

67 Habits Of The World's Most Successful People



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“HIGH PERFORMANCE STARTS WITH A MIND-SET THAT TRANSLATES INTO THINGS THAT YOU DO. ONCE YOU’VE GOT THE MIND-SET, YOU WILL HAVE THE BEHAVIORS, AND THEN IT WILL TURN INTO ACTION.”

BY GWEN MORAN

12 Habits Of The Most Productive People

Some people just get stuff done. By the time most are pouring their second cup of joe, these super-achievers have been to Crossfit, hit inbox zero, and nailed the rough draft of that report due next week.

How do they do it? Actually, you can, too, says Paul Rulkens, author of *The Power of Pre-eminence* and president of Netherlands-based Agrippa Consulting International, which works with multinational companies like ExxonMobil and SABIC.

“High performance starts with a mind-set that translates into things that you do. Once you’ve got the mind-set, you will have the behaviors, and then it will turn into action. Everyone can become a high performer,” Rulkens says. They know these 12 things.

1. THEY FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS

People who are highly productive have established clear goals and a vision for what they want to achieve long term. They focus on what matters and realize that “80% of what you do doesn’t matter,” Rulkens says. Instead, they focus on the 20% that does and apply their efforts there.

2. THEY KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “IMPORTANT” AND “URGENT”

Extremely productive people know that “important and urgent are two different things—many things are urgent, and that’s usually determined by someone who expects an immediate answer,” says professional organizer Alison Kero, founder of ACK Organizing. If you get sidetracked by unimportant urgent issues, you spend your time fighting needless fires instead of getting done what matters.

3. THEY PLAN THEIR DAYS

When some of the smartest people in the world want to be productive, they attend Robert Pozen’s executive education course, *Maximizing Your Personal Productivity*, at MIT. Pozen, who is the author of *Extreme Productivity: Boost Your Results, Reduce Your Hours*, is himself a highly productive person. He writes and speaks, teaches courses, and holds a post as a fellow at the Brookings Institution, among other things.

To stay on track, he says he is meticulous about planning his to-do items around his appointments and then setting goals for what he wants to get out of each appointment to ensure those meetings are worthwhile.

4. THEY KNOW WHERE TO FIND WHAT THEY NEED WHEN THEY NEED IT

You don’t have to have a pristine desktop or 27 organization apps, but you do have to



have a system that lets you find the information and files you need when you need them, Pozen says. He keeps files on each of his courses so he can easily access them and adds relevant news to each file as he comes across it. That way, he can update his courses with the most current events.

5. THEY HAVE SET ROUTINES

When you make the more mundane aspects of life routine, you free up brain power and time, Pozen says. His days are highly regimented. He usually wakes at the same time and has simple morning routines. He lays out his clothes the night before. It may sound boring, but think about how much time is wasted wondering what to wear or have for breakfast. Reclaim those valuable resources by making them a routine, he says.

6. THEY SALVAGE WASTED TIME

Those 10 minutes before your next meeting or the two hours your flight is delayed can be great news for your productivity, Pozen says. When you keep a list of things that need to be done, you can quickly scan it and pick out the actions you can take in the time you have. Answer a few email messages or return a call in the few minutes before your next meeting, or start the research for your next project while you wait for your plane.

7. THEY ONLY ATTEND MEETINGS WITH PURPOSE

Meetings are a necessary evil and can aid productivity when they're used wisely. But poorly planned meetings waste precious time, says business coach Melissa Mizer, founder of the coaching firm MoreSeekers. Mizer says effective meetings must have five components:

Make sure the right and necessary people are in the room.

Make sure roles are clearly defined.

State the meeting purpose upfront (e.g., brainstorming, decision making, etc.)

Set objectives for the meeting.

Define next steps and action items before the meeting ends.

8. THEY DO THE THINGS THEY DON'T WANT TO DO

Sometimes you have to “eat the frog,” Rulkens says. Overcoming procrastination—at least most of the time—is essential for high performance, he says.

9. THEY AREN'T PERFECTIONISTS

At the heart of procrastination, you'll often find one of its root causes: perfectionism. Let that go, Kero says. It's not attainable and will just lead to dread when it's time to start big or challenging projects. “Your desk doesn't need to look perfect all the time if you don't want it to, and your proposal doesn't need 10 drafts,” she says.

10. THEY LEAVE GAPS IN THEIR SCHEDULE

Sometimes you get lost on the way to the meeting. Sometimes a meeting runs long. Sometimes you just need some time to think. Highly productive people leave room for all of these things, Pozen says. When you're too tightly scheduled, you can end up undermining



your productivity, because if one thing goes wrong, your schedule could be disrupted for the rest of the day. Give yourself time, which you can always find a way to spend wisely.

11. THEY MULTITASK WISELY

Pozen bristles at the anti-multitasking research of late. Multitasking is essential for productive people, but you have to choose the activities to pair. You wouldn't write a paper while driving a car, but you might check your email or write a note while you're on a call. "The tasks should be complementary in the sense that usually, one task is much more important than the other, and the other one can be done with a limited amount of energy and diversion," he says.

12. THEY QUIT STRATEGICALLY

Think high performers are the "quitters never win" types? Wrong, says Rulkens. Winners quit all the time—they're just more thoughtful about it. Strategic quitting means ditching the things that you shouldn't or don't want to be doing because they aren't worth your time, or delegating those things that can be done more cost effectively or efficiently by someone else. And that does more than free up time.

"I work with high-performance organizations. Whenever we do a workshop on quitting—what it is we're not going to do—you see a lot of energy being released, and that energy is then focused on new things that really matter," he says.



