

r i s e

**NP**  
NEWTON  
PARK

Newton Park Publishing

# r i s e

How to be Really Successful at Work  
AND Like Your Life

PATTY AZZARELLO

Rise...

How to be Really Successful at Work AND Like Your Life

Patty Azzarello

Copyright 2010, 2011 by Patty Azzarello

All rights reserved. Except as permitted under U.S. Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Newton Park Publishing

Visit our website at [www.newtonpark.com](http://www.newtonpark.com)

ISBN-10: 0615415776

ISBN-13: 978-0615415772

Published in the United States by Newton Park Publishing

Book Design by [www.KarrieRoss.com](http://www.KarrieRoss.com)

# Thank You.

*To the people who genuinely  
helped me learn the most  
important lessons in work and life in  
order of appearance: Mom, Dad, Kerry,  
Al, Jim, Jacek, Nick.*

*To the many people who personally  
went out of their way to help  
me succeed: You are too  
numerous to list.*

## CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION xi

## DO Better – Have More Impact

*Learn the vital difference between working hard and succeeding.*

*Deal with frustrating obstacles and stupid people.*

## WORK...

## THE RIGHT WAY

- 1 Productive Laziness 1
- 2 The Agony and the Paycheck 9
- 3 They Shoot Work-horses, Don't They? 25

## ON THE RIGHT THINGS

- 4 Ruthless Priorities 35
- 5 Better with Less 57

## AT THE RIGHT LEVEL

- 6 The Level Dilemma 65
- 7 Delegate or Die 77
- 8 Trust and Consequences 93
- 9 Make More Time 109

## LOOK Better – Be Visible, But not Annoying

*Good work doesn't stand on its own. Build your credibility with the people who can help (or black-list) you.*

- 10 Credibility & Relevance 125
- 11 Your Personal Brand 139
- 12 Be Visible, But not Annoying 153
- 13 Selling your Ideas 169
- 14 Look Better! 183

## CONNECT Better – Get Support

*Successful people get a lot of help. Develop your network without being political. Get access to the best opportunities.*

- 15 Authentic Networking vs. Politics 193
- 16 The Experience Paradox 211
- 17 Get Help 223
- 18 Imagine That! 241
- 19 Going Big 251
- 20 Getting on “The List” (There is always a List) 271

## GO! – Make your Work and your Life Work

*Make the right trade-offs on purpose. Get better at enjoying your life while you are earning a living.*

- 21 Work and Life: Be Better at Both 279

## EXECUTIVE CONFESSIONS

What no one tells you... 289

Epilogue

Resources

About the Author

Acknowledgements

# Introduction

## Working vs. Succeeding

I have always been fascinated with really successful people. What actually got them to the top? Was it *being really good at what they do* that set them apart? Or was there more to it?

What struck me was that big success did not just happen to talented, fortunate people unexpectedly. And it didn't happen to the people who tirelessly worked really hard at their jobs.

*Highly successful people seemed to get there by breaking through limitations of how their jobs were defined—by conceiving and doing extra things above and around their jobs descriptions.*

The most successful people had some other things in common:

- Yes, they were really good at what they did, but what they were doing seemed to suit them personally. They were truly *being themselves*.

- They stood out as being different from their peers. They were not doing the job *as written*—they were always getting *more, broader-reaching* results than everyone around them.
- They had amazing networks of people they could go to for information and for help. In fact, getting help was something they did regularly.
- They commanded immense respect from others.
- They fail more than normal people. They hear “no” a lot. They screw up. But they get up again. They learn. They keep going.
- They DO stuff. It’s not always dramatic, but there is always a sense of taking action and making steady forward progress.
- Most of them had plenty of money, but that was never the whole point for them. They seemed genuinely satisfied with their lives. They had happy families, took great vacations, and even enjoyed hobbies and community interests.

I also met many rich people who were miserable, and many successful people who were complete jerks, but they didn’t fit my definition of “success,” so I didn’t include them in my model!

## **Why I wrote this book**

First, I want to share.

I have had a highly successful career. But I was very fortunate to get a lot of help from smart people who cared about me along the way. Because of that, I was told a lot of important things that no one else was. Without serious, personal mentors, most people don’t ever get to learn about what really matters and what really works. They don’t learn how to avoid the common pitfalls, or get the insights to survive the confusing and rough times.

So I want to give away all the secrets! —all the executive, insider information that is typically only shared with a select few people who get taken under a mentor’s wing.

Big success requires all three, not just in sequence or isolation, but in combination. Missing any one of them is what causes most career stalls or wash-outs. Without taking some care to make progress on all three, you fall behind—you get stuck.

Here is where you can begin to see why hard work alone doesn't cut it. The work is only in the DO Better category. If you burn all your time and energy doing excellent work, you may fail to get recognized (LOOK Better), and fail to build a network of support (CONNECT Better). So your career stalls. You are doing an excellent job of everything that is asked of you, but you still get stuck.

