

SHINE At Work: Your 30-Minute Guide

By

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SHINE At Work: Your 30-Minute Guide
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Resource Box/SIG line:

Long as he is popularly known - went through a period of disillusionment many moons ago. 'A slap and a kick' from a good-hearted cousin then woke him. He found himself graduating and having a good career. In his free time he runs <http://www.career-success-for-newbies.com> with his wife Dorena as their way of paying it forward. Download these free eBooks - Career Success Recipe for Newbies and SHINE At Work: Your 30-Minute Guide - at this website (***your site's URL***) now.

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Dedicated to:

Ng Wan Hoon, Ian Tan, Jessica Koh, Yee Hui Tsin, Cassandra Lee, Cindy Lim, Jessey Chew, Alvin Ng, Desiree Tan, Renay Pu, Irene Kuan, Angie Ng, Teo Shen Rhen, Terence Leong, Zahir Mazlan, Hussin Yusof, Wong Yee Thong, Toh Saw Gin, Alyssa Chew, Joanna Kong, Alex Goh

It is an honor to work with you guys!

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Part 1. How to SHINE and Gain the Promotion You Want

You landed that first job and you have been at it for about a year or two. And you're looking for [career promotion](#) advice to move up the ladder, successfully. Obviously, there are no hard and fast rules to this. However, there are guidelines that can help increase your chances of promotion.

In my years at work, I have had the opportunity to practice some of these advices and observed some of it being practiced too. I have also had the opportunity to give this career promotion advice to my staff. Many have gone on to greener pastures and they have told me these are some of the career promotion advice that works for them even now.

It is patent that to [get promoted](#), you need to **shine**. But what do you have to do to shine to gain promotion? Here are some guidelines you can follow:

Serious

Be serious at work and be serious with your work. What does this mean? Being serious with your work does not mean that you cannot have fun at work. Neither does it mean you cannot enjoy your work. It just means that you need to focus on your work.

Be focused and never let anything detract you from what needs to be done on time with speed and consistency. No bosses like people who are not mindful of their job. When you are serious at work you minimize silly mistakes. Bosses and colleagues can feel your commitment. This career promotion advice does not stop you from having fun at work. Being serious at work means being focused and yet still being able to enjoy your work.

Hardworking

This is one career promotion advice that many career newbies find difficult to take. After all, they feel shouldn't there be some form of short cuts? Being [hardworking](#) probably sounds laborious to many. And many would expect that a career promotion advice would talk more about working smart than working hard. Well, not this career promotion advice.

You see, no matter how much you work smart and no matter how many 'tricks' you know to work smart, you still need to work. You still need to be hardworking in order for the results to show. Any short cut that does not require being hardworking will not bear fruits!

Indispensable

Isn't it true that no one is indispensable in this world? Well, it is true. But you should strive to make yourself indispensable in the unit you work in. To gain

promotion and to shine at work, make "being indispensable" part of your career goals.

Strive to be a [key competitive advantage](#) to your bosses and your unit. When you do that you are making yourself indispensable. Being indispensable means taking initiatives, do what needs to be done on time. And take the initiative to do what is beyond the call of duty. When you take this career promotion advice to heart you increase your chances to gain promotion.

Nice

The advice of being hardworking in order to shine to gain that promotion is toughest to swallow for some. This career promotion advice then should be the easiest to accept - being [nice at work](#). Being nice at work is to be a delight and pleasing to work with. It means to be polite and being able to handle your frustration and anger. It also means being able to [lower your stress levels](#).

You would probably ask, why would being nice increase your chances to gain promotion? The answer is simple, when you are nice – polite, pleasing and able handle your emotions well; you demonstrate professional decorum. One who does that is more professional and shines at work more than one who does not.

Enthusiasm

If you want to gain promotion be enthusiastic at work. Put passion behind every task that is given to you to complete. Let that enthusiasm rub off on your colleagues. This career promotion advice works because when you put enthusiasm into every task, work becomes easier and lighter. You complete it with more accuracy and speed.

Enthusiasm doesn't just fuel you alone. That feeling of passion is also easily transferred to fellow teammates. It then fuels them to work harder for that [common goal](#). When you work that way you naturally shine at work.