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BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

4 Habits Of Punctual People

Plan any event and chances are one in five of the people you invite will be late.

A study done at San Francisco State University found that about 20% of the U.S. population is chronically late—but it's not because they don't value others' time. It's more complicated than that, says lead researcher Diana DeLonzor.

“Repetitive lateness is more often related to personality characteristics such as anxiety or a penchant for thrill-seeking,” she says. “Some people are drawn to the adrenaline rush of that last-minute sprint to the finish line, while others receive an ego boost from over-scheduling and filling each moment with activity.”

In her book *Never Be Late Again: 7 Cures for the Punctually Challenged*, DeLonzor says our relationship with time often starts in childhood and becomes an ingrained habit.

“Looking back, you were probably late or early all of your life—it's part physiological and part psychological,” she says. “Most chronically late people truly dislike being late, but it's a surprisingly difficult habit to overcome. Telling a late person to be on time is a little like telling a dieter to simply stop eating so much.”

DeLonzor says the majority of people have a combination of late and punctual habits—usually on time, but with a frantic rush at the last minute—but we can all learn from those who are chronically punctual. DeLonzor shares four traits that always on time share:

1. THEY'RE REALISTIC THINKERS.

Punctual people know how long things take. Chronically late people, however, engage in what DeLonzor calls “magical thinking.”

“If once, 10 years ago, they made it to work in 20 minutes, they believe that's how long it should take,” she says. “They forget about the 99% of the times that took 30 minutes.”

To develop realistic habits, DeLonzor suggests relearning to tell time. Write down how long you think it takes to shower, get ready in the morning and drive to work. Then for a week, track how long those things really take. Chronically late people are often off of their time estimates by 25% to 30%, says DeLonzor.

2. THEY GIVE THEMSELVES BUFFER TIME.

Punctual people are usually early, says DeLonzor. “Being late makes them stressed out and they don't like feeling rushed,” she says. “Late people get stressed out from being late, too, but they don't strive to be early; they tend to time things to the minute.”

For a 9 a.m. meeting, for example, a punctual person would try to arrive by 8:45 a.m. or 8:50 a.m., allowing enough time for an unexpected delay, such as traffic or a full parking garage. A punctual person reviews directions online, checks traffic reports before leav-



ing, and some will even drive to an new location the day before to understand the route. To be punctual, plan to arrive early.

3. THEY'RE ORGANIZED.

DeLonzor says that 45% of everything we do on a daily basis is automatic: "Our lives are filled with habits—from the way you brush teeth to how you get dressed and leave for work," she says, adding that they're necessary. "If we didn't do things automatically, it would take us forever to get through our day."

The habits of people who are always on time are highly structured. They analyze their daily activities, set routines, and stick to them on regular basis. Chronically late people, however, don't have structure and often fall on the attention deficit disorder spectrum, says DeLonzor.

"Instead of thinking about why their routines don't work and trying something different next time, chronically late people simply hope that tomorrow will be better," she says.

To become punctual, DeLonzor suggests putting more routines and structure into your life. For example, do everything you can to prepare for the morning the night before.

4. THEY'RE COMFORTABLE WITH DOWNTIME.

Being punctual often means getting to meeting or an appointment early. Punctual people use the extra five or 10 minutes as a chance to catch up on emails, read over notes, or simply enjoy the solitude.

Chronically late people, however, hate downtime. They enjoy the thrill of that last-minute sprint to the finish line and crave stimulation. To be more comfortable with downtime, bring along something to fill those spare moments.

"Knowing that you have something to occupy your time will help," says DeLonzor.



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BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

6 Habits of The Best Conversationalists

Some people have the gift of gab, and can talk to anyone about anything. And some people struggle to make small talk. What separates the two isn't knowing what to talk about; it's polishing up your communication skills so you can keep a good conversation going.

“Good conversations require a give and take, just like keeping a ball in the air during a game of catch,” says Anne Green, president and CEO of CooperKatz & Company, a communications and media-training firm with clients that include Richard Branson. “When someone directs a question your way—when the ball is thrown to you—you should always respond with an answer that will continue the flow of dialogue, passing the ball back and never letting it drop.”

If a musician is asked, “What kind of music do you play?” for example, Green says the response “many different kinds” will shut down the conversation. “The key is to answer and elaborate,” she says. “A more effective response to that same question would be, ‘I play many different kinds of music, but I spent my early twenties in the South playing a lot of country music, which I've since brought to my music career in New York City.’ That gives the other person something to work with, creating a more stimulating conversation.”

Thinking of a conversation as a game of verbal tennis will keep things flowing, but becoming a good conversationalist requires having more skills in your communication toolbox. Here are six habits that the best conversationalists have mastered to practice every time you enter a new situation.

1. THEY LISTEN MORE THAN THEY TALK

The irony of being a good conversationalist is that talking isn't the most important piece; listening is what makes you memorable. Unfortunately, listening is a skill that not many people master; most people would rather talk, said Celeste Headlee, host of Georgia Public Broadcasting's *On Second Thought*.

“The irony of being a good conversationalist is that talking isn't the most important piece; listening is what makes you memorable.”

“When I'm talking, I'm in control. I don't have to hear anything I'm not interested in. I'm the center of attention. I can bolster my own identity,” she said in a 2015 TED Talk called “10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation.”

