

90% of the Fortune 500 CEOs play golf. Why do you think they do? Learn how they use golf to their advantage. Read more...

The Promotion Factor: Seven Strategies to Promote Yourself and Your Business by Playing Golf

by Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

Effective business promotion is more powerful than advertising. Using golf is one the best ways to increase your business and personal success. Playing golf is the foundation for networking and recruiting. Think about the relaxed atmosphere a golf course provides. It is surely not an office environment where you have to watch what you say and how you behave. Many business opportunities have been realized on the golf course. In addition, many job offers have been negotiated there as well. Here are seven strategies that will help you network and recruit for your business and personal success:

“It’s not who you know, it’s who knows you.”

- Observe the true character of the person while playing golf. They are more relaxed and open in this environment than at the office.
- Learn what challenges their businesses face and think how you can help solve their problems. Caution: don’t offer your solutions on the golf course. Wait until after the round.
- Ask open-ended questions. Remember your best approach in asking is: who, what, where, when, and how questions. It shows that you are interested in them.
- Make them be interested in what you do. When you are asked, “What do you do?” don’t give them your title or what products/services or industry you represent. Give them a description of the benefits you offer. For example: “I help small business owners, on a limited budget, create more revenue.”

“Where can I find good, dedicated and hardworking people?”

Most businessmen and women are always on the lookout for talented people to help them in their businesses. Why couldn’t it be you? You can tell many

things about a person's character by playing golf with them. You can tell the following:

- Honesty/integrity...Do they cheat? Do they play by the rules? Do they make excuses for not playing well?
- Thoughtfulness/consideration...Do they put their name first on the scorecard? (a sign of "me first" attitude) Do they offer to buy the first round from the beverage cart? Do they remember their playing partner's names?
- Social/business political etiquette...Do they offer to drive the golf car? Do they help look for a lost ball? Do they offer to rake the bunkers for others? Do they repair ball marks on the green? Do they include everyone in the conversation?

Being aware and applying these seven strategies will definitely improve your chances of success in your business and personal life. See you on the golf course.

Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster is the president of the Education & Learning Institute, a research, seminar and publishing company. He helps organizations and individuals think differently to ensure their success. He is also a professional speaker and author of E-books. *The Top 40 Things Considerate Golfers Do*, *Fairways to Heaven-Lessons for Life from the Golf Course*, and *I Didn't Know That-The Complete Golf Reference Book for the New Golfer* are three of them.

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How one behaves on the golf course is a preview of the real person behind the golf ball. There are five ways golf can build character in anyone. Read more...

Golf “Fore” Success

Five Ways Golf Can Make a Positive Difference in Your Personal and Professional Life

by Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

Golf has a crazy way of telling who we truly are as a person. Many people judge us by the way we play the game. Everyone has a favorite quote they live by, whether in business or in their personal lives. Here are five humorous golf quotes that will get you thinking about what is really important in life as seen through the game of golf:

“Golf is the most fun you can have without taking your clothes off.”

Chi Chi Rodriguez

Always have something to look forward to each day. It may be something you ordered by mail and are anxiously awaiting its arrival or just relaxing on a quiet Friday night cooking for yourself with some soft music. Treat yourself often. Golf has a way of taking your mind away from the daily grind.

“Golf is a game in which you yell ‘Fore’, shoot six, and write down five.”

Paul Harvey

Never cheat yourself out of anything. If you practice that, you will be less likely to cheat anybody or at anything. Remember, there is always an extra pair of eyes watching what we do and how we do it, especially in organizations.

“Golf is a hard game to figure. One day you’ll go out and slice it and shank it, hit it in all the traps and miss every green. The next day you go out and for no reason at all you really stink.”

Bob Hope

Don't take life so seriously. Get out of your own self's way and let things happen. There is a reason why things happen to us...just listen for the answer and don't over analyze it. Our success is determined by which path we take in life-follow the one that has a heart.

“If you break 100, watch your golf. If you break 80, watch your business.”

Joey Adams

Be sure to put balance in all aspects of your life. We realistically cannot be the best at everything. Concentrate on your strengths, not your weaknesses. Most successful men and women do just that. They delegate or hire their weak areas to others. It is the same for successful organizations-they concentrate on their strengths, not their weaknesses.

“If you think it's hard to meet new people, pick up the wrong ball.”

Blake Lochrie

Show genuine interest in everyone you meet. Ask them about themselves instead of trying to impress them with your credentials. Remember, the top questions to ask anyone that will make a positive impression are: who, what, when, where, how, and why.

