



Diligence is like an investment, which means the results of your effort depend largely on how much you apply yourself to the work at hand. Providing quality products and service doesn't happen by chance. It takes hard work and dedication – combined with the right circumstances and opportunities – to achieve great results.

“Diligence is the mother of good luck.” – Benjamin Franklin



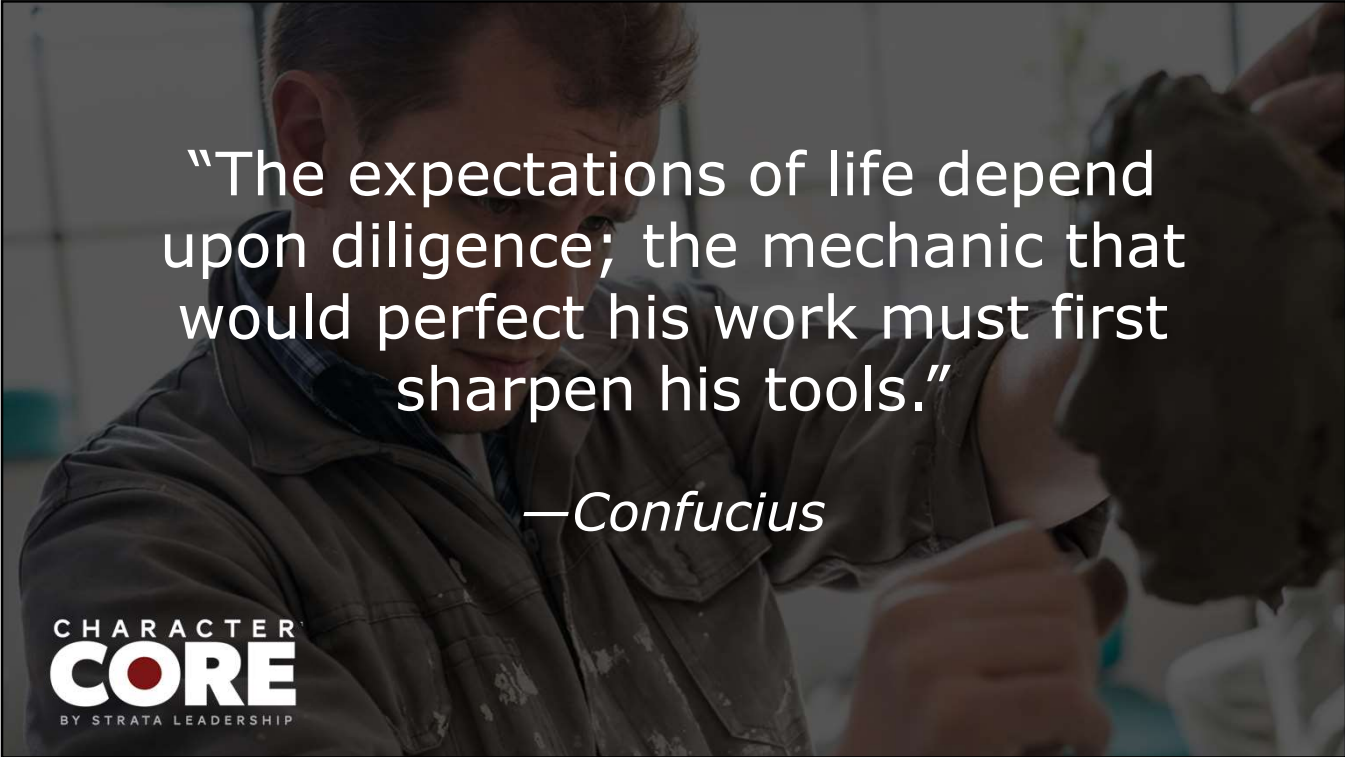
We must apply ourselves to achieve great results in what we do, but sometimes we might be tired, or we don't see the value in what we do. Diligence applies to small and large tasks, significant or menial, easy or difficult – whether someone sees you or not. If we feel tired, the quality of our work may suffer. When life is busy and we get short on sleep, it becomes harder to concentrate at work. It is important to get the rest, nutrition, exercise, and renewal you need to be your best.

