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Demonstrating Excellence In Your Work

In his recent book entitled *It's Called Work for a Reason: Your Success is Your Own Damned Fault*, author Larry Winget reveals on the very first page of chapter one that the average American works at about a 50% level of total output – basically enough to remain within the accepted parameters of the organization's expectations and obligations. However in a tightening economy, it is the employee who consistently demonstrates excellence that will be the most secure. But how does one attain excellence? Let's look at what some prominent career counselors suggest:

- **Build relationships:** Marianne Adoradio, a Silicon Valley recruiter suggests that we as workers should strive to develop solid relationships with co-workers. This would include sharing ideas with colleagues, suggesting possible process improvements to management and avoiding "tearing others down" by way of spreading gossip.
- **Appreciate other's work styles:** Glenn Parker, a team building consultant from Princeton, NJ notes that workers approach their tasks in differing ways: one person may be very detail-oriented while another may be quite observant about a better way to complete a task. The really good team player is someone who can understand and appreciate these differences and work with others whose style is different from their own.
- **Avoid workplace politics:** Accountemps recently polled the chief administrators of America's largest employers and asked them what trait they most appreciated in their workers. The #1 answer was "meets deadlines" but the second most frequent response was "avoids politics," meaning discussions of and about others that are negative, destructive or which work against the team concept.
- **Adapt quickly:** We're probably all familiar with the longterm employee who continually rants about the "new ways of doing things." But in today's world, successful companies are frequently upgrading their technology, adapting to new or emerging markets and even retooling their product mix. Glenn Parker therefore states that workers who demonstrate that they are adaptive, creative and flexible will be noticed and appreciated.
- **Position yourself for success:** Although it may be tough, employees who think in terms of "what's best for my team" rather than "what's best for me" quickly become noticed and appreciated by others, says Steve Kass of Robert Half International.
- **Choose collaboration over confrontation:** Mike Beasley of Career Crossings, a career development coach, suggests that we be constructive rather than "throwing up roadblocks" when confronted with change in the workplace. Even if one has concerns, these can be more effectively aired by coming across as interested but concerned rather than judgmental and angry.
- **Be engaged in your work:** Arguing with your supervisor over every request is not a good strategy but neither is simply "shrugging your shoulders" and agreeing with everything, according to Beasley. Managers like to see an engaged individual and this means both showing enthusiasm for your work but speaking up respectfully and appropriately when you have alternative suggestions.

Every job has its own unique stresses and challenges. Your Employee Assistance Program is fully invested in helping you to not only *succeed* but also *excel* in your work! We are always available to help you cope with change, interact more positively with "difficult" co-workers or overcome personal traits such as anger which can sabotage your success at work. We are here for you!

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