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What managers know that we don't know, but would like to know. Five essential factors future managers must be aware of for business success. Read more...

So, You Want to be in Management? Five Essential Factors that Will Determine Your Chances

by Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

The following information is based upon over 500 interviews with senior executives with whom I conducted over the past four years. These senior executives represent a variety of industries and organizations. It is interesting to note the similarities of their responses. The research concentrated on five areas :

1. How they gained their experience and knowledge to become a senior executive.
2. What are their attitudes and opinions concerning the youth of today?
3. What are they most concerned about in running an organization in today's society?
4. What are their hobbies and interests outside of work?
5. What do they read to keep current?

How they gained their experience and knowledge:

- For all respondents, education was the number one priority. All had an undergraduate degree and approximately 60% had a graduate degree. They all believed that without a college education, their chances for advancement to senior management were almost unattainable.
- Having mentors throughout their career was very important to these men and women. They learned how to promote themselves through the guidance of a mentor. I highly recommend that you read Steven Scott's book, *Mentored By A Millionaire*.
- Networking was the key for much of their success within and outside of their industry. When they joined professional associations, they joined with the goal of becoming an officer in the organization for better exposure and networking. Networking consistently served as a catalyst for thinking creatively to capitalize on opportunities.

- They all are students of human behavior. They are keen observers of their employees' and managers' actions. They look for team-oriented individuals who treat others with respect and dignity. Attitude is the key ingredient for being recognized by this group of executives. They are constantly on the look out for talent within and outside of their organizations.
- The majority of these senior executives moved around their organizations every two to three years. A lot of them took lateral transfers in order to understand all facets of the organization.
- It was evident that these senior executives all focused on results. They have no patience for excuses or reasons why something cannot be done.
- All of them are strong advocates of life-long learning. They are voracious readers. They read about many different subjects. Their readings spur creativity which they put into action. They are constantly learning about how others run their organizations and how they can apply those strategies to their organizations.

What senior executives are most concerned with:

- Retention of valued employees
- Turnover
- Ethical behavior
- Customer service and satisfaction
- Global competition
- Employee healthcare
- Lack of communication from all levels of the organization
- Lack of employee loyalty and company loyalty to employees
- Finding good people
- Satisfying stockholders while balancing cost, quality, service and employee morale
- Lawsuits/discrimination charges
- Lack of civility towards one another and customers
- Integrating a diverse workforce

What senior executives think about today's youth:

This question was a mix of attitudes and opinions. It appears that responses were influenced by type of industry and tenure of the senior executives. Here is what they said:

- Bright, ambitious, motivated, opinionated, intelligent and confident
- Have an entrepreneurial mindset
- Ability to multitask
- Need a better work ethic...absenteeism, drugs
- What can the company do for me attitude
- Expectations are too high...expect promotions without paying the dues
- Lack of commitment to the organization
- Have a sense of entitlement
- Lack of civility and professional bearing
- Lack of respect for others
- Too much reliance on technology and not enough people skills

Publications senior executives read most:

- Trade publications specifically written about their particular industry
- *Harvard Business Review*
- *Wall Street Journal*
- *Fortune*
- *Economist*
- *Investors Business Daily*
- Books on tape
- *Fast Company*
- *Executive Books Summary*
- *Forbes*
- *Business Week*

Hobbies/Interests of senior executives:

- Golf
- Family
- Reading
- Traveling

- Volunteering
- Working out
- Walking/running
- Cooking
- Tennis
- Fishing
- Bicycling

If your career plan is to ascend to a senior management position, write your own personal action plan based upon how the senior executives in your organization gained their experiences. In addition, think about how you can help them with their major concerns in leading an organization. Read what they read in order to be conversant with them. Look at their hobbies and interests and determine if you have mutual interest with them. If you do, use it to network and display your similar interest through conversation. Lastly, form a positive response for their perception of the youth of today. Suggest ways that they can harness the energy of the youth and put it to a positive force within an organization.

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Do you want a paycheck or a passion? Managers and executives are concerned about the work ethics of new employees. There are ten qualities hiring managers seek in candidates today. Read more...

Do You Want a Paycheck or a Passion? 10 Qualities Managers are Looking for in Hiring You

By Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

Based upon my research of over 300 managers in the last two years, I have found what qualities are most important to hiring managers.

You will be in a more competitive advantage if you do a self-assessment to determine if you possess these qualities. If you lack some of these qualities, find a career coach and turn your liability into an asset for any organization.

The following are the top ten qualities hiring managers seek. They are not in any particular order.

