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Extraordinary Employee Habits

Employers spend millions of dollars every year looking for ways to boost productivity, do things better or find new techniques to compete in the market. It is a constant battle for organizations to sustain sales growth, profitability, cost containment and market share.

Employers need extraordinary employees. In his book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins has it right focusing first on who to hire, then what to accomplish in the popular phrase “Getting the right people on the bus.” Employers who focus on hiring individuals and cultivating cultures that contain the following extraordinary employee habits will see outstanding business results. Individuals who develop these habits will be top producers in the field and will grow personally and within the organization:

Works for Results, Not Time

We all know individuals whose focus at work is putting in their time. They clock in from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily; make sure they take every break, watch the clock until closing time, clock out and go home. This becomes their routine, every day punching the clock, putting in their time for pay.

Extraordinary employees don’t work for time; they work to add value to the organization. They understand the job expectations and continually make an impact striving to not only meet expectations, but to exceed them. These employees work to make a difference for their employer and their customers.

Makes Things Happen

Let’s face it, the work place like life, is full of surprises and challenges. Some employees respond to challenges, acting as victims or blaming others. They get frustrated and let someone else fix things. In many instances they go into auto pilot; reacting emotionally-- living in a way that they let things happen to them, then enjoy complaining and whining about it. Some are quick to judge, are critical, and negative about changes in their environment.

Extraordinary employees respond to work place challenges, surprises, and change, by choosing a positive, productive

reaction. They consciously take control over what happens by choosing their reaction. They cause positive things to happen, rather than be an effect of things going on around them. They are happy, creative, and responsible, always focusing on the overall best outcome for the company and their team members. They make good things happen!

Knows the Score

Have you ever played a sporting event like basketball or golf when you did not keep score? If you did, you discovered you did not play as hard or perform as well.

Some employees drift through their job never really knowing how well they are doing. In fact, they may even be upset their supervisor is not doing a good enough job at telling them how they are doing. Any job performance tracking that takes place is imposed by the company or their supervisor.

Extraordinary employees measure their job performance knowing how they impact the organization, other team members, and their customers. They define key performance indicators for their job, track performance, and set goals and action plans to make improvements. They care about how well the company is performing and strive to do everything they can to improve the business. These employees understand the “big picture” of what really matters in an organization, learn their part in this effort, and move forward making it happen. Annually, quarterly, and monthly these employees set objectives that are aligned to support business strategy, their department and their immediate key functions. These employees know the score for the business, their department and for themselves.

Focused, Organized, and Efficient

Do you know employees who are scattered, disorganized, and seem to waste a lot of time doing trivial things? Some employees operate reactively, waiting for a new fire to dictate their next priority or work task. Others spend a great deal of time doing personal things on the job like texting, instant messaging, banking, email, Facebook, etc...

Extraordinary employees are skilled at identifying top priorities. They are skilled at moving through the details of their job, identifying critical information and organizing their work flow into efficient systems. They crank out work using the best methods while striving for new improvements. They keep their work-time and personal life separate, staying focused at work, not wasting time. Their work is organized in a way that keeps them proactively focused and efficient, not fire fighters.

Shows up Big – Is Engaged and Motivated

Some employees are motivated as long as a supervisor is present; there is a new incentive carrot, a threat of punishment, or something in it for them.

Extraordinary employees are self-motivated without external influence. They love their job, care about the company's success, are committed, and go the extra mile because they really care. It's not just what they want, it's who they are. These employees don't just go through the motions; they show up big, actively making a difference with passion and enthusiasm. They volunteer for assignments, offer suggestions, develop new improvements, perform extra tasks without being asked, and always give 110% effort.

Selfless Team Player & Service Oriented

Do employees at your office focus on making themselves look good or only do things that have something in it for them? Do they help out other team members or departments?

Extraordinary employees are not just in it for themselves; they care about the company, their team, team members, and their customers. These employees can take a lead or follower role within a team, as appropriate for the overall success of the group. They define success as a "we" rather than "me" issue. Working as a team player, they inspire and promote shared values to focus the team in the same direction. They keep others informed of relevant information, as needed, cooperate well with other departments, and assist for the best outcome for the group.

Besides being a team player, extraordinary employees know their customers, internally and external. They are relentless in making sure they understand what's important to them and meet or exceed expectations. They make realistic commitments and ensure they are met. They return calls and emails in a timely manner, always following through doing what is right for their customers and the team.

Stays Knowledgeable and Trained

Ordinary employees look for the company or supervisor to train them in their job. They expect the organization to continually keep them up-to-date on their skills and job knowledge.

Exceptional employees dive in asking questions, seeking training and develop the skills and knowledge needed for the job, on their own. These employees take ownership for keeping their knowledge, skills, and abilities state-of-the-art. They read articles related to their job, take courses to improve their skills, ask for increased work experience, and actively increase their value and skills for the organization.

Value-Driven

Some employees gauge their behavior and actions based on what they can get away with, following the minimum requirements dictated to them from handbooks, department rules, and supervisors. They base their behavior on what they see others doing or getting away with.

Extraordinary employees have personal values that guide how they work, interact with others, and govern their overall behavior. They too learn and follow company requirements, but they typically live and act with higher standards than are required. They work and behave in accordance to values, like giving more than a fair day's effort, being honest, working with integrity, being kind to others, and being dependable. They learn the company values as well and incorporate them into how they behave on the job.

Solves Problems and Continually Improvements

Extraordinary employees identify and resolve problems creatively on an ongoing basis. They continually strive to make things better and better, raising the bar for success. These employees don't settle for average or accept things as they are. You'll never hear them say, "If it's not broken, don't fix it". Instead, you may hear them say, "I know we can do better, let's think about other ways to make improvements."

Choosing to be an extraordinary employee is within the reach of everyone. It is more about choosing your attitude, and how you react to life than it is about skills and abilities. Compare your attitudes against each of the topics discussed in this article. Resolve today to live and act as an extraordinary employee. Define specific objectives, plans, and actions needed to improve how you show up at work and in life in general. In today's market, organizations select and keep only their top performing employees. Being extraordinary in these key areas will not only make you one of the elite, but will help your organization grow and thrive.

*By Ken Spencer, President & Sr. Consultant
HR Service, Inc., (801)685-8400, Ken@HRServiceInc.com.*

Need Assistance?

Contact HR Service, Inc. for assistance in creating extraordinary employees, employee selection, assessment tools, setting performance expectations, training, and building an environment of success.

*Call: (801) 685-8400 or visit us online at:
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