



Practice is Your Best Training

Mastering any career or profession takes time. Many have suggested 10 or even 20 years of dedicated learning and application. Given that most employees now change employers multiple times per decade, the difficulty comes in accumulating the proper skill sets over a shorter period of time. People aren't sticking around long enough to master their jobs. Industries are accumulating a whole arsenal of "jack of all trades... masters of none".

There is a counter to this argument (all-be-it limited). The saturation of internet information such as YouTube and social media creates a virtual tsunami of raw information or potential career training. The demand for one-on-one mentoring is replaced with digital learning. For many, this type of learning speeds up the mastering process. However, digital learning has downsides.

The failure to interact with people limits the social graces needed to truly master a career. One of the major components of becoming a "master" or professional is the

ability to truly work effectively with people. Practicing the art of conflict resolution or minimizing potential damages through patience, gentile responses or empathy is simply not promoted on the internet. Social media emphasizes the exact opposite. Try posting a contrarian opinion and the reaction is more like the Sci-Fi movie "The Blob" where people are consumed and absorbed by a mindless, faceless mass of emotional violence.

Mastering any career in trucking (especially driving) requires strong people skills and the ability to professionally react to: dispatch, shippers, traffic, DOT and receivers just to name the few obvious ones. Increasing the use of YouTube and Facebook hardly teaches or encourages patience and diplomacy. In fact, those who spend too much time on either usually build tendencies of impatience and narcissism. The internet may deliver head knowledge but hardly any advice or mentoring on the personnel crisis that you may be dealing with today. Social media doesn't provide much experience in building skills such as discernment

(an ability to effectively judge/evaluate a person or situation without direct disclosure). The subtle art of reading people takes time, effort and a significant dose of humility.

Too much head knowledge can cloud a person into believing they know what they are doing but they have no experience in it. There is no personal critiquing process. People think it is enough just to know they should have patience. True patience comes with practice. The ability to act professionally when someone is pushing your buttons is what is needed. Knowledge itself doesn't necessitate a great degree of humility and discipline.

All great masters hold humility in their portfolio. In order to truly master anything, we must practically assimilate new, contrarian or different information... being stubborn, arrogant or unaccountable immediately stops the learning process.

The internet is not known for assisting in the development of humility. In fact, it usually inspires the opposite. Studies are now showing that social media aids in LOWER self-esteem (everyone else's life looks so good... compared to mine).

If you want to advance in your career, avoid excessive use of the internet. Embrace difficult situations in real life.

Learn how to respond effectively... face to face interaction is an art that will advance your career better than just cyber-resolution.

Old school is still the best class to take.

About the Author:

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