

Striving for Excellence

I have been working in the personal and organizational development industry for over 14 years. During this time, I have had a chance to interact with a wide range of people. All the way from the very top performers in business down to people who fail miserably. I always try to analyze what separates the great performers from the mediocre and “also-rans.” I have discovered six characteristics or qualities that I have found in almost every top producer. These qualities are either missing or not completely developed in people who are not considered top level producers.

1. Focus

All top performers have an unswerving singleness of purpose. They are 100 percent, full-time committed to their chosen pursuit. The reason for this is they have an unbridled enthusiasm for what they do. They absolutely love it. They do not even consider work as work, it is play to them. Their vocation is actually their vacation. This enables them to be macro-thinkers or big-picture seers. In other words, they are able to see long-term, see the total picture, and they do not get bogged down in details. **They have two rules:**

- A. Don't sweat the small stuff.
- B. It's all small stuff.

In other words, they are focused on what is important. They are focused on what pays off, they are focused on success essentials.

2. Integrity

Top performers understand that success in business comes from establishing trust with prospects and clients. This trust only comes if the person believes totally in what they do. Top performers, almost to a fault, are congruent in their words, beliefs and actions. They use their own products. They are their own best client. They walk the talk. They do what they say they will do.

3. Service

This could also be called win-win relationships. Top performers understand

that for future success, it is absolutely critical that their clients are happy.

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To do this, top performers do three things:

- A. They study their clients' business. They learn the language, they learn the problems, they learn the challenges, they learn the competitors, they learn the dynamics. They know their clients' business almost as well as the client.
- B. Top performers are masters at asking questions to find out if and how they can help prospective clients. Top performers understand that the client will show them what they need and how they want to buy, if they only ask the right questions.
- C. Top performers under-promise and over-deliver. They make sure that everything they commit to is done and then some. Their goal is not a satisfied client, but an absolutely excited, happy, thrilled and overjoyed client.

4. Relationships

Top performers understand that they are not selling products, they are creating relationships. Top performers know in their hearts that their success is determined by the quality of these relationships. Consequently, they network, they seek referrals and they constantly build up their relationships. They turn clients into centers of influence who become ambassadors for their business. They measure their success not by their bank accounts but by the size of their client and prospect list.

5. Smart-Hard Work

Top performers understand that it takes a lot of hard work to succeed at anything. They also work very smart. But they understand that they cannot rationalize hard work away just by saying they are going to work smarter. Top performers develop and follow a system. They also keep very detailed and accurate records and statistics on their activities and results. Top performers pay the price.

6. Continuous Improvement

Top performers are never totally satisfied with their performance. They are always looking for ways to constantly invest in themselves. They study their industry. They always set goals to beat their best. They are always working on ways to improve the system – not to change the system, but to improve it, to optimize it, to maximize it, to multiply it. Top performers are a lot like ducks. They look very calm and smooth on the surface, but underneath they are paddling like the world is coming to an end.

I would very much recommend that you look at these six qualities and rank yourself from one to ten on each. Set a goal to improve in these areas. Find out what qualities are missing or lacking. Our lives are racing by us at lightning speed. Life is too precious to be only mediocre, to be average, to be only so-so, to be only okay. Make a decision now to fully commit to your dreams, goals and aspirations. Make a decision now to incorporate, believe in, trust and live by these success essentials.



By Randy Slechta, President of Leadership Management International, Inc. a global leadership and organizational development company.