

ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN A JOB

So you know how to do your job, and you've been hired. Congratulations! You have successfully completed some of the hardest steps in building your career.

When people accept a job offer and shake hands with their new employer, they are usually very happy. And they should be. But later that day they may start to worry.

What if I mess up? What if I can't hack it? What if I don't like the people I am working with, or they don't like me?

These can turn into real problems for a lot of people. But instead of worrying, plan. There is usually more to job success than simply knowing how to do the job. Everyone runs into obstacles. And the best time to learn how to overcome obstacles is before you have to deal with them.

Why do people have problems at work? There are a few common types of problems:

Alcohol & Drug Abuse:

Alcohol or drug abuse can be career poison, whether you are job searching or already employed, and whether you do it while on or off the job.

You can be the most qualified job applicant in town. But if you can't pass a pre-employment drug test you won't get the job, and your job search will be a waste of time.

You can be the most competent and popular member of your employer's team. But if you show up drunk or high you'll get fired.

That's the plain truth. If you need help changing a drug or alcohol habit, then get it. Don't put it off.

Here's one more tip: There are a lot of ways that people try to fake their way through drug tests. None of them work.

Unreliability:

Success means doing good work, and being recognized and rewarded for it.

A guaranteed way to not do good work is to do no work at all. A guaranteed way to do no work at all is to not be there to do it.

That's why employers value reliability more than any other single employee skill or characteristic. More than education, experience, or anything else.

But what if you don't have a reliable way to get to work? In fact, how can a person even get a job and some income if they don't have a car or other reliable transportation?

That's a sensible question. But it makes even more sense the other way around: How can a person get a car or other transportation if they don't have a job and some income?

It is generally easier to get income if you don't have your own transportation than it is to get your own transportation if you don't have income. So solve this problem the easiest possible way: Concentrate first on getting a job, then on getting regular transportation.

Once you get a job, you may be able to share transportation with someone who works at the same place or nearby, and who would appreciate a little help with gas money. Or you may be able to get rides from friends or relatives who want to help you succeed. Or they could let you borrow their cars. Or you might be able to use public transportation.

You may even be able to get a loan to buy your own car, especially after a couple of months on the job.

But what if you don't have a driver's license as a result of DUIs or other problems? Don't be shy: Write to the judge about how you are staying straight, trying to work, and doing the right thing. The judge may decide to encourage you by lifting your restrictions. If you think this never happens, you're wrong.

This is a problem you can solve — as long as you don't give up.

Conflicts With Other People:

Think of all the people you have ever met. You have liked some of them. You have not liked others. Some of them have liked you. Others have not liked you. That's natural.

Having a job means working with other people who you have not chosen. You will get along better with some of them than with others.

Being friends with people at work is a good thing. But your job is not to be friends with people. Your job is to work with them. You will almost certainly have to work with some people you don't like.

If you remember a few simple tips, you may find there are very few people you can't work with:

- Treat everyone with respect, and if possible with kindness.
- Don't be too quick to be offended. Everyone has bad days.

- If you find yourself getting mad regularly, or if someone gets mad at you regularly or treats you badly, try to talk it out with them respectfully and privately. Don't complain about them to others. Be willing to listen and to compromise.
- If you can't talk it out directly, ask for help from your boss or your employer's Human Resources Department.

It all comes down to respect, honesty, clarity, and staying focused on getting work done as a team.

Failure to Follow Rules:

A rule has to be followed even when people don't want to. Otherwise it would be called a suggestion.

Every workplace depends on rules. Rules define how everyone's jobs fit together. Not following the rules is the quickest and surest way to fail.

But what if the boss who makes the rules is a jerk? Well, some bosses are.

Most of us have acted like jerks at some point, so maybe we should try to get along with others when they act like jerks too. After all, it doesn't make much sense to say "I'll show them: I'll fail!"

What if the rules are stupid or pointless? One characteristic of good employees is their willingness to suggest improvements, so maybe you could tactfully propose a rule change.

But if the rule doesn't change, remember this: The reason your employer pays you money is because you are not doing things that you would happily do for free.

If you have a hard time taking rules seriously, that's something you should work on.

Level 5.0