



## **SUCCESS RULE # 30**

### **Maintain a Success Portfolio**



A success portfolio is simply a way to provide evidence of your productivity. Why is this important? First, it is a constant reminder of, and accountability to, your success. If you've followed these rules and tools, you will recall the first rule is, Success . . . it's everything you think it is. Success builds confidence, confidence leads to success, and success builds . . . well you get the picture.

Secondly it's a resource to refer back to, not only so as to improve on previous successes, but also to be able to refer back to when it's time for your review. Ideally one would expect an immediate supervisor to be aware and knowledgeable of what we've accomplished over the past year when it comes time for our annual review. The truth of the matter is they typically don't know what you've done for the past few months, much less for the past year. Instead your review becomes simply a snapshot of the past several weeks versus a compilation of the whole year. . . unless you have a success portfolio.

With a well-constructed success portfolio, you can either provide it to your supervisor, bring it with you for your review, or use it yourself and write an "executive" overview to give to your reviewer. I first learned this technique in its simplest form as a young Lieutenant in the Air Force. My supervisor called me in to go over my Officer Performance Report. I was totally taken aback by the lack of information he had written about me. It was at that moment I realized no one cares more about my career than I do. From that point forward I kept a log of all my projects, accomplishments, letters of appreciation and anything I felt important enough to record or keep. Never again did I receive a poorly written review. My ideal log? A simple Table. The date, what is it that was done. What were the measurable results? What was the tangible benefits?

Date	Event	Results	Benefit
22 Jul 2018	Coordinated the efforts of 6 employees and rewrote office employee handbook	A comprehensive handbook outlining in a concise, easy to read format defining our values, vision, mission and goals. Included were policies and procedures on employee responsibilities pertaining to . . .	Over an initial three-month period, supervisors saw an increase in morale and productivity of employees. HR saw a 50% decrease in filed grievances

It is said luck isn't anything more than when preparation meets opportunity. In other words, we create our own luck by being prepared. You're at a business card exchange, a cocktail party or industry conference and during conversations you meet someone who is interested in your work, your services, or can perhaps further your career. You arrive at a follow-up meeting with your success portfolio, or you send one via email, it may just get you that new job or client you were looking for.

Be Extraordinary!



# **LEADER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**

## **TIPS FOR CREATING A SUCCESS PORTFOLIO**

### **WHY SUCCESS PORTFOLIOS WORK**

Success portfolios work so well because:

- They provide tangible evidence of your productivity. By contrast, most applicants base their employment pitches solely on uncorroborated promises of their productivity. In other words, actions speak louder than words.
- Employment pitches that feature impressive materials appeal to multiple senses. Therefore, they are more vivid and memorable than oral pitches alone.
- Your competition probably won't take the time and trouble to create a success portfolio. Therefore, your success portfolio will help you prove to interviewers that you are more organized and thoughtful than other applicants.
- Your portfolio will leave your interviewers with an indelible impression that will linger long after you have left the interview.

### **WHAT YOUR SUCCESS PORTFOLIO SHOULD LOOK LIKE**

Your success portfolio should be a portfolio with pockets that holds a well-formatted, hard-copy version of your resume, your business card, and a sample of documents that validate your relevant successes. If your achievements involve the web, you may bring a device with an Internet connection with your relevant web sites bookmarked, so that you can easily show them during your interview. However, if you choose this method, be sure to have a back-up plan in case you do not have an Internet connection in your interview office.

Some tips on creating an impressive hard-copy success portfolio:

- When you're invited to an interview, ask for each interviewer's name and title. If possible, provide each interviewer with his or her own portfolio that is labeled with their name and leave it with him or her when you leave the interview. Bring extra copies of your portfolio for unanticipated readers.
- Emphasize key text in the portfolio with a highlighter. Label and annotate your materials so they are self-explanatory to hiring managers who may review your portfolio after the interview is over. Identify your contributions to group projects.
- During your interview, artfully weave your success portfolio into the conversation. Introduce your portfolio with pride and confidence but without cockiness.
- Remember: preparing an impressive portfolio is time-consuming. So don't leave its preparation to the last minute.

### **TYPES OF DOCUMENTS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR SUCCESS PORTFOLIO**

- Excellent performance evaluations; praising emails from managers, colleagues or clients; evaluations from conferences, trainings or other events you helped organize; major awards and their justifications; and written recommendations from your references.
- Writing samples, such as reports, articles, newsletters, press releases and associated press clips.
- Print-outs of PowerPoint presentations you prepared or delivered.
- Programs from events you organized or conferences that featured your work.
- Explanatory maps, charts and photographs.
- Samples of artwork or manufactured products that you helped produce.
- Students and recent grads: your transcripts, copies of your relevant papers (preferably with praising comments from professors) or a list of your relevant courses or papers that received high grades.

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Rules and Tools for Success

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