- **Personality**

Making people feel comfortable when you meet them goes a long way in establishing a business and personal relationship. A smile and a warm greeting in any situation pays big dividends. Always ask about the other person. It makes them feel that you sincerely care about them.

- **Verbal and Written Communication**

Being concise but specific in your communication is very important to anyone in this day of high tech communication. Many times the human factor of thoughtfulness and consideration is abandoned in the technology. A key formula in both written and verbal communication is: Tell'em What You Are Going To Tell'em, Tell'em, and Tell'em What You Told 'Em.

- **Team Player**

Being a team player simply means that one not only does his or her job, but also is honestly willing to support their peers. If another department or group is in need of help, volunteer yourself.

Remember, top management really knows who is a team player and who is not. Just keep in mind that there is always an extra set of eyes watching you.

- **Listening Skills**

Have you ever noticed that when you go to a fast food place and you tell them that your order is to go and they ask you, “Is this to go”? How does that make you feel? Right, they are not listening. Listen thoroughly before you speak. That means listen to what’s not being said. Then ask open-ended questions, who, what, when, where, why and how to show the other person that you really are listening and that you do care about them.

- **Attitude**

We can train people on how to do a job, but we can’t train attitude. Managers look for a positive and sincere attitude when thinking about promoting someone. Always have something positive to say about your company, department and peers. If you don’t have something positive to say about them, don’t say anything. If asked, be truthful with diplomacy. Remember, attitude is everything.

- **Enthusiasm**

Enthusiastic people seem to radiate confidence and leadership qualities. Think about what you are most enthusiastic about at work and share your enthusiasm with others. It is catching.

- **Goal Setting**

One of the many traits top executive men and women possess is goal setting. They write their goals and read them every day. They make their goals specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and they put a timeline on each one. Be prepared when one day your boss will ask you what are your goals? Write them down and carry them with you daily. Share your goals with a trusted friend or manager. During your performance review, be prepared when your boss asks you what your goals are.

- **A Sense of Humor**

Adding harmless humor to the workplace takes a lot of stress away from the pressures of our daily activities. Life is too short to take seriously. Take your job seriously but not yourself by using your sense of humor.

- **Professional Appearance**

The image we project will determine how others judge us. From our economic heritage to our economic status, our educational heritage to our educational status, our level of sophistication to our income levels we are judged by our appearance. Observe how your senior management projects their image. Take some clues and do the same.

- **Life-Long Learning**

Another common trait top executive men and women share is their quest for knowledge about a variety of subjects. They read about many things that cause them to be creative and knowledgeable. Their attitude is that once they stop learning how to become better at what they do as a person or as a professional, they might as well retire. Show your managers that you are willing and excited about learning. Attend your company's training sessions, establish an executive book club in your department and come up with creative ideas to increase the success of your department and company.

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Thinking about remarrying? Consider these reasons why others have chosen not to.

One out of two marriages ends in divorce. 60% of second marriages fail. 66% of marriages and living together situations end in break up according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Read more...

The “EX” Factor: Why Men and Women Over 50 Don’t Remarry

by Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

In focus groups conducted by this author with men and women over 50 and divorced, five major reasons why they don’t want to remarry surfaced. Finances are the prevalent concern of both groups.

Financial

- Debt responsibility of a new partner
- Alimony and child support payments
- Family inheritance issues
- Financial responsibility for stepchildren
- Financial responsibility for elderly parents

Health

- Deteriorating health of partner
- Caregiver responsibilities
- Lack of healthcare coverage
- Health issues of the extended family
- Differences in beliefs of medical treatment-homeopathic versus prescription medicines

Children

- Strained relationships with partner’s children
- Holiday sharing
- Gift giving
- Wills, trusts, and inheritance
- Visitation and caring for children and grandchildren

Independence

- Loss of freedom
- Set in their ways
- Lifestyle changes
- Lack of common interests
- Co-mingling of household goods and possessions

Social

- Family acceptance
- Challenges of meeting potential partners
- Different religious affiliations
- Acceptance of friends
- Differences in social etiquette

Currently, R.J. is co-authoring *He Feels, She Feels-Dating, Relationships and Remarrying After 50*. He invites you to complete their survey on his website, (www.rjlancaster.com) to further their research. As a thank you, R.J. will send you an E-book of your choice as listed on his website. E-mail R.J. with your preference upon completion of the survey.

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Today, more than ever before, companies are staffing their organizations with Chief Learning Officers. One of their major responsibilities is the recruitment and retention of talented employees.