SHINE At Work

To shine at work remember to practice these attributes. It will help you increase the chances to gain promotion. Be Serious, Hardworking, strive to be Indispensable, Nice and Enthusiastic.

Part 2. The Key Ingredients For Your Career Success

You found your first job and you feel a little anxious. You think to yourself – “How am I going to survive through all these?” With the [right attitude](#) and guidance, you will soon look forward to doing your best.

Like any other [career enhancement tips](#), there are no guarantees for success. However, if you bring the right attitude and decide to take action then you are half way there. Nothing will stop a first jobber like you from [shining at your workplace](#).

1. Self-discipline

The value of [self-discipline](#) in a first jobber is often underestimated. Now that you are in the working world you think to yourself, “Is self-discipline overrated?” I will tell you, no. It is not overrated. I have often found new staff with good self-discipline doing better than those who are poor in it.

Let me use a simple example to demonstrate this, assuming it's a Friday and the rest of the department is planning to go out for a fun night. You have an important document to be completed for the coming Monday. What do you do? Give the fun night a pass and complete the work? Or join the fun and hope that you will find time to finish it over the weekend thus leaving you little chance to perfect it before submission?

Part of self-discipline is also about **sacrifice**. When you have strong self-discipline, it is inevitable that you would need to sacrifice some fun time to [focus on your goals](#). If you are interested in [advancing your career](#) you may take some courses, or even read books to increase your knowledge. All these activities come with an opportunity cost. It could very well mean less time for leisure activities.

2. Success

You're probably thinking, “Success as part of these practical career enhancement tips is funny.” Let me assure you it is not. What I want to explain here is this – if you want to enhance your career, [define what success](#) is to you. Once you know what success is to you then you can plan towards that goal. Spend some time thinking what success is to you. Crystallize this in your mind. Assuming you know what success is to you, the next step is to be **single-minded** in the pursuit of your goal.

Being **single-minded** means to be focused on your goals. When you focus your energy on your goal, you get more out of your effort. You inch closer to your goals. When you are single-minded other things do not distract you. You know what you want and you power yourself towards it as best as you can so you can clearly see what you want.

Knowing your goal and your personal definition of success is an important element amongst these career enhancement tips for first jobbers. Equally important is to know your own **strengths** and your **skills**. If you want to enhance your career, play up on your strengths and improve on your [skills](#) required for your job. What are you good at? What are the skills sets you do not have that are required for the job? Build up on those skills.

The career enhancement tips in this sub-section basically means this – when you define what is success to you, you then pursue it single-mindedly knowing your strengths and the skills required to attain that success.

3. Sincerity

Sincerity in your career means a lot of things. For me, as a first jobber you should look at doing your work sincerely and joyfully. Meaning, do not treat your work as a drag. If you feel that your work is a drag, then start by asking yourself. Why is it so, before blaming anyone else – be it the company, your boss or your colleagues. So, be sincere with yourself. What is your core challenge in not being able to do your work sincerely?

Being sincere at your work means doing it with your level best. It means playing your part and [taking personal responsibility](#) for your work. It also means to **share** your learning and knowledge. When you share what you know about a certain task, you become an asset to your unit and this inevitably [enhances your career](#). Many people think, the more they hoard what they know the more advantage they have. However, in my experience this is not true. I find that the more you share the more others are willing to share with you and the more you know.

In summary, the practical career enhancement tips you can start now is – developing self-discipline, learning to sacrifice, define what success means to you, be single-minded in pursuit of your goals by knowing your strengths and skills, and doing your work with sincerity and have sharing as a work value.

Part 3. Career Advancement Tips for Freshies

These career advancement tips are not instant solutions to your career challenges. They are work values you can practice to help you [advance in your career](#).

You have just left college and started on your first job. Although you know what your role is at your work place, you are also eager to make an impression. Remember that when you practice these career advancement tips, the results are not immediate. You will only begin to see their values when you start to internalize and act upon them naturally.

1. Heart

If you want career advancement, then do everything fueled by the heart. While your brain provides the knowledge, your hands and legs provides the skills, and your heart provides the passion. Fuel every task with passion. When you work full heartedly, your quality shows. Someone who has the [skills and knowledge](#) but do not have the heart to complete the given task can only do a good job. To do a great job, you not only need skills and knowledge, you need heart. Perfection comes when passion meets skills and knowledge. Approach your work with all your heart and you will advance in your career, successfully.

