

@DareToBeThe1st

THE FIRST

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Things
you must
W Learn
in order to
Succeed
at work

DARE TO BE THE FIRST, LLC

A pink-rimmed pair of glasses is positioned diagonally across the upper half of the image. In the top right corner, a portion of a white computer keyboard is visible, showing keys for 'command', 'option', and a question mark. On the left side, several colorful paper clips (yellow, green, blue, red) are scattered. In the bottom left corner, a pair of yellow-handled scissors is partially visible. The entire scene is set against a light pink, textured background.

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**Keep your dreams alive.
Understand to achieve
anything requires faith
and belief in yourself,
vision, hard work,
determination, and
dedication. Remember all
things are possible for
those who believe.**

~ Gail Devers

1 WHAT PEOPLE THINK OF YOU MATTERS.



School can be full of bullies and mean girls. I'm sure everyone has come home from school a bit sad because of that. My mom would always tell me to not worry about what people thought of me. Instead, she wanted me to focus on my work and let that speak for itself. What I know today is that what people think absolutely matters. And it's not just what the mean girl thinks or what my teacher thinks. It's my boss, my bosses boss, my peers, the people in HR, our external partners, our board, and so on and so on. Most educational settings lead us to believe that we live in a meritocracy. In school, the work speaks for itself. The grade is all that matters. At work, the smartest most accomplished person isn't always in the leadership seat. Likability and who you know is just as important as your work product. That can be tricky for young professionals because those with influence aren't always their direct manager. Being conscious of what people think, managing your personal brand and building networks is critically important to getting ahead at work.

2 HARD WORK ISN'T ENOUGH.



Yes, hard work matters but results and outcomes matter more. There's no A for effort in the world of work. In school, you may have gotten a gold star for activities and effort. If you have a big presentation and you stayed up all night to prepare and research but you ultimately never created the powerpoint or the handouts in order to deliver the presentation, none of that effort matters. Everyone doesn't get a trophy or certificate of participation for just showing up. College students have also grown accustomed to having the opportunity to "reset" their reputation and credibility each class and each semester. At work, it is a never ending semester! Every encounter you have will either build or break your brand or reputation. The stakes are higher at work and unfortunately, in the the minds of young professionals you're only as great as your last mistake. *le sigh*

3 THERE IS NO SYLLABUS IN REAL LIFE.



Throughout the entire educational journey, teachers tell students what to do and when to do it. In some classes you will see the words "Do Now" or "Do Next" permanently on the board with an assignment underneath. The hallways are filled with people in straight lines following attentively after one another. In college, you receive your syllabus on day one which maps out your entire semester with a clear road to the finish line. The real world is far from this educational utopia. There is no syllabus. there is no roadmap. Many times, the work you are assigned is ambiguous, the solution isn't obvious, and sometimes the problem itself isn't clear. I've seen this frustrate so many young professionals. They want "leadership" to tell them what to do. The future of work is filled with trends connected to artificial intelligence, so execution-only roles are being automated quickly by computers and robots. Those who thrive in the workplace are those that can think critically, solve problems and push through ambiguity. Students who will thrive at work have a sense of curiosity, a growth mindset and are solution oriented.

4 FAILURE IS A REQUIREMENT. EMBRACE IT.

Parents and teachers alike protect their kids from failure at every turn. From government programs like "no child left behind" to passing out certificates to everyone participates, the feeling of failure is something that many young professionals haven't felt until work. Helicopter parents don't want their child to feel disappointment or pain and unfortunately it is a disservice to them and the world by not allowing them the opportunity to experience that feeling early on and practice how to rebound from it.

Personally, I RARELY let my 10 year old daughter win at anything. She loves to race and I'm proud to say that my inner FLO-JO is still there! She and her dad would get so mad at me for not letting her win but I know that they will thank me in another 10 years. There are winners and there are losers. If you want to win, you have to simply work harder. No one is going to "give" you anything. You have to earn it through hard work, focus and commitment. When students don't learn to fail as children they become adults who cry in the workplace when told they aren't great.