So, what does it take to be recognized by a Chief Learning Officer? How about being a nice person? Read more...

Are You a Nice Person? What Companies are Looking for in Recruiting and Retaining Great People

by Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

Hal Rosenbluth, author of *The Customer Comes Second*, states; “In our selection process, kindness, caring, compassion, and unselfishness carry more weight than years on the job, an impressive salary history, and stacks of degrees.”

Does your company hire these types? Are you one of them? Take the following quiz to see if you are:

	Agree	Disagree
1. While driving, I signal my intentions	___	___
2. I slow down to allow traffic in from on-ramps and other lanes	___	___
3. I place my shopping cart to the side of the aisle so others can pass	___	___
4. I look behind me at the check-out lane to allow the person with very few items to go ahead of me	___	___
5. I return the shopping cart to the return area	___	___
6. I place the plastic separator wand behind my groceries on the conveyer belt so the person behind me can start placing their groceries on the belt	___	___
7. When going to a restaurant, I shut off my cell phone	___	___
8. I recognize the bus personnel by thanking them for their assistance	___	___

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 9. I make sure I have enough money on me to cover my portion of the bill | ___ | ___ |
| 10. At the office, I answer my phone with enthusiasm in my voice | ___ | ___ |
| 11. I never use the speakerphone unless I ask the caller's permission | ___ | ___ |
| 12. At the golf course, I call to determine if they have a dress code | ___ | ___ |
| 13. When flying, I respect the regulation of the amount and size of carry-ons | ___ | ___ |
| 14. I look behind me before reclining my seat in the airplane | ___ | ___ |
| 15. I am respectful of the arm rest space on the airplane | ___ | ___ |

If you answered 12 out of 15 “Agree”, you are what companies are seeking.

If you answered 7-11 out of 15 “Agree”, you have potential. You might consider hiring an executive coach to teach you how to be nicer.

If you answered less than 7 “Agree”, don't work with people. Don't get into management and screw up another company.

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Grantland Rice wrote, “Golf is twenty percent mechanics and technique. The other eighty percent is philosophy, humor, tragedy, romance, melodrama, companionship, camaraderie, cussedness and conversation.”

Golf professionals know this. They also know what keeps them consistent in their game. Want to know how they do it? Read more...

Wanna Play More Consistent Golf? Learn and Apply 10 Proven Techniques Golf Professionals use.

by Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

For the past seven years I have been researching what are the most important things great golfers do when playing their best golf. Being an instructor at the San Diego Golf Academy, I was exposed to many golfers, both amateur and professional. My research encompasses over 300 golfers, professionals and amateurs who have handicaps from 2 to +3.

Some commonalities they all share are:

- Started playing golf in their teens
- Play 15-20 tournaments a year
- Average best round was 65
- Practice every part of their game consistently
- Never satisfied with their game

Here is what they do to keep consistent:

1. They know how far they hit each club in their bag. In addition, they know instinctively how to hit different shots for different distances. In other words, how to hit a club at 25%, 50%, 75% and at full power.
2. They practice at least four times a week with a specific agenda. They practice all types of shots that they may encounter on the golf course.
3. They have mental fortitude. They don't let a bad shot or a bad round ruin their focus and determination. They have consistent positive expectations.
4. They all practice course management. Knowing what club to hit in different situations is key to them. They might even walk the course

- backwards before their round to determine where the “bail-out” areas are.
5. They all focus on one shot at a time. They don't think about the last shot or the next. They only focus on the shot they are going to hit at that moment.
 6. They all have a consistent light grip on the club throughout their swing combined with a balanced tempo.
 7. They visualize their shot before making a stroke. They see the ball flight and the trajectory they desire. It is almost like they subconsciously control the ball flight.
 8. They don't think “mechanics” when they are playing their best. They leave the “mechanics” of their game on the practice facility. They become “feel” players on the course.
 9. They all work on their short game consistently. They concentrate on 120 yards and in to the green.
 10. They all put in a lot of time practicing putting. They spend hours putting from different distances and angles.

There are many other factors these great golfers do when they are playing their best. However, from my research, these were the top 10.

So, go out and practice like the pros and watch your game improve like you never thought it would. Keep your head down!

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Benjamin Jewett stated, “To teach a man how he may learn to grow independently, and for himself, is perhaps the greatest service that one person can do for another.”

