

How to Spot Slothfulness



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Diligence is defined as **“investing my time and energy to complete each task assigned to me”**. Success is as much about working *hard* as it is with working smart. The danger of over-focusing on working smart is the over-reliance on “connections” as the basis for success. While it is true that having the right network of relationships will help you to close the business deal, it is the character quality of diligence that will help you build a sustainable reputation of maintaining and growing that business deal.

It is easy to tell whether if someone is not diligent i.e. slothful - here are three telling symptoms :

Symptom 1 : The Complaining Mouth

When the tongue says, “I cannot” – it reveals a “I will not” in the heart. The benefit of complaining is this : it gives a false sense of accomplishment because the one complaining is highlighting the problem and then it is up to someone else to take up the plight! I call this the “plight and flight” strategy. The diligent person accepts each assigned task as an opportunity to demonstrate the commitment to completion and spends every ounce of his energy towards completion rather than complaining. Be prepared to match what you say with a commitment to be part of the solution. Then you will be viewed as a diligent team player rather than a complaining back-bencher.

Symptom 2 : The Fear of Peers

What is the purpose of turning up for work? To make friends? It may come as a surprise to you that your job in the company is not to make friends but to make your boss look good! This may sound strange but there are those who fear to work too hard for fear of being seen as the boss’ favorite! Re-examine your fundamental purpose of working. Who is paying your salary? Who has the authority to determine your career progression? Certainly not your peers! Be bold to do what is needful and keep the company’s reputation and good name in front of you all the time (instead of what your friends will think about you). In any case, most are followers and it takes a leader to be willing to stick out like a “sore thumb” among his or her peers. Be diligent to protect the reputation of your authorities and work towards their goals. Otherwise, you will be constraint by the wishes of the majority and fail to soar as a leader.

Symptom 3 : The Energy Zapper!

A diligent person invests **energy** to complete each assigned task. Besides complaining, negative energy is also generated when there are attitudes of self-entitlement, blame, finger-pointing, work avoidance, and “playing politics”. Everybody is concerned about who gets the credit and who will do the work but nobody steps up to do it! A diligent person focuses on the completion of the work rather than on who gets the credit. Often you may end up taking up a responsibility beyond the normal scope but hey, isn’t this what growth is all about? Beware of being an energy-zapper; instead be seen as someone who is an **energy-giver!**

Diligence is the quality of doing what needs to be done especially when the boss is not around! The key to diligence is not in the beginning of a task but in its completion. Check yourself on a regular basis – Do I regularly complain about others, about the boss and about the task?

Diligence begins with keeping our mouth shut and directing the energy instead to keeping our hands busy.

Think about it.

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