

Prosper at Work

By Iyer Subramanian

Every one of us goes for work to **earn a living**. We do this in a very routine manner day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year without knowing how to really go about prospering. In order to prosper at work, there are certain universal laws / strategies which have to be adhered to. Follow these principles to bloom at work.

Find out what your boss expects.

- It is not enough to be industrious; so are the ants, what are you industrious about? - Henry David Thoreau.

You are expected to read the boss's mind, knowing what is to be done and how to do it. Unless you ask, these secrets won't be revealed to you until it's too late. You can unravel the mystery. (Find out what your boss expects)

- A man should live with his superiors as he does with fire: not too near, lest he burn; nor too far off; lest he freeze. - Diogenes.

Your **job** is to serve at the pleasure of your boss. The more pleasurable you make that service, the quicker you'll get to the top. You can find many ways to delight your supervisor. (Please your boss)

- I don't meet competition. I crush it. - Charles Revson.

Corporate dynasties have been built on stellar customer service. Tatas, Birlas, Mahindras and Reliance are dramatic and visible examples. Your company's name may not yet be a household word, but you can improve your bottom line today through greater responsiveness to the people who your salary. (Serve customers exceptionally)

- It's what you learn after you know it all that counts. - John Wooden.

Ask most employees what they think about the feedback they receive from their boss, and they will respond, "What feedback?" If this is your dilemma, you can find ways to get your boss to provide constructive criticism about your performance. (Find out how well you're doing)

- If you're not fired with enthusiasm you'll be fired with enthusiasm. - Vince Lombardi.

A promotion isn't something that just happens; it results from careful planning along the way. You can figure out what it will take for you to get ahead. (Increase your chances to advance)

- If I am not for myself, who will be? If I am only for myself, what am I? – Hillel The Elder.

Your successes will advance your career only if others find out about them. You can keep the people in your company informed about the value of your contributions without blowing your own horn too loudly. (Sell yourself effectively)

- Value has been defined as the ability to command the price. – Louis D. Brandeis.

You believe you deserve a raise, and your worsening financial position has given you the courage to go for it. Can you **ask for a raise** in a way that will increase your chances of getting it? (Ask for a raise or a promotion)

- The secret of success is making your vocation your vacation. – Mark Twain.

Successful people don't hate what they do. Work is not some penance we must pay in order to earn a living. You can have fun as you pursue your profession. (Make your work fun)

- The French fry is my canvas. – Ray Kroc, Founder of McDonald's.

Work has the potential to add to life or subtract from it. It can be heavenly, hellish, or somewhere in between. No matter what the circumstances of your work, you can make your work life more fulfilling. (Find fulfillment at work)

- Manners are like zero in arithmetic. They may not be much in themselves, but they are capable of adding a great deal of value to everything else. – Freya Stark.

Your golden rule is as important in business as anywhere. Treat people with respect and consideration, and they'll return the favor. Furthermore, there are certain rules of conduct in business that others have every reason to expect you will follow. You can meet these expectations. (Practice business etiquette)

- Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you. – Carl Sandburg.

Disorganization is a major contributor to stress and one of the reasons we don't achieve our goals. You can avoid the diseases of clutter, poor planning, and disarray. (Get organized)

- Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff that life is made of. – Benjamin Franklin.

Often without thought, we allow time wasters to gobble up chunks of our day. You can prevent these "minute maulers" from doing their damage. (Stop wasting time)

- Know the true value of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every moment of it. – Philip Dormer Stanhope.

Most of us need to find a way to get more out of the hours available to us. It can be done, and you can do it. (Make good use of time)

- Don't serve time; make time serve you. – Willie Sutton.

How much time do you spend standing in line, stalled in traffic, sitting in airplanes, waiting for an appointment or a meeting to begin, being put on hold, or in any one of the hundreds of ways life places you in suspended animation? Even if the time you spend waiting averages only fifteen minutes a day, this could easily consume over two hundred days of your lifetime. You can make better use of this time. (Use waiting time productively)

- A committee of three gets things done if two don't show up. – Herbert V. Prochnow.

You may not run every meeting you attend, but you can be an active participant and thereby contribute significantly to what gets accomplished. (Stand out at meetings)

- The training which makes men happiest in themselves also makes them most serviceable. – John Ruskin.

These days training companies and consultants offer an overwhelming selection of professional development opportunities. You can choose the best ones for you. (Choose the best seminars for you)

- The shy man will not learn: the impatient man should not teach. Ask and learn. Hillel The Elder.

Those who profit the most from seminars plan their approach to the learning opportunity. You, too, can get more out of the seminars you attend. (Get the most out of a seminar)

- There is no future in any job. The future lies in the man who holds the job. – George Crane.

Hanging on to your job following a takeover or the downsizing of your company is a blessing. But the immediate aftermath can be stressful and fraught with uncertainty. Can you do something to improve your morale, productivity, and ability to survive this uneasy period? (Survive a reorganization)

- There is no security on this earth; there is only opportunity. Douglas MacArthur.

Fellow employees are falling like flies in the midst of a corporate downsizing. You love your job and want to make sure you'll keep it. Can you take out an insurance policy for job security? (Increase your job security)

- Experience is not what happens to a man, it's what a man does with what happens to him. Aldous Huxley.

Your world just fell apart. The job you were counting on to last for years is no longer yours. Can you endure? (Survive a [job loss](#))

- Success is a matter of luck. Ask any failure. _ Earl Wilson.

With more people chasing fewer jobs, you need to increase the probability that you'll find a position that will advance your career. Can you shop for a job more wisely? (Conduct a smart job hunt)

- The closest to perfection a person ever becomes is when he fills out a job application form. _ Stanley J. Randall.

When two candidates have similar credentials, the one who is better at selling him or herself usually gets the job. You can convince an interviewer that you are too good to pass up. (Ace an interview)

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