

# Risks Great Business Leaders Must Take in Order to Succeed



Good leaders are often reliable and hard workers. However, what makes a good leader become great is their ability to take risks.

Risks can be a scary word to many of us. When we take a risk, we could lose something valuable. Great leaders see opportunity in failure and potential from the learning experience. If you want to be a great business leader, you will have to take risks at some point.

Learn some of the most common risks every great business leader faces:

## Risk Failing

We all risk failing when we try something new, but failing is not always a bad thing. Your efforts are the key to success. Successful business leaders can view failure as learning process.

**Failure accomplishes two very important objectives:**

1. We are willing to embrace risking failure by doing something risky. You can't be successful unless you try!
2. We discover the proper expectation mentally. Plan for the best but prepare for the worst. This allows the opportunity for recovery and another attempt.

# **Risk Admitting that You Don't Know**

We are conditioned to have quick and confident answers. Unfortunately, if we are always providing an answer, we will never have the opportunity to learn from other perspectives.

For business leaders, the risk of saying "I don't know" can be the opportunity to engage a team. Use the opportunity to gather new ideas with group discussions and brain storming sessions.

# **Risk Losing Everything**

Whether you have been in business for forty years or one, every company makes financial risks to get ahead. Sometimes, the choice can be a plunge. However, a successful business leader continues to take smart risks from the knowledge of previous learning experiences.

# **Risk of Stepping into Unfamiliar Territory**

Stepping into unfamiliar territory starts from day one of opening a business. You will continue to expand your boundaries as your business expands.

Stepping into unfamiliar territory could include providing a new product or service, opening a branch office, or hiring a team. We must make changes or our company will remain stagnant.

# **Risking Being Misunderstood**

Thinking outside of the box can cause people to question your sanity! As a business leader, your character will be questioned at some point. After all, your decisions are possibly affecting the future of the company. Nevertheless, stick to what you think is right. You did not become a leader by being just like everyone else.

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# How-To Keep Employees Engaged With Their Work



Every empowered team has one thing in common - they are engaged with their work. Achieving engaged employees may seem simple. Unfortunately, only 32 percent of workers are engaged in their jobs. As a business owner, this is a frightening statistic! We want employees that are passionate about their careers.

As a recruiter, I seek candidates that enjoy their career field. However, after I find the employee, it's up to the business leader to keep them happy. Learn six tricks to keeping your employees happy at work.

## Be Transparent

Transparency should be core in a company's values. It develops trust and productivity within the organization.

To be transparent, make important information available. This does not mean that you should broadcast your company's finances. Instead, create charts on the progress of meeting company goals.

You can also trust employees to make decisions. This may seem scary at first. After all, you are loosening the reins when an employee starts making decisions. However, they will become more invested in company operations and will learn to take ownership of their projects.

# **Take Responsibility for Mistakes**

Nobody wants to take blame for something that was not their fault. It will be very difficult for you to maintain the respect of others if you do not take responsibility for your actions.

Apologize when you know that your decision was not best for the company. Your employees will appreciate your honesty and you will gain their respect.

# **Make Training Available**

Employees who are enthusiastic to learn are some of the best additions to your team. Make sure training is available to help their skills develop. This could be webinars, online courses, mentoring, or job shadowing. These passionate employees can potentially be your managers and directors. By providing training and learning options you increase the chance they will want to stay on your team.

# **Allow Individuality in Dress Code**

Suit and tie attire are a thing of the past for most jobs. Allow your employees individuality in their clothing -within reason. You can provide guidelines for what is appropriate such as no t-shirts, jeans or sandals. However, small changes that allow self-expression can make employees feel more engaged in their job position.

# **Thank Employees for Good Work**

Everyone likes to know that they are appreciated. Acknowledge your employees hard work. For large projects, you may choose to reward an employee with a gift certificate, bonus, or extra vacation time.