2. Heed

Many freshies I have come across and worked with are very excited to demonstrate what they know and learned in school. However, they forget that sometimes experience is needed to complement what is learned in the academic world. As a freshie in the workplace, you need to take heed of what your seniors and bosses advice you. Pay careful attention to what they are trying to tell you. Some things only experience can teach you. The finer points of any industry can only be learned when you take heed of advice from elders in the industry.

3. Hunger

Have the hunger to know more and learn more. Have the hunger to want to go further and do more. If you want to advance in your career, always be hungry for relevant skills and knowledge. Always be hungry for excellence in your work. One of my ex-bosses used to tell me, when you do a good job, you earn your salary and your current position. When you do an excellent job, you give me reasons to give you an increment and a [promotion](#).

The hunger to want to do more and do better quite naturally makes you a [competitive advantage](#) in your unit. People will notice your constant pursuit of excellence and that will make them want you to work for them and [keep you](#)

[on the team](#). You increase your value to the company. This is one of the career advancement tips I continue to practice till today.

4. Hindrance

As a freshie, you lack experience at work and you will find a lot hindrances. These hindrances coupled with your eagerness to demonstrate your prowess at work will frustrate you. Some challenges and obstacles are real. It could be related to your lack of skills and knowledge to complete a task.

You may perceive yourself to know how to do the task but in reality you may not be equipped to do so. When faced with hindrances, seek help. Do not be egoistic to not do so. No one knows everything. When you seek help you learn a new skill.

Some hindrances are more people oriented. They can be difficult colleagues simply testing your patience. When I was a freshie, how I approached this hindrance was to see it as a rites of passage. They want me to give them a reason for respecting my input and my work. When faced with such colleagues, practice patience. In extreme cases, you can seek help from your immediate boss. As cliché as it sounds, hindrances only serves to make you learn more if you view them positively.

5. Humor

To balance off the career advancement tips of heed, hunger and hindrance is humor. I can still remember some of my personal experiences related to these career advancement tips. Imagine how stressful it can be when they all happen together.

Imagine the [stress](#) of having to deal with this situation - You are supposed to take heed of advice and remember it, especially when it is due to a mistake. You need to be hungry for excellence. You get hindrances from colleagues because you are new. In addition, hindrance to complete some tasks due to the lack of experience. How do you deal with it?

One of the best ways to deal with all these is to have a sense of humor. Laugh at yourself a little. When the going gets tough, laugh. While you need to be serious with your work to increase your chances of career advancement, it doesn't mean you cannot relax. Sometimes you have to say - it's only work. Having a sense of humor allows you to minimise the stress at work.

These are the 5 quick yet important career advancement tips a freshie can practice at work immediately. With constant practice, you can make it a habit and it would seem effortless before you know it.

Part 4. Positive Work Behaviors

Positive work behaviors are by far one of the most straightforward tips I can give you when it comes to [moving up the corporate ladder](#). Do you sometimes feel that whenever people speak about moving up the corporate ladder, it almost always has a cunning undertone?

For career newbies especially, my recommendation is to always focus on positive [work behaviors](#) that you can start practicing now. When the time comes, moving up the corporate ladder will seem effortless. This is because you do what is right and focus on the positive. Bosses will notice and when the right time comes, the [promotion](#) you want is just a natural next step. So what are the 8 straightforward positive work behaviors for moving up the corporate ladder?

1. Ideas

Regardless of how junior you are in an organization, you can have ideas that positively affect the company. Do not be contented with just doing your own work. Do not be shy or embarrassed about sharing them either. What's the worst that can happen? They laugh at it and reject the idea? Well, then you turn it into something positive. Ask why can't it work, and you would have learned something new. That information can be used to come out with better ideas.

2. Impact

Be smart enough to choose some projects in a year that are considered a challenge for your level of experience. Be [hardworking](#) enough to see it through. But have the wisdom to cross check with your bosses to make sure it is a challenge and not impossible for your experience. That way you can create an impact in the company. This positive work behavior ensures that you aren't just the average worker clocking in and clocking out without making an impression.

