the left-hand side. Instead, get some ‘Things That Have to Get Done’ pads printed. Yes, it’s my idea and you probably should give me credit for it, but I am more interested in your getting things done. That is plenty of repayment for me.”

- Larry Winget
How to bridge the gap between poor and great performances

Poor 2 Sell whatever you have to offer – it won’t sell itself

Great

The only two ways to be profitable in business are to reduce expenses or increase your income. The easiest and surest way to increase your income is to get better at selling. In the final analysis, everything has to be sold so you might as well accept that fact and get better at selling.

Good selling is based on principles rather than technique. A technique approach will be something along the lines of: “When the prospective customer says ‘this’, then you should say ‘that’.” Technique selling rarely works because the customer in real life never says the ‘this’ that you’ve trained to respond to. You’re much better off throwing away all your techniques and focusing instead on principle-based selling.

People actually like being sold well when they are confident the salesperson is putting their interests first. They hate being hustled by someone who is not even attempting to serve them. People always buy for their own reasons rather than yours, so give your customer a solid reason to make the transaction first and foremost. The fact you need to make money really isn’t a factor. Their needs are what counts.

The only five reasons people won’t buy from you are:
1. They have no need – which is fine because if they really do need something, they will buy without your help.
2. They aren’t in a hurry – which means you have to create a sense of urgency.
3. They have no money – which generally means they don’t want it badly enough yet.
4. They have no genuine want – which is where you come in priming the pump of their desires.
5. They don’t trust you – which is a deal stopper until you build credibility by the way you act.

To overcome these reasons and sell more:
☞ Look successful – because people won’t buy much from someone who is disheveled and disorganized.
☞ Be professional and likable – as the simple fact is not many people are approachable and courteous.
☞ Ask more of your customers – and give them a chance to say yes or no. Just make sure you’re credible when you do this by first asking yourself to act more professionally and become better prepared.
☞ Find out more about what people want – and then figure out ways you can actually give them more of that very thing.
☞ Pay attention – and learn from how other people are selling and how your customers like to buy.
☞ Listen to what customers are saying – because they’re usually telling you much more than you’re picking up on at present. Cultivate the art of listening more intensely. This is the best and simplest way to show you care.
☞ Circulate – get involved in what’s happening in your community. Forget about networking groups. Sign up for charities, civic events, church fairs, whatever. Get involved in helping people run these events.

☞ Stop selling when the person is ready to buy – and don’t force them to take some other actions before they can buy. When they’re ready to buy, stop talking and take their money and get the product into their hands immediately.
☞ Know what you’re talking about – so you can state facts rather than mere opinions. Don’t lose sales by being ignorant.

To move your sales to another higher level again:
☞ Always be brutally honest – every time and without exception. If your product won’t do something, say so. Be blunt.
☞ Return calls – promptly and professionally. So few people do this you’re doing so will be noteworthy.
☞ Take notes – so you can work from a document rather than from memory. People will actually tell you more when they realize you’re writing things down as they speak.
☞ Be on time for your appointments – so you give people a solid reason to trust you.
☞ Be great on the telephone – meaning you know how to project enthusiasm without coming across like a flake. Even just knowing how to transfer people without cutting them off is helpful because it conveys the fact you’re smart.
☞ Find ways to deliver more than you promise.
☞ Follow up – and check your customers are happy. If they are, that’s the best time to sell them more or get some referrals.
☞ Know when to shut up – as it’s easier to talk yourself out of a sale than it is to talk your way into one. Make your points and then stop talking and start listening.
☞ Have a great handshake – not overpowering but not a dead fish either.
☞ Bounce back – have the mind-set you can’t and won’t win them all, so move on.
☞ Capitalize on your successes – and keep making more sales while the going is good rather than thinking you’re done selling for a while. The best time to sell more is while you’re still on a high from a previous success. Harness that adrenaline rush.

For every product you will ever handle in your professional life, there will be one reason why people buy more than any other potential reasons you can think of. Ask prospective customers what it is. Try something along the lines of: “It’s been my experience people buy this product for one reason more than any other. What will be the reason which makes you decide whether or not to buy?” Listen for what they say and then give them what they want. If you can do just this one simple thing, you’ll do just fine in sales.