See [20 Techniques for Acknowledging Your Employee's Good Work](#) for ideas on thanking employees for their good work.

# **Provide Flexibility on Hours**

Different employees are more productive different hours of the day. If your office allows the flexibility, provide your employees with a two-hour window for coming

to work. For example, your employees must start work between 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM. They can leave from 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM. This flexibility works for employees that workout in the morning or drop their kids off at school. It can also attract potential employees that have a long commute or have to deal with a lot of traffic that might not otherwise consider your company for employment.

Take the time to build a company with engaged employees. You may find that you have a decreased turnover rate, increased productivity, and you have a team that is easier to manage. Not to mention, you will build a healthier, happier working environment.

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## **10 Mistakes Successful People Never Make Twice**



We all make mistakes. When a mistake occurs, we have two options:

1. Blame someone else and continue with the same behavior.
2. Learn from our mistake to make more productive choices in the future.

Successful people choose option two. You must use your mistakes as an opportunity for growth in order to meet your business goals. Of course, you can also apply these suggestions if you think of your career as a business as well.

It's important to realize that you are not alone in making mistakes. The following are 10 common mistakes that successful business owners seldom make again:

## **Let Other People Bring Them Down**

Successful people will always have “haters”. These are the people that are jealous, doubtful, or just do not like you. It is easy to be discouraged when someone is constantly questioning your decisions. To be successful, you cannot let “haters” bring you down. Be confident in your abilities.

## **Make Emotionally Driven Decisions**

The most logical thinker can be ruled by their emotions. Unfortunately, emotionally based decisions can be detrimental in business. We often make emotionally based decisions from a disgruntle in a partnership or upset client. When emotions are high, take a moment to pause and rethink your decision.

*How will this affect your business?*

*Will you regret this decision in a month?*

## **Focus on the Short Term**

If we focus on the short term, we will only achieve short term results. Create a plan on how you want to see your business in 5, 10, and 20 years. Work toward achieving your long-term goals.

## **Repeat Decisions that Previously Failed**

A failed approach usually does not succeed the second time. When you fall short, take a step back, evaluate why, and change your approach. A successful business leader alters what is not working for the company.

## **Fail to Document Important Information**

Paperwork is almost everyone’s least favorite task. However, you will be happy you were thorough at tax season or when a customer requests a prior contract.

### **Important Information to Document**

- Revenue

- Expenses
- Contracts
- Customer comments/complaints (or performance evaluations)

## **Let Fear Dictate Their Decisions**

Fear can make or break a business. Successful business leaders do not let fear hold them back. One way to approach this is to ask yourself, “If I had no fear of failure, what would I do?”

You will have to step outside of your comfort zone to get ahead. Often, the decision may turn to failure. Consider your failure as a learning experience and keep trying.

*“I have not failed. I have just found 9,999 ways that do not work.” -Thomas Edison*

## **Underestimate Physical Fitness**

Physical fitness is for more than getting a nice beach body. Working out and eating right has a direct correlation on your energy level. Optimizing your energy and productivity is essential for leadership.

## **Chase Other People’s Dreams**

Seeing other people succeed can be a motivator to reach your own goals. However, you must determine exactly what your goals are in order to be happy with your career. Someone else’s goals may come at a higher price than you are willing to pay. Determine what your dream is and what you are willing to do to achieve it.

## **Stretch Themselves Too Thin**

At some point, we will all take on more than we can handle. Unfortunately, we are not machines and have a limit. Our work will start to decrease in quality and we can miss deadlines.

Be realistic with yourself. How much is too much? A successful business person knows their limits. Prioritize and don't be afraid to say No to things that will distract you or that you know you don't have time to help with.

## **Stop Believing in Themselves**

You are your biggest cheerleader. If you do not believe in yourself, how do you expect anyone else to?