3. Impeccable

This positive work behavior is to be flawless in your language and dressing. Know that you are judged at all times. First impression or not, people judge you on how you talk and what you wear. You are lucky if you work in a company with dress codes, then just dress up or down accordingly. Being impeccable when it comes to dressing doesn't mean expensive clothes. It simply means to dress well. Being impeccable with your language doesn't mean using bombastic words. Quite simply, it means abstaining from vulgarity.

4. Independent

Learn to work independently. In the age of empowerment, most employees are given the freedom to fail. Even if this culture is not practiced in your company, learn to work with minimal supervision. When you can work independently, it allows your boss to concentrate on other things. But remember to always update your boss on what and how you are doing. Working independently as part of positive work behaviors will help you in moving up the corporate ladder.

5. Ignite

Be an ignition of your company. Take the initiative to start something. It does not always have to be work oriented. It can be something fun or informal. For example, if you know some of your colleagues enjoy exploring different restaurants, why not start a group that does it after work Fridays? When you are a positive ignition, you can move up the corporate ladder quickly.

6. Interest

Show interest in your company's initiatives. Be an interested party in things involving your department. Some career newbies I know come across as being cynical with initiatives that are being carried out by the company. As part of positive work behaviors, show [interest in these initiatives](#). Give it a chance and support them. Do not send signals that your bosses see you as being merely contented as being a passenger of the company. That doesn't help in your plan of moving up the corporate ladder.

7. Intangible

Do not always focus on the tangible benefits when working. There are a lot of values in doing things that at the moment does not seem to benefit you. For example, helping a colleague on a project. Volunteering to cover for someone who's sick. Taking on an extra project when your boss seems inundated with work. Positive work behaviors like these may not have immediate tangible benefits but in the long run, helps you in moving up the corporate ladder.

8. Integrity

This positive work behavior means to have a sound moral character. Practiced at its most basic level for a career newbies, it can be as simple as not talking bad about a colleague and [gossiping](#). Do not be drawn into wrong doings like cutting corners. Be honest in your dealings with colleagues, clients, business partners and suppliers.

These positive work behaviors are straightforward and simple to practice. You need not have an evil plan when thinking about moving up the corporate ladder. Cliché as it maybe, the cunning plans makes you fall off the corporate ladder faster than you can climb it.

Part 5. Career Success Factors

It's always tough to give advice on career success factors because there isn't really a set of formula you can follow that can guarantee [career success](#). A combination of various factors in the right context and with the right character will give your career a boost.

For senior executives, these 5 [career success factors](#) will probably work more as a reminder. For career newbies, especially if you are in your first year of work – these factors will be your guide to a [career boost](#). Like all career advice I give, do not expect instant results. Practiced often and you will see the results.

1. NOW!

Do things NOW! Do not [procrastinate](#). Nothing irks a manager more than a newbie at work that is already showing signs of lazing or taking short cuts. Attack your work immediately. Have a plan of attack to the work that is assigned to you. Without procrastinating you can finish your work much earlier. This allows you to be assigned more work. As the trust with your supervisor increases, he/she will assign you more and more important work. Make a decision now to put in place a plan for this career success factor.

2. Next Steps

Never leave a meeting without clear [next steps](#) that you are required to complete. A date of when the work is expected to be completed by you is part of this next step. This also applies to your discussion with your supervisor. Always seek to clarify what's needed from your end before you leave the discussion.

If you are lucky enough to be chairing any meetings or are a project leader, remember that listing the set of next steps or action plan is your responsibility. When you have clear next steps; who and when the task should be completed, you become productive. You get a career boost when you are productive. It is one of the easiest career success factors to practice.

3. Notice

No, I do not mean giving notice. Notice here means being a keen observer of things around you and people. Now, it doesn't mean being nosy and to start gossiping. Every office has their dynamics. Do not be pulled into the politics that can hurt your career at an early stage. Notice here means to observe and to take note of things. When you notice things you become more careful. You also become better at knowing how things work in the office. You will blend in better. Notice and learn what are the norms of the industry, the ethics and the legalities. Notice the corporate culture and who is in charge. Sometimes those truly in power are those who can influence the bosses.

4. Nice

Amongst all the career success factors, this is probably one that is the easiest to do. Being nice doesn't mean you go around volunteering to make coffee for your colleagues. It can mean very simple and sincere greetings of "Good Morning." It can also be a pleasant smile.

