



And The Award Goes To...

The goal of this book is to equip you with some simple tips, tricks and habits that will help you distinguish yourself from your peers, many of whom may also be new corporate professionals. Face it, these peers may be your friends, but they're also your competitors. You are all on a playing field and the prize is upward mobility; getting off the first rung of the corporate ladder, getting more responsibility, more challenges, more prestige and naturally, more money.

I want you to be set apart, to be thought of as head and shoulders above your workplace competitors, to have everything you need to catapult yourself over those first few rungs of that ladder.

But before we get started, I want you to answer what you may think is a rather bizarre question. You may even think I'm rude to ask you this question. It's a simple "yes" or "no" answer, but I want you to sincerely think through your past as you formulate your response. If you are honest with yourself, the answer you give may be hard to admit and may be hard to take.

So, here is the question: Are you a trophy kid?

For those not familiar with that term, a trophy kid is one most likely born in the 1980s or 1990s. They were most likely very pampered by their parents and as a result have a strong sense of entitlement.

That is, they often feel like someone owes them something just for showing up.

So, what's your answer? Are you a trophy kid?

One way to help think through this is to answer another set of questions. For instance, do you have great expectations...expectations not of yourself, but of others?

More specifically, do you expect your employer to give you flexible hours and mold themselves to your needs and lifestyle? Do you expect to be rewarded by your employer for doing the bare minimum required of your job? Do you believe there are some jobs or tasks that are beneath you, that you'd rather starve to death before doing? Do you expect to be CEO in five years, but don't want to give up your free time? Will you blame someone else if you miss a deadline because you didn't receive a reminder notice?

If after some honest self-evaluation, you come to the conclusion that you may just possibly, on the extreme outside chance of probability, think you're a trophy kid, that's ok. You're not alone. In fact, according to a survey by CareerBuilder.com and as reported in the Wall Street Journal, 85% of hiring managers believe that those born between 1980 – 2001 (a.k.a. The Millennial Generation), "have a much stronger sense of entitlement than do older workers."

Of course being a trophy kid isn't necessarily your own doing – it's the way you were raised. Most parents spoil their kids and want them to have the best of life and avoid hardship. You'll maybe do the same when you become a parent. But you have to admit, after living 20 or so years getting golden trophies even though your soccer team never finished above last place, it may be hard to overcome the expectation that you should be rewarded for just being a participant at your workplace.

Don't get me wrong, I love the trophies. But now that you're in the

real world, things just don't work that way. If they did, cops would be pulling you over and giving YOU money just for not breaking the speed limit.

So, maybe you received trophies all your life for just showing up. Maybe that didn't make you feel like you were more special than everyone else. Maybe it did. But at this point, your days of participation trophies are over. As of this moment, if you show up to work, great. Then get to work. If you don't show up, great. You've decided to get yourself fired.

Now, it's all about performance. It's about performance and doing a few extraordinary things. Look at that word "extraordinary." It's a compound word. You can break it down into two words, "extra" and "ordinary." There is a truism in life that states the difference between ordinary performance and extraordinary performance is that little "extra" you put into your effort. Learning how to be extraordinary in your job is what you'll find in the rest of this book.

To be sure, none of the insights described on these remaining pages will be of any use to you if you are not committed to a strong work ethic. As you may already know, life is not always fair, but it is usually a lot more fair to people who work hard and don't sit around waiting for good things to happen to them. Success won't come to those who play themselves as the victim of their circumstances and let life control them instead of the other way around.

I hope this has not offended you. Believe me, that's the last thing I want to do. But you need to be aware that there is a perception out there you may need to deal with, whether it's fair or not fair. If your answer to the question was "no, I'm not a trophy kid and I've never been afraid of hard work," you'll still need to deal with the generalization that some people have.

If on the other hand, you answered, "Well I might be a trophy kid," then you will need to work on making sure you are willing to do

whatever it takes to succeed in your new career.

If you think you're entitled to live the lifestyles of the rich and famous just by showing up, you're in denial. You'll be left in the dust. You've got to achieve. You've got to strive for it.

So here is my promise to you. If you practice the time honored virtue of hard work, saving your money instead of spending it like a drunken congressman, and practice the techniques described in these pages, the best trophies of life will all come your way. And when you actually earn them, when you truly deserve them, then I guarantee, those will be the best trophies you'll ever receive.