Boost your confidence with these tricks:

- Identify and ease self-doubt
- Stop listening to people who bring you down
- Recall your successes
- Trust and love yourself
- Give yourself permission to try and try again
- Consider each failure as new knowledge gained of what NOT to do next time

Success is a marathon! You have to be consistent to meet your goals. Avoid these ten mistakes to build your business leadership skills.

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## **6 Tips to Becoming a Great Presenter**





At some point, business leaders are required to give a presentation. For many of us, public speaking can be terrifying. According to Statistic Brain, 74% of people suffer from anxiety during public speaking. As a business leader it is critical that you improve your public speaking abilities if you introduce or improve business processes.

The following are a few methods that can create more engaging presentations:

## **Do Not Read from Your Power Point**

If you plan to only read the Power Point then just email your employees a copy. The Power Point should only be an outline of your presentation. And try to limit the resources you refer to during your presentation to the PowerPoint outline. More sources will only distract and confuse you during the presentation. The more you practice and know the material you are presenting, the more relaxed you will be.

## **Use Engaging Body Language**

Make your employees feel like you are speaking to each of them individually with eye contact, smiling, and not turning your back away. Doing so, could make the presentation feel more like a conversation. Your employees will be more likely to ask questions at the end.

## **Tell Stories**

Your employees want to be able to relate to you. Rather than make them feel lectured, give them an example of when you went through a similar situation. Bonus points if you can make them laugh! Provide your employees with

information that is not listed to increase employee engagement.

## **Start Strong**

The beginning of the presentation sets the tone. Do you want your presentation to be light hearted? Make a joke! Is the presentation serious? Start with a statistic or story.

## **Focus on Your Audience's Needs**

Build your presentation for what you would like your audience to receive. If what you are saying does not contribute to the core message then do not say it.

## **Use Your Voice Effectively**

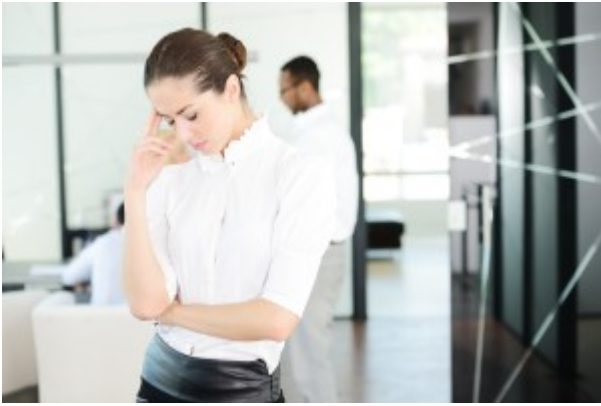
None of the other tips matter if you cannot master your presentation voice. Your audience must be able to hear you. This does not only require speaking louder. Annunciate your words and slow down your speech. Don't rush to get the information out. Try for a comfortable conversational pace.

Practicing your presentation techniques can have many benefits for your career. You can improve training methods, sales, and the efficiency of your company.

Relax... presentations do not have to be that bad!

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# **How-To Manage Stress at Work**



If you have had a job, you probably experienced work-related stress. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 40% of workers report their job at “very or extremely stressful.” In these severe situations, a person’s lifestyle can become compromised. The following are a few common reasons why Americans experience stress at work:

- Low Salaries
- Excessive Workloads
- Few Opportunities for Growth or Advancement
- Lack of Social Support
- Work that is Not Engaging
- Conflicting Demands or Unclear Expectations

Do not let stress overwhelm you. Learn to manage your stress before it takes a toll on your life.

## **Take a Deep Breath**

When stress chemicals overwhelm our body, we experience the “fight or flight” response. Breathing deeply relaxes your muscles and allows fresh air into your lungs that helps relax your body. Next time you feel stressed over a surprising email or overwhelming amount of projects, practice the deep breathing relaxation technique. You can practice deep breathing without even leaving your desk.

1. Sit comfortably with your back straight. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
2. Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.
3. Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles. The hand on your stomach should

move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.

4. Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.

## **Eliminate Interruptions**

Interruptions can add hours to your work day. You may have blocked out time for an important task. However, if phone calls, emails, or co-workers interrupt your schedule, your task could take hours longer than planned. It's important to find ways to prevent interruptions from disrupting your focus.

The first step is to plan for expected interruptions. Notify coworkers that you do not want to be disturbed within a certain time period. Turn off email notifications and send all phone calls to voicemail. Eliminating interruptions can help you get your work done faster and more thoroughly.

## **Eat Right and Sleep Well**

I am sure you have heard of the phrase "stress eating" before. When we are stressed, we seek high fat, sugary, "comfort" foods. Often, these foods stress out our body chemistry leading to fatigue, trouble sleeping, weight gain, and other diseases.

While a sugar rush might be appealing after reading a nasty email, long-term rejuvenation derives from an early bedtime and tall glass of water.

## **Identify Self Imposed Stress**

Many stresses can be alleviated from simple lifestyle changes. For example, focus on your level of self-confidence rather than seeking approval of others. Procrastination can also lead to high amounts of work stress. Make sure your perception of work is not tainting what your work actually is.

# Prioritize Your Work

Most jobs encounter deadlines. Prioritizing your work can help you complete difficult projects. The Liquid Planner Blog explains how to efficiently prioritize your work. Follow these steps to start meeting your goals every day. Find more information within their article.

1. Collect a list of all your tasks
  2. Identify urgent vs. important
  3. Order tasks by estimated effort
  4. Be flexible and adaptable
  5. Know when to cut
  6. You do not have to live with chronic work stress. Managing your stress can help you enjoy daily life.
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## 5 Rewarding Team Building Exercises for an Evolving Company



Every business owner strives for a workplace where their team members work together positively. However, building unity within the workplace requires time and effort. Incorporate team building exercises to help employees adjust to an evolving company.

The following are a few fun team building activities for the workplace:

# **Provide a Comfortable Break Room with Snacks and Beverages**

Everyone needs to get away from their desk during the day. A comfortable break room offers your employees a place to rejuvenate or eat lunch. Inevitably, the break room often becomes a gathering place where employees build community.

Creating a comfortable break room takes little effort. Maintain a few snacks, such as granola bars or fresh fruit, as well as coffee and other work appropriate beverages.

# **Sponsor Job Shadowing Opportunities for Employees in a Different Position**

New employees are often attracted to their job position due to the opportunity for growth. Use job shadowing as an opportunity to introduce the employee to the position while meeting others in the department. Job shadowing is easy to manage with little costs. Job shadowing is essential if an employee is considering transitioning to a new position.

## **What to Include in Job Shadow**

1. Participate in Brainstorming Session
2. Attend a Meeting
3. Take Notes During Planning Sessions
4. Variety of Non-Confidential Activities

# **Hold Company-Sponsored Team Building Lunches**

Food always has a way of pulling people together! Get your employees out of the office with a barbeque or restaurant outing. If your meal is outside, you can schedule fun games where employees work together. Sports work well for team building.

# **Sponsor Sporting Event or Team that Employees Can Participate in Together**

Create a sporting team for your company to participate in together. This could be a community softball, basketball, or kickball league.

You could also sponsor a sporting event, such as a half-marathon or 5k. Provide your employees with company t-shirts. The t-shirts not only create unity but great advertising!

# **Encourage Team Members to Volunteer for Charity Together**

The camaraderie that people develop when they volunteer together is powerful. Create a volunteer event with a local charity. The event could be picking up trash, building homes for poor families, or cleaning hiking trails. Volunteering together can create positive memories that unite the company.

# **Host Activities for Employee's Families**

Company lunches are great but many employees have families that they would love to involve with events. Hold family-friendly events where employees can develop friendships outside of work. The holidays are a great excuse to hold company parties.

