

UPGRADE YOUR CAREER

Feeling ambitious? Entrepreneur Seth Godin shares advice that will help you succeed

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AVERAGE WORK IS GOING TO BE WORTH LESS AND EMPLOYEES DOING TYPICAL WORK ARE GOING TO BE LESS RESPECTED AND VALUED THAN EVER BEFORE. AND JUST AS EXPECTATIONS ARE SHIFTING, NEW OPPORTUNITIES WILL ARISE. THEY ALWAYS DO.

For years, there's been talk about robots taking jobs. Then COVID-19 came along and made it clear that the old ways of doing things are gone for good. We must, as Daniel Newman and Olivier Blanchard write in *Human/Machine*, accept this.

DOING WORK WE'RE PROUD OF IS A FINE ALTERNATIVE TO BEING SEEN AS LESS THAN HUMAN. AND SPENDING OUR DAYS DOING AS MUCH HUMAN WORK AS WE CAN IS MORE APPEALING THAN HOPING TO DO AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE.

What's the best way to rise against the machines? As Geoffrey Colvin explains in *Humans Are Underrated*, it's to focus on what they can't: empathy, communication, and social skills.

'YOU'RE NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF HAVING A JOB WITH AN

OFFICE. YOU'RE WILLING TO TRADE TIME AND EFFORT IN EXCHANGE FOR MONEY AND A CHANCE TO DO WORK YOU'RE PROUD OF.'

Alas, many people are still working just to get paid. But, as Steven Pressfield writes in *Do the Work*, you have to go above and beyond if you want to succeed.

IF YOU ARE HOPING TO CONTRIBUTE, PARTICULARLY IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE, THEN GO AHEAD. IT IS PROBABLY NOT TOO SOON. OR NEVER TOO LATE.

Although it's scary to put yourself forward, you can't get ahead if you do the minimum. Instead, you have to take action, even if it's 'little and often', as Michael Hyatt explains in *Your Best Year Ever*.

BEING CHALLENGED AT WORK IS A PRIVILEGE. IT MEANS THAT YOU HAVE A CHANCE, ON SOMEONE ELSE'S NICKEL, TO GROW. IT MEANS YOU CAN CHOOSE TO MATTER.

What should you do with the extra time that comes from working at home? Steven Kotler, in *The Rise of Superman*, recommends building new skills.

PEOPLE DON'T HIRE YOU, BUY FROM YOU, OR RECOMMEND YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE INDIFFERENTLY AVERAGE AND WELL-ROUNDED. THEY DO IT BECAUSE THEY KNOW YOU ARE EXCEPTIONAL AT SOMETHING.

If you don't want to be just another replaceable employee, find out what makes you the best. Discovering your talent, as Ken Robinson discusses in *Finding Your Element*, can transform your life.

WE INVENT ALL SORTS OF TRAPPINGS AND DECIDE THAT THE TRAPPINGS ARE OUR WORK. THEY'RE NOT. THERE ARE ONLY A HANDFUL OF GAMES THAT MOST PEOPLE DECIDE TO PLAY... GAMES THAT HAVE BOUNDARIES, OTHER PLAYERS, CONNECTIONS, AND OUTCOMES.

Office politics, even if they're happening on Zoom and Slack, are a distraction. Instead, as Todd Davis writes in *Get*

Better, it's more valuable to build workplace relationships based on respect.

FOR EVERY PERSON WHO HAS PROVEN THE SCEPTICS WRONG, THERE ARE A HUNDRED WHO SHOULD HAVE DONE THE WORK THEY CARED ABOUT INSTEAD OF KEEPING TRACK OF THE WRONG METRICS.

Comparing yourself to your colleagues is a trap. So, rather than waste time on this,

it's better to focus on what matters to you, as Mark Manson explores in *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck*.

WE'VE BECOME EVER MORE SUSPICIOUS OF THE BARGAIN THAT THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD HAS BEEN OFFERING: COMPLIANCE IN EXCHANGE FOR STABILITY. THE ALTERNATIVE IS TO OWN YOUR PATH AND TO DO THE INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT WORK OF CHOOSING WITH INTENT AND THEN STICKING WITH IT.

If you're still struggling at work, maybe it's time to quit. Even if it means taking a short-term cut in salary, remember that you're working for the long term, as Chandramouli Venkatesan covers in *Catalyst*.

IF WE COMMIT TO LOVING WHAT WE DO, WE'RE MORE LIKELY TO FIND ENGAGEMENT AND SATISFACTION. AND IF WHAT WE DO CHANGES, WE CAN CHOOSE TO LOVE THAT TOO.

If you decide to stay where you are, put in effort to make things work. As Brad Stulberg and Steve Magness write in *Peak Performance*, it's about elevating your game while avoiding burnout.

IF YOU SHOW UP WITH GOOD WORK AND GENEROUS ACTION, OVER AND OVER AGAIN, SOONER OR LATER SOMETHING THAT APPEARS TO OTHERS TO BE LUCK WILL APPEAR.

No matter what your plans, you'll need other people's help. But, as Ken Coleman discusses in *The Proximity Principle*, you have to take the lead when putting yourself in situations that let you advance.

[EVEN] IF WE DON'T FRET, THE FUTURE IS STILL GOING TO TAKE CARE OF ITSELF. ALL THAT'S ON US IS TO DO OUR BEST WORK.

Nobody knows what tomorrow will bring. But even with all the uncertainty we can, as Darrell M West writes in *The Future of Work*, redefine our careers in a way that works for all. **M**



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