

was in. My head was full of wonderful and great projects to simplify the processes, to design new machines, to revolutionize the methods of the whole establishment. It is needless to say that 99 out of 100 of these projects were impracticable, and that very few of them ever came to anything, but I was devoting every minute of my spare time, at home and on Sunday, and entirely too much of my time in the works, to developing these wonderful and great projects. Now the superintendent of the works, who had been a warm friend of mine for years, wanted me to keep all of the machines going with the minimum loss of time, and kept telling me this over and over again. I, however, knew much better than he what was for the interests of the works. I did not daily ask myself, "What does this man want me to do?" but I daily told myself just what I ought to be doing. He stood this as long as he could (which was a great deal longer than he ought to have stood it) and finally came into my office one day and swore at me like a pirate. This had never happened before, and I, of course, at once made up my mind that I should get right out; wouldn't stand any such treatment. I, however, remembered my early advice, and waited 48 hours before doing anything. By that time I had very greatly cooled off, but for two or three weeks at regular intervals my friend, the superintendent, repeated this process of damning me up and down hill, until he finally beat it into my dumb head that I was there to serve him, and not to work in the interests of the company according to my own ideas, when these conflicted with his; and from that time forward I made quite rapid progress toward success.

What your employer wants is results, not reasons. He wants you to *get there*, and he is not interested in your explanation of why you failed to get there. There is one saying which we have all used since childhood, and which has had no little part in the failure of unsuccessful men. We have all of us said, "I have done the best that I know how; no one could expect any more of me." Now, whenever a man fails to get the result that his employer asks for he should feel intense chagrin and disappointment, instead of feeling satisfied because he has done the "best he knows how." What we are in the world for is to learn continually to do better than we know how. And be sure that in 99 out of 100 cases your employer has

very little interest in hearing that you have done the "best you know how," when you have failed.

Andrew Carnegie came back from England one summer and found that one of his superintendents had made an unusually large profit in his plant. He wrote this man a check for \$15,000 as a gift. Another of his superintendents had lost money, and when this man started to explain to Mr. Carnegie the reasons for this loss, Carnegie said, "Oh, John, don't bother about telling me any reasons. One single reason is good enough. Just tell me that you are a ——— fool—that'll do."

Now, this sounds brutal, and yet it forcibly expresses the mental attitude shared by perhaps the majority of employers when they are given *reasons* instead of *results*. Let me tell you how this fact was driven home in my case.

A workman came up to my house in the middle of the night to tell me that a valve had broken, and shut down one of the large departments in the works. I took the earliest train at 6 o'clock down into Philadelphia, hired a carriage and drove all over the city to every dealer who might possibly have the valve on hand, and also to all the establishments who were users of this kind of valve. I failed, however, to find it in Philadelphia. About noon I returned to the works, feeling very well satisfied that I had left no stone unturned in my hunt for the valve. I started to explain to the superintendent just how thoroughly I had done my work, when he turned on me.

"Do you mean to say that you haven't got that valve?"

"Yes, sir."

"Damn you, get out of this and *get that valve!*"

So I went to New York and got the valve.

Not reasons, but results, are wanted.

There, however, is one exception to the rule that you should do just what your employer wants. You, of course, must do nothing mean or dishonest for your employer. If your employer wants you to do anything of this sort, get a new employer.

But what I want particularly to call your attention to is, that in almost all cases success is due not to the brilliant qualities, but to the plain, ordinary, homely virtues—to grit, determination, perseverance; to the willingness and the character required to do ordinary, disagreeable things; to the ability to take a licking and come up smiling, over and over again.

I think I am through now with personal illustrations. I have tried to emphasize the fact that

success, character, common-sense and integrity count, and that the most important idea should be that of serving the man who is over you *his* way, not yours; and that this lies, generally speaking, in giving him not only what he wants but also giving him a little extra present of some kind, in doing something for him which he has no right either to ask or expect.⁴

In an engineering establishment there were ten or fifteen young college men who were all trying to work up into good positions. Among them there was one man of no especial ability. He didn't do especially well at college, although he was an ordinary scholar. He appears to have been endowed, however, with fully the ordinary amount of common-sense. At any rate, he saw an opportunity for advancement which the other young men failed to see.

Most of the departments of the works ran night and day, so that every Saturday night and Sunday urgent repairs were required to keep the place running. Naturally, the work of making these repairs was in no way sought for by these young college fellows. They all had something much more interesting to do on Sunday—either choir practice or lawn tennis or social engagements of some kind. So that the superintendent in charge of repairs had a hard time to get the men whom he wanted to work hard, and chiefly on Sunday. One of these young college men, however, went to the repair superintendent, and told him that he didn't mind Sunday work at all—in fact, he rather liked it. He said he had served his apprenticeship as a machinist, and didn't mind being called upon at any time. This was such a new experience to the repair superintendent that he sent for him to come in on the following Sunday. He did so well that he kept him at work practically every Sunday throughout the year, and also quite frequently all of Saturday night, and, contrary to what usually happened, he never had any kicks or complaints from this young man. All of this man's friends, however, laughed at him and remonstrated with him for being so foolish as to take much more than his share of Sunday work. This was particularly true of the rest of the college fellows. His parents, his social friends, also told him that he was nothing⁵ but a fool to work in this way. However, by the end of

⁴Nevertheless the researches of the biographer of Mr. Taylor have disclosed that many of the illustrations following represent cases in which young Taylor was the "hero," thus illustrating his habit of "disguising the incident so as to avoid the appearance of boasting." (Copley's Frederick W. Taylor, Vol. I, p. 197.)

a year practically every superintendent throughout the establishment wanted this young man in his department, and as a result he was promoted with great rapidity. At the end of two or three years all of the other college graduates were wondering why this man, who really was not as smart as some of them, was given all the promotion, all of the good jobs, all of the best positions.

In another establishment a young man, also a college graduate, had worked up to be at the head of one of the departments. A drain which ran underneath this mill became clogged up. He sent his best foreman and a gang of men to clean it out. After they had tried to do it with jointed rods of all kinds, they failed, and reported to him that the only thing to do was to dig down, break open the drain, and clean out the obstruction. Now this drain was some twenty or thirty feet below the mill, and ran underneath the foundations, which made it extremely difficult to dig, and certainly involved the loss of several days in the operation of the mill. This young man made up his mind that the drain must be cleaned, so he took off all of his clothes, put on overalls, tied shoes on to his elbows, shoes on to his knees, and leather pads on to his hips to keep from getting cut in the drain, and then crawled in through the black slime and muck of the drain. Time and again he had to turn his nose up into the arch of the drain to keep from drowning. After about 100 yards, however, he reached the obstruction, pulled it down, and when the water had partly subsided backed out the same way that he had come in. He was covered with slime perhaps half an inch thick, all over, which had to be scraped off with a scraper, and his skin was black for a week or two where the dirt had soaked in. He was, of course, very much laughed at, and finally the anecdote was told as a good joke at a meeting of the Board of Directors. The President of the company,⁵ however, realized that this was just the kind of joke that his company appreciated. He realized that the company had been saved perhaps one or two thousand dollars in profits by the grit of this young man. It was the first time that it had been called to the President's attention.

A few weeks afterward the President sent for him to come to his office and said, "I have tried to get the oil out of the cylinders of our steam hammers.

⁵The President was William Sellers; the company, Midvale; the young man, Taylor. (Copley's Frederick W. Taylor, Vol. I, p. 145.)

³Russell W. Davenport, at Midvale. (Copley's Frederick W. Taylor, Vol. I, p. 131.)