

DRIVE/ INITIATIVE



Makes a strong, positive impression; is a self-starter and originator; maintains high levels of activity and produces a high level, high quality output. Sets demanding goals for self and others and is dissatisfied with average performance.

Behavioural Indicators



- Approaches everything with energy (highly self-motivated): takes ownership and accountability for achieving results by pushing self and others within the team / department to exceed quality expectations and improve delivery times
- Seeks to make a difference and exceed expectations
- Gets things done; displays a strong “can do” attitude (doesn’t procrastinate or make excuses)
- Able to implement solutions and deal with stumbling blocks (stays positive)
- Takes immediate action when confronted with a problem; proactive in suggesting ways to meet current and anticipated client / customer needs
- Volunteers for additional tasks and assignments beyond expectations of own role



Improving drive

Initiative and creativity move the world. They foster the realization of innovative ideas in various industries and contribute to constant development.

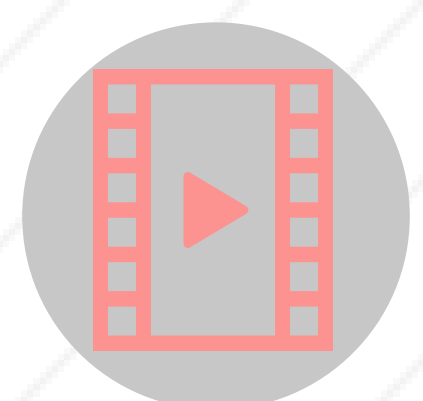
There is a great demand for energetic professionals who are inventive and enterprising enough to be proactive in everything they do.

When you show initiative, you do things without being told; you find out what you need to know; you keep going when things get tough; and you spot and take advantage of opportunities that others pass by. You act, instead of reacting, at work.



Exercise

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/one-the-best-goal-setting-exercises.html>



Motivational Videos

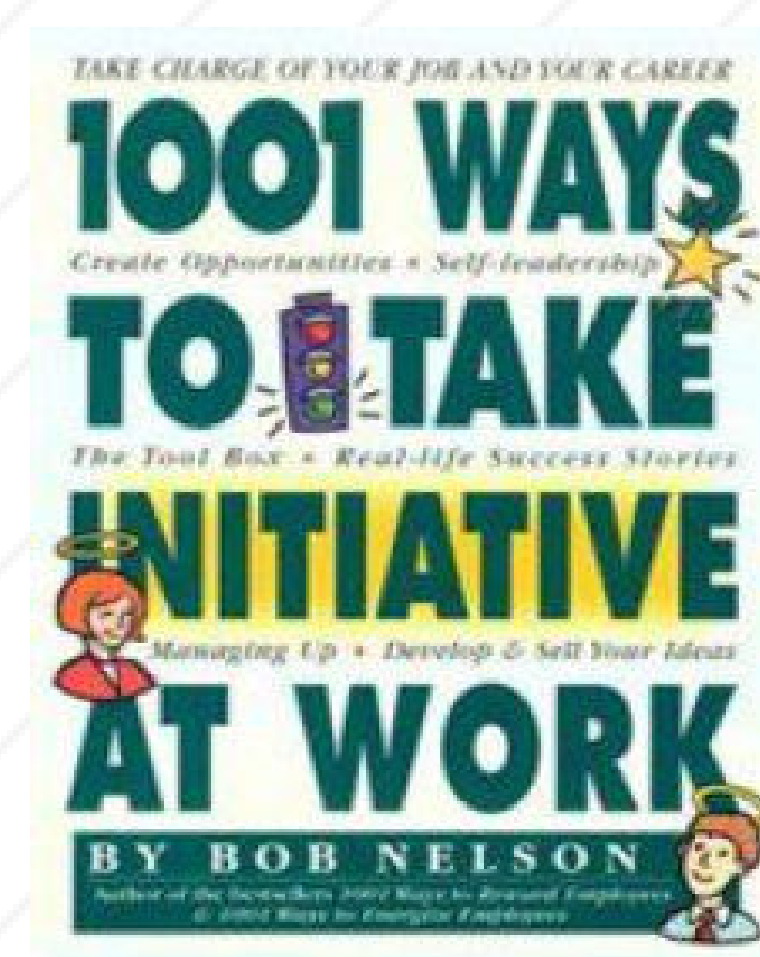
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTDt5mv0-rk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hZCdS1Bbk4>