The other reason we'd rather talk is because it's easy to get distracted when we listen. The average person talks at about 225 words per minute, but we can listen at up to 500 words per minute, said Headlee. “So our minds are filling in those other 275 words,” she said. “It takes effort and energy to actually pay attention to someone, but if you can't do that, you're not in a conversation.”



2. THEY DON'T ALWAYS INTERJECT THEIR EXPERIENCES

Good conversationalists don't interject themselves into the topic when it's not needed. If someone is talking about having lost a family member, don't start talking about the time you lost a family member, said Headlee.

"If they're talking about the trouble they're having at work, don't tell them about how much you hate your job. It's not the same," she said. "It is never the same. All experiences are individual. And, more importantly, it is not about you. You don't need to take that moment to prove how amazing you are or how much you've suffered. Conversations are not a promotional opportunity."

3. THEY ADMIT WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW

A good conversationalist isn't afraid to show they don't understand, says Mark Levy, president of the branding firm Levy Innovation and author of *Accidental Genius: Using Writing to Generate Your Best Ideas, Insight and Content*. "So many people shoot themselves in the foot, because they're trying to come across as all-knowing or perfect, but letting the other person in on your lack of understanding can actually be flattering to them," he says.

"Conversations are not a promotional opportunity."

If you're confused, Levy suggests asking, "I want to make sure I really understand what you mean. Can you say what you just said in a slightly different way?"

"Not only will the other person feel heard; they'll likely love having to explain their point in a way that's different than normal," he says.

4. THEY ARE WELL READ

Be a person of interest by reading and informing yourself on a variety of topics from world affairs to business and culture, says Suzanne Bates, author of *All the Leader You Can Be, the Science of Achieving Extraordinary Executive Presence*.

"Be bold in getting beyond pleasantries to introduce high interest topics likely to enliven a conversation," she says. "Be attuned to each person to meet them where they are and be curious about their views."

Being well read allows you to introduce ideas and stories from other domains, adds Levy. "When a businessperson wants to make a point in conversation, they'll often rely on an idea, opinion, or story from the world of business," he says. "After a while that gets old. We've all heard the same business stories, and we start to mentally check out."

Good conversationalists "seed a conversation with jolts," says Levy. "If you're talking about, say, workplace productivity, it's fine to talk about [the Civil War battle] Pickett's Charge or black holes or an idea from an Elizabeth Gilbert book that, in some way, relates to workplace productivity. Bringing in ideas from other domains keeps people awake and interested, and it's actually how paradigm shifts are born."

5. THEY LOOK FOR CUES

Good conversationalists listen with their eyes, looking for body language or changes in mood that provide information about the other person's interest level in the conversa-



tion. This can help them redirect or improve the conversation in the moment, says Parker Ellen, professor of management and organizational development at Northeastern University.

“It also would equip individuals with an awareness about other parties, including their goals, as well as any underlying motives the other party had for the conversation,” he says. “Apparent sincerity would enable individuals to present comments and pose questions in a manner that seems genuine, such that it builds trust.” This could be crucial to getting other people to open up more and build rapport.

6. THEY LET GO OF THE DETAILS

We’ve all been in a conversation where the speaker derails the topic by struggling to remember a date or name. Small bits of information add verbal clutter, and good conversationalists don’t burden the subject with years, names, dates, and tiny details, said Headlee. “[The listener doesn’t] care,” she said. “What they care about is you. They care about what you’re like, what you have in common. So forget the details. Leave them out.”



“COMBINE OPTIMISM WITH ACCEPTANCE OF THE LIFE YOU’VE BEEN DEALT, AND THE SKY’S THE LIMIT.”

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

7 Habits Of Optimistic People

Optimists aren't just people who see the glass half full. They also make more money than pessimists and enjoy health benefits such as fewer colds, a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, and a longer life.

That's something to smile about.

“Children are born optimists and over the course of time, life happens,” says Jason Wachob, cofounder and CEO of the healthy living website MindBodyGreen.com. “Circumstances change and cynicism sets in, but deep down most of us want to get back to the optimism of our childhood.”

David Mezzapelle, author of *Contagious Optimism*, has studied optimistic people for five years: “Some people are naturally more optimistic,” he says. “I believe, however, that somebody who is negative or pessimistic can control it and improve upon it.”

Optimism isn't a pie-in-the-sky ideal, says Mezzapelle. “It's not closing your eyes and being in the clouds,” he says. “People often tell me they're a realist, but reality alone may prevent you from getting past first base. Combine optimism with acceptance of the life you've been dealt, and the sky's the limit.”

Like any healthy habit, Wachob says optimism is something you need to practice every day. He and Mezzapelle share seven traits optimists share and the habits you can implement to become one, too:

1. THEY EXPRESS GRATITUDE

Being appreciative of big blessings isn't enough; Mezzapelle says optimists are grateful for the smallest things in life.

“The sun coming up in morning, your child or dog excited to see you—being thankful about the littlest thing makes the bigger things that much better,” he says.

Optimists also find good in hardships, obstacles, and failures, because these are the situations that give you strength and resilience: “When optimists stumble across problems, it doesn't seem as bad because they've learned to always find the silver linings,” Mezzapelle says.

2. THEY DONATE THEIR TIME AND ENERGY

Whether it's helping at the local soup kitchen or being available to people you know, Wachob says giving back is a habit optimistic people practice.

“This helps you feel grateful for what you have,” he says. “It's a good place to start if you want to become more optimistic.”



Mezzapelle agrees: “No matter what you’re going through, you need to be good to others and help when you can,” he says. “The spirit of altruism can make you feel optimistic about your own life.”

