

Professional Service Firm50

We think the WOW Project! is the fundamental atomic particle of the NWW (New World of Work).

In the midst of a discussion in June 1998, my comrade in arms, Julie Anixter, turned to me and blithely said, "So, how about making a list of the 50 things you think are most important about Way Cool Projects [that's what we called them at the time]." Turns out I had just finished reading a terrific management book, Stan Davis' *Blur*. His last chapter had been a list of 50 practical things that captured the essence of the book. I'd glanced at Stan's main body of text and then meticulously gone through the list.

Light bulbs flashed in my mind. We're all insanely busy. We want stuff we can use ... now! Sooooo ... why not (1) construct a whole book around 50 ideas that illuminate an important topic, (2) do a series of books that collectively go to the heart of the work place madness engulfing us all, (3) make each one portable as Hell ... i.e., pocket size, and (4) action oriented to a fault?

A year later we're delighted to announce the first three of a dozen or more "50 Lists" that will encompass all the important elements of our The Work Matters! movement. Below you'll find the basic, barebones "list" from ***the Professional Service Firm50***.

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I. PSF = Inc. + Clients + Projects!

1. Think Inc.
 - 1a. Commit "Cool."
2. Think Client. Period.
3. Select Clients very carefully.
 - 3a. Seek out Clients who are leaders.
 - 3a. F-i-r-e Clients ... upon occasion.
4. Turn every "task" into a PROJECT.
 - 4a. The Work Matters!
5. Become a Catalyst for Revolution.

II. Portfolio Quality!

6. Visit every Client.
7. Create an immodest Current Projects List.
8. You are a Venture Capitalist.
9. Conduct a weekly or a more frequent formal Current Projects Review.
 - 9a. Words ... matter.

III. Impact!

10. Transform every "job" into a ... WOW! Project.
11. Never ever compromise your Identity.
12. Pursue ... P-a-s-s-i-o-n.
13. Measure: Did we make an impact?
14. Tom's Epithet No.1: "THOROUGHLY PROFESSIONAL ... BUT NOT PROVOCATIVE."
15. L-E-A-D your Client!
16. Another-flavor-of WOW: Politics.
17. PSF success boils down to ... the fine art of balance.
18. Accounting (etc.) is a performing art.
19. Speaking of accounting ... remember the bottom line: "Business-ing."
20. Got any quirky projects on the list?
21. Think ... LEGACY.
22. Pitch in ... or bail out!
 - 22a. Practice serial monogamy.
23. PSFs need Vision Statements!
 - 23a. We help people!

IV. Live With 'Em!

- 24. Make Clients an integral part of every project team.
- 24a. Cohabit with the Client!
- 24b. Turn the Client into an expert!
- 24c. Engage Clients in a measured "risk progression" process.
- 25. Insist that Clients submit a formal evaluation of "your people" (and "their people") at the end of each project.
- 25a. Think External.
- 26. Client-centric = PSF Imperative
- 27. Bring in wild and woolly Outsiders. E-x-p-a-n-d the box.

V. A Culture of Urgency!

- 28. Create a "sense of urgency"/ "excitement"/ "vibrancy"/"buzz."
- 29. Hot Teams thrive in Hot Spaces.
- 30. Celebrate ... constantly!
- 30a. Projects-worth-doing are bumpy.
- 30b. You need a clown!
- 31. Love thy "support staff."
- 32. A rabid scheduler is a must!
- 32a. We're in this for the money!
- 33. Pay attention to the "hard stuff" ... e.g.: METHODOLOGY.
- 34. Embrace marketing.

VI. Knowledge-Is-Us!

- 35. Become a Research & Development evangelist.
- 35a. Devote a sizeable share of effort/revenues to Knowledge Development.
- 36. Turn your current portfolio of projects into a ... Research & Development playground/gold mine.
- 37. Think ... DESIGN.
- 38. Evaluate the possible bases of PSF competitive advantage.

VII. Talent!

- 39. Become a ... CONNOISSEUR OF TALENT.
- 39a. We want to be a Magnet for Talent.
- 40. Cherish instability. Mix up teams!
- 40a. Mix redux: Encourage turnover!
- 41. Demand that every PSF member be known for ... something.
- 41a. Admiration beats affection.
- 42. Champion passion. Champion perfection.
- 43. Create stories/mythology around "project winners."
- 44. T-R-A-I-N. Teach the "Professional Service Firm Basics" ... with a vengeance.
- 45. Provide "project management-leadership" opportunities ... ASAP.
- 46. Cherish great listening skills.
- 47. Geeks/the antisocial, masterful diggers-of-obscure-facts should be adored!
- 48. Challenge! Challenge! Challenge!

VIII. It's Ours!

- 49. Think ... Dream ... Act: WOW! Beauty! Impact! Distinction!
- 50. We Own This Place!