

Lessons Learned (and Still Learning!) 2015 edition

1. Be **maniacal** about doing the right thing.
2. **Say Thank You.** If your people work late or go the extra distance, acknowledge and thank them. Food works!
3. **How to always have successful projects:** If you have the perspective that “if the project fails, it’s your responsibility, and if it’s a success, your people are the reason why” is the mindset.
4. Administrators react, **managers anticipate.** Be a manager.
5. **Add Value to Every Communication:** If no one is commenting on your report or weekly email, no one is reading it.
6. No substitute for “in person” talking: By the second email, **pick up the phone or go talk to your manager.** This is particularly true regarding **escalations.**
7. Never underestimate the power of **pre-selling** to those you will impact before you make a change.
8. **Use your voice:** If you’re in the meeting, contribute. **Say something.** Staying on the sidelines is sometimes **worse** than getting sacked in the game.
9. **Prioritizing gives time back to you.** You have to schedule capacity.
10. Friends and family members spell love “**T-I-M-E**”. Show up.
11. Don’t aim for perfect. Aim for the **best** you can do.
12. Most things we worry about **never materialize.**
13. **Be a true team player.** Help someone who is down. Don’t badmouth. Coach.
14. Be brave: stand up for your position. **Speak up.**
15. When things go wrong– notify people immediately and take accountability. **Bad news never ages well.**
16. Hire slow, fire fast.
17. Don’t play the angles/weaknesses/backdoors to a process. **Point them out.**
18. **Mentoring Test:** you should be “having a cup of coffee” with at least 2 people more senior than you on a regular basis...they should know you. Create the relationship now..not when you need help.
19. **Assume positive intent**
20. If someone’s struggling, ask yourself it’s a **will or skill** issue? If it’s a skill issue, you can change it. **Will, you can’t.**
21. A presentation tells a story. It’s almost always “Where we are, where we want to be, how we’re going to get there.”
22. Be fast **and** accurate. One without the other is only 50%.
23. Always take the tough assignment. **Raise the bar for yourself.**
24. **Myth: “My work stands for itself”.** If no one is talking to you about promotion, it’s probably not going to happen.
Three Ps: Performance (are you **consistently** excellent?), Platform (is your job big enough to warrant the title?), and Perception (do people know who you are and what do they think of you?).
25. **Say hello.**
26. Be **consistent.** Random wins don’t make you a first string player.
27. **Learn when and how to say no.** Usually, “here’s what I have on my plate. If we do this, what should come off the list?” works.
28. **Inspect vs Expect or, “In God we Trust, all others we verify”.**
29. Just like on planes, put the oxygen mask on **you first** before you help anyone else.
30. **Provide feedback quickly and frequently...both good and bad.**
31. You don’t need to have a plan, but you need to know **your anchor value.**
32. **Don’t opt out prematurely.**