CLASSIC | CREATING | PERSONAL GROWTH

Self-knowledge: The key to preparing for competition

Knowledge is the new power. And literacy is the door to knowledge.

by **Denis Waitley**

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> ***Self-knowledge has always been the key to preparing for competition.***

Knowledge of your attributes, abilities, interests, strengths, weaknesses, and traits is essential to riding the front end of the wave of change into the new century. To fully assess your own talents, realize that studies confirm that what we love and do well as children continues as our latent or manifest talent as adults.

Examination of your weekend or evening interests might reveal a gem of potential you can apply to your vocation. I strongly suggest you don't unthinkingly relegate what you love to do for yourself solely to hobbies. You might make it, or at least integrate it into your life's work.

> ***The acquisition of knowledge, which is the new global power, is a life-long experience, not a collection of facts or skills.***

Not long ago, what you learned in school was largely all you needed to learn to secure a career. With knowledge expanding exponentially, this is no longer true. Hundreds of scientific papers are published daily.

Every thirty seconds, some new technological company produces yet another innovation. Your formal education has a very short shelf life. Life-long learning, once a luxury for the few, has become absolutely vital to continued success. Continue gaining expertise and avoid thinking like an expert.

Action Idea: An excellent benchmarking exercise is to spend a weekend with key associates or family members and dust off your childhood memories. Remember what you really enjoyed and wanted to do most as a child. The next activity in assessing your interests is considering your current ones. What do you most enjoy after work? What do you most want to do on weekends and vacations? What are your hobbies? Can you bring more of what you enjoy into your business life?

Action Step - Increase Your Reading, Writing and Vocabulary Proficiency.

One of the most important qualities of successful leaders is an ability to express thoughts and knowledge. Research by management and human resource experts confirms that no matter what the field of employment, people with large vocabularies - those able to speak clearly and concisely, using simple as well as descriptive words - are best at accomplishing their goals. Well chosen, carefully considered words can close the sale, negotiate the raise, enhance relationships, and change destinies.

In a world of e-mail, fax dispersal, voice mail, sound bites, concise reports, business plans, and meeting briefs, the individuals who can articulate their goals, substantiate their claims, and support their visions, will own the future.

In the 21st Century, literacy will be the major difference between the haves and have-nots.

Why do fewer than 10 percent of the public buy and read nonfiction books? One reason is that many would rather get home than get ahead. They are motivated to get by and get pulled along by the company, the economy, or the government.

Another reason is that many individuals believe that information found in books, computer programs, and training sessions has no value in the business world. How self-deluding!

As the new tools of productivity become the Internet, the Digital Versatile Disc, direct digital download of text, audio and video, and the combination of the interactive computer with telecommunications, the people who know how to control the new technologies will acquire power, while those who thought that education ends with the diploma are destined for low-paying, low-satisfaction jobs. In almost the blink of an eye, our society has passed from the industrial age to the knowledge era.

Increase your reading by 100 percent. Decrease your television watching, and that of any children in your family, by 50 percent. Surf the Internet and subscribe to book summaries, or download free chapters from different sources. By reading book summaries, you can gain the essence of all the top business books in a very brief period of time.

Action Idea: Read at least one book each month, and listen to at least one additional audio book or education series during commute or down time.

Knowledge is the new power. And literacy is the door to knowledge. Hopefully, listening to the “Psychology of Winning” program will be one of the keys that will open the door to your future for you.

Denis Waitley is one of America's most respected and beloved authors, keynote lecturers and productivity consultants on high performance human achievement. He has inspired, informed, challenged and entertained audiences for over 25 years from the boardrooms of multi-national corporations to the control rooms of NASA's space program. Denis has been voted business speaker of the year by the Sales and Marketing Executives' Association and by Toastmasters' International and inducted into the International Speakers' Hall of Fame.

With over 10 million audio programs sold in 14 languages, Denis Waitley's CD album, *The Psychology of Winning*, is still the all-time best selling program on self-mastery. To order this Best-Seller or his newest release, *The Platinum Collection* and to subscribe to the free Denis Waitley Weekly E-zine visit his website here: DenisWaitley.com