

5 Hidden Habits Holding You Back



Love Your Working Life



Increasing Your Personal Power @Work

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You know you are in the right profession, and you've mastered key expertise. You put in the overtime and are completely committed to the work. So, your career should flourish, right?

Moving forward in today's complex organizations takes more than dedication and expertise. It takes strong emotional skills for your performance to have a notable impact at work.

Recent studies have shown that emotional skill supports strong interpersonal relationships and wellness at work. Because of this, professionals with high emotional intelligence (EI) outperform those with lower EI, both at work and in life.

If this is news to you, you are not alone.

Expertise and commitment are not the only tools you need to own your impact at work. Using emotional skill to build confidence, communication & interpersonal skills, decision making capacity and stress tolerance increases your impact.

You have the power to own your impact at work. This is how hidden habits can hold you back.

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Constant Negative Self-Talk

Everyone has bad days and makes mistakes, it's what you do with them that counts. Re-living them (or living in fear of them) consumes your time, energy and impact. Learning from mistakes offers so much more.

You can't hate yourself confident.

Example:

Terry and Cho work in similar, demanding positions at the same organization. Terry was publicly called out in a team meeting for not having key documents prepared for a deadline that kept changing. Terry had no idea the deadline had moved up and was devastated to miss this crucial milestone; blushing and apologizing in a flustered way, Terry hated himself and wanted to disappear (Terry's manager wanted that too).

Cho also missed a key deadline because it kept jumping around, but when it was publicly mentioned in their team meeting Cho chose to use considerable skill in managing the emotions that came up, and could better help the team understand everything would be done to get the key documents completed ASAP. Cho went on to say that with a fast moving project like this one they needed to look at how deadlines were set and communicated, to ensure no one else on their team would be impacted by changing client demands. Cho's manager agreed.

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Waiting for the “Perfect” Moment to Speak

Ever wonder why some people seem to get everything they want during a meeting and others don't? The key is to use your voice strategically.

It's not about “likeability”. It's about being visible, relevant and assertive, all of which makes you more likely to be listened to, and understood.

Example:

Robyn and Sandy both work in senior positions. Both are hard-working, results driven and exceptional at what they do. However, Robyn respectfully says her thoughts in interdepartmental meetings, even when they differ from other people's. She is credible and at ease with healthy debate/conflict. Sandy doesn't like to ruffle feathers in meetings; she has important things to add, but often misses the right moment to say them because she doesn't want to accidentally speak over someone else.

Sandy has a proposal for the next steps in their interdepartmental project, and assumes she will have agreement because this is her area of expertise. In the meeting Robyn asks questions and puts forward options other than Sandy's, options which others are keen to explore. Sandy is flustered, stops talking and feels undermined; she wonders why everyone listens to Robyn, but not to her...

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Trading Likability for Respect

Have you observed how some people rarely get cut off in meetings and are often spoken to with esteem? It's not a coincidence, they do something key and specific - they ask for what they deserve.

When you know how to advocate for your rights (large or small) you get respect ...and respect generates bigger impacts than simply being liked.

Example:

Amira realized that getting cut-off by her manager in group meetings was taking a toll. She became irritable the moment it happened and it lasted all day, coming home with her at night. Something had to change. The next time her boss did it, she discreetly asked to speak with him privately. The conversation was awkward (for both of them) but Amira diplomatically helped him see he had a pattern of interrupting her, and while he wasn't happy about getting feedback, he did acknowledge that he shouldn't interrupt people and would be more aware in the future.

A few months later, an opportunity came up to work with a difficult client - a special project that could put someone on the path to promotion. Amira's boss suggested she be a part of the project as she could handle stressful conversations with skill and tact.

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Ignoring the Real Problem (& Opportunity)

Choosing to see the reality of a situation at work, rather than being overly optimistic about it, does amazing things for your impact.

If you face the real problem at hand, and are clear about what you can and can't control within it, you communicate with confidence and don't unintentionally mislead anyone.

Example:

Sam knew his manager wanted to ask him to take on the over-flow work from the policy project. He also knew if he did that, his other work would suffer. When the request came, he was ready. He helped his boss to see what was already assigned to him, and politely asked what he should de-prioritize to take on the policy work. After recognizing what he was currently responsible for, his manager realized that Sam had more pressing work to do.

Taimur had an equal amount of pressing work on his plate, but didn't know how to say "no" without being rude when his boss assigned the policy work to him. He figured it would all be OK in the end. Later that quarter Sam was nominated for a "BRAVO" award for his work contributions while Taimur received feedback from his manager that he needed to work on meeting his deadlines more consistently...

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I'm "Fine"

Ignoring strong feelings and being overly optimistic about being OK when triggered, leaves you exposed, reliant on luck (and your day going really well).

Frustration tolerance isn't about "sucking it up", it's about being able to process your emotions in a skillful way so emotions don't derail your intentions or impact.

Example:

Kim had a difficult morning even before getting to work and it wasn't getting any better. Looking at her exploding in-box, Kim answered as many emails as she could before hurrying into meeting after meeting. Late that afternoon her manager asked to speak to her, and opened by asking how she was doing. Kim was confused by this and said she was fine (even though her day had continued to pile on stress).

Her boss then provided her with constructive feedback that others found her email messages too direct, and one person didn't want to work with her in the future. Kim's manager asked her if she had any questions or insights about these concerns. Kim felt herself shaking her head "no" but didn't trust herself to speak, she just wanted to leave. When her boss then empathetically offered whole-hearted support to help Kim with these concerns, Kim could feel hot tears spilling onto her cheeks...

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If you work on these habits, you are less likely than your peers to be over-stressed, interrupted in meetings, under-valued by others or over-looked for promotion ...and these are just the “top 5” (there are many more).

Watch this video <https://www.loveyourworkinglife.com/hidden-habits-video.html> to see practical tips you can use to overcome these, and other hidden habits, in your career.

About | Carleen Hicks

Carleen helps professionals who struggle with feeling disconnected, underutilized or undervalued by their organizations to see how their work makes a difference.

Carleen created her organization, Love Your Working Life, to empower professionals to create their ideal situation at their current company, or find their dream job elsewhere, ensuring professionals increase their personal power at work, building dream careers.