3. THEY’RE INTERESTED IN OTHERS

When people hear the stories of how others persevere, it fosters optimism, says Mezzapelle.

“People often think they’re alone in their struggles, such as divorce, cancer, or financial problems,” he says. “When they hear about people who’ve experienced the same thing and came out on the sunny side, it can give them hope, and hope is the foundation of optimism.”

Wachob says simply reading inspirational stories can help. “This is something everyone can do on a daily basis,” he says. “There are so many amazing stories about amazing people who overcome incredible odds.”

4. THEY SURROUND THEMSELVES WITH UPBEAT PEOPLE

You are the sum of the people you spend time with, says Wachob.

“If you are with pessimists, every time you hang out with them it can be draining. If you’re with optimists, however, it’s easy to absorb that energy and it can be powerful.”

Mezzapelle likes a phrase coined by Olympic gymnast Mary Lou Retton: “Optimism is a happiness magnet.” “It’s true,” he says. “When you’re around people who are positive and upbeat, it brings you up.”

5. THEY DON’T LISTEN TO NAYSAYERS

What other people do or say is a reflection of their own reality, not yours, says Mezzapelle. Optimistic people don’t take the opinions of others too seriously when they don’t agree.

This means not listening to the naysayers who will tell you that you can’t achieve your goals: “You can disagree with other opinions—that’s the beauty of life,” Mezzapelle says. “Don’t look at it any other way and don’t let it affect you. It’s their reality, not yours.”

6. THEY FORGIVE OTHERS

While this can be easier said than done, Mezzapelle says optimists have an ability to forgive.

“The easiest way to forgive is to reflect on the fact that the past is the past,” he says. “Make peace with it so that it doesn’t spoil the present.”

7. THEY SMILE

Smiling creates a happy environment that draws others in, says Mezzapelle, and happiness, even in brief doses, releases serotonin, a hormone that contributes to the feeling of well-being.

Smiling also has health benefits; a study from the University of Kansas found that cracking a smile—even when you don’t feel like it—reduces the intensity of the body’s stress response, regardless of whether a person actually feels happy.



▶ 67 HABITS OF THE WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE

“YOUR HABITS ARE
THE REASON WHY
YOU’RE RICH OR
POOR.”

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

7 Habits Of Self-Made Millionaires

Most millionaires aren’t born; they’re self-made. In a survey by Fidelity Investments, approximately 80% of people who have a net worth of \$1 million or more did it without a trust fund or inheritance. As the classic Smith Barney commercial from the ‘70s used to say, “They make money the old-fashioned way . . . they earn it.”

They also have habits that help them accumulate wealth: “Your habits are the reason why you’re rich or poor,” says Tom Corley, author of *Rich Habits: The Daily Success Habits of Wealthy Individuals*. “In fact, it’s often two or three habits that separate the wealthy from those who are financially challenged.”

Corley has studied millionaires for 12 years, and says many of them share the same daily practices and beliefs. Here are seven habits of self-made millionaires:

1. THEY READ

Self-made millionaires are readers, and Corley says this is the number one habit to adopt if you want to become wealthy. According to his study, 85% of millionaires read two or more books a month, and they choose books that help them grow, including topics like careers, biographies of successful people, self-help, health, current events, psychology, and leadership.

“The key to success in life is growing your knowledge base and skills,” says Corley. “Devote 30 minutes or more each day to learning by reading books. If you do, it will set you apart from the competition, as most people do not read.”

2. THEY PURSUE THINGS THAT INTEREST THEM

People often enter careers for the stability factor, but wealthy people pursue their interests. “They put their ladder on their own wall,” says Corley. “When you’re passionate about what you’re doing, you work harder.”

3. THEY FIND A MENTOR

Ninety-three percent of self-made millionaires in Corley’s study attribute their wealth to having mentors.

“Finding a success mentor in life is one of the least painful ways to become rich,” says Corley. “It can put you on the fast track to success.”

Corley says there are five types of success mentors:

Parents. Parenting is very important when it comes to being a millionaire. Parents are your first mentors. If they teach children good daily success habits, they’ll struggle less in life.

Teachers. Teachers can reinforce the mentoring children receive at home from their parents, or step in to provide the success mentoring absent at home.



Career Mentors. Finding a mentor at work you admire, trust, and respect can lead to success in life. Choose someone at least two levels above your rank.

Book Mentors. Mentors don't have to be real relationships. Sometimes the best source are found in books, particularly books about successful people, says Corley.

Yourself. Also called "the school of hard knocks," you can mentor yourself by learning from your own mistakes. "This is the hard path to success, because those mistakes and failures carry significant costs in both time and money," says Corley. "But this is also the most powerful type of mentoring you can get, because the lessons you learn are infused with intense emotion and never forgotten."

4. THEY USE DREAMS TO SET GOALS

Before millionaires identify goals, they do something that Corley calls "dream setting"—they write down what their ideal life would look like, then use this script to create a bullet-point list of dreams. Goals are then built around each dream.

"Think of dreams as a ladder, and the rungs are your goals," he says. "Ask yourself, 'What would I need to do in order for each wish or dream to come true? Am I capable of performing those activities? And do I have the necessary skills and knowledge? Then take action.'"

5. THEY WRITE TO-DO LISTS

Goals are only goals when they have two things: 100% achievability and physical activity, says Corley. Millionaires break down goals into physical action steps that make up their to-do list, and many have lists that follow a habit.

"Millionaires process success," says Corley. "When you create processes, you don't have to think, which takes energy and contributes to decision fatigue. Habits are valuable because they brain fuel that can be used doing something else."

