

## It's Not How Good You Are, It's How Good You Want To Be

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“Nearly all rich and powerful people are not notably talented, educated, charming or good-looking. They become rich and powerful by wanting to be rich and powerful. Your vision of where or who you want to be is the greatest asset you have. Without having a goal it's difficult to score.”

In Paul Arden's short, dynamic book It's Not How Good You Are, It's How Good You Want To Be, he uses personal stories and the process of advertising to explore how to creatively enhance your professional career.

Some Highlights from the book:

You can achieve the unachievable.

- Focus on aiming above where you can hit; make goals that seem beyond what you are capable of
- Arden claims this will create a vision that you can inspire yourself with

Do not seek praise. Seek criticism.

- Ask questions like ‘What’s wrong with it?’ or, ‘How can I make it better?’
- Seeking criticism will lead to break-throughs in design, thought process, and to different perspectives on ideas you might have gotten locked in on

Don't look for the next opportunity. The one you have in hand is the opportunity.

- Whatever is on your desk right now, that's the one
- Do the best with what you have

Don't be afraid of silly ideas.

- Pathway to eliminate mental blocks
- “High creativity is responding to situations without critical thought” – John Cleese
- Try playing:
  - Do the opposite of what the solution calls for
  - Whatever catches your eye next, make that your solution

How you can make your company great.

- Everyone has a desire to be proud of the company we work for
- Not company of the year? Make it better:
  - Start by talking it up
  - Think and behave like a winner
  - Watch people catch the idea

When it can't be done, do it. If you don't do it, it doesn't exist.

- New ideas can be unfamiliar, silly, or both
- New ideas can't be judged by a description
- Create your idea, make it exist

“Fail, fail again, fail better.” – Samuel Beckett

Energy: It's 75% of the job. If you haven't got it, be nice.

Why do we strive for excellence with mediocrity is required?

- Creativity= the brilliance that comes out of a rebellion against structure
- The normal mediocrity of the workplace calls for a creative spark to make something special
- Talent can get you so far, it is your ambition that really takes you all the way

The cleverest people at school are not {necessarily} those who make it in life.

- What sets the truly successful people apart is their drive to continually be better than they are
- Creating goals can make your achievements limitless

It's all my fault.

- Once you have touched something, you should claim full responsibility for that piece of work
- Eliminate excuses

Do not covet your ideas.

- Share your thoughts about issues, processes, and innovations
- This will force you to be more aware of your surroundings and constantly replenish your brain with fresh, new ideas
- More ideas will bounce back to you
- Ideas are open knowledge.

Accentuate the positive.

- Make your positives brighter with dramatization
  - Ex. You know a horse can jump a ditch, you accept that it can jump the Grand Canyon

Eliminate the negative.

- Don't hate on your competitors
  - It publicizes them, not you
  - It's an easy cop out

Don't put cleverness in front of communication.

- DON'T do a quick fix with a witty idea
- DO ask more questions, find the root of the problem

Don't promise what you can't deliver

- Leads to disappointment and a lack of trust

Start with his way then do it your way.

- Your client knows what he wants
- Give him what he wants first, then show him your ideas
- Bring him out of the corner

It's wrong to be right.

- Being right: based on knowledge, experience, and is provable
- Knowledge: past
- Experience: old solutions
- Being right=lazy

- Leaves you concrete in old ideas of the past with a closed mind
- Arrogance and morality

It's right to be wrong.

- Being wrong: everything is possible
- In the unknown
- Risks associated with it
  - "Stupid idea!"
  - Get stonewalled at meetings
- Risks mean there is more to gain

Don't give a speech, put on a show.

- In a song, we remember firstly the melody, then we learn the words
- Make your presentations striking and visual
- Paint a picture

Compose your ad from the weakest point.

- Treat weak spots as advantages, not problems

If you get stuck, draw with a different pen.

- Change your tools → free your thinking
- Plainness can help focus on the idea but it also dulls the product
- Water colors, charcoals, pencils, fountain pen, etc.
- Open up your mind

Suppliers are only as good as you are.

- The art is to inspire
- Craft a vision to expand both your views
- Show them the better way; no fear

Don't be afraid to work with the best.

- Best can be difficult:
  - Single-minded
  - Tunnel vision
  - Intimidating
- Clear and strong ideas will come across best
- Guaranteed superior job

Get out of advertising.

- 90% of advertising inspiration comes from other advertising
- Stop repeating old news
- Push to be original
- Look for inspirational from other sources

Do not try to win awards.

- Awards: glamour → income
- Judged using a consensus of what is known
- What is in fashion ≠ originality