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good work consistently and on time. If you are low on work, visit with managers and partners to get more work. Always be planning ahead.

Mar. 03, 2016



I was recently asked by [CPA Leadership Institute](#), one of the industry's finest resources for cutting edge CPA practice management, to describe the most common career builders and career killers for staff professionals. Here was my response:

Career Builders

- Develop a positive attitude towards practice development. Even if your results

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- Demonstrate a positive attitude when working with difficult people. Avoid being combative or competitive in your interactions with them. This pertains to all firm personnel (especially partners) and clients.
- Understand that, with reasonable exceptions, the firm's #1 goal is to provide world-class service to clients and consistently meet their needs and expectations. Work-life balance is great, but don't let it negatively impact clients.
- As early as possible, become known as a go-to person in a specialty area important to the firm.
- Embrace technology; learn it well. The ideal scenario: mentor an "older" partner who is technologically-challenged.

Career Killers

- Being "ordinary;" being satisfied with average performance.
- Turning in work to supervisors knowing it is incomplete and expecting corrections.
- Making the same mistakes over and over again; "it just doesn't sink in."
- Inability to multi-task, mainly to organize and manage multiple jobs at the same time. When one job is stalled, be able to start another and then return to the first job.
- Being a "me first" person instead of a team player.
- Disrespectful treatment of co-workers, admin staff and clients.
- Disorganization and poor time management.

Attracting and retaining good staff is one of the profession's ongoing challenges. Our Monograph [How CPA Firms Work: The Business of Public Accounting](#), demystifies the process for new hires and sets them on the path to achievement.

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