

Effortless English

Solve a Problem

“I have long been of the opinion that if work were such a **splendid** thing the rich would have kept more of it for themselves” -Henry David Thoreau

“To become successful quickly, become an expert at solving a certain type of problem. Don't **diversify**. Become an expert at solving that one type of problem and people will come to you. Then, if you are good and trustworthy, you will reach your financial **fast track** more quickly.” --Robert Kiyosaki

As we discussed, simplicity is the first step to “Effortless Success”. The next step is to become an expert at solving a particular type of problem.

Its very important to think in this way. We are trained to think in terms of “having a job”. We get up, we go to work for 8 or more hours, we come home. To be more successful, however, we must do something different than a job. Most people focus on what they do at work, we must focus on solving a particular problem.

For example, I have a friend who is a **massage therapist**. She wants to leave her job and create her own massage business. When I asked her to describe her business, she said, “I give people massages”. That is typical job thinking. I told her, “No you don't. You help people relax and you **relieve** their muscle pain”.

She focused on what she did. I taught her to focus on the problem she solved.

So how do you decide? What problem should you solve?

Make a list. Make a list of things you are **passionate** about. What do you love to do? What are you good at doing? List job related activities. List hobbies. List anything you enjoy and are good at.

Next, pick your two favorites. My friend, for example, is good at massage and yoga. So those are her two passions.

Once you know your passions, you must identify problems **related to** those passions-- problems you can solve, or can learn to solve. Back pain and high stress are the problems my friend chose to solve.

You can even do this at your job. Instead of being a normal, boring employee-- become a problem solving expert. Pick a common problem at your company, and become an expert at solving it. Don't be normal. Be remarkable. And don't try to do everything. You don't need to work 50 hours a

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week to be successful. You don't even need to work 30 hours a week!

Success comes from being an expert problem solver. In other words, success comes from working smarter, not longer.

I did this with my own teaching. When I started to teach English many years ago, I quickly realized that speaking **fluency** was the number one problem for students. Most students had studied a lot of grammar in school. Most could read well. But few could speak or understand quickly and easily.

I decided to be an expert at solving this problem. To do this, I knew I had to focus. I **deliberately** chose not to teach writing. I enjoy writing. In fact, I'm a **freelance** writer and I have a degree in journalism. But I needed to focus, and speaking was the number one problem I wanted to solve. So I became an expert at helping people speak English easily and fast.

Sometimes I got in trouble at jobs because of this. Bosses wanted me to teach grammar, but I knew that grammar study did not help. So I ignored my bosses. My goal was not to be a good employee, my goal was to solve my students problem in the best way possible. As a result, I often had problems with bosses, but I was very popular with students. I became an expert, started my own business, and became successful.

None of this would have happened if I had played it safe and done my job like everyone else. Focusing on a specific problem, and becoming an expert at solving it was my key to success. It is your key too.

That's the attitude you must have. You must decide that solving a problem is more important than making your boss happy. You must decide that your **long-term** success is more important than following the rules.

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