6. THEY CREATE MULTIPLE STREAMS OF INCOME

Self-made millionaires do not rely on only a single source of income, says Corley. Instead, they develop multiple streams, and most have at least three.

"Sixty-five percent had three or more streams of income that they created over time," he says. "Diversifying your sources of income allows you to weather the economic downturns that always occur in life."

Revenue streams include real estate rentals, stock market investments, annuities, private equity investments, part ownership in side businesses, ancillary products, or services, and royalties.

7. THEY AVOID TIME WASTERS

Millionaires believe money can be recouped, but the bigger risk is wasting time.

"When we invest our time in anything, it's lost forever," says Corley. "Yet, because we are all given what seems to be an abundance of time, it has very little value to us."

Sixty-seven percent of the self-made millionaires in Corley's study watch less than an hour of TV each day, and 63% spent less than an hour a day on the Internet in activities such as Facebook or watching YouTube videos.

"This freed up time for them to pursue their dreams, goals, read, learn, exercise, volunteer, and network," he says.



“ON AVERAGE, AMBITIOUS PEOPLE ATTAIN HIGHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND INCOME, BUILD MORE PRESTIGIOUS CAREERS, AND REPORT HIGHER OVERALL LEVELS OF LIFE SATISFACTION.”

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

6 Habits Of Ambitious People

Ambition gets a bad rap. The trait that pushes someone toward success can sometimes turn into a game where winning isn't about achieving; it's about beating the other person. Channel it correctly, however, and ambition can bring great results.

“On average, ambitious people attain higher levels of education and income, build more prestigious careers, and report higher overall levels of life satisfaction,” says Neel Burton, psychiatrist and author of *Heaven and Hell: The Psychology of the Emotions*. “Many of man's greatest achievements are the products, or accidents, of their ambition.”

The key is to pursue healthy ambition: “People with a high degree of healthy ambition are those with the insight and strength to control the blind forces of ambition, shaping [it] so that it matches their interests and ideals,” says Burton. “They harness it so that it fires them without also burning them or those around them.”

They harness it so that it fires them without also burning them or those around them.

Nearly anyone can be ambitious given the right internal and external stimuli, says Jason Ma, author of *Young Leaders 3.0: Stories, Insights, and Tips for Next-Generation Achievers*. Here are six things you can do to harness your ambition and focus on success over competition:

1. THEY SET GOALS BUT DON'T SHARE THEM

Ambitious people are goal-oriented and are always striving towards the next accomplishment, but healthy ambition involves keeping your goals private, said entrepreneur Derek Sivers in a 2010 TED Talk “Keep Your Goals To Yourself.”

Psychologists have found that telling someone your goal makes it less likely to happen, Siver explained: “Any time you have a goal, there are some steps that need to be done, some work that needs to be done in order to achieve it. Ideally you would not be satisfied until you'd actually done the work. But when you tell someone your goal and they acknowledge it, psychologists have found that it's called a ‘social reality.’ The mind is kind of tricked into feeling that it's already done. And then because you've felt that satisfaction, you're less motivated to do the actual hard work necessary,” Siver said.

2. THEY ARE WILLING TO TAKE RISKS

Ambition takes a willingness to step into fear and anxiety, says Burton. “Some people are better able to tolerate this fear, perhaps because are more courageous, committed, or driven, and can minimize the fear,” he says. “Ambitious people act with purpose, but allow themselves room to explore, experiment and discover.”

Don't be surprised if a breakthrough emerges from a well-managed crisis



“Don’t be surprised if a breakthrough emerges from a well-managed crisis,” adds Ma, who is also CEO of ThreeEQ, a firm that mentors high-achieving teenagers and adults. “Ambition is the act of being an innovative change-maker.”

3. THEY EXPOSE THEMSELVES TO NEW WAYS OF THINKING

Ambitious people break away from consistent groupthink, and expose themselves to new ways of thinking.

“Talk with and learn from people different from you,” suggests Ma. “Be open to dialogue with acquaintances and even select strangers, as you may uncover interesting opportunities.”

Burton says ambition makes people resourceful: “It forces us to grow, often in unexpected ways,” he says.

4. THEY ARE FOCUSED ON EXECUTION

Often people spend the most time working on building their skill set and researching solutions or possibilities. While it’s wise to craft and execute a strategy for any given type of important vision or outcome you want to achieve, ambitious people put the main emphasis on pulling the trigger.

“An executer is one who gets shit done,” says Ma. “If your execution is poor, nothing matters.”

5. THEY DON’T COMPETE WITH OTHER PEOPLE

Your biggest competitor should be yourself, says Ma. “Avoid the trap of comparing yourself with others, and measure success only against what you are capable of achieving,” he says. “Nothing beats hard work with focus and passion. Stretch yourself.”

6. THEY SURROUND THEMSELVES WITH OTHER AMBITIOUS PEOPLE

Finally, Ma suggests applying the “power of proximity” by networking with clusters of successful people.

“[The late entrepreneur and author] Jim Rohn said: ‘You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with,’” says Ma. “Find role models. Befriend and learn from mentors. Make friends with people smarter than you and more successful in fields you are interested in.”



“YOUR MOST SIGNIFICANT ROLE DOESN'T INVOLVE YOUR RESULTS; YOUR JOB IS TO INSPIRE YOUR EMPLOYEES' RESULTS.”

