



4T's PRODUCTIONS

5 Things Successful People Don't DO

By

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There are no formulas for who is successful. But there are statistical probabilities. For example, you are equally as likely to succeed if you go to Harvard as if you apply to Harvard and get rejected, according to [Alan Krueger](#), Princeton economist. And you are more likely to be [successful at work if you were a cheerleader](#) than if you get a Ph.D.

So you can be proactive, and do things that successful people do. But you can also think the other way, and avoid doing things that only losers do.

Here are five of those:

1. Retrieve voicemail.

Voicemail is over. All of Microsoft has voicemail that goes straight to email because it's so much more efficient to read email than listen to voicemail. However, voice recognition software has not caught up with our need to stop listening to voicemail, so most of these emails we see translated from our carefully planned voicemail are rubbish. Which means anyone in the know has just stopped using voicemail. And for those of you who still use it, [your direct reports probably make fun of you.](#)

2. Sort through resumes.

The problem with hiring is not that there are no good candidates -- because really, there are great candidates for every job. It's just that maybe you are not paying enough or maybe you don't look fun enough to work for. You can fix that. But you can't fix it if you are plowing through stacks of resumes. The biggest bottleneck in the hiring process is receiving too many resumes and then having to read them. If you have great jobs to offer, you never have to do that. If you sometimes have great jobs to offer, and sometimes you don't, you should at least avoid the dreaded stacks. Use a recruiting solution -- I like [Brazen Connect](#) (yes, this is a plug for my last startup, but it works!) -- to weed out unwanted resumes.

From The Entrepreneur's Corner Office

3. Play Solitaire on airplanes.

Have you no shame? It's one thing to have no idea what to do with yourself. It's another thing to let the whole world know. I would rather be caught looking at porn than playing Solitaire -- porn, at least, is goal-oriented. If you don't know how to spend your free time, you need to do some soul searching to find an interest. The biggest violators of the no Solitaire rule say it's relaxing. But you know what? It's not relaxing, it's vegetative. Nick Powdthavee author of "[The Happiness Equation](#)" reports that after a half-hour, the television drains you. [You're better off with real relaxation methods than vegetating.](#) So do them.

4. Forgo maternity leave

No woman has any idea what she'll feel like after she has a kid. Each kid is different, each mom is different, each adjustment phase is different. If you don't take maternity leave you don't give yourself a chance to experience that. It's a time to check in with yourself and see how you feel -- and how you feel in relation to the baby. People with good self-knowledge make the best leaders. People who are scared to take any time off to learn about themselves are too weak to lead. Taking maternity leave is an act of strength, and an announcement that you take yourself and the people around you seriously enough to know who you are, even if it's difficult.

5. Work through lunch.

The people who get the most done at the office are not the people sitting at their desk working. Because your job is not actually to do what's on your to-do list. Your job is to do what your boss cares about and what other people notice. So [it's important to know what matters at work](#), and ignore the rest. And also, it's important to [never look like you're the hardest worker](#). Because if you are, why is that? Do you need to work harder than everyone else because you're slow?