

The differences between college and work are many. You are moving from a world that has been highly structured, flexible, focused on development and personally supportive to a world that is more competitive and less structured with higher expectations.

The following nine behaviors have been identified as crucial to being considered a star performer at work.

1. Initiative

- Includes
 - Seek out responsibility above and beyond the expected job description
 - Undertake extra efforts for the benefit of coworkers or the larger group
 - Stick tenaciously to an idea or project and follow it through to successful implementation
 - Willingly assume some personal risk in taking on new responsibilities
- Steps
 - Do your current work well
 - Ask who benefits from your work
 - Stay close to the critical path
 - Determine the probability of success and the cost of failure

2. Knowing Who Knows - Proactively developing dependable pathways to knowledge experts who can help complete critical path tasks, share knowledge and minimize knowledge deficit

- Supporting Factors
 - Knowledge itself
 - Organizational support
 - Technical/physical environment
- Network Nodes
 - Mental models of networking: understand different ideas of how the network is supposed to work
 - Get network in place before you need it
 - Networking etiquette: small courtesies and considerations are critical
 - Do your homework
 - Do a self-study on as much of the general subject area as possible

- Summarize attempts to solve the problem or find elusive information
- Spend time forming the right question
- Link the problem to a discipline/area of interest intriguing the expert
 - Credit lavishly: follow up with a note of thanks & make sure public credit is given for contributions
 - Benefits of newness: new employees trying to break into an established network for the first time are given much consideration
 - Networking is a two way street, help others with their networks

3. Managing Your Whole Life at Work - Develop a portfolio of talents and work experiences so that value to the company increases; know your strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons
 - Know yourself well
 - Know the kind of work you do best and that you want to do
 - Take control of your own career path by developing a plan to connect yourself to the work you enjoy most and to connect that work to the company's critical path
- Adopt a system that helps you:
 - Plan the entire project
 - Schedule your time
 - Keep track of your progress
 - Store and retrieve important information
 - Provide for a backup plan if problems arise

- Communicate your progress and results to important others
- Core self-management skills
 - Find out what the critical path is for the organization and get on it by adding value
 - Choose work where you can leverage yourself, your talents, get into flow, and experience job satisfaction
 - Regularly review your personal productivity and devise ways to increase personal effectiveness and efficiency
 - Borrow shamelessly – techniques and methods for better self-management
 - Don't fear experimentation; try new approaches
 - Make compelling case to management for changing job description and regulations that limit productivity
 - Adopt behaviors that allow minimization of interruptions with separating from the group
 - Work to avoid time-killer crises by planning for problems – building mistake-recovery time into the projects; write up personal damage-control plan
 - Develop procrastination-busting work habits – to-do lists, priority plans, building enjoyable assignments around drudge tasks
- Learn to accept occasional unproductive days, even weeks of slump
- 4. **Getting the Big Picture** - See in a larger context and through the eyes of the critical others
- 5. **Followership** - Be actively engaged in helping the organization succeed while exercising independent, critical judgment of goals, tasks, and methods; work cooperatively even through differences
- 6. **Small-L Leadership in a Big-L World** - Employs expertise and influence to convince a group of people to come together and accomplish a task; help create vision, create trust
- 7. **Teamwork** - Taking joint "ownership" of goal setting, activities, and accomplishments; help build team, deal with conflict, and solve problems
- 8. **Organizational Savvy** - Navigate competing interests to promote cooperation, address conflicts, and get things done; communicate with individuals and groups, avoid conflicts and make allies out of enemies
- 9. **Show-and-Tell** - Selecting information to pass along, developing effective format for persuading a specific audience; selecting the right message