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

6 Habits Of People Who Know How To Bring Out The Best In Others

If you think your most important job as a leader is to write mission statements, set goals, or even increase revenue, you're focusing on the wrong metrics. Your most significant role doesn't involve your results; your job is to inspire your employees' results, says Richard S. Wellins, co-author of *Your First Leadership Job: How Catalyst Leaders Bring Out the Best In Others*.

“As a leader your focus changes; your number one priority is to bring out the best in others,” says Wellins, who is senior vice president at management consulting firm DDI.

A study done by DDI and Harris Interactive found that 98% of employees who have good leaders are motivated to do their best, while only 11% of employees with ineffective managers felt motivated to give their best.

Being able to bring out the best in others is a skill that involves just 10% natural inclination; the other 90% has to be deliberate, says Wellins: “It can't be learned by listening to a lecture or reading examples,” he says. “It needs to be practiced, reinforced, and used day to day.”

Here are six of their daily habits:

1. THEY FOCUS ON THE PERSON'S STRENGTHS

Good leaders identify the strengths of individual team members and give employees opportunities to use them, says Wellins. “They cultivate and optimize others' talents and capabilities,” he says.

While some strengths will be obvious, good leaders schedule one-on-one meetings and ask questions such as, “What do you enjoy doing most as part of your work?” and “What do you miss most about the jobs you've had in the past and why?”

2. THEY EMPATHIZE

Leaders who bring out the best in others listen to what team members are saying and put themselves in their shoes, says Wellins. When dealing with an emotional situation, listening and responding with empathy can immediately reduce tension, and until things calm down, nothing productive can occur.

“Empathy will drive better performance; this is a huge motivator,” says Wellins.

3. THEY GIVE RECOGNITION

People who bring out the best in others also reward and recognize good work. Leaders



often worry that praise will seem unprofessional or that employees will become complacent or overconfident.

“It isn’t and they won’t,” says Wellins. “It’s about making a person feel good about themselves even when they feel challenged or are in tough times..”

This is also important when things are going well, adds Wellins. “It’s so simple, but our research shows that one- to two-thirds of leaders are not good at acknowledging good work,” he says.

4. THEY CONNECT THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Liz Wiseman, author of *Rookie Smarts: Why Learning Beats Knowing in the New Game of Work*, calls leaders who bring out the best in others “multipliers.” She says multipliers look for talent everywhere and focus on finding people, at whatever level, who know the things they don’t.

“Multipliers take the time to understand the capabilities of each individual so that they can connect employees with the right people and the right opportunities—thereby building a virtuous cycle of attraction, growth, and opportunity,” she writes in an article for *Harvard Business Review*.

5. THEY DON'T MICROMANAGE

Bringing out the best in others means delegating. “Good managers are careful to not micromanage,” says Wellins. “Their job is to assign or direct general goals in work that needs to be done but they should never do it for the person.”

Stretch goals that push people can have a big impact on how people feel about themselves, their work, and what they can accomplish, says Wellins. “Appeal to their strengths and give them responsibility and they will achieve their goals,” he says.

As team members earn small wins, their confidence grows and seemingly insurmountable problems appear less daunting, adds Wiseman; roadblocks become interesting puzzles for the team to solve.

“Multipliers see themselves as coaches and teachers,” writes Wiseman. “These leaders put a high premium on self-sufficiency: Once they delegate a task or decision, they don’t try to take it back.”

6. THEY CREATE SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

People who bring out the best in others give people permission to think, speak, and act with reason, says Wiseman.

“They generate an intensity that demands high-level work from the team, but they also have a high tolerance for mistakes and understand the importance of learning along the way,” she writes. “So they create mental spaces in which people can flourish.”



“BEING CONFIDENT MEANS PEELING AWAY THE DOUBT, FEAR, AND WORRY, AND GETTING BACK TO OUR CORE. CONFIDENT PEOPLE HAVE LEARNED HOW TO GET BACK TO THEIR PURE SELVES.”

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

6 Habits Of Confident People

When my son was four, he wore a superhero cape. All of the time. I vividly remember a trip to Home Depot when he had dressed himself in shorts and a shirt, cowboy boots, swim goggles, gardening gloves, and the cape. Even though he attracted plenty of stares, he walked through the store very sure of himself and his wardrobe choice.

Many of us outgrow our childhood ideals, but why is it we also often leave behind the sense of confidence that accompanied them?

Self-doubt is common—especially in women—and for many the feeling remains constant. A survey of British managers done by the Institute of Leadership and Management in the United Kingdom found that 50% of female respondents and 31% of male respondents don't feel confident about their job performance and careers.

“We're all born with the capacity to be our best selves—to be who we really are,” says Jen Sincero, author of *You Are a Badass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life*. “Then we hear the messages that exist in our fear-based society, and we get beaten down. Being confident means peeling away the doubt, fear, and worry, and getting back to our core. Confident people have learned how to get back to their pure selves.”

Katty Kay and Claire Shipman, coauthors of *The Confidence Code: The Science and Art of Self-Assurance—What Women Should Know*, say confidence isn't just an attitude: “We spent a long time trying to define confidence because we felt that it would be easier to grow it if we really knew what it was,” they write in their book. “In the end we came to this conclusion: Confidence is life's enabler—it is the quality that turns thoughts into action.”

Confidence is life's enabler—it is the quality that turns thoughts into action.

Becoming confident takes practice, calculated risk-taking, and changes in the way you think, say Kay, Shipman, and Sincero. Here are six habits confident people share:

1. THEY PUSH THEMSELVES OUTSIDE OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE

Nothing builds confidence like taking action, especially when the action involves risk and failure, say Kay and Shipman. Confident people start small and continue to take action until they become more comfortable with the risk.