Remember, it's not just about the work.

It's about the value you add. To add real value to the business you need visibility to understand what is truly valuable to the business, and to build a broad network of support so you can deliver significant results in a big and far-reaching enough way.

## DO Better

*(work the right way, on the right things, at the right level)*

DO Better is about producing exceptional results.

DO Better is about working on the right things in the right ways. It's about rising above the work. DO Better is about freeing yourself from your overwhelming, tactical workload, and identifying and delivering on the few most critical outcomes, the ones that are really count.

DO Better is about tuning your job, knowing yourself really well, and putting yourself in situations where you can thrive in your work and accomplish exceptional things. It's also about how you lead, build trust, delegate, and make more time and build up your energy.

Successful people are not burned out and used up.

And they are not the ones who were less busy along the way. They deliver remarkable results and leave room to DO even better after that.

## LOOK Better

LOOK Better is about standing out. Successful people do their work and produce their results in a way that is meaningful and visible to people that count. They understand which audiences matter most, and they communicate with the right people at the right times, in a compelling way.

LOOK Better is about building personal and professional credibility, and becoming more relevant with your key stakeholders. People with high credibility get more done because they face fewer obstacles. Successful people are widely known for the extra value they contribute to the business, not just doing their jobs really well. They have risen above the work and proven their greater, farther-reaching value to their companies.

## CONNECT Better

The most successful people get a lot of help. CONNECT Better is about building a broad base of support for yourself, your team, and your work. As you advance, your focus needs to broaden, not deepen.

Successful people are not isolated in their own world. They build the right networks of mentors, partners, and supporters. They know how to get on “The List” of people who get access to the best opportunities.

It’s not about politics; it’s about effectiveness. Successful people build an “extra team” around them, and accomplish

DO Better

---

---

## DO Better

*Learn the vital difference between  
working hard and succeeding...*

No one cares how hard you work.

DO Better is about making sure your work is adding enough value.

Become a better leader personally, and help your team step up. Deal with annoying obstacles and stupid people. Your job description is not a life sentence – you can change it to deliver more value and be more satisfying. Learn to renegotiate your overwhelming workload. Refuse to burn your time on things that are not so important. *Have more impact.*

# 1.

## Productive Laziness

### Be Less Busy

OK, here's the rub...

**B**efore we even get started on the *DO Better* part of the model, you can imagine throughout this book that I'm going to suggest that you do things that you are not doing today. But if you are like most people, you have no extra time.

The key point: *You need to have time to do extra things.* If you don't make yourself less busy, it's game over. You might as well put this book down and just go back to work.

You need to use your time differently. You need to rise above the work. You need to figure out how to make yourself less busy with your current workload to make room to do higher value work. No one will do this for you.

### **The over-busy manifesto:**

1. **No one other than YOU has any motivation whatsoever to make you less busy.** Your team, your boss, your peers, and your business partners all only benefit from your tireless output.
2. If you are overwhelmed by the activities of your job, and you use up all your time and energy on your current job, you are not ready for a bigger one. Simple as that.
3. **The most successful people are not the ones who were less busy along the way.** They weren't given more time to be strategic, and more room in their schedule to add more value. They figured out how to do it anyway.

### **Embrace your inner laziness**

The first thing you need to do is to give yourself permission to be less busy.

#### KEY INSIGHT:

*It's important to realize that not only do you have permission, as a leader you are expected to be able to deal with an overwhelming work load and not stay overwhelmed. That's the job.*

Your job as a leader is to deal with it and make it more manageable. You are supposed to create systems and processes to get more done with less effort. You are expected to think strategically, prioritize, and focus on the most critical tasks. But you never get to do any of this if you don't first give yourself permission to be less busy.

## **It is up to you to put yourself in a job where you can win**

Every highly successful person I have interviewed about this has had a moment in their career when they decide to stop trying to do everything, to work with other people to cover the areas they are not good at, and to put themselves in their power alley. Once you do this you will be surprised at how much you can deliver, how impressed people are, and how irrelevant your weaknesses become to you and others.

At any point in you have three choices. If your job is not working for you, you can:

1. Do nothing about it—make no change—stay there, be stuck.
2. Change the nature of your current job to be more satisfying.
3. Change your job.

Most of this book will center around #2, because #'s 1 and #3 you can pretty much do without reading a book! But also, if you do want to get a new job to make your life work better, it's important to understand how doing #2 really works. That way you can make sure that your new job will work for you, and you will thrive doing it.

## **The hard (and important) part**

As much as we all crave someone to tell us what we should be when we grow up, or to discover us and put us in the perfect job, it doesn't happen. Understanding your strengths at a core level is not easy to do, and takes real