Suggested Reading

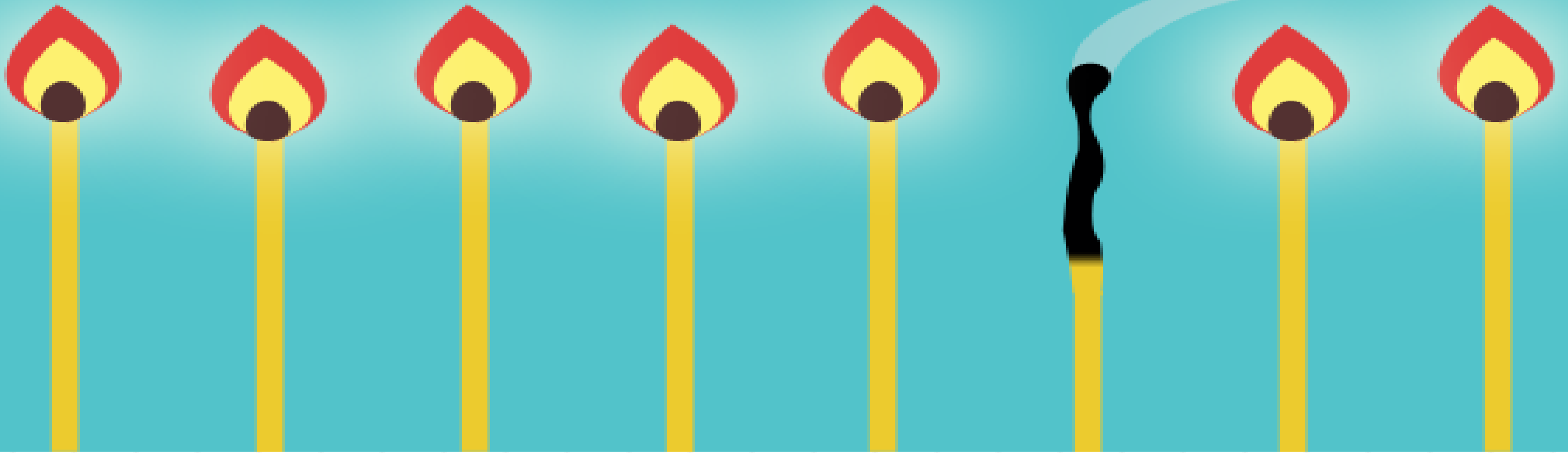
- 1001 ways to take initiative at work





Reasons for a lack of drive

Before you can develop this competency, you need to identify possible reasons why you may lack in this area. Below are some reasons people lack drive/initiative:



1. MOTIVATION



Motivation is a very important factor in compelling or helping people turn that wheel of life. Here's the thing about motivation it comes in small bursts, we have to utilize them at precise time to fuel our actions. Some people are high on motivation at one time of day and at other times they are just down right demotivated and just want to drift through the day. So, you have to use your motivation armoury at precise times to keep the wheel moving.

2. PRE-SET NOTIONS



Our pre-set notions regarding our life and other things makes it difficult for us to initiate that substantial change in our life or in other aspects of life. While growing up we have acquired these pre-set notions from media, other people, hearsay etc. But here's a thing it's their opinion and this doesn't necessarily means their actions or notion will hold true to your situations or thoughts.

3. FEELINGS OF DESPAIR



That mental voice always coaxing us to let go of things before it builds up and becomes detrimental to our little delicate life is what stops us to take initiatives.

4. THE NAYSAYERS



It's human psychology or more or less human mind innate ability to wield to others ideas and ideology. We are so sceptical to our thinking process that we do not give it a chance to prevail rather we pin our hopes onto others experiences and ideas. Sometimes, it's good to go out and face the music and see for yourself. Some things are worth experiencing.

5. HOLDING ONTO THE "NORMS"



A school once had a big board which had some scribbling about personality and it said tailor yourself to fit properly in the culture and following the norms. What utter rubbish to pass onto to young budding generation. Norms are mere tools to make one a prison of the society. These shackles need to be broken and people need to be set free.