“Nerves are normal—everyone has them,” write Kay and Shipman. “The difference between a confident person and an unconfident person is simply that the confident person acts on their ambitions and desires and doesn't let fear of failure stop them.”

2. THEY VIEW FAILURE AS INFORMATION

Confident people are not immune to failure; instead of letting it stop them, they view it as



an information-gathering session.

“It’s a notch in their belt and proof that they’ve started moving in the direction they want to go,” says Sincero. “Confident people thank the experience for the lesson, and then they course-correct.”

It’s not the strongest species that survives, it’s the one that’s most adaptable.

It’s not the strongest species that survives, say Kay and Shipman, it’s the one that’s most adaptable.

3. THEY WATCH THEIR LANGUAGE

Sincero says confident people don’t speak badly about themselves. Instead, they question their self-doubts.

“Instead of believing something is 100% true—such as feeling like a loser—they realize that they bought into something that’s not certain and they attach feelings to new belief,” she says.

Kay and Shipman call that getting rid of NATS (negative automatic thoughts): “Women are particularly prone to NATS. We think we make one tiny mistake and we dwell on it for hours and hours ... and it kills our confidence,” they write.

To get rid of NATS, the coauthors suggest reminding yourself of three good things you did for every negative thought you have. Eventually this technique will help you eliminate the tendency to think badly about yourself.

4. THEY TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Instead of feeling like a victim of their circumstances, confident people take ownership of their situation and do something about it, says Sincero.

“They don’t blame their parents or others, they take responsibility and change the things that are getting in the way of their goals,” she says.

5. THEY SEEK OUT INSPIRATION AND ADVICE

Sincero says confident people read books, take classes, practice meditation, and find coaches and mentors who have done the things they want to do.

“If you’re confident then you don’t feel weird about showing your vulnerability and opening yourself up to learning from somebody else,” she says. “Insecure people stay where they are because they’re afraid of admitting their weaknesses.”

6. THEY USE POWER POSITIONS

Sitting up straight gives you a short-term confidence boost, say Kay and Shipman. The coauthors suggest keeping your abs in and chin up, which they call “astonishingly simple yet woefully infrequent.”

Also try nodding your head: “You feel more confident as you talk when you do it—and you’re sending a subconscious signal that makes others agree with you,” they write.



“GET IT OUT OF YOUR HEAD THAT IT'S HARDER TO MAKE FRIENDS WHEN YOU'RE OLDER. IT CAN ACTUALLY BE EASIER BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE, AND WHAT KIND OF FRIEND YOU WOULD LIKE.”

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

6 Habits Of People Who Make Friends Easily

Friendships are more beneficial than just sharing laughs over a cup of coffee. A lack of strong relationships increases your risk of premature death from all causes by 50%, according to research from Harvard University. That's the same mortality risk as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. If your social life is looking light, it might be time to make some new friends, but it doesn't have to be an intimidating and awkward process.

“Get it out of your head that it's harder to make friends when you're older,” says sociologist Jan Yager, author of *Friendshifts: The Power of Friendship and How It Shapes Our Lives*. “It can actually be easier because you know who you are, and what kind of friend you would like.”

The secret to making new friends is as simple as being open to it. Here are six things you can do to fill your calendar and forge new friendships:

1. BE APPROACHABLE

The first impression sets the stage on whether a person will be communicating with you or not, says psychotherapist Richard E. Toney. “The key is your facial expression,” he says. “Think about people who you've seen in grocery stores, airports, and even in long lines that are near you. If you see them grimacing and frowning, you more than likely will not communicate with that person because they do not appear approachable or even nice.”

An inviting smile or a courteous head nod could go a long way in allowing people to know that you are available and open to communicating, he says. And being a good listener is a big part of being approachable, adds Yager. “Too many focus on sharing with others, forgetting that they need to be there for their new relationships that might become friends,” she says.

2. GET INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY

One of the best ways to make new friends is to meet people with whom you share a common interest, says John Boese, founder of *GoFindFriends.com*, a website that helps New Yorkers find new friends. Turn your hobby into a social activity by joining a meetup.com group or social sport league, he suggests.

Going to places that you enjoy allows you to be around like-minded individuals, adds Toney. “It is easy to start up a conversation about things that you like,” he says. “Once you find someone who has similar interests to yours, you can exchange phone numbers or email addresses and keep in touch.”

3. HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

“Feeling positive is one of the absolute requirements of friendship, and how we choose



who we want to spend time with,” says Shasta Nelson, CEO of GirlFriendCircles.com, an online community that helps connect women, and author of *Frientimacy: How to Deepen Friendships for Lifelong Health and Happiness*.

Figure out ways to help other people feel better for having spent time with you. Saying “thank you,” being encouraging, asking questions, validating feelings, and smiling are all ways of affirming new friends, she says.

“Researchers have found that if you say good things about other people, people tend to remember you as having those positive qualities.”

People don't like to be around others who are negative all the time, adds Keith Rollag, author of *What to Do When You're New*. “Researchers have found that if you say good things about other people, people tend to remember you as having those positive qualities,” he says. “For example, if you tell a new coworker that your previous boss is a friendly, helpful person, they will likely walk away remembering you as somewhat friendly and helpful, too. But if you complain that your previous boss was an egotistical jerk, they may see a few of those qualities in you, too.”

4. DON'T WAIT FOR OTHERS TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE

While you can feel vulnerable approaching someone for the first time, the other person may have even more reluctance, says Rollag. “Just go for it,” he says. “What's the worst that can happen?”

