

Children First

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By

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“Working with education leaders to keep children first.”

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Ideas About Work

Even Sweat Has Dignity

Our task as parents is the help prepare our children for the world of work. Unless they're born into the lap of luxury, children will have to earn a living. But even under such circumstances, some effort may be needed to keep that luxury going.

How do you start educating your child about work? Begin early to give small jobs around the home. Teach responsibility and sharing the load of household burdens. Let children know that a little sweat won't melt them and that committing to task completion is a vital part of the world of work.

Normally those who work their brain stand a better chance of making more money than those who work by the sweat of their brow. But it's pleasurable to sweat a little. I grew up having to do things around our home that generated a lot of sweat. My work involves using my brain more than my muscles so an occasional shift to sweating is a welcomed change for me.

If you don't mind working hard, sweating a lot and getting your hands dirty, you will always be able to find work and make a living. So, mom, dad—let 'em sweat!

Initiative Is In

Firms studying the job market are predicting that employers are shifting their focus to attract employees who possess key critical skills needed by their organization. While cost controls are still important, employers are striving to balance this activity while retaining the best and brightest needed to drive their profits up. Employees not possessing critical skills will be more vulnerable to reductions.

Employees who demonstrate initiative by properly preparing themselves become key players in an organization. While that has always been the trend, the importance of doing this has risen sharply in recent months. After firms discovered that a “brain drain” occurred when they forced very experienced older employees to retire, they're now changing their tactics.

What does that mean to you as a parent? From my vantage point, I'd say teach your child to be an observer of what key skills are needed in the industry of choice upon which they've focused their future career. Teach them that initiative is in and minimally contributing to the welfare of the organization is out.

There are always exceptions and sometimes one is employed by a bad corporation. But from my work experience of over forty years, I'd still maintain that good workers will always be employed. And, if you are a good worker with an exceptional skill base, you will be in demand and probably never without work opportunities in front of you.

Some Ideas on Job Success

No matter what career choice your child might make, there are some basic characteristics one must master to be totally successful. Let me share a few.

1. **Honesty & Dependability.** No one wants to hire a crook unless your child is applying for a job with organized crime! That career choice aside, organizations want someone honest to the core—no stealing (things or time); my word is my bond! If I tell you I'll do something, I do it. That denotes dependability. Being willing to step up to the plate in times of need is dependability. Dependable and honest people will always be in demand and hot in the workplace.
2. **Responsibility.** Workers who understand that their performance is their responsibility are a step ahead of the competition. Taking responsibility to learn all one can about a job, the duties required, and how to improve profits for my company are traits organizations need in this competitive economy. "I am responsible" are mature words.
3. **Solves Problems.** Don't go to your employer with problems, provide solutions. Organizations need people who can assimilate facts and draw smart, correct conclusions. Problem solvers survive. Problem producers perish.
4. **Forms Relationships.** Strong workers know how to work well with his or her fellow workers and build personal respectability. They are team players who have equal concern for helping others as well as helping build their own careers. Relationship building is the key to opening career options or building business.
5. **Being Punctual.** Whatever time your work schedule starts, be there. Companies want you to show up on time and ready to work. Habitual patterns of tardiness can quickly result in termination.
6. **Self-starter.** Managers don't have time to jump start workers. They are not battery cables! Organizations want initiative, energy, and enthusiasm from workers. Always be ready to "get up and go." Learn to overcome your own inertia and you will make progress.

Mastery of these six simple characteristics sets your children apart from a large number of their co-workers. Take a second look at the list and you'll notice that every one of these characteristics begin to form in the family environment. Help your children off to a fast start by teaching and demonstrating these values. You cannot afford to short change your child on this important parental responsibility nor can you trust that they will learn on their own.

Begin with this short list and build other character building ideas into your parenting responsibilities. Make these items the subject of talks with your children. Continual emphasis raises the relevancy and importance.

Checkout Billy

Billy Arcement, MEd. brings “wisdom that makes a difference” to your meeting or organizational training session. Corporate and education leaders appreciate the quality of his messages and recognize that improvement results from implementation of the knowledge shared. He blends thought provoking ideas with his “Cajun Stories” to bring audiences a winning combination guaranteed to make your event a success.

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Build Your Success Library

Searching for Success is a great book for parents to use to build a strong value system within their children. The content can also help make them better students. Why not make it part of your training process with your child? Send your \$ 15.00 check now and receive a signed copy in the mail within a few days.

All Work and No Play Can Be Dangerous

While it’s important to build career skills, life must take on a balanced format. Placing too much emphasis on work leads to a distorted view of life. There must be time off to pursue a hobby or simply go out and have a little fun. Teach children about priorities and a balanced lifestyle. Children possess a natural ability to have fun. Don’t let that fun side disappear as they grow up. Help your child understand there is a time for serious work and for serious fun. Parents can help by serving as role models for working hard to earn a good living for the family and then enjoying the fruits of this labor by celebrating in a fun-filled fashion.

There’s Another Newsletter for You

Some of you may not be aware that we publish a second monthly newsletter, *News from the Swamp*. It is filled with practical ideas on personal and organizational leadership topics. You’ll find value to help with your career and personal success strategies. Subscription information follows.

Your Child Is Not You

Many parents live vicariously through their children. They are determined to steer them into a career that they missed out on. The most abused example of this is the father or mother who pushes and forces their child to be a perpetual participant in athletic events such as football, baseball, basketball, etc. Such parents believe their child is the most gifted athletic that ever lived. They push them to participate so the world can recognize how great of an athlete they are and what wonderful parents they have. They push children to attempt to earn a college scholarship. Some also dream of that professional athletic career they missed that will now be realized by their child. Forget the unbelievable odds to reaching a professional athletic career. They let the dream of millions of dollars cloud their vision. Doesn’t matter if children possess no athletic ability. Let’s press on so I can make my child what I never was.

Athletic competition can be a great character builder if done properly. Athletes should like the sport and be willing participants. But get real. Let it be fun and give it the level of importance it should have. If you're blessed with a real superstar, (a very rare occurrence), encourage and pray that your child gives it his or her best shot. If talent is mediocre (the norm), be realistic and let the experience be fun. When your child is no longer competitive and miserable participating, let them find something else to bring joy to their heart. Never forget it is their life, not yours to live over again. You've had your chance. Let your child have their chance.

Value Added Ideas

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