

## The 10 Commandments of a Happy Work Life



by Tom Terez

### 1. Thou shalt honor thyself

Your brain can process 100 trillion instructions per second while using the equivalent of just 12 watts of power. Your heart beats 100,000 times per day, carrying your blood some 12,000 miles (19,000 km). You're built to imagine, create, communicate, and love. If you do nothing else today, sit back in awe of yourself.

### 2. Thou shalt be true to thyself

Only one person has your portfolio of experience, know-how, skills, and style attributes. You're in charge of putting it to work without compromise. If you need inspiration, consider Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King Jr., and Thomas Edison. These greats—and many more—enriched the world by making the most of their differences.

### 3. Thou shalt speak up

When you have a good idea, share it. When you have a question, ask it. When your help is needed, offer it. When you see a scene of disrespect, step forward and set things right. When you envision a better future, put it in spoken word. Your voice needs to be heard.

### 4. Thou shalt strive to simplify

Whenever people congregate, they tend to overcomplicate. That explains those countless workplace rules, objectives, projects, deadlines, and meetings. It's up to you to challenge the mind-numbing routine. Take a fresh look at your schedule, and eliminate every activity that seems important but isn't. An action is either mission-driven or mere motion. Keep the former, ditch the latter.

### 5. Thou shalt assume the best

Few people wake up and declare: "I'm going to make this a horrible day. I'm going to foul things up and make life miserable for my co-workers." No, most people want good days in which they use their know-how, exercise their creativity, and make a positive contribution. Assume and expect the best...and that's what you'll get.

### 6. Thou shalt fix processes, not people

It's tempting to blame that missed deadline or fouled-up

project on Debbie, Dan, or some other nearby human punching bag. But the fact is, problems almost always occur because of process issues, not people. So cut Debbie and Dan some slack—and enlist their help in analyzing and improving the flow of activities that make up the process.

### 7. Thou shalt serve a greater purpose

Henry David Thoreau lived 150 years ago, but his words seem especially relevant in today's Blackberried world: "It is not enough to be busy—so are the ants. The question is: What are we busy about?" Nor is it enough to have a mission statement that lies forgotten. What's needed is a heartfelt mission that gives meaning to all the work-related busyness. What's yours?

### 8. Thou shalt be interested

Want to be interesting? Then be interested—in people, processes, clients, customers, competitors, and more. Open your eyes a bit wider. Be more curious. Seek new challenges. Start more conversations. Make a point of asking questions rather than making statements. Turn your work world, and the larger world, into your own lifelong school.

### 9. Thou shalt honor time away from work

You're more than an employee. You're more than the sum of your tasks. You're a human *being*, not a human *doing*. Treat yourself accordingly by rounding out how you spend your time. Balance your time at work with time at home, outdoors, in the community, and elsewhere. You'll recharge your battery while gaining new insights and perspectives that inform your work.

### 10. Thou shalt be thine own best manager

Guess who's in charge of you. Hint: It's not your boss, your boss's boss, or anyone else. The sooner you take responsibility for your own happiness and fulfillment, the sooner you'll achieve it.

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