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Self Starting

A session from
Rx Online

Self Starting

Demonstrating initiative and willingness to begin working.

Why is this skill important?

An essential part of Self Starting is your attitude and willingness to focus! You must believe in your ability to get results. Effective leaders act independently to define and achieve objectives without supervision. If you want to be seen as a leader in your organization, you must be more than just knowledgeable about your subject area or profession. Rather, you should establish ambitious and challenging goals and become known for achieving them.

You may be an expert at defining your priorities, seeking and accepting feedback from others, and achieving every goal you set for yourself. But more likely, from time to time you will feel a lack of commitment to your job or a lack of satisfaction in your daily activities. When this happens, and it does to all but the luckiest, it is critical that you focus on your commitment to your career and personal growth, as well as take responsibility for your actions.

A person who is good at Self Starting will maintain a consistent level of activity toward a task and will stay busy without supervision.

Unfortunately, people with poorly developed Self Starting will be easily distracted from the task at hand. In fact, they are so easily distracted that distractions don't have to be from an outside source, but can be daydreams or random thoughts. These people may also have difficulties maintaining a sense of focus or direction toward obtaining personal or professional goals.

What skills are associated with Self Starting?

Someone who has mastered skills associated with Self Starting:

- Possesses unwavering confidence and belief in personal capabilities.
- Takes initiative and does whatever it takes to achieve goals.
- Projects confidence and self-assurance.
- Bounces back after setbacks.
- Asserts self in personal and professional life.
- Accepts personal responsibility for achieving personal and professional goals.
- Functions effectively and achieves results in adverse circumstances.

How do you develop your own skills in Self Starting?

- Define your priorities and see if they are in alignment with how you spend your energy.
- Make your job more rewarding by redefining your role and/or the tasks you devote your energy to.
- Participate fully in the workplace. Put in extra time and effort if they are needed to do a good job.
- With your company's mission in mind, define your personal and professional goals. Where do you want to be in six months or a year? How would you like to improve yourself? How would you like to be perceived at work?
- Identify opportunities to move a step above and beyond what is expected of you to add value to your organization or department.
- Focus your energies on accomplishing goals that are important to the management team or organization.
- Once you have committed to personal and professional growth, don't stop until you have achieved your objectives. When you have met your goals, make a new list of achievements you wish to make.
- If you need to make changes, create specific action plans. Always look before you leap and be realistic about the results you expect from making the change.
- Ensure you have quality processes in place. If you don't, you probably won't achieve quality results.
- Challenge yourself and monitor your progress toward achieving key goals.
- Make sure the goals you set for yourself and others are measurable and reasonably achievable.
- Follow up on outstanding issues and bring them to closure.
- Organize the things you use at work so that you are able to find them when you need them.

Self Starting

Activities

Activity 1: Taking Action

Think of a recent situation in your workplace in which you let a project slip between the cracks because you were uncertain of how to proceed. Or think of a recent group project that someone else really seemed to take the initiative to organize. Try to answer the following questions:

1. Why did I let that project slip between the cracks? What action could I have taken to rescue it? Who could have helped me?
2. How did the project organizer get the project moving and keep it on track? Whom did he ask for assistance or direction?

Think of a current project or issue that seems to be stagnating from lack of direction. Is there a committee that has never met to plan the company holiday party? Is there a proposal due to a client, but no one has started the proposal process? Try to establish the following action list for yourself:

1. Who are the key players in the project decision making process?
2. When can I hold a kick-off meeting to discuss making progress toward the goal?
3. How can I keep those people involved actively pursuing the goal?
4. What resources can I offer to the project?
5. What resources do I think others need to contribute?

Once you have investigated the issue thoroughly, it will probably become clear what your role can be in pushing the project or problem to resolution. When you have defined roles and responsibilities among project team members, be explicit about expected results and deadlines. Make sure you follow up not only by completing your task or tasks, but also by calling follow-up meetings and asking other people for updates on their progress.

Activity 2: Personal and Professional Growth

Make a list of five personal goals you want to achieve. Then determine the reason for each goal.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Make a list of five professional goals you want to achieve. Then determine the reason for each goal.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Finally, list two things you can do to ensure you start making progress toward reaching each goal.

Personal Goal 1: _____

1. _____
2. _____

Personal Goal 2: _____

1. _____
2. _____

Professional Goal 1: _____

1. _____
2. _____

Professional Goal 2: _____

1. _____
2. _____