

What I've learned

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A few things I've learned after nearly 20 years:

1) Your mother lied to you! She probably taught you to treat everyone equally...well, that doesn't exactly work. The fact is, big clients are more important than little clients. Don't mistake my message — everyone deserves to be treated fairly and ethically; they just do not deserve an equal amount of your time, attention and resources. If you treat everyone equally, it will hinder the growth of your business.

2) Learn to delegate very effectively. At some point in time, you just can't work longer hours.

3) You only have one reputation, so don't screw it up. Make decisions that your (lying) mother would be proud of.

4) Your mother was RIGHT — Many people win and lose client opportunities by adhering to or forgetting the basics: Show up on time, look sharp, explain what you do, do what you say you are going to do.

5) Be prepared. Chances are the difference between a good year and a great year will come down to less than one meeting per month.

6) Technology is zapping an enormous amount out of our business (and benefiting us in other ways too). The client relationships that we have are still relationships, and we need to keep it that way. At ERA, we try to pick up the phone more than we send e-mails.

7) Don't dwell on losses and failures. They happen to everyone.

8) Celebrate successes! I was always lousy at this when I was younger because I was always looking forward to the next milestone. Live in the moment, and enjoy the wins.

9) Find balance. Find a good man, woman, dog, child, hobby, sport, or any combination thereof. A well-balanced life will make you more productive and creative at work.

10) Find great mentors and latch on to them. With that said, I would like to thank my lying mother, my father for reinforcing point No. 4 (over and over), Bob Allen, Len Reynolds, Bobby Jones and Dan Sullivan.

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