“We don’t live in a perfect world. If we did, seniority wouldn’t matter, unions wouldn’t exist, and everyone would get hired, fired, paid and promoted solely on their performance. The person who contributes most to the bottom line, treats people with respect, works hard, works smart, and serves customers well would be the employee who is most rewarded. But that isn’t going to happen . . . yet. Not until we take back our businesses from the control of the government, and the control of labor unions. Not until companies get some backbone and managers, leaders and workers start doing what is right without the worry of lawsuits. Not until customers get the guts to demand good service and not settle for anything less. Not until manufacturers make products they are willing to stand behind. Not until businesses quit looking for loopholes to get out of warranties. Until then, we just have to do the best we can with what we have.”

– Larry Winget
The real key to amazing your customers can be summed up very succinctly: A deal is a deal. The moment someone agreed to pay your asking price, a deal was struck. You go to work for your customer and agree to provide them with whatever they’ve ordered. It’s now up to you to do everything in your power to live up to your side of the bargain, which means making them happy. If you mess up along the way to doing that, go out of your way to make things right again. You have an obligation to provide the service you offered or get out of business.

This will only happen if your frontline staff have the big picture in mind. You want them to be able to make decisions on the spot with the goal of amazing the customer rather than on following the policies and procedures you have. You’ve got to allow people to make decisions based on what makes good sense under the circumstances rather than set procedures.

In fact, if you really want to grow your business exponentially, periodically ask your employees what upset your customers more than anything else. They will generally know this right off the top of their heads without any prompting. Then go to work and change things to eliminate that frustration. Find an easier, cheaper and faster way to achieve things in a way which doesn’t upset your customers. They will love you for it.

Never get caught up in performing to the “industry standard” or according to your “company policy”. Nobody cares about that sort of stuff. You’re in business to serve your customers, not to make them conform to some cryptic standards you don’t even know who set. Create happy and satisfied customers and you won’t be able to stop them telling everyone else about how good your company is.

“Discover your uniqueness and learn to exploit it in the service of others, and you are guaranteed success, happiness, and prosperity.”

– Larry Winget

“You were placed on this earth to create, not to compete.”

– Dr. Robert Anthony, author, Beyond Positive Thinking

“Focus on competition has always been a formula for mediocrity.”

– Dan Burus, futurist

“There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down simply by spending his money somewhere else.”

– Sam Walton, founder, Wal-Mart

“The customers who are willing to pay you the least will always demand the most.”

– Mark Sanborn, author, The Fred Factor

“As a leader, don’t let your employees get so caught up in the process of doing business that they forget why they are there: to serve customers. Remember and remind others that we all do what we do for only one reason and that is to serve others, knowing that the better we serve others, the better we are in turn served. That’s why we work: to serve others. How we serve others is only a process that must be susceptible to the circumstances of the moment. Corporations must decide what’s really important and allow their employees some latitude in making that happen. It’s a true shame that an employee is made to go against policy just to provide good service. The answer to every ethical question should be based on whether it’s legal and moral, makes sense, and is the right thing to do to serve.”

– Larry Winget
It's tough to hire the right people, especially because nowadays you can't legally ask those telling questions which separate the wheat from the chaff. The best you can do is trust your gut instincts, which won’t be infallible. Try to hire good people and then train them to do what needs to get done. When you get a group of great people together, there’s not much you can’t do.

Hiring is a challenge for every organization. Irrespective of whatever techniques and strategies you use, you’ll find your entire employee pool will break down into three distinct categories:

- **Top performers** – who do all the right things and who work consistently hard
- **Mid performers** – who do most of what you want but never really actually excel
- **Poor performers** – who for one reason or another never produce anything worthwhile

If you’ve hired people who just naturally slot into the top performers category, celebrate. Keep out of their way and let them do the work and generate the results without you looking over their shoulder all the time. Give them appropriate levels of support and encouragement but then let them get on with what they need to do.

Similarly, if you’ve hired people that end up in the bottom 20-percent, don’t bother trying to reeducate or change them. It can’t be done. If they don’t care about their results, you won’t be able to help them. Fire them and let them move on to other jobs where they might have what it takes to excel.

