

“CORPORATE SKILLS - YOU DON’T LEARN IN SCHOOL”

“They do not teach corporate life in school or college”. What you do next when you get a job in a big company after your graduation. You think that the toughest part of your entry into the business world is over. You dump your extra résumés in a recycling bin and eagerly await your first salary. You look forward to business trips, stimulating office brainstorming sessions and hanging out with your co-workers every weekend. But then you realise it’s not happening cause you are still at an entry level position even after 18 months of working hard and late nights.

Three years into the working world and your resume lists five positions in different companies because you were always on the lookout for a better opportunity that would bring the ever-elusive job satisfaction. Eventually, you consider joining the large numbers of your friends who were leaving the corporate world in favour of an MBA in a prestigious college. The idea of going back to college is tempting, and why not? You’re comfortable with the concept of studying in a college. You know how the story goes. If you work hard, you get good grades, and everyone is happy. The business world is another world entirely. You have worked so hard but have not been valued or recognized.

The corporate world is a different Jungle which is full of animals and politically motivated for kill in the name of ambition and success. Like in a jungle there is a Lion and a deer. The Lion wakes up every morning with only one thought. To run and Run faster than the deer or starve to death and the Deer also wakes up with only one thought to run and run faster than the Lion or get killed. So it does not matter if you are a Lion or a Deer, when the sun goes up you’d better be running. The same applies here. It does not matter if you are a Boss or a subordinate, every morning at work you need to not just outperform each other but maybe outperform your own self to survive.

This world is not a natural fit for ambitious graduates who leave college expecting results from a logical combination of education and effort. Suddenly, the tenets of success you’ve followed since your school days don’t apply, because getting ahead in the corporate structure often has nothing to do with intelligence or exceeding a set of defined expectations.

So if you want to succeed in this, here are some tips to help you through this game called corporate.

Establish profitable relationships: You need to be visible in your field, network to gain information and make connections that will help you move forward in your career. Seek out mentors whom you like. There's no shame in learning from mentor's experience and who can give you advice and be positive role models in your life, before you start to burn out.

Master transferable skills: You might not know exactly what you want to do with your career, but the transferable skills will help you no matter what future path you decide to pursue. Work with your boss to set specific, reasonable and attainable goals for your present position that will help you advance to the next level.

Get people to cooperate: People don't care what you want — they want to know what's in it for them. By approaching negotiations with an attitude that allows a win – win situation, you'll be more effective at eliciting cooperation and ultimately getting what you want.

Develop a Marketable Personality: Learn the art to promote yourself. Capitalize on your skills and achievements. Project you're most mature, professional and competent face.

Stay motivated in all circumstances: The Corporate world can be frustrating at the start, but it's your response to the environment which matters. Make a conscious decision to begin each day with a positive outlook. Aim at increasing your self-awareness so you can better understand your emotional intelligence.

Be proactive about your career growth: Approach your performance review strategically by soliciting feedback on your progress, identifying new goals and growth opportunities. Always be prepared with a list of contributions that have positively impacted the bottom line of the organization.

Set the right goals: Chasing that next promotion can seem like the best way forward, but that's not always the case. Focus more on your personal development and less on your job title. Be patient with your career path. Success will come. Don't waste time only focusing on climbing the corporate ladder. Focus on learning all that you can in each position, knowing that your credibility and experience will be more valued.

Learn to let go: Small daily frustrations can get bigger and suddenly explode at the least expected moment. Repressing emotions create physical issues, expressing them may get relationship issues. Learn to release emotions in a healthier way with visualizations so you can let go without destructive behaviours.

Be confident: Never say to yourself that you're not good enough to do something. Do not limit your options and ruling out possibilities that could have otherwise been great opportunities for you. No matter what, continue persevering and giving yourself chances to succeed.

Spend more time with people than with your laptop: The strongest relationship is formed in person, not online. Soft skills are always more cherished in companies so it's important to drop your technology and actually communicate with people. People hire you, not technology and you have to remember that!

Learn what you can in your first job and give it your best while you are there. Find jobs, projects and people that you can learn something from and put to use practically. Don't just take a job. Have a purpose behind doing so.