Relationships are built on give and take, and Rollag suggests starting by helping other people meet their needs. “Many of the things we want in friendships—trust, reliability, integrity—have their basis in reciprocity,” he says. “Figure out what other people want and help them get it, and you've predisposed them to see you as a potential friend.”

Be proactive and ask people to get together, or let people know that you're looking for activities to join, adds Boese. “You'll be surprised how many people are open to having you join one of their weekend activities,” he says.

5. FOLLOW UP

Relationships are built largely on logging time together, so be thoughtful about how to stay in touch, says Nelson. “Before leaving one get-together, say, ‘This was such fun and I'd like to get to know you better, could we schedule it now and avoid the email back-and-forth?’” she suggests. You can also send an email the next day, thanking them for their time, or set a reminder in your calendar for a date they mentioned of something coming up, such as a surgery or birthday, and email them to let them know you're thinking of them.

One of the keys to turning an acquaintance into a friend is consistency, adds Boese. “Don't let more than two weeks go by without seeing them,” he says. “If you spend time with someone and then don't talk to them for a month, it's going to be tough to keep them in the friend zone.”

6. SAY “YES” TO INVITATIONS (EVEN WHEN YOU WANT TO SAY “NO”)

People who make friends easily view events as opportunities to meet people, says Nelson.



▶ 67 HABITS OF THE WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE

“Remind yourself to choose based on what you value or hope for, not based on how you feel in the moment,” she says. “Like exercise, if left to only when we felt like it, we’d often opt for a quiet night in instead of the chance to connect.”



▶ 67 HABITS OF THE WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE

“ORGANIZED
PEOPLE ARE NOT
BORN; THEY'RE
BUILT.”

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA

7 Habits Of Organized People

We all know that one friend or coworker who is super-organized. The person who is punctual, finishes projects with time to spare, and always knows exactly where to find what they need when they need it.

Instead of hating that person, why not figure out how they do it?

“Organized people are not born; they’re built,” says John Trosko, founder of OrganizingLA, a Los Angeles-based organizing firm. “The people who emerge as ‘organized’ use a variety of tools and methods to accomplish their goals and priorities in life.”

Their systems become habits, says Trosko. Here are seven things organized people do on a regular basis to stay on top of it all:

1. ORGANIZED PEOPLE SEEK OUT TOOLS

From kitchen timers to smartphone technology, organized people find tools that can help them make the most of their day, week, and year, says Trosko.

They use mobile phone apps with pop-up reminders, for example. They also use timers to help visualize the passage of time. And they break down tasks into smaller chunks and take short non-work-related breaks in between, which increases their overall productivity.

2. ORGANIZED PEOPLE SET PRIORITIES

Instead of having an overwhelming number of commitments and little idea where to start, organized people have a clear sense of what’s important, says Lisa Zaslow, founder of Gotham Organizers, New York City-based professional organizers.

“They know what their goals are, what needs to be done when, and what can be put off,” she says. “They start the day with a clear plan of their ‘MITs’—their ‘most important things.’ And they review their plan throughout the day and adjust as necessary.”

3. ORGANIZED PEOPLE HAVE LESS STUFF

The golden rule of organization is to have as little as possible to organize, says productivity expert Hillary Rettig, author of *The 7 Secrets of the Prolific*.

“They figure out what the core of their professional and personal missions are and eliminate all else,” she says. “They will still have stuff to organize, but they’ve made the job doable.”

4. ORGANIZED PEOPLE CHOOSE SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

When organizing systems are complex, they often go unused. Trosko says organized people use simple tools that make an easy job of putting things away.



For example, baskets hold receipts that need to be filed, bills that need to be paid, and books that are waiting to be read. A hook by the door makes it convenient to hang up a coat. And bowls and trays near an entryway will keep keys and wallets in one place.

5. ORGANIZED PEOPLE PRACTICE MAINTENANCE

Organization requires continual upkeep, says Zaslow: “You don’t go to the gym, get in shape, then cancel your membership,” she says. “Being organized is the same.”

Organized people will take a few moments each day to put things back in their proper places. They might archive an email, for example, or put away papers.

“They don’t drop things in a random pile ‘just for now’—it’s always now,” says Zaslow. “The tiny amount of time it takes to do this is vastly less than the time it takes to look for something that wasn’t put away properly.”

6. ORGANIZED PEOPLE REGULARLY PURGE

Situations change and formerly useful things become unnecessary. Instead of letting clutter sneak up on them, Zaslow says organized people periodically purge. They clear out their files when the drawer starts to get full, for example, and they toss the notes for the project that was canceled.

Zaslow says she once had a client who would buy a new filing cabinet each time one got full: “By the time she called me to intervene, she had file cabinets in her home office, guest room, upstairs hall, den, and basement,” she says. “Needless to say, most of the information was out of date and irrelevant.”

7. ORGANIZED PEOPLE PROJECT THEMSELVES INTO THE FUTURE

Using a two-person mind-set—present self and future self—can help you stay organized, says Lorie Marrero, founder of the Clutter Diet, an online organizing program. She likes to think of her future self when she takes care of small tasks right away.

“If I walk through a room and see a mess, I will say, ‘I bet if I do those dishes now my future self will be so much happier later,’” she says. “That motivates me to do those favors for my future self.”

Marrero says organized people also think into the future when they add activities to their calendars: “They ask: ‘What could I do before, during, or after this appointment to improve it?’” she says. If they need to prepare for it, bring something to it, or follow up after it, they schedule it now and put it on their task list.