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Make Yourself
Indispensable

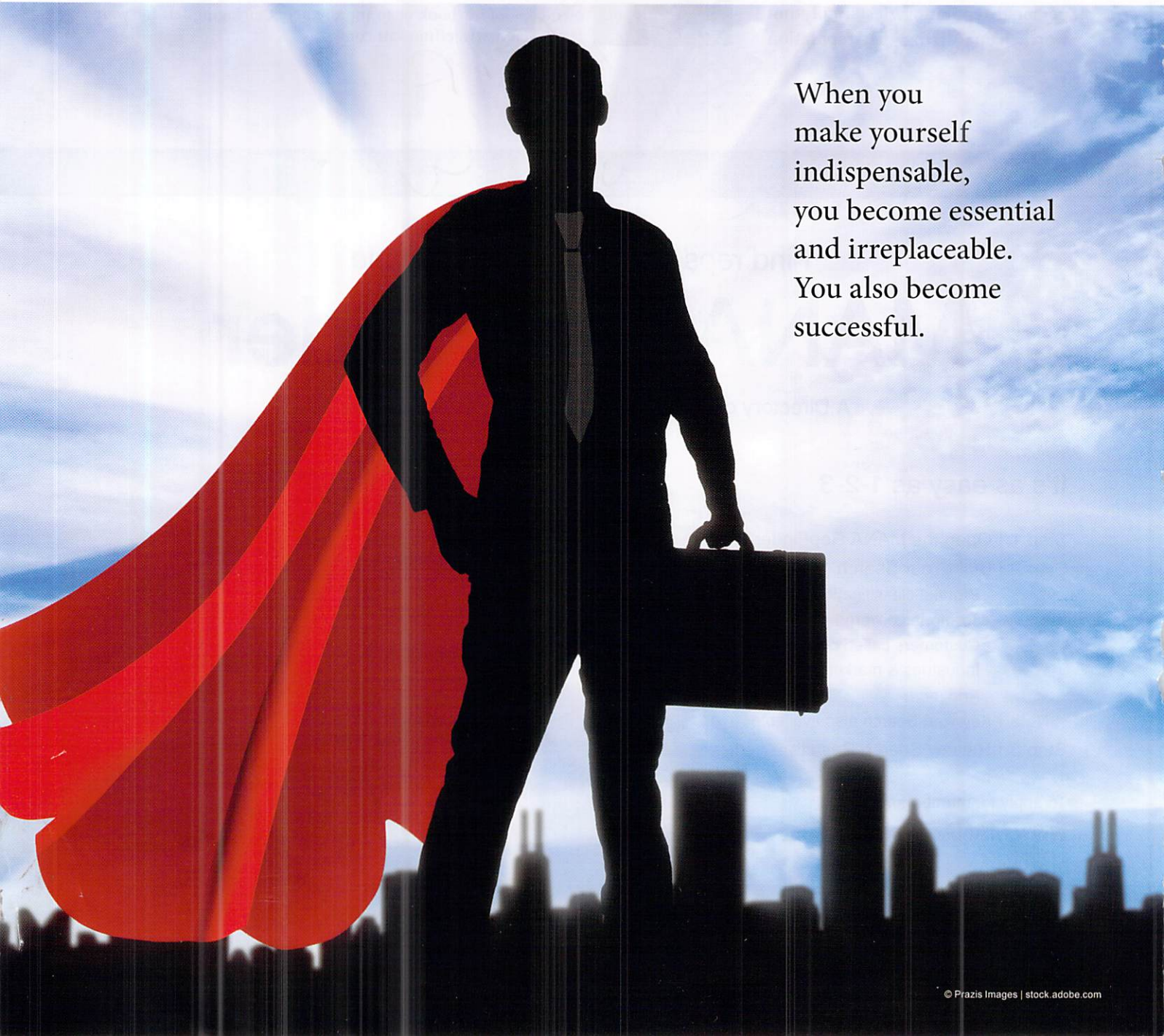
Plus Principal Focus
A History of
Working With Reps



Make Yourself Indispensable

BY JOHN TSCHOHL

When you make yourself indispensable, you become essential and irreplaceable. You also become successful.



Being indispensable means being someone others can depend on. It means you are dependable, productive, and reliable. It means you have a great attitude, go above and beyond to do the best job possible, have great communication skills, and are an integral member of the team. It means you don't wait for instructions or directions; you figure out what needs to be done — and then you do it.

Being indispensable strengthens your self-esteem, your financial well-being, and your future. But it doesn't just happen. You must identify what you can do differently that will make a huge impact on you, your work, and your life.

Most employees are held back by self-imposed limitations. Fear is, in many cases, at the top of this list. Fear of failing can paralyze you. It can keep you from taking chances and, in the process, strip you of power. You must step out of your comfort zone. If you want to get promoted and make more money, it's imperative that you put your ego aside and take risks.

The first step in becoming indispensable is to set goals. I've been setting goals annually for the past 50 years. They are the road maps that take me from where I am to where I want to be.

Your goals need to be challenging, and they need to be put in writing. They also need to be specific. Vague goals produce vague results. Look at where you are today in your career and identify the steps you need to take to move up. Include a timeline for each goal so you can track your progress. If you're a runner, consider your goals and your timelines splits that track your progress on the path to success.

Identify the skills you need to have — or improve — to move

ahead. That involves education, but it doesn't have to be formal or cost a lot of money. Take online leadership and management courses; enroll in seminars on those two topics and on customer service. Many companies offer tuition reimbursement for employees who want to further their educations; check that out.

Read at least one self-improvement book a month. Those books will not only inspire you, they will guide you by sharing the challenges others have faced and the steps they took to overcome them. Also, learn everything you can about your industry and your company and its products and services.

Learning is a fundamental activity to realizing success. If you fail to learn, you will fail to grow.

You must also assess your customer service skills. How do you interact with internal and external customers? Do you actively listen to what those customers have to

say? Are you empathetic? Do you offer solutions?

Talk to your boss. Ask, "What can I do to become more successful? What skills am I lacking? How can I help lessen your work load?"

Push yourself physically and mentally. Take care of your health because, if you're not healthy, nothing else matters.

I must also add a warning: Don't sacrifice your family or relationships as you pursue your goals. Becoming indispensable at work and making more money should not come at the cost of ignoring — or losing — your family and friends. Maintain a balance between your goals and your relationships.

Believe in yourself. Be focused. Massage your mind. Take chances. Become indispensable.

MANA welcomes your comments on this article. Write to us at mana@manaonline.org.

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John Tschohl is the founder and president of Service Quality Institute — the global leader in customer service — with operations in more than 40 countries. He is considered one of the world's foremost authorities on all aspects of customer service and has developed 17 customer service training programs, including his book and training program *Coaching for Success*. His monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge at www.customer-service.com. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.