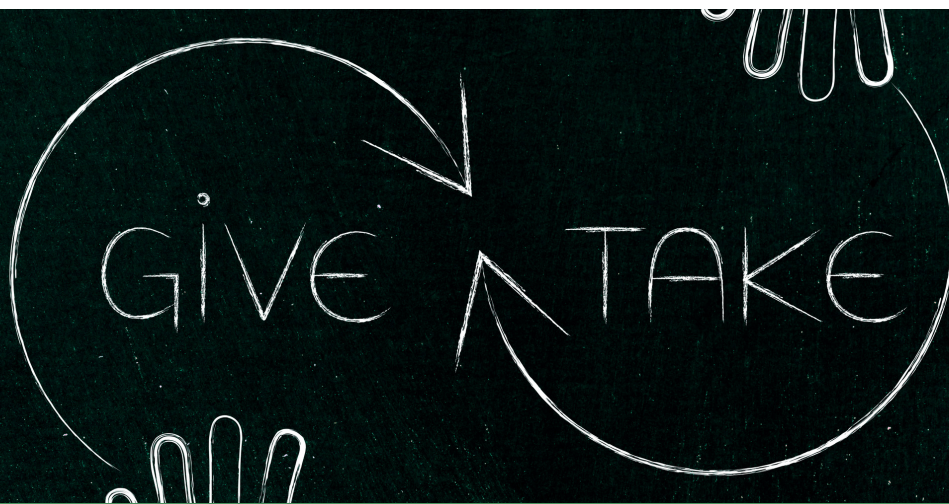
Keep your dreams alive. Understand to achieve anything requires faith and belief in yourself, vision, hard work, determination, and dedication. Remember all things are possible for those who believe.

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5 IT'S NOT (JUST) ABOUT YOU.

In school, it feels like every man or woman is for themselves. At the end of the day there's one valedictorian and you receive a report card with your singular name and grades on it based on your personal effort. Work, on the other hand, is a team sport! You need people in order to win. Mentorship and sponsorship are critical to advancing your career. In school, all of the answers are usually in a book. At work, the answers are unwritten and unspoken. Mentors coach you to uncover these invisible rules of the road. And if you're lucky, those mentors turn into sponsors who will advocate for you in rooms where decisions are being made about advancements. As a CEO of a growing team, one of my pet peeves is when young professionals snatch credit for EVERYTHING in the name of self promotion rather than sharing the spotlight with their teammates or manager. We know that everyone has played a role, but rather than provide praise to their teammate or manager, they eagerly receive any and all accolades.

Among my team, I recalled having a conversation with my mentor who reminded me that my job was to make my boss look good. A younger professional listening enthusiastically disagreed. Not only did she disagree, she had never even heard that advice before. After an informal poll of my team, 95% neither agreed or had even heard that as advice. What I know for sure is that the law of reciprocity is real. When you share positive praise about your team or manager, that same praise will likely come back to you which will ultimately give you the recognition you crave and likely deserve. What emerging professionals don't realize is that the praise that others give is actually worth 10x that of the words you say about yourself. Snatching opportunities for praise leaves you with a brand of being self-centered, arrogant and professionally immature. It also lends to a toxic political work environment that is bad for everyone.



5 Steps

in a Glance

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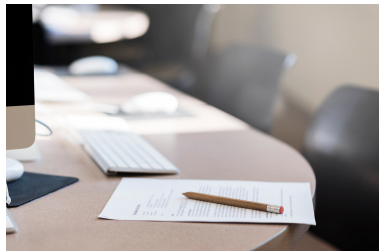
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About *The Author*



Dominique Jordan Turner Author | Speaker | Coach Strategist | Entrepreneur

Dominique Jordan Turner (DJT) is a FIRSTIE through and through! Being the first in her family to do many things like graduate high school and college, she believes that those who are the first have a special gift. They have what she calls 'superpowers' that are developed because of where they come from. On her journey as a first generation professional, she is learning something new each day. She has made it her mission to share these nuggets of wisdom and insight with other FIRSTIES like herself. They don't teach you these secrets in college!

DJT is attempting to help others redefine what leadership looks like. Born in Chicago's Ida B. Wells housing projects, her life wasn't destined for leadership or success. Being the first in her family to get a college degree was a defining moment on her leadership journey. Currently, as the CEO of Chicago Scholars, Dominique is helping a new generation of young people in the city of the Chicago not only get to and through college, but to live a life of fearless and passionate leadership.

She has received many awards and acknowledgements for her leadership including most recently being selected as one of 20 inaugural OBAMA FELLOWS out of an applicant pool of 20,000 global leaders.



5 THINGS YOU MUST UNLEARN IN ORDER TO SUCCEED AT WORK