“What we hope ever to do with ease, we may learn first to do with diligence.” – Samuel Johnson

**Opposite:** laziness, inattention, idleness, slacking off, carelessness, neglect, thoughtlessness, indifference

**Related Concepts:** alertness, industry, attentiveness, applying oneself, caring, working hard, concentrating, completing

**Summary:** working with effort and purpose

A man in a workshop, wearing a dark jacket, is focused on sharpening a tool. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and equipment. The text is overlaid on the image.

“The expectations of life depend upon diligence; the mechanic that would perfect his work must first sharpen his tools.”

—*Confucius*

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BY STRATA LEADERSHIP

**Confucius** (551-479 BC) was a Chinese philosopher, teacher, politician, and writer. (Wikipedia) “The expectations of life depend upon diligence; the mechanic that would perfect his work must first sharpen his tools.”

**Other Diligence Quotes:**

“If your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill.”

– Samuel Johnson

“Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence.”

– Abigail Adams

“I never could have done what I have done without the habits of punctuality, order, and diligence, without the determination to concentrate myself on one subject at a time.”

– Charles Dickens

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– Samuel Johnson

“Diligence is the mother of good fortune, and idleness, its opposite, never brought a man to the goal of any of his best wishes.”

– Miguel de Cervantes

“The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand.”

– Vince Lombardi

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.”

– Colin Powell

“Hard work spotlights the character of people: some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don't turn up at all.”

– Sam Ewing

“A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.”

– Colin Powell

“Focused, hard work is the real key to success. Keep your eyes on the goal, and just keep taking the next step towards completing it. If you aren't sure which way to do something, do it both ways and see which works better.”

– John Carmack



# 1. Get Started

“Well begun is half done”

It is important to decide what the first step is and take it.

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When you feel like procrastinating, break your job into small enough pieces that you can start doing something today. Getting started builds momentum, encourages new ideas, and gets you one step closer to achieving your goal.

“I never could have done what I have done without the habits of punctuality, order, and diligence, without the determination to concentrate myself on one subject at a time.” – Charles Dickens



## 2. Focus Your Effort

Concentrating on one task, or one part of that task, allows you to pour your energy into accomplishing your goal.

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Concentrate your mental and physical energy on the task you want to accomplish. Clarify the goal, get everyone “on the same page,” and hold one another accountable to accomplish what you set forth to achieve. Don’t allow yourself to become distracted by other things or tasks that don’t help you reach your goal. Dividing your effort on other things drains energy you need to accomplish what you set out to do.

“Focused, hard work is the real key to success. Keep your eyes on the goal, and just keep taking the next step towards completing it. If you aren't sure which way to do something, do it both ways and see which works better.” – John Carmack



### 3. Finish Strong

Don't give up before the finish line.  
With effort, you can finish what  
you start and accomplish your  
goal.

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Your work is worth doing to the best of your ability, even if no one will see you doing it. Apply your energy and effort to finishing what you begin so that you can feel a sense of accomplishment as you reach your goal.

“The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand.” –  
Vince Lombardi



# Discussion Starters

1. What motivates you to do your best at work?
2. How can you stay focused while at work? How do you deal with distractions?
3. What quality issues should you pay attention to at work? What should you do if you find a problem?

## **Additional Diligence Discussion Starters:**

When you feel like procrastinating, how can you break your task down into smaller parts?

Are there projects at work or at home you are procrastinating on? Can you think of one or two steps that would begin the process?

What are some of the things that distract you at work? What are some of the things you do to “tune out the distractions” and concentrate on the task at hand?

Why is it important to clarify your goals and communicate with team members? How do you communicate with team members or others on the job?

How does the quality of your work reflect who you are?



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