Having taught in the business program at the university level as an adjunct faculty member for over 20 years, I have come to the conclusion that we really don't prepare our students for the reality of business. It is all about case studies, simulations, problem-based learning and “the flavor of the academic month”-distance learning. I propose we go back to the basics to educate and facilitate real-life learning. Exposing business students to real-life learning enables them to become a true asset to any organization. Through my research, I have found 10 factors that differentiate a “cookie-cutter” business grad from a “street-smart” rising star for any organization.

Read more...

The Top 10 Things They Don't Teach You In Business School

by Ryan James (R.J.) Lancaster

Here are 10 subjects that academia should be teaching their students in business school:

1. Generate revenue for your company

What academia doesn't teach you is that the real purpose organizations hire you is to generate revenue. Pure and simple. How do you do that? Look around and ask yourself, how can I increase productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and profitability in my area of responsibility? If you work in a non-profit arena, you ask yourself the same question. It is not “profit” in your case, it is “surplus funds.” In reality, there is no such thing as “non-profit.” You have to have money to open the doors and turn on the lights, don't you?

Remember, there is a rule of thumb when you are hired. It is the 2.5 times rule. This means you will have to generate 2.5 times your salary (including benefits) in order for your employer to break even on you. How do you do that? Generate revenue!

2. Move every two to three years

When you think about who has been “reduced in force” in the last 10 years, it appears that it has been individuals who have been in their same job description for at least 10-15 years. Moving every two to three years gives you a competitive edge in any organization even if it means taking a “lateral” position or even a “demotion.” Who will be more valuable to an organization, a person in the same job for 10+ years, or the individual who has worked in a variety of positions within the organization? If you were the CEO, who would you retain when it comes to “downsizing?”.

3. Learn and apply business and social etiquette

Have you noticed how many people lack civility today? The lack of thoughtfulness and consideration is rampant not only in society but also in organizations. Remember, there is an extra set of eyes watching you in every thing you do. Senior executives looking for a “rising star” oftentimes observe behaviors of potential individuals who they most likely would consider for advancement. They observe behaviors at social events, business meetings, how you treat peers and employees, how you correspond in speaking and writing, and most importantly, they listen to what others have to say about you. It is highly recommended that you read up on business and social etiquette. I would love to see a business school that offers a course in business and social etiquette. God forbid that organizations would offer that instead of another boring, unproductive meeting!

4. Professional bearing

It may not be fair, but people judge us on what we wear no matter what the current craze is. Observe the professional grooming habits of the senior executives in your organization. Do you fit in with them? According to professional bearing consultant, William Throulby, there are 10 factors people judge us by what we are wearing:

- Your economic level
- Your educational level
- Your trustworthiness
- Your social position
- Your level of sophistication

- Your economic heritage
- Your social heritage
- Your educational heritage
- Your success
- Your moral character

Many potential “rising stars” are hiring career coaches to help them further their careers and professional bearing.

5. Be nice to everyone

Hal Rosenbluth in his book, *The Customer Comes Second*, states that his main criteria for hiring is seeking “nice people.” He also states that you just cannot decide on Thursday to be nice. It is very difficult and almost impossible to teach people to be nice. Nice people are born and raised with that trait. They are natural when it comes to being nice. Practice observing who you think would qualify as a nice person. What do they do that you don’t do for others? Consider this, would you hire a person who never uses their signals to change lanes? ... a person who does not look behind them in a grocery store line to see if the other person has a lot fewer items? ... a person who doesn’t hold a door open for you? ... or a person who doesn’t clean up after themselves in business and social situations? Next time you are in a restroom, observe how many people wipe down the basin counter-top after washing their hands. You get the message?

6. Get your personal finances in order

I am sure you have heard the comment, “You’ll never get rich by working for someone else.” Have you ever wondered why the rich get richer and the poor get poorer and the middle class struggles to survive? I have also. What I have observed is that the subject of money is taught at home and not in schools. Academia focuses on academic achievement and professional skills, but they don’t focus on personal finance skills. Did your parents teach you how to accumulate wealth? Mine neither. So, how do we do it? I am a big fan of Robert Kiyosaki, the author of *Rich Dad, Poor Dad*. Go out and buy all of his books. You will be inspired to get your personal finances growing for you. I have heard that some schools are offering his practical series of money matters in their curriculum. I would highly encourage all of academia

to implement his program in their curriculum. In academia we teach students how to crunch numbers, but do we teach them to crunch their own?