# **Family-Friendly Events to Host**

1. Halloween trick-or-treating at desks in the office and pumpkin carving for the kids.
2. Luncheon the week before Christmas before employees scatter their own ways.
3. Bringing a big screen to the office for family movie night.

Team building exercises can be an investment for your company. When people

work well together, they can get more done faster with a positive attitude. It is important to continue team building as your company grows.

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# How-To be a Successful Business Person



Successful business leaders are not just lucky. They work hard and develop character traits that make them dependable employees.

If you are trying to get a raise, promotion, or new job, there are adjustments you can make to your work ethics to achieve your goals. Each of these habits can be started today!

## Be on Time

Punctuality is not only courteous but conveys respect. However, there are people who really struggle with it.

You must learn to be on time to be a successful business leader. This means meeting deadlines, and arriving to work and meetings on-time.

## Respect Your Employer and Co-Workers

Treating employers and co-workers respectfully seems obvious. After all, you probably spend more time with your co-workers than almost anyone else in your life. Why wouldn't you be respectful?



However, many employees develop a superiority complex that prevents them from respecting their employers and co-workers.

Lack of respect can permanently prevent your improving your job title. It is important to start acknowledging and appreciating other's efforts. No one will trust you to take on more work without mutual respect.

## **Avoid Gossip**

Office places always have one or two gossips. Most of the time, these employees are not the managers of the company. Do not get involved with gossip if you want to be successful. You will only get yourself stuck in a trap of "he said, she said" that could send you looking for a new job.

## **They Speak Up at Meetings**

If you want to be successful then you must make your opinion heard. The best method to voice your knowledge is at meetings. Before every meeting, contemplate the problems, issues, and concerns that the company is facing. Develop a few productive ideas that could help the company improve.

If you create a noticeable difference in the company you could be more likely to be considered for the next promotion that becomes available.

## **They Don't Over Apologize**

The ability to apologize is great but can you ever apologize too much? If you are trying to be successful in business then yes!

The Submissive Guide states that, "while seemingly harmless, stating unnecessary things as apologies tends to result in two effects: you essentially undercut every legitimate moment where an apology is actually needed by constantly apologizing (making your apology less valuable) and the negative phrasing that you use either lowers others' opinion of you (because you're constantly associating yourself with a negative exchange of some kind), or insults them because, by apologizing for essentially existing in their presence, you're indicating that you suspect them to be inconvenienced by everything you do (thereby undermining any positive relationship you have with that person)."

In summary, if you are constantly apologizing then you will paint yourself in a negative light, therefore lowering your co-worker's opinion of you. Constantly apologizing could also insult your co-worker by conveying that you are constantly inconveniencing them.

Learn to not apologize unless absolutely necessary!

## **Don't Say "Yes" to Everything**

Saying "yes" to everything can prevent you from doing a great job at anything! You will spread yourself too thin trying to please everyone. Initially, you might think that you will impress everyone by your ability to complete a variety of tasks. However, the quality of your work will probably be inadequate, and you may be viewed as someone that can't prioritize.

Wouldn't it be better to produce superior outcomes, even if there are fewer?

## **Ask for Help**

Somehow, we have developed the idea that asking for help is a bad thing. Many people think asking for help is an act of weakness. In reality, most successful leaders will tell you that you cannot do it alone. It can also show you know how to delegate.

### **Benefits of Asking for Help**

- Creates Community
- Achieve Your Vision
- Develop the Skill of Receiving

## **Own Up to Your Mistakes**

Even Bill Gates made a mistake at one point. If you made one... or two... or three... it's okay! What is not okay is shrugging your shoulders and telling management that you had no idea who did it. Most likely, you will be caught for your mistake AND lying!

### **Steps If You Made a Mistake at Work**

1. Apologize (once)
2. Figure Out How to Fix What Went Wrong
3. Make a Plan for the Mistake Not to Occur Again
4. Tell Your Boss What You Learned From the Mistake