6. OVER THINKING



Let's just not go into this little mischievous conniving trick our mind plays with us. Think less in your solitude and then shut your brain unless you can control your thoughts. Be gentle to yourself, love yourself. If you are not going to be gentle to yourself don't expect others to be gentle. How you treat yourself sets the tone for others.

7. FOCUS ON END RESULT RATHER THAN PROCESS.



Generally people focus on the end result, which is not even important. One should focus on the process, the journey. That journey to the end result teaches you more than the destination you have set sail for.



STEPS TO DEVELOP THE COMPETENCY

Try these 9 steps to improve your drive/initiative:

CONSIDER EVERY OPPORTUNITY

Opportunities are hidden everywhere, and people who see them are the ones who prosper. Make a habit of constantly asking yourself: "What opportunities for growth can I carve out of this situation?" If needed, think about this same question again and again. Gradually you will find the answer. You may see a chance to show your unique professional abilities.

BE SELF-PROMOTIONAL

If you firmly believe in something, don't accept every criticism you receive. So many successful entrepreneurs' ideas were initially considered to be a failure. But they persisted and won. If you have a firm foundation for certifying the success of your insight, then do your best to convince others of its importance. Each situation may require a different approach. Find out the best one to promote your ideas depending on a current circumstance.

ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS

To take initiative you should know how things work and how you can improve them. For this purpose, try to observe everything going on around you as much as you can. Be curious and ask questions. Try to find out how the things work and analyse each situation. This will give birth to new ideas and ways to contribute to the growth of your organization more and more.

ALWAYS BE PREPARED

Tackle new skills and refine your abilities all the time. You learn and grow by challenging yourself. This will give you the knowledge and confidence to show more initiative in current or upcoming projects. It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one than to have an opportunity and not be prepared. That is why you should aim high and constantly grow both as a person and a professional. As soon as you see a chance to use the acquired competence, go ahead and do that.

THINK AS A TEAM MENTOR NOT AN EMPLOYEE

You can't care and devote yourself fully to something that you don't consider as yours. We have the same concept in the workplace too. If you decided to take initiative at work, then think about yourself as a team member. This means that each success, each achievement of the organization is yours as well. Corporate prosperity will lead to your personal prosperity too. As soon as you establish this mind-set you will start caring about each detail and dedicating all your efforts to achieving profound outcomes.

DO MORE THAN IS REQUIRED OF YOU

Ability to perfectly implement the delegated tasks is, of course, an important quality for being effective at work. But this won't give you the opportunity to stand out. There may be a plenty of people in your organization who succeed in that.

Do you want to be exceptional? Then act exceptional. Try to do something extra all the time. One important rule is to concentrate on areas where you can generate the most visible and remarkable results.

NEVER STAND STILL

People who do the things the way they have always been done will in the best case get the same results all over again. It's not a secret that even for staying in the same place you have to run faster and faster. Thereby, for standing out you need to be creative. You should constantly search for new solutions and more effective approaches. Ideas are the most expensive matters nowadays and so far the best contribution you can offer to your organization.

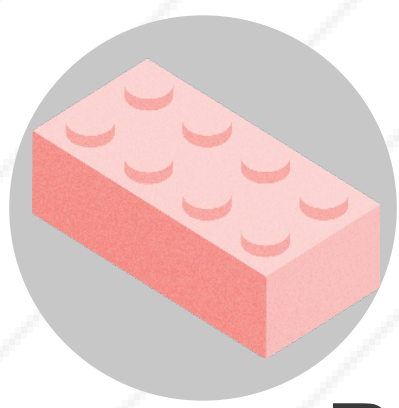
SPEAK UP AND SHARE YOUR IDEAS

Do you have a brilliant idea? Then go ahead and speak about it. A million wonderful ideas haven't meant anything to this world just because they were not told; no one knew about them.

There is always need for fresh, powerful concepts. If your suggestions are based on broad research and adequate facts, then you have a great chance to see them being realized in the near future.

FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT

It's not a secret that self-confidence is one of the most powerful characteristics of successful people. It is extremely important in any sphere, place, or circumstance. Your confident gestures, voice, and behaviour will have a crucial role on your way up the career ladder. So, develop your self-confidence all the time. Focus on your strengths and build on them to realize your goals.