You need to be mindful to do this in order to transfer it to your colleagues. Ever noticed some people smile and greet for the sake of doing it? You can't really feel that they mean it? All else being equal, being genuinely [sincere and nice](#) can give you a career boost.

One sub point I would add to this is to be **neat**. This means being organized, clean and orderly. As a freshie with these efficient behaviors, you become nice to work with, as you are productive.

5. Network

Sure, you are new to the industry. There are very few people you know. But that should not stop you from finding out where people hang out and when. Start with your colleagues first. Where do they go for lunch? To network at a smaller scale is to get your face recognized. Then you can work on getting your name known. There is a caveat to this, while networking is one of the important career success factors - make sure you deliver good work. All the networking cannot give you a career boost if you do not deliver good work.

Part 6. Career Booster – 5 Attitudes in the Workplace to Get You Ahead

You are looking for [attitudes](#) in the workplace to become your career booster. You are possibly past your first year mark at work. You have somewhat learned the ropes of your position but you feel you are slowing down.

So, what are some of the attitudes in the workplace that can help you get ahead at work? These are many [positive attitudes](#) that can help you do that. In fact, the value of these attitudes is that they make you more [motivated](#) and hence, give you a [career boost](#).

These are the 5 career booster attitudes in the workplace to get you ahead:

1. Enthusiastic

I know, how can you ever feel enthusiastic about work especially when you already feel sluggish with the same work after a few years? It is precisely this reason that I ask you to be enthusiastic. To be enthusiastic at work is about a mental state. You need to make the decision to be enthusiastic. Start by saying I will be an eager participant in this project or task.

Attack your task with energy. Do not drag your feet. The more you tell yourself, “This is so boring”, or whatever the excuse maybe the worse you will feel. Get interested in the work and the energy will come naturally. Then decide to be eagerly involved. Being enthusiastic and energetic are attitudes in the workplace that can get you ahead. You cannot get ahead without energy.

2. Efficient

Strive to be the most efficient worker in your team. According to Webster’s Universal College Dictionary, to be efficient means “performing or functioning effectively with the least waste of time and effort.” When you are [effective](#), you are producing the intended result. When you are efficient you do it with the least waste of time and effort. That means you are capable and competent. If you carry with you the attitude in the workplace of constantly striving to be the most efficient worker, then you will sooner or later get ahead in your career. You will get a career booster because you are the most capable and competent on the team.

3. Excellence

Of the 5 attitudes in the workplace, this one probably calls for you to give yourself some pressure. A little pressure is good since it makes you push yourself harder. Strive for excellence in everything you do. Do not be contented with good. Go for great.

Exceed expectations by knowing that good is sometimes not good enough. Give everything your utmost best. You will naturally see how this becomes your career booster. When you strive for excellence in everything you do, you quite naturally surpass others in your work. That gets you ahead.

4. **Early**

Have you ever thought about being early as an attitude in the workplace that can get you ahead? Yes, especially when your workplace practices flexi time. Many people take flexi time for granted. They stroll in and out at their own pace, not knowing they have probably wasted productive time. Start early at work. Some of my most productive days are those that I start early before the phone rings and before my staff walks in with questions. Clear your emails from last night, craft that important email when there are no disturbances.

5. **Easy**

Make every effort to be the easiest to work with in the office. Now, I am not saying compromise on your need for excellence. For example, this means not to complain and grumble each time there is a team meet. No one likes to work with someone who nags all the time. When you are easy to work with, you make working enjoyable for the rest too. Such attitudes in the workplace is welcomed everywhere and you make yourself a competitive edge of any team. This competitive edge is your career booster.

There is no need for complicated plans to get a career boost. Simple steps with these attitudes in the workplace can get you ahead in your career.

About the Author

Long as he is popularly known - went through a period of disillusionment many moons ago. 'A slap and a kick' from a good-hearted cousin then woke him. He found himself graduating and having a good career. In his free time he runs <http://www.career-success-for-newbies.com> with his wife Dorena as their way of paying it forward. Download these free eBooks - Career Success Recipe for Newbies and SHINE At Work: Your 30-Minute Guide – there now!