The bulk of your time will be spent working with those who make up the middle 60-percent of your workforce. Your goal with these people is to either move them into the top or the bottom categories. Here you have a goldmine of talent waiting for an opportunity to shine and probably an equal amount of people who would welcome the chance to slack off and do nothing. Your challenge as a leader is to identify which direction the people in the middle are heading and then to facilitate that transition in both directions.

What you’re doing when you make hiring decisions as a business leader is you’re trying to create the right group of people who will take your organization forward. That is a very worthy challenge and a very tangible way you can contribute to the long-term success or failure of your company.

In actual fact, there are eight things you can do as a leader to build your organization:

1. **Create** – you can create the right environment, the right atmosphere and bring together the right group of people to do impressive things. People will naturally be more productive when they work in a physical facility which is properly set up. And similarly, if there is a culture of personal accountability for results, more will get done. Great leaders create the right setting for great accomplishments.

2. **Communicate** – you have to get your people to see the big picture about what you really do as an organization to earn a living. Communicate what needs to get done and then let people figure out their own best way to do that.

3. **Educate** – invest in the people who do the frontline work first and foremost. Establish a lending or learning library where people can come to borrow educational materials they study in their own time. You should be doing all you can to help your people enhance their work and life skills because that will pay off big over the long haul. Encourage everyone to read, attend seminars, take courses and generally get better.

4. **Delegate** – which essentially means sending someone who is cheaper, faster or who can do a job better. Great leaders match the jobs to their people and make sure the necessary jobs get done by the person best suited to the task. This is an essential aspect of leadership.

5. **Participate** – know what’s involved in doing the job you’re proposing. There’s nothing worse than promising things to customers as a manager that your field staff cannot possibly deliver. Good leaders know what’s required. It’s also an excellent idea for you to participate in rewarding your people when they do the right things. If you find people that are doing good things and give them a hundred-dollar bill, you’ll find everyone will get busy doing good things. By having hands-on involvement in the rewarding of your people, you’ll also prove to everyone you are involved in the business and not just called in when things go wrong.

6. **Hibernate** – stepping back and letting people get on with the things that really count rather than running around trying to keep you happy. Very good leaders get out of the way and trust their people to do things which will amaze.

7. **Evaluate** – the natural follow-on to hibernating. As a manager, it’s your job to evaluate performance. You have to inspect what you expect to see happening, or else it will just get lost in the shuffle. You need to look at both activity and productivity – not only whether the job is getting done but also whether the right stuff is happening. You have to look at whether employees have the desire to do their jobs plus the ability to do them well.

8. **Amputate** – literally cut loose non performers and replace them with people who will. Firing is something which comes with the territory when you’re made a manager. It’s not something you do to a person but it’s more something you do for them. If they are not performing, you’re letting them go somewhere else where they will be happier because they are more appreciated. When someone gets fired, it should never come as a total surprise to them because you will have been working with them for some time helping them improve their performance. If it does come as a total surprise, that would suggest you’re at fault, not them.

"Remember, it is not the job of the leader to motivate others. It can’t be done anyway, so don’t waste your time. Motivation doesn’t work. You can threaten, coerce, dangle money, time off, and carrots of every size, shape and color and it will always come down to this: People do what they want to do when they want to do it and when the consequences of not doing it are painful enough to force them to do it. Make it your goal to have standards so high that only the best and brightest will be willing to work for you. All others will go to those companies with lower standards."

— Larry Winget
Unsurprisingly, very few people actually like firing employees. It’s a lousy job, but that’s what you’re paid to do at times. So what’s the best way to fire people?

- **Communicate** – make certain you have explained clearly and without any ambiguity what the problem is and what your position is. Let people know the consequences of ongoing nonperformance will be dismissal. You can then refer back to these conversations if you have to fire them.

- **Stay focused solely on results** – and avoid any other issues. Let people know your action is not personal but your hand was forced by the obvious lack of results.

- **Fire people quickly** – don’t keep threatening to do so or drag things out unnecessarily. As soon as people have been given notice, walk them to the door immediately and let them go their way. You don’t want them hanging around generating bad vibes for everyone else.

- **Don’t argue** – because it’s pointless. State your case, make things very clear and walk them to the door.

