

By John McKee

You're fired! This succinct phrase strikes more fear into the heart of the working man or woman than any other. Why is it, then, that many well-intentioned and reasonably astute professionals hear these words throughout their career despite all best efforts? Below are the top 10 self-destructive workplace habits sure to endanger your longevity on the job.

1 Failing to have a life plan

All successful people have a clear life plan, whether memorized or actually written down. They create it, massage it, and refer to it often.

2 Not keeping your skill set current

The business landscape is ever-changing and there is more demand for jobs than for supply. Not staying on par with colleagues and those vying for your job will be a death knell.

3 Failing to deliver results

Winners in business know that it's all about accountability. Those who harbor a sense of entitlement for simply having put forth effort, regardless of the results of those efforts, are guaranteed to fall by the wayside.

4 Confusing efficiency with effectiveness

Those who think that communicating via e-mail replaces the need to actually talk with people around them fail to recognize the importance of personally connecting with others in today's highly automated and technological environment. Communicating in person whenever possible is imperative for success-seekers.

5 Believing that you are irreplaceable

There is no room for divas in the workplace. As soon as you convince yourself that you and only you can do the job "right," your star will surely start to fall.

6 Knowing all the answers

The old adage remains true: Knowledge is power. Professing to know it all can readily stagnate a career. Winners are unceasingly interested in learning new ideas and approaches.

7 Surrounding yourself with brown-nosers

Losers like having people tell them how smart they are, regardless of whether it's true, while successful managers and other professionals accept and encourage intelligence and creativity in others.

8 Forgetting to give credit to others

Losers inappropriately take full credit for positive events despite the help or input received by others, while winners give credit where credit is due. Losers inevitably reap what they sow.

9 Failing to self promote


Bragging is one thing, but letting colleagues throughout your industry know of your success through case studies, promotion bulletins, or other such tools is quite another. Losers often fail to recognize the importance of letting others know about their successes or go about it in entirely the wrong way.

10 Losing perspective

Intuitive business people recognize that despite their best attempts to do everything right, sometimes they will encounter roadblocks. When that happens, they must seek the advice and perspective of a respected friend, colleague, or even a business coach. Those who fail to recognize their shortcomings are destined for the unemployment line.

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