Useful Tips

Below are some top-tips to assist you in taking more initiative at work and in life:

- Make a habit of asking “what if” instead of accepting the status-quo
- Schedule creative brainstorm sessions by yourself or in groups
- Challenge yourself to try new things every day for a week
- Ask a lot of questions
- If you are spending a lot of time doing boring tasks, ask yourself if it really needs to be done. If it does, find ways to make it more efficient. Consider outsourcing some of those tasks.
- Do different self-awareness exercises every day for a month. Take personality tests. Journal. Ask your friends and family about your strengths and weaknesses.
- Make a list of all the things you’ve been meaning to do for a while – whether it’s something as small as cleaning the house, or something as big as writing a book – and start doing at least one thing from that list straight away.
- Find a mentor.
- Form a mastermind group.
- Join a class to learn something new, even if it has nothing to do with your career.
- Make a list of your biggest mistakes. Journal about the lessons you learned from those mistakes.
- Speak up. Next time someone asks you for an opinion, or if you are in a meeting, don’t hold back. Present your ideas, or say exactly what you think. You have to be comfortable with yourself and your beliefs, to get used to taking an initiative.
- If you see something that needs to be done, go do it – even if it’s not a part of your responsibility.
- Admit your mistakes.
- Set goals.
- Participate. Make your presence known by taking part in any discussion or activity with enthusiasm.
- Take advantage of new opportunities.
- Discover your values. Do you know what you stand for? Your core values are an essential part of the life you want to create, so spend some time thinking about them.
- Make a list of things around you that are not quite good enough, the ones that you know could be better. Pick one, and brainstorm how you’ll make it better. Then, immediately implement the idea.
- Make decisions. When something needs to be decided, don’t just worry or think about it and prolong the situation.
- Follow the 80/20 rule. Focus your efforts on the things that will deliver high impact results.
- Make a conscious effort to give your absolute best to every task at hand.
- Be persistent. If you want something, and you know you are right to want it, then keep at it. Don’t let the fear of rejection hold you back.
- Influence is power. Experiment with different ways to improve your influencing skills.
- Send a hand-written “Thank You” card to someone who has helped you.
- Approach one person who’s good at something you want to improve in, and ask them for help. You could either ask them to be your mentor, or make a mutually beneficial offer where you provide them with something they need in return.
- Lead by example. If you are trying to get someone else to do something, do it yourself first. Inspire action in others. Don’t force it.
- Help someone with zero expectation for any reward, or even a thank-you. Help them because it’s the right thing to do.
- Find an informal leadership position. Organise events in your local community; offer your help with school projects; start a group that brings like-minded people together. Leaders lead – whether they get paid for it or not.
- Find one way that you can improve your communication skills, and practice it every day for a fortnight.
- Find out how other people prefer to communicate. Wherever possible, use the medium of their choice.
- Bring solutions, not problems. This is a cliché for a reason. No one likes naysayers and whiners. If you see an issue, by all means bring it up. But have something constructive to say as well.
- Anticipate your manager’s, partner’s, children’s, friends’ needs. Do something for them that they need, without their having to ask you.
- Regularly ask people in your life for their feedback on your strengths and weaknesses.
- Be honest. Be yourself. Success without authenticity is meaningless.
- Be your own best supporter. Learn to present your ideas and plans in positive and effective manner to others.
- Volunteer for difficult or weird assignments.
- Smile at people. Greet them. Friendliness is the most effective way to create connection.
- Give what you want to receive. This is similar to “do to others what you want done to you.” If you want respect, give respect to others. If you want opportunities, give the opportunities in your power to people who would benefit from it.
- Find a work environment that supports your authenticity. Don’t try to fit in a place that is totally wrong for you.
- Create a plan for where you want to be in five years’ time.
- Actively break-off association with all negative influences in your life. Surround yourself by people who support, motivate or inspire you.
- Regularly review your progress on your goals, and adjust your course as required.
- Pick one skill that is important/necessary for you but you aren’t very good at, and focus on improving it to a high level within 4-6 months.
- Simplify your life.