

Work Lessons From The Nursery



No matter what your job —
being careful is critical.



by
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Your visit to the nursery.

Imagine you are a parent on your way to the nursery for a visit with your new baby. As you stop at the window, you see the nurse pick up a baby, then drop it to the floor

"What are you doing?!", you shout. "What's the matter with you? You dropped that baby!"

"Well ... yes," she replies. "What's the problem?"

You're shocked. "What's the problem," you ask. "Just look what you've done. That's terrible!"

Then she replies, "I hate it when I make mistakes. But what do you expect?"

What do you expect?

Perhaps unknowingly, she has asked exactly the right question: In day to day reality, what do you expect?

Fortunately, this event in the nursery is fiction, but chances are the same type of event takes place in your office, factory, or store.

How? By excusing mistakes away. By rationalizing and accepting defective product or sloppy work.

Think of this, would it make a difference if the nurse in this situation were really a secretary, a factory assembler, a farmer, or even a company manager? In many jobs, bad product is tolerated and poor work is common — after all, "everyone makes mistakes" and "what do you expect?"

Are mistakes OK?

What about the nurse? Can she really afford to make even one small mistake? She may say, "Listen, I change and feed these kids all the time. I pick up 15 babies 8 times every day. Let's see, that's 120 total 'pick-ups' each day. — That's about 2,400 every month."

Then, she says, "Hey, look. My drop rate is 10 babies per month. That's not bad. It's less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% error per month. So, don't give me a hard time."



Well, what is your answer to her? What is the right answer? She has a tough argument. To her, the mistakes are justifiable. She is well within "acceptable" limits for error.

No errors

The answer to this nurse isn't complex. It's simple: No errors, no matter what. It's true that she's handling a "product," but it happens to be very important.

How do you work?



Now, compare this nursery story to the way you work. If every small baby (work effort or product) in your job had to be handled with extreme care, what would you do? Would you change the way you work? What would you improve? How would you do it? Not your boss, not your company ... you.

Here are some guides that will help you seriously re-think your approach to your work. They will help put your work right on target:

Know your job.

Exactly what should be done? Ask questions, read, and research. Have a complete understanding of your product or service. Know what makes it right. Know what makes it wrong.

If you understand how your "baby" works, you'll know how to make it or do it correctly. If you really understand how your baby can be hurt, you'll know how to protect it from damage.

Do it exactly right the first time.

"Oop's" is a comment that no one likes to hear. You've got to figure out how to catch the mistakes before they occur.

No slip-ups. Don't let the baby slip out of your hands. Think carefully about each of your work actions. Pay close attention. Don't mentally wander. Take personal pride. Make your work superior, outstanding, even ... flawless.



Measure it.

Measure your performance. A practical and meaningful way is in dollars. Percentages and other number counts are good indicators, and they are useful. They can help describe how well you are doing and where problems occur.


But, dollars ... hard dollars actually pay bills, and make your company run. It's sometimes hard to state problems or performance in dollars. It takes a keen understanding and work to interpret activities in dollars. Very few people will take the time and effort to do it. And that's exactly why you will get ahead – because you're willing to handle hard things.

If you are conscientious and accurate, the dollars you help to save ... and the dollars you help to earn will find their way to your wallet.

Keep integrity & honor.

Does it really matter if your boss is watching? It shouldn't. Don't let it matter. Even when no one sees your good work, keep doing it.

The jobs, places, money, people, and titles will come and go in your career. Your inner character is always there. Never do anything that will damage your integrity and honor.



"Even when no one sees your good work, keep doing it."

Raises, promotions, & more business.

Do you want real success? Drop by the nursery in your local hospital, and watch care and accuracy in action.

Learn the lessons of error free mentality. You'll give your boss, customers, and everyone around you solid reasons to give you raises, promotions, and more business.