- **Have a witness** – who can confirm all of the company’s legal obligations were fulfilled. Don’t leave yourself or your company open to being sued by someone who claims due process was not followed to the letter.

- **Make all your new hires “at will”** – meaning you state in their employment contracts their employment can be terminated at the company’s discretion. If you have a performance culture, people won’t mind this at all. Make it very clear people have to perform.

Keep in mind when you’re firing people, you’re not really trying to build a cohesive team within your company. That’s not the goal at all because teams as a rule don’t work. They allow average performers to ride on the coattails of the hard workers your organization is fortunate enough to have. Instead of trying to create a team, what you should be working towards is to create groups of superstar individuals who all share a common goal. You want your exceptional performers to be working alongside others who have talents and abilities which are worthy of respect.

When you pause and think you’ll probably realize most superstars are not very good team players. They like to shine and to receive due credit for their accomplishments. In short, superstars like to and want to look good. Your goal should be to create a workplace where superior performers are recognized for what they are and what they contribute.

Of course working with superstars isn’t easy. If they are producing enough, they can pretty well make their own rules. As long as they continue to generate more revenue than anyone else, superstars can pretty well do whatever they please. It’s only when and if their production slips back towards the median that they are required to toe the line.

When someone says they are a “team player”, you can be reasonably certain you’re looking at an average performer. Superstars won’t stand for that. They want to be acknowledged openly as being the best. If good sales cover a multitude of sins as the cliche goes, then exceptional sales are the genuine ticket to freedom. If you want to get out some slack from all of the in-house rules, generate superior sales. And forget about joining a team of average performers. Be someone who is known for hitting the ball right out of the park.

If you’re not yet a superstar and you’ve made some mistakes which end up being costly for your employer, there are a few things you can try to avoid being fired:

1. **Start with a genuine apology to your boss** – where you take full responsibility for what has happened. When done with sincerity, this is very hard for anyone to argue with.
2. **Clarify the reasons why** – and make certain your boss understands why things didn’t quite work out the way they were supposed to.
3. **Take personal responsibility for your role in all these reasons** – while at the same time pointing out how there were also other contributing factors. This needs to be an honest assessment rather than finger-pointing.
4. **Present your plan on how to move forward from here** – how to actually get out of this mess. Good leaders will always be more interested in solutions rather than apportioning blame. Have some practical and workable ideas for your boss to consider rather than throwing it in his or her lap.

If you work for an organization which focuses on results, this should be sufficient redress for an honest mistake made. If, on the other hand, this failure becomes like an albatross around your neck for ever after, then it’s time for you to move elsewhere where you can be judged on the merits of what you’re doing. In that case, make the move sooner rather than later. Don’t sit around waiting for the axe to fall, but be much more proactive in moving to greener pastures.

“I’m about the work. Are things being sold? Is the customer being served? Is everyone contributing to the bottom line? Are people getting along well enough to get the work done? If so, what else really matters? Give people a chance. Not many chances, but at least a few.”

— Larry Winget

“I have read thousands of business books. That is no exaggeration. I really have read thousands. All except a handful have been a total waste of time. Most of the authors of business books on the market today like to stroke people’s egos by reinforcing information they already know. They tend to say, ‘You are doing a really good job; you just need to do it a little bit better or think slightly differently’. Business books contain too much jargon, too much cute, too much pie-in-the-sky, too much BS, too much of everything except the key ingredient to success in business: work! All of those books are selling a load of crap. And people are lapping it up like ice cream. The bottom-line answer to every problem in business is this: People aren’t working! Most employees are simply not doing a good job — in fact, they barely do their jobs at all. Sales results are down in most companies because the salespeople don’t pick up the phone and actually talk to customers. Employees don’t do their jobs because no one expects them to, and there are no real penalties for not doing their jobs.”

— Larry Winget
Great

Have fun, but do what you’re paid to do

Love what you do so much you willingly pay the price to be great at your job. If the passion just isn’t there, quit and find something else. Remember, you aren’t being paid to like your job. Instead, you’re being paid to do your job. If you get in a rut, come up with some ideas to spic up your job by all means but don’t for one second lose sight of the fact you’re paid to get results, not to be entertained.

