



## **Genius File #12: You Get What You Accept**

**By**

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One of the most common problems uncovered in the Genius Study was that those who achieve less actually accept less in the first place. In other words, they settle.

The top performers we studied, however, don't settle. They are unreasonable in their expectations, regardless of what the culture says. They force life to work with them on their terms, not the other way around. They know what they are good at and what they like to do and they refuse to allow themselves to get into work or roles, or relationships for that matter, that force them to be unhappy being something they are not.

Just after college I went to work for Johnson and Johnson as a surgical sales representative. I was struggling as a sales person. It wasn't that I wasn't a good sales person, or that I wasn't smart or hard working enough, but that the sales process I had been taught wasn't a good fit for my natural drivers and talents.

My motivations weren't the same as most of the other sales reps. One day I was telling my sales manager, Rick Gilson, how unsatisfied I was with my own results. Rick told me something that day that seemed rather insignificant at the time, but later his words would take on a life of their own. Rick said, "You get what you accept."

When you really think about it, this disarmingly simple thought is actually one of the most powerful concepts you can own. It is the realization that you are in control; that you are the master of your own destiny, and this grand idea holds the power to set you free from any struggles you have.

As Lao-Tzu put it in the famous *Tao Te Ching*, "Hold the great elephant – the great idea – and the world moves." The concept of "you get what you accept" is the great elephant, and when you truly grasp this concept you realize that

whatever your condition in life, you alone are ultimately responsible for how you deal with it. And this realization *should* move your world because it means that you just put yourself in the drivers seat.

Anthony Robbins, in *Awaken the Giant Within*, recalls the point in his life when he stopped accepting what he got. "I remember feeling like my life didn't matter, as if the events of the world were controlling me. I also remember the moment my life changed, the moment I finally said, 'I've had it! I know I'm much more than I'm demonstrating mentally, emotionally and physically in my life.' I made a decision in that moment which was to alter my life forever. I decided to change virtually ever aspect of my life. I decided I would never again settle for less than I could be."

Not only is this a great example of someone who decided to stop accepting what he got, but it also shows the importance of realizing that you are actually in control. When Tony realized that he was in control of his success and destiny his belief switched from believing that the world controlled him, to believing that he controlled him. He realized he was in the driver's seat.

Speaking of driving, when best selling business author Jim Collins talks about improving performance from management's perspective in *Good To Great*, he talks about "getting the right people on the bus, at the right time, in the right seats." All due respect to Mr. Collins but this is exactly the kind of *legacy thinking* that supports the notion that the company will decide which bus you get on, when you get on it and in what seat you will sit.

I firmly believe that it is the individuals who must take ownership of this changing paradigm first and foremost. In today's intellectual economy companies need to realize that no one rides a bus anymore. Today, top performers don't want a bus ticket, they want a company car – and they want to drive it themselves.

In all too many cases, instead of controlling our own path to success, we're just fulfilling the prescribed path chosen for us by others. Our only success is in how compliant we are to their orders and instructions.

When you think about Rick Gilson's words, however, you realize that you are the only one who really can be responsible for your success. And, if you are the only one responsible for that success, and you don't have it, then you are the only one who can do anything about it.

A significant part of achieving much higher performance levels is realizing that you don't have to settle. We don't live under a totalitarian regime. You are not forced into one role or one job for life. You are free to do whatever you want, wherever you want, and as more organizations become enlightened and start to realize that top performers like to drive their own cars, they too will start to allow you to control more of your own destiny within the company.

So, if you are unhappy with where you are in life, just remember - you get what you accept.

As for me, Rick's words will always play an important part in my life, but in some ways he probably regrets them because when I did take them to heart I realized that I was being inauthentic and once I decided to stop accepting that – I quit.

I had allowed myself to take a job that didn't fully maximize my greatest natural talents and once I realized I was the only one who was really responsible for that fact, I also realized that it was my responsibility to correct it. I owed it to myself. I left Johnson and Johnson and eventually started my own consulting firm and now I get to be in the flow all day, every day. So thanks Rick!

The Genius Files is a series of educational articles crafted from lessons learned in the recently concluded Genius Project (a seven-year, 197,000, twenty-three country study of what drives individual excellence in the new knowledge worker economy).

The Genius Project is the foundational research behind the latest book from Innermetrix Inc Founder and CEO Jay Niblick titled, *What's Your Genius – How the Best Think for Success*.

To view the entire Genius series, or to learn more about how you can uncover your own genius, please visit <http://www.whatsyourgenius.com>.