

BECOME INDISPENSABLE AND EXTRAORDINARY

Companies want (and need) employees who are indispensable and extraordinary, because they know those are the folks who'll drive the business.

Employees who are indispensable and extraordinary don't wait for instructions or directions, they figure out what needs to be done, and they do it. They generate ideas. They think outside the box. They don't become complacent. They make a difference. In the process, they become more than they ever dreamed they could be.

Do you want to become one of those employees?

OVERCOME FEAR OF BEING EXTRAORDINARY

To become indispensable and extraordinary, you'll need to overcome obstacles, one of which is fear. Fear takes away our power. Fear imprisons us in the safety of the status quo. Fear prevents us from becoming what we could be. Fear keeps us from moving ahead, following our dreams, and achieving our goals.

Many people are afraid to fail. They don't understand that they must be willing to fail, even happy to fail, because it's a natural, necessary, expected part of succeeding. Failure can teach us invaluable lessons. If you can get over your fears, you'll become free to pursue your path to being more successful than you ever imagined. First identify your fears, then analyze and dissect them, and develop a plan to overcome them.

OVERCOME SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATIONS

Our own self-imposed limitations create another barrier to becoming indispensable and extraordinary. Limiting ourselves in what we think we can achieve keeps us from believing in ourselves. You might think you aren't smart enough to do something, or that no one cares what you have to say, or you might think you don't have the time or money to do something like earning an advanced degree.

You have to be willing to step outside of your comfort zone and identify your self-imposed limitations, and attack them one by one. The most successful people have overcome their self-created limits. You can learn a lot by reading their stories of challenges faced and overcome. How did they meet their challenges? Make their stories your story.

KNOW YOUR CAREER GOALS

Where do you want to go? How do you plan to get there? Use your shining goals to motivate yourself and get to where you want to be. But make your goals specific and measurable. Which

actions will each goal require? How will you know when you've reached the goal?

Set a timeline for each goal. Don't just say you want to "make more money." Be specific about what it means and why it's important to you. It's better to say you want to be making 15 percent more in 12 months than you're making now. That's a specific, measurable goal.

EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE SEEK FEEDBACK

Seek constructive feedback that will help you understand what you're doing. Ask for input from managers, coworkers, and maybe even a few trusted clients and customers. Use that feedback to self-assess your talents and weaknesses and develop a plan to forge ahead.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Never stop learning – it's fundamental to your success. Failing to learn is failing to grow. Identify learning opportunities within your organization – tuition reimbursement, for example – and outside sources that will help you improve your education, enhance your skills, and energize your passion. Learning doesn't have to cost a fortune – you can take online courses, read books on personal development, attend seminars and lectures and get involved in training programs or mentoring opportunities that match the steps you're taking toward your goals.

EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE ARE FOCUSED ON SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

Indispensable and extraordinary employees recognize opportunities whenever they arise. They are constantly seeking opportunities to improve their skills, position and prospects – and they're ready to take advantage of them.

For more information on John Tschohl and the Service Quality Institute, visit www.customer-service.com.

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John Tschohl is founder and president of Service Quality Institute, the global leader in customer service with operations in more than 40 countries. John is considered one of the world's foremost authorities on all aspects of customer service. He has developed 17 customer service training programs, including Moving Up, that are used by companies throughout the world. His monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge at www.customer-service.com.

