

ARE YOU A DRIVER OR A RIDER?

Grab the wheel and step on the gas

Some people like to drive the bus, while others are content to sit back and enjoy the ride. As the driver, you choose the route to where you want to go. As a rider, you'll leave the choices to someone else.

There are lots of riders who do little or nothing to drive their careers. Don't be a rider. To grow, succeed, and prosper, you must set goals, plan your route, and take the wheel.

What is your goal? Is it to earn the respect of your manager and coworkers, get promoted, and enjoy greater financial benefits? If so, read on.

- **Step One**

Set goals that will take you where you want to go. Without goals, you won't get far. Your goals will determine your future. They will be your road map to success. Set goals that are tangible, measurable, and realistic. Review them daily or weekly to keep them at the front of your mind. Set a timeline for each goal, as it will keep you focused.

- **Step Two**

Plan your route. What will you do to get to where you want to be? Conduct a self-assessment: review your attitude, work ethic, strengths, weaknesses, aspirations, and opportunities for improvement. A thorough self-assessment will help you measure your progress and create a habit of comparing yourself against yourself, instead of with others. Your plan should be specific, and it should include timelines.

- **Step Three**

Recognize the roadblocks. Will there be potholes and detours along the way? You should identify them and develop a plan to avoid or overcome them. Take responsibility for yourself and your career. Many roadblocks are self-imposed limitations; don't let them stop you. Set your own ceilings, and be proactive. Proactive people identify, predict, and prepare for possible obstacles, then

find ways to overcome them. They prepare for the future, participate by contributing, and perform by taking appropriate, purposeful action. You must be willing to do the work!

- **Step Four**

Implement your plan. If you fail to do this, you'll remain where you are. Recognize that your attitude will drive your actions. Believe in yourself! Your thoughts will determine your beliefs, and your beliefs will drive what you do. Set aside an hour every day for personal development. Use that time to meditate on and visualize your day, listen to audio motivational programs, or read meaningful literature. Never stop learning – it's a fundamental element of a successful life. Take an online course, sign up for a workshop, read a book on personal development every month, and take advantage of tuition reimbursement opportunities.

- **Step Five**

The final step is equally important: Enjoy the benefits of all your hard work. Those benefits include increased earnings, the respect of your managers and coworkers, and the freedom you'll find in being better able to support yourself and your family, emotionally and financially.

When you drive the bus, you control of your destiny. Get out of the passenger seat and drive into your future.

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

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John Tschohl is the founder and president of Service Quality Institute, a global leader in customer service. He is considered one of the world's foremost authorities on all aspects of customer service, and is the author of several books including Moving Up: A Step-by-Step Guide to Creating Your Success. His monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no cost at www.customer-service.com.

