

A brief story of a life

I met a man who was in desperate search for a spark to light his way so he could more confidently walk the righteous and noble path of a life well lived. He found the journey treacherous, laced with self-doubt, and in its darkest passageways lurked denial.

The persistent temptations of the flesh presented themselves in the most devious of ways and at times he felt as though evil had the upper hand. So when confronted with such circumstances, he attended to the cornerstones of his life to assure himself that when called to his final journey he would do so with the peacefulness and tranquility provided to the servants of mankind.

He learned that the path he chose only had room for himself, and within himself resided the light and the lens that would be necessary to succeed. The tricky part was to recognize that the lens could magnify the “good” and the “evil” equally well to those around him. So he made a plan to focus on the good and daily stamp out the evil. Though it was initially the harder option, he realized his character is like silver and only gains purification when tried by fire.

He was aware of his failings, but knew his creator is forgiving and that even the just man falls seven times. He was confronted by the complexity of love; it has no scorecard and cannot exist without its companion, forgiveness. In the end, his freedom to choose was one of his greatest gifts.

Remember, every story has an ending and it begins with you.



Wisdom from my father’s “School of Hard Knocks” . . .

Success: To be grounded in the ideal that to give of oneself for worthy cause, or goal, in a life of service, whatever your chosen field may be, is the ultimate objective.

- **Set and stick to specific goals. Write them down and review daily.**
- **Think for yourself and follow through on your ideas.**
- **Back up your words with action, be a self-starter.**
- **Select and support good leaders, and be willing to serve yourself. Critics and spectators accomplish little.**
- **Do you know the facts?**
- **Have you rehearsed what you plan to say?**
- **Do you vary the tone of your voice, its pitch and speed?**
- **Do you seek constructive criticism about your presentation?**
- **Do you end your remarks by suggesting some positive action?**



Sales tips I learned from my mother . . .

- **Follow the golden rule.** Treat others as you would like to be treated. My mother was quick to remind me what goes around comes around.
- **God gave you two ears and one mouth.** Listen twice as much as you talk. For anyone in business, particularly sales, this can be a difference maker.
- **Do it now, not 10 minutes from now.** My mother understood that the greatest labor saving device available to a child (and adult) is, “I’ll do it later.”
- **Stop complaining and get to work.** Nobody likes a whiner. Most of the great alibis to rationalize failure start with “if.” My mother would call them the “had’um boys” — “If I had’um” and “I should of had’um.”
- **Ignore him and keep moving forward (or working).** Me being one of nine children there were plenty of distractions, kindly provided by a sibling, that kept you from the work at hand, but mom knew the power of focus in anything you were attempting to accomplish.
- **Who do you think you are?** Delivered like the snap of a rubber band to remind you about humility.
- **Be grateful for what you have.** She had the wisdom of knowing the destructive powers of greed and envy.

So
Let’s
Get
to
Work.™

BY
PAT BURKE



Building Blocks of Success

1 Stay optimistic.

Do not let others or events determine your frame of mind. Optimism is contagious and creates a special force.

2 Commitment.

Determine the complete focus of your professional energy. Rarely conduct outside business affairs during the work day. The work day belongs to clients and achieving the corporate mission.

3 Honesty.

We must exercise, and demand in others, complete honesty in all affairs.

4 Professional and personal development.

If you expect the company to grow and create opportunity, you must do the same.

5 Discipline.

Be organized personally and professionally. Always do 100 percent of the job the first time; extra effort is always rewarded.

6 Urgency.

Instill in yourself and others the importance of deadlines. They must be met, no matter what the effort.

7 Always attack.

Take the initiative. Difficult situations are best handled head on.

8 Credibility.

We must practice what we preach.

9 Fairness and professionalism.

Treat all people fairly and with dignity.

10 Look good.

Remember names and dress in a manner that shows respect for the parties you are meeting. Invest in the best clothes you can afford. If you're selling a superior product, you should look like one.

11 Courage.

Fear becomes the wedge of discouragement that keeps many people from reaching their full potential. Don't be scared to be great.

12 Faith.

Believe you will take the right turn of the road.



Be a good networker ...

- **First**, and foremost, approach the world with an attitude and behavior of being a friend, not finding a friend. You must have a sincere interest in others' success, with no expectation of reciprocity.
- **Second**, make a commitment to yourself to excellence in your profession. Strive to be in the top 1 percent in your chosen field, and don't deceive yourself.
- **Finally**, embrace the idea that what you do off the job, determines how far you will go on the job. Get meaningfully involved in your community.



Be an interesting person ...

People are drawn to interesting people. So what does it take to be an interesting person? Become an avid reader about trends in business and current events. Spend time expanding your vocabulary, and constantly hone your speaking and writing skills.

Become a thought leader and find avenues to present your ideas and remain open to others' ideas.

Be a good storyteller with a keen sense of historical perspectives, and an appropriate sense of humor.



Be a good finder in people and for people ...

As you interact with others, be a good and active listener with the ability to ask pointed follow-up questions.

Develop a credible ability to connect parties that have a mutual interest, and when you see something that may be of interest to a contact, send it along.

Select good leaders and be willing to lead yourself.

Don't ever complain and maintain an attitude of gratitude.