

Being Indispensable and Empowered in the Workplace

By Jennifer K. Hill

“I've learned that people will forget what you said,
people will forget what you did, but people will never
forget how you made them feel.”

— Maya Angelou



Why am I here?

- To give you access to being indispensable and empowered in any situation
- To offer you tools to access your greatness and be extraordinary
- To provide insights into how to respond powerfully to all situations in your life
- To enhance your communication personally and professionally

What we are going to cover

- The top 10 ways to make yourself indispensable in the workplace
- Looking at how your perspective can shape your reality
- Exercises to give you access to being empowered when engaging in challenging personal and professional situations
- Overcoming the “Drama Triangle”
- How to reverse the “Accidental Adversarial” relationship between attorneys and staff

The Challenge

- Many people in the workplace face upsets and frustrations on a monthly, weekly and/or even daily basis that can diminish their happiness and fulfillment in the workplace

The solution is you!



What does **indispensable** mean?

Merriam-Webster's definition:

- *Not subject to being set aside or neglected <an indispensable obligation>*
- *Absolutely necessary : essential <an indispensable member of the staff>*

My definition:

- *Proving your worth by increasing the productivity, efficiency and/or performance of your firm, and your firm's clients*
- *What does being indispensable mean to you?*



The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#10

ALWAYS display a professional attitude and be the type of person that others want on their team: **Exhibit a can do attitude** at all times

The top 10 ways to make yourself indispensable

#9

Always learn - This includes taking continuing education classes and keeping up with the latest trends in your industry by reading articles, journals and books and/or taking tutorials on relevant subjects or software

The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#8

Know your practice area, know your clients, and know your technology better than everyone else in your office

The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#7

**Anticipate the needs of your assigned lawyer:
Take initiative**

*One of the biggest pet peeves of employers is an employee who only does what is asked and nothing more!

The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#6

ALWAYS be the **one others go to for help** and be helpful at all times

The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#5

Be the type of person your assigned lawyer would **trust** to run things while he/she is out

The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#4

ALWAYS be **reliable and on time**

*Be in the office at all times unless absolutely necessary!

Being **dependable and accountable are often the most important things employers look for

The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#3

Listen to what is being asked of you

Answer the question that is being **asked** of you



The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#2

Conduct yourself **with impeccable integrity**, which includes not only doing what is asked of you, but more importantly, doing all of the things you know should be done

The top **10** ways to make yourself **indispensable**

#1

Whoever you work for, **make their job easier**

Cardinal Rule in Business

When we make others look good, we
make ourselves look good.



Contribution

- What types of contributions do you accept?
- What types of contributions do you reject?



Your perceptions affect your reality

- Is perception reality?
- How are our perceptions created?
- How does the way we perceive people impact the way they show up?
- When you are approached by a “difficult” attorney, manager and/or peer, what do you mentally tell yourself about that person?
- What is the harm in choosing a “good” perception?

Check how you are perceived by others by asking the following questions:

- What was your first impression of me when we met?
- Where have I surprised you?
- Where have I disappointed you?
- What can you count on me for?
- What can't you count on me for?
- What is your impression of me now?

Reacting vs. Responding

- Reacting: an instinctual act designed to counter-balance something else (weak)
- Responding: a choice to act (powerful)

Are you reacting or are you responding?

- When someone in your office makes a mistake or gets upset with you, how do you react and/or respond?
- What does it look like to react?
- What does it look like to respond?



5 easy steps to respond powerfully

- 1) PAUSE
- 2) ALLOW A BREATH
- 3) Ask yourself, am I taking this personally?
- 4) Ask yourself if what you are about to say is the truth and if it needs to be said
- 5) Ask yourself if you can say it from a non-emotional place



Accountability

“If you want to know what you are committed to, look at what you have.”



Drama Triangle

- Drama Triangle: Hero/Victim/Perpetrator
 - If you are standing in any one of those stances you are not accountable because you are blaming one of the other stances in the triangle
 - Example “You made me feel X”
- Start by accounting for how you are contributing to that situation.
- Results of Drama Triangle can include: guilt, blame, shame, anger, frustration, resentments, etc.

Exercise

- For 24 hours use a notepad or your smart phone to make a mark every time that you do any of the following:
 - Complain
 - Justify
 - Blame

What is the “Accidental Adversarial Relationship”?

- A simple misunderstanding
- If party “A” does not understand where party “B” is coming from, you are going to naturally have unfulfilled expectations, frustrations and resentments
- It is as though one person is speaking “orange” and another is speaking “apple”

Basics to better understanding

- Men and women are designed differently
- That said, it is important to understand that a woman who is driven and type “A” can often exhibit masculine traits and vice versa
- What we are going to work on is teaching an “Apple” to speak “Orange” so that they are using the same language to communicate regardless of background

Keys to effective communication

- The first key to effective communication with an Orange is to begin with, “I am sorry to interrupt...”
- Followed by: “Is now a good time?”
- Once one has established it is a good time to talk with an Orange and/or requested a future time to speak, a good ask is necessary.
- Examples would include: “I need your help,” “I would be happy if...”, “You will be my hero if you can help me with X.”



Four ways to have your communication land in an empowering way

1) Check your perspective

2) Be mindful of your tone

3) Choose your language

-Omit words such as: “try” “might” “should”
“hard” etc.

-Replace with words such as: “can” “will” “am”

4) When in the midst of an upset or confrontation, get curious rather than assume

Additional Resources

- A great resource for a better understanding on how men and women are designed is: www.understandmen.com
- Also, Alison Armstrong's book, Keys to the Kingdom, is another great resource
- Landmark Education is also a wonderful resource for fostering better interpersonal skills and more effective communication: <https://landmarkworldwide.com/>
- Another great resources is the book "The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz

Five elements to generate being empowered and indispensable

- Be an opening for contribution
- Remember to look for the good in every situation and person you encounter
- Pause before you respond
- Be accountable
- Use empowering language

Thank you!

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