

Ten Ways to Achieve in the Business World

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Several years ago I had the opportunity to participate in a group of business people who were dedicated to both self improvement and moving their professional lives or their businesses ahead.

The split was fairly equal among men and women and among business owners and those pursuing careers with an organization or company.

The first thing I realized was what a great thing a brain-storming group like this could be. I found we all had a lot of problems, challenges and yes, even fears, in common. We also had a lot of positive experiences, valuable marketing tips, and thoughts on what it took to succeed.

Susan was one of the women participating in the group. What stood out about Susan was her note-taking. Everything anyone said was bound to end up in Susan's notebook. People would teasingly say things like, "And for Susan's benefit I'd like to repeat..." Then one day Susan showed up with a copy for all of us of her notes - carefully organized and categorized.

We shut up in a hurry. Susan had given us three very powerful lessons: listen and absorb everything of value someone has to offer, synthesize it so it is applicable to your circumstances, and always share and be willing to help others.

Out of our group, and through my own experiences as a trainer in corporations, I have been able to cull ten tips that can help you move ahead more quickly in the business world.

1. Find a mentor. It will give you a tremendous advantage either in making your own business more successful or moving you where you want to be in your career. Don't be afraid to reach out and ask. But keep in mind that this is a partnership. What can you do to be a giver as well as a taker?
2. Be a superb networker. Learn the art of bottom-lining who you are and what you are about. Always remember how important questioning and listening is - people are attracted to those who show a genuine interest in others.
3. Always be ready to volunteer. Whether it is a business organization to which you belong, a chamber of commerce or community or civic group, offer service. If you are employed by a company, offer to do what needs to be done both inside and outside your job description.
4. Look for educational and training opportunities. Think you've got it all down pat? I don't think so. Continued learning, looking at new ways of doing things, is always energy well spent.

5. A job is not a career. Don't spin your wheels deciding what to do or put your career on hold while you spend years on the wrong course. Go after what you really want, be single-minded and keep the passion.
6. Practice self-talk. Make sure your goals aren't too low and that you are promoting the full, exciting package of what you are. Don't be shy: self-confidence and assurance is a fine trait.
7. Be flexible. We are living in a world of change. The 21st Century will ask for people who see creative, out-of-the-norm ways of doing things. Listen, observe and try new things.
8. Mellowspeak is in. That means a cooperative, consensus-building way of dealing with others is the way to successful relationships.
9. Be aware of your world. Be informed as to what is happening in the business world in general. What are current trends? What is being affected by whom? What can be done to improve where you and your business are? Read. Check the Internet. Talk to others.
10. Share. Keep the cycle of success alive and well. Passing on what you have learned and sharing knowledge, time and encouragement with others is the sign of a true achiever.