It is certainly a solid business principle that if you enjoy what you’re doing, you’ll end up doing a better job. But that line of thinking doesn’t mean you should only work hard at a job you love. Quite the contrary, in fact. You aren’t paid to like your job. You’re paid to do it. That said, if you’re enthusiastic about your job, maybe even bordering on passionate, the odds are you’ll end up doing your job better.

Pause for a moment and consider how much time you actually spend each day doing what you are paid to do. Some days, it may seem like you have to put up with stuff you don’t enjoy 90-percent of the time in order to get to the 10-percent of your time that you actually love. If you can’t work up passion for your job as a whole, at least convince yourself you’ll put up with that other stuff in order to continue doing the small part you do enjoy. That at least is a starting point you can build on.

So what else can you do to increase the fun component in your job? A few suggestions:

In addition to working hard on your job, work even harder on improving yourself – by spending your own time reading books, watching training videos, studying your competitor’s products and improving yourself any way you can. Just the mere fact you’re doing these things on your own initiative will make you feel and act differently.

Get a reputation as being the guy or gal who gets stuff done – because this is how you become invaluable to your employer. Don’t worry about titles, just results. Get things done today, not tomorrow. When you’re busy working fast to make good things happen, you have less time to worry about whether or not you’re having fun.

Get into the habit of speaking well – of yourself, of your coworkers, even of your competition. Build respect deep into your organization. You should especially speak well of your customers and view them as the whole reason you’re in business rather than as interruptions to what you want to do. In business, it’s the little things that matter and that can make a huge difference in the way customers perceive your business. Make certain respect is there from the ground up.

Act ethically – which essentially means don’t do anything you wouldn’t be proud of if everyone knew about it. Society today seems to be bathed in many more shades of gray rather than the black or white of previous eras. To act ethically means to give your best effort. This is an era where you have to listen to your gut all the time. If you’re uncomfortable about something, that’s usually a reasonably good indicator what is suggested is wrong. Make sure you’re giving your all if you genuinely anticipate having fun.

In actual fact you should really have an employee handbook which has just twelve instructions:

1. Focus on what you achieve. Become known inside the company as the person who gets things done.
2. Develop a reputation – inside and outside the company – that you are proud of.
3. Be completely and absolutely trustworthy. Be the person who always keeps a secret, who never gossips and can be counted on in all situations.
4. When you give your word on something, keep it. No exceptions.
5. Always be on time. Be where you’re expected to be when you are expected to be there, and be ready for action.
6. Don’t brag. It will either come across as obnoxious or it will alienate others. Neither outcome is very helpful.
7. Don’t complain. Nobody really cares because they all have their own problems to mull over. You’re being paid to generate results, not to have a happy life.
8. Look on work friendships as a bonus when they happen. It is not required or automatically expected.
9. Don’t tolerate abuse, disrespect, a lack of ethics or a lack of integrity from your employer. If you come across these, find another job. Life is too short to worry about these things.
10. Find out as soon as you can what is the single most important result you are expected to generate, and then make sure that happens. Even if you achieve nothing else at work, get that done.
11. Serve customers well irrespective of whether you call them clients, patients, coworkers or boss. Never forget your rewards in life will always be in direct proportion to the service you provide.
12. Never forget you work for someone somewhere. That person has the right to say what you do, when you do it, and how you do it. Respect that right.

“People who make $6.00 an hour are paid that because they provide $6.00 worth of service and it takes them an hour to do it. Face it: ‘Do you want fries with that?’ isn’t brain surgery. People who make $25,000 an hour are paid that because they provide $25,000 worth of service and it takes them an hour to do it. Face it: That is brain surgery. The difference is not the hour. For both individuals, it was the same sixty minutes. The difference is the service provided within the hour. The key is putting more service into the hour. Most people spend their energy figuring out how to put more hours in the service.”

– Larry Winget

“It is your own damn fault. Always and without exception. If you will accept this, then you will have the key to opening the door to personal and business success.”

– Larry Winget
Focus on generating results that you’re proud of. Results never lie – they are the true litmus test of what you’re worth. If you can make yourself worth more than you cost, then you have reasonable grounds to feel good about the future come what may. If, on the other hand, you actually cost more than you generate for your employer, then there is a problem that sooner or later needs to be addressed. It’s your responsibility to deliver results, not anybody else’s.

