



PROFESSIONAL Tips

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SIX CHARACTERISTICS OF A GREAT EMPLOYEE

"HOW TO ADD VALUE TO YOUR INSTITUTION"

A Great Employee is Involved

By getting involved in whatever project is important to your boss, you'll shine as an employee. If your boss is keen on how paperwork is processed, find out exactly how she wants it done, then set up a checklist so you always do the right way ... HER way. If she focuses on customer relations, get deeply involved with your company's customers and set up files and dossiers on them so you know every little tidbit about your customer's lives, their likes, dislikes, birthdays, business background, and preferences.

An involved employee adds value by listening, and by shouldering responsibility to make sure the boss's priorities rule. **Whatever she says is your top priority, get THAT done.**

A Great Employee is Flexible

As with everything else in life, sometimes your boss's priorities get changed by customers or by his boss. A great employee doesn't cop an attitude and say, "But you said the Henderson project was my top priority, now you're putting me on the McMillan case?" Instead, a great employee will understand that in the world of business, as in life, **sometimes things just come up that move to the front burner.** The boss isn't indecisive, he's simply forced to be flexible with HIS time and resources and there are times that he has to allocate those resources to the most pressing need at the moment. A flexible employee adds value by becoming a "fall back" option for the company. When the boss needs someone in Atlanta to train the new office, be that person!

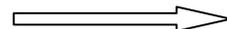
A Great Employee is Welcoming

When someone comes to your workstation or office, do they get the idea that you have an open door, or do they stand in the doorway and talk to you from a distance? Unless you're working on something pressing, welcome them in and listen to what they have to say. I'm not talking about the small talkers, I'm referring to someone who genuinely needs to speak with you.

Making your customers feel welcomed insures you and your company's long term survival. You have "internal" customers as well (co-workers). Welcome them, their ideas, and contributions as well. A great employee adds value by becoming the face of the company or the team and by making customers feel special.

A Great Employee is Genuine

Ever see an employee with a pasted on smile and know that they really don't want to be there? You can usually spot them a mile away. Here's an exercise: no matter what you do for a living, no matter where you work or for whom, **imagine how the product or service that your company provides benefits the end user.** A uniform delivery driver who brings



scrubs to the hospital serves a vital function in the healthcare of thousands of people. A factory worker who machines high tension bolts used in bulldozers serves a vital function in the construction of office buildings and the people who need them.

Once you see your unique role in your organization, you can be genuinely proud of your contribution and you can smile a real smile, knowing that your role is vital in some way. A genuine employee adds value by being an example to the rest of the organization and knowing his or her unique contribution.

A Great Employee is Curious

A great employee constantly seeks to increase her knowledge of her company's products and services and she will keep up to date on industry news as well. A knowledgeable employee is a valuable employee and **when you're constantly seeking to increase your knowledge, you add value to yourself and your organization.**

A curious employee adds value because he or she has a passion for learning, and is constantly seeking to upgrade their skills and knowledge to help drive the company forward.

A Great Employee is Hard Working

None of the other traits matter much if an employee has a poor work ethic. The willingness to do what it takes to get the job done is **the granola of life: sometimes bland, sometimes dry, but really good for you.**

Too many people look for a job or a relationship or some other circumstance to bring them happiness. It won't and it never will. Happiness is what you bring TO your job, what you bring TO a relationship. When you make the conscious decision to bring happiness wherever you go, you're well on your way to becoming a truly great employee. And who knows, one day YOU may be the boss!

By Ron Haynes