7. Know when it is time for you to go

Have you ever stayed in a job too long that you didn't like? Most of us have. We never admitted to ourselves that the day would come when someone else would tell us to leave. You're fired! If you have the following thoughts and concerns, maybe you should be looking to do something different:

- The job isn't fun any more
- I don't know what else to do
- My manager is a zero
- I have been passed over for promotion several times
- I work with the same boring people at the same boring company
- I am barely making ends meet
- I really don't care anymore
- I have been warned and written up but it's no big deal

If you have experienced at least four out of these eight "symptoms", I would suggest it is your time to go. What do you do next? You might seriously consider contacting a career counselor. I recommend a lot of people to American Career Executives. 1-800-838-5119 www.amcareer.com

8. Use organizational politics to your advantage

Organizational politics: Just saying this phrase draws rolling eyes and sounds of exasperation. But office politics are necessary for corporate success. Politics in the workplace has come to mean backstabbing, gossip, complaining, and turf battles between competing departments. But it can also mean team building, morale boosting and consensus building. Here are 10 things that will help you "play the game".

- Know your industry so you can discuss it intelligently with anyone
- Bring solutions to problems
- Don't whine or complain
- Be loyal to your boss even if you don't like him/her
- Treat everyone with respect...always
- Keep your boss updated on your projects

- Do not gossip, ever.
- Send appreciation notes often.
- Stay away from discussing controversial topics...focus on topics that contribute to the organization's mission.
- Find out the hobbies and interests of top managers and executives and learn them. If they all play golf, go out and learn to play.

Remember, it is not who you know, it is who knows you. There are numerous articles and books on political etiquette. You should read all of them. Consider coaching your team in corporate politics to support your organization's mission, enhance team building and improve morale.

9. Find a mentor

Every person I've ever known or read about who has achieved his or her dreams has had at least one mentor. Henry Ford credited his former boss, Thomas Edison. Francis Ford Coppola mentored George Lucas and Sid Shineberg mentored Steven Speilberg.

Mentors will not only enable you to achieve extraordinary success, they will help you achieve it far more quickly than all the networking you could possibly do. Here are 10 tips that just might help you in finding a mentor:

- Check to see if your company offers a mentoring program. If not, check your alma mater or other professional organizations to which you belong.
- Choose a mentor you respect. You can choose someone in your company or outside your company. You may have both.
- Decide why you need a mentor. What skills would you like to develop with your mentor's assistance?
- Don't choose your manager. It's better to have someone with whom you can talk freely about your career and workplace challenges.
- Discuss with your mentor your expectations as well as theirs.
- Choose a mentor who has succeeded in their area of expertise.
- Choose a mentor who has legitimate credentials.
- Make sure that this mentor is known for their integrity.
- Choose mentors that are living examples of what you want to achieve.

- Seek a mentor who is a “nice person”...possesses emotional intelligence, a sense of humor, and a desire to help you. Don’t choose a mentor who is too controlling, judgmental, or a “know-it-all.”

I would highly recommend that you read *Mentored By A Millionaire – Master Strategies Of Super Achievers* by Steven K. Scott.

10. Find your purpose and passion

In 1986 my life came to a standstill. My corporate job was terminated, the third one in 12 years. I was going through a divorce. My credit cards were maxed-out. I felt depressed beyond anything I have ever experienced. I eventually declared bankruptcy. I didn’t know what to do next. For the next four years I lived like a hermit. Many times I couldn’t pay my rent, didn’t have enough money to buy food, worked part time for less than sustainable wages. I would sit around the pool at my apartment and dream. “What did God put me on this earth to do?” was the daily mantra I would pursue.

The answer came from some introspective exercises I did for almost six months. I am going to share them with you in hopes that you will find your purpose and passion in life like I have done. I found that I am a edu-tainer. It is my life’s passion. Here is how I found my passion:

- Think what you were like behaviorally between the ages of seven and fourteen. If I interviewed your parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc, how would they describe you, behaviorally at that time? What did you do that was natural? It will be a clue for what you should be doing.
- List all of your strengths and weaknesses in two separate columns. Share the list with your closest friends and have them add to it. Ask them to be very honest.
- Beginning with your very first job as a youngster, make three columns on a piece of paper. Under column one, list all of the jobs you have had in your life including the present one. In column two list what you liked most about each. In column three, list all the things you didn’t like about each one. A picture of what your passions is should be surfacing.

- Finally, write a job description with no title. Be very specific. Will you work from home, in an office, on the road? Will you have employees? What hours and days of the week will you work? How will you dress? What type of projects will you work on? Describe your ideal day.

If only academia would provide these 10 topics in their curriculum, all organizations would benefit by having a greater workforce that would be committed to their mission.

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