

Title:

ABOUT YOUR WORK

Word Count:

499

Summary:

I like Simon, one of three judges on American Idol. I find his feedback refreshingly honest. And while his words startle me with their ego wounding potential, the traditional feel-good, let-you-down-easy, sugar-coated feedback is not much of a gift. It's hard to tell someone they're not good enough and their dreams are not going to happen, at least in this venue. But not telling them is no gift either. Some contestants rise to the challenges he throws at them. Some don't. And, some can't. Which one are you?

Keywords:

winning, working, win, work, success, American Idol, self-assessment, feedback

Article Body:

I like Simon, one of three judges on American Idol. I find his feedback refreshingly honest. And while his words startle me with their ego wounding potential, the traditional feel-good, let-you-down-easy, sugar-coated feedback is not much of a gift. It's hard to tell someone they're not good enough and their dreams are not going to happen, at least in this venue. But not telling them is no gift either. Some contestants rise to the challenges he throws at them. Some don't. And, some can't. Which one are you?

The people who influenced me most in my career were those who gave me the hardest critiques. Stricken with a bruised-ego for days, or on occasion for months, inevitably their feedback helped me make the right life choices to improve, change direction, or stay the course with intensity. In fact, the boss who was the hardest on me is the one I thank the most. Good was not good enough if I was capable of better, and she was quick to point out when that was. No sugar coating from her. And the funny thing? When I was honest with myself, I knew she was right.

Being honest with yourself is one of the challenges to winning at working. We all have talents and abilities, but they're not always in the areas we pursue at work. Too many people I've run across in my career have American Idol Syndrome (AIS). Like Idol contestants auditioning with little or no singing ability, these people believe they are good at what they do. They can't understand why

they don't get the promotion, the outstanding review, or the highest increases. They view themselves as varsity team material, but they play with junior varsity skills.

When I was a freshman at Stanford, I got a D in biology. Stanford graded on a bell-curve, so an 84% that might traditionally put me in a B category, was near the class bottom. Accustomed to A's, first quarter grades woke me up. At first, I rationalized a D at Stanford was an A or a B at most any other school. But, reality prevailed. I wasn't at another school. If I was going to compete at the school I was at, it was time to use more than high school skills to bring results.

Are you applying yourself? Are you as good as you could be to get the raise, the promotion, or the more interesting work? If these are things you want, don't suffer from AIS. Give yourself some Simon-esk feedback. Ego aside. A Simon-esk answer to the questions, "how good are you?" and "are you in the right field?" offers you a chance at becoming happier and more successful at working. The answers give you choices: you can stay the course; find a playing field at your skill level; improve your skills to compete where you are; or change directions.

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