Believe it or not, companies exist to make a profit. They aren’t there to make you happy. You’re not entitled to a job as a birthright. You have to earn your keep or else the company has a perfect right to replace you with someone who will do more. This is a case where the saying “A deal is a deal” truly applies.

In fact, when you think about the workplace realistically, you’ll reach some surprising conclusions:

- Really the only thing your company owes you is a safe working environment. It doesn’t owe you a place where you won’t be exposed to inappropriate remarks, stupid actions on the part of your co-workers or anything else that hurts your feelings. If these things do arise, go after the people who generate them, not the company who has entered into a deal to pay you.
- Companies don’t care about your feelings. You’re being paid to work. If you’re happy, that’s a bonus but it’s not one of your inalienable rights. Happiness is your own responsibility. If you’re not happy, work somewhere else.
- Companies exist to generate customers. They pay you to serve customers so those customers will keep paying for the company’s products or services. Do your best to help facilitate this and you’ll do fine. Above all, don’t bog things down by sniveling about minor issues. If you’re unhappy and don’t want to get paid, go somewhere else.
- Think back to the work ethic of your parents. They probably worked because they took their obligations seriously. They probably even went to work when they didn’t think they were going to have a particularly happy day. If you ask them why, they will probably tell you it is the result of a very simple dynamic: You pay me and I’ll do what you say. Have these simple principles become superceded by an element of entitlement which exists today?

The brutal fact is you have to make yourself worth more than you cost or it doesn’t make sense for anyone to employ you. It’s time to deliver tangible and real results which nobody can argue with. If there are problems in doing this, it’s your responsibility to fix those blockages, not anybody else’s.

Note, however, you’re not being paid to work hard. You’re paid to generate results. The amount of effort you put in to making those results happen is a good indicator, but results are everything and they never lie. All of the other stuff about which you might fuss over are a smoke screen. Your results are everything when you’re at work, and the various elements of your life will reflect the quality and consistency of those results.

Your results will always be your own fault. They will be the direct consequence of the decisions you make and the things you choose to do. With that in mind, there are a few things you can do to bulk up your results in life and in business:

- **Take a look in the mirror** – and tell yourself nobody else can generate the results you need. Take full and total responsibility for where you are. Take equal responsibility for moving onwards and upwards. This is a good first step.
- **Do a reality check** – and admit that you’ve been complaining about things rather than doing something about them for quite some time. Feel confident that you’ll survive and move forward from here.
- **Make a list** – of what you want to do differently in the future. If you want to generate better results, you’ll need to do things differently. Write down what that will mean in your everyday actions in fine detail.
- **Get busy** – doing what needs to get done. Take action on your intentions today rather than thinking sometime you’ll get around to it. If you aren’t actively working to fix your problems, you’re in effect admitting you are happy with the status quo. If not, do something about it.
- **Find practical ways to serve your company’s customers better** – because ultimately that sets your rate of pay. If you want to be paid more, find more ways to serve actual customers. Don’t try and put in more hours doing the same things you’re now doing. Instead, put more service into each hour you already work.

“Don’t go around saying the world owes you a living; the world owes you nothing; it was here first.”

– Mark Twain

“We’ve gotten to the point where everybody’s got a right and nobody’s got a responsibility.”

– Newton Minow, former chairman, Federal Communications Commission

“Never mistake activity for achievement.”

– John Wooden, coach, UCLA basketball team

“The really idle man gets nowhere. The perpetually busy man does not get much farther.”

– Sir William Heneage Ogilvie

“If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.”

– Sir James Goldsmith

“Are you an employee who believes that appearing busy is the key to success? Or are you one of those stupid managers who likes to see people being busy? Wait, did I just say that a manager who likes to see people being busy is stupid? Yes, that’s what I said. If you like watching busy people instead of productive people, you are stupid. Some people can look so busy, you actually think they are getting things done. Be careful. Look at the results. There is nothing sadder than to find out an employee is excellent at doing something that doesn’t need to be done at all. Reward results. Empower people to get results. Appreciate results. Judge results. Results are everything. This is the real message to those who do the work and those who manage the work: Work is getting the desired result.”

– Larry Winget