

DILBERT'S GUIDE TO THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

Dispatches from Cubicleland
RY

SCOTT ADAMS

Congratulations, Graduate! Now it's time to take your optimism, creativity, and boundless energy to the workplace where you will quickly learn that those things are not rewarded.

What you need is a quick course in reality. Don't even think about showing up for your first day of work before reading *Dilbert's Guide to the Rest of Your Life*. No one wants to be the only balloon at the dart festival.

In the next few months you will experience something called a job. A job can be very rewarding, at least for the employer who is underpaying you. This book is designed to slow the rate at which your employer sucks the life force out of your body.

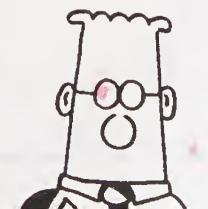
There's a good chance that you will get your own cubicle. This fabric-covered box—and others just like it—is where you will spend your next 30 years pretending to add value to various companies before they downsize you. Always

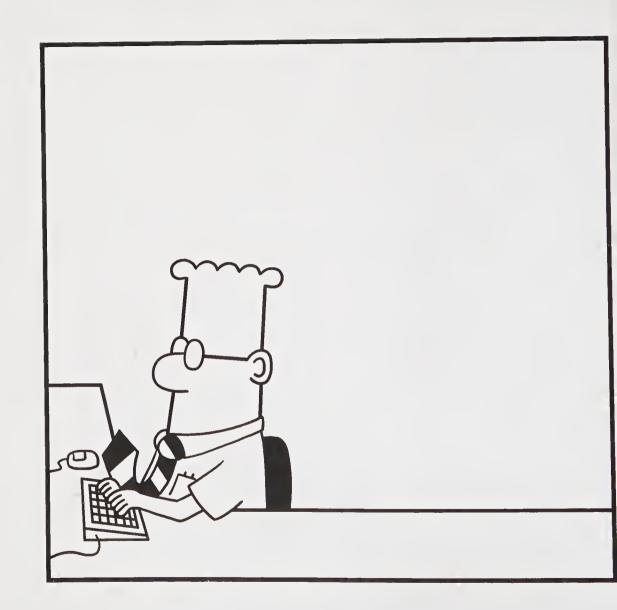
(Continued on back flap)





DILBERT'S GUIDE TO THE REST OF YOUR LIFE





DILBERT'S GUIDE TO THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

Dispatches from Cubicleland

RUNNING PRESS

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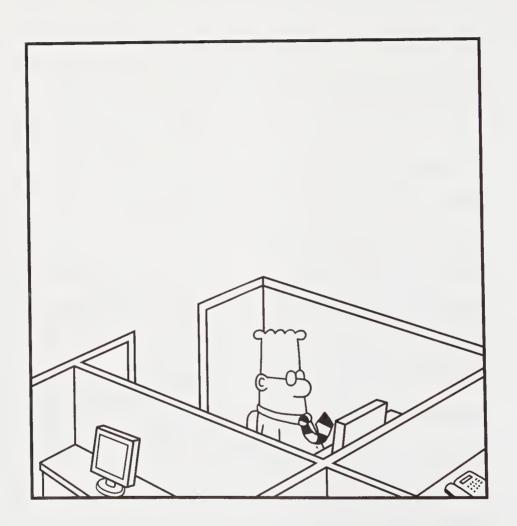
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction
Chapter 1: Getting Hired and Getting Started10
Chapter 2: Co-Workers30
Chapter 3: Management48
Chapter 4: Workload
Chapter 5: Performance and Compensation88
Chapter 6: Business Ethics
Chapter 7: Business Communication128
Chapter 8: Strategy and Planning148
Chapter 9: Moving Up168
Chapter 10: Moving On



Introduction

YOU RECEIVED THIS BOOK as a gift because someone noticed that you're about to enter the business world with a solid education and plenty of idealism. That is the equivalent of using a hanky to skydive.

This book will teach you how to roll into a ball and cover yourself with a temporary coating of distrust and cynicism. In time you will acquire something called "experience" to dull your senses. Until then, this book is your best protection against the series of low-grade misfortunes you will later call a career.

I extend to you my condolences, but more importantly, I give you the priceless advice on the pages that follow. These nuggets of wisdom are plucked from the input of thousands of cubicle-dwellers who came before

Introduction

you. Most of those people are still in cubicles, slowly decaying in their clothes. So they know what they're talking about.

Many young people think that Dilbert is just a comic strip. You are about to discover that it's actually your biography, somehow creepily written in advance. I wish you the best of luck navigating the business world, and I hope that Dilbert's Guide to the Rest of Your Life gets you off to a safe start.

-Scott Adams

CAREER DAY

WHEN YOU GROW UP YOU'LL BE PUT IN A CONTAINER CALLED A CUBICLE.





Chapter 1

GETTING HIRED
AND GETTING STARTED

THE BLEAK OPPRESSIVE-NESS WILL WARP YOUR SPINE AND DESTROY YOUR CAPACITY TO FEEL JOY.



LUCKILY, YOU'LL HAVE A BOSS LIKE ME TO MOTIVATE YOU WITH SOMETHING CALLED FEAR.

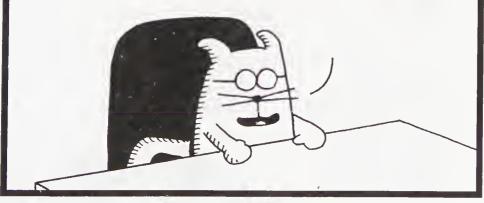


MAY I SEE A BROCHURE?



he job interview process is designed to be as humiliating and degrading as possible. It weeds out the whiners. Save your whining for later when you've created the illusion of being indispensable.

GIVE ME BLOOD,
HAIR, AND URINE
SAMPLES, FINGERPRINTS, SOCIALSECURITY NUMBER,
PAST EMPLOYERS,
AND PAST LOVERS.





Getting Hired and Getting Started

DON'T WORRY about your job qualifications.

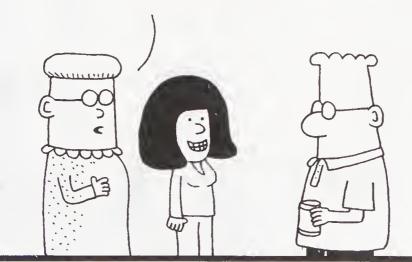
Your potential boss would hire a monkey with a drinking problem if the monkey had a good haircut.

All you have to do is pretend you aren't worthless for the duration of the interview.

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f your college degree has the word "arts" in it anywhere, you'll have no problem getting a job, at least as long as cars and dishes get dirty.

YOUR COUSIN LAUREN JUST GOT HER DEGREE IN ENGLISH. CAN YOU GIVE HER SOME CAREER ADVICE?



I'LL HAVE TO RUN SOME CHAOS AND COMPLEXITY SIMULATIONS, BUT IT LOOKS AS IF YOU NEED MORE MONEY.



talking nonsense to people who can't tell the difference. Avoid jobs that involve moving objects or accomplishing measurable objectives.

CAREERS ARE what Vikings and blacksmiths had. Your "career" will be a series of random jobs that are each somewhat less horrible than the one before. Eventually, when you have changed jobs enough times, you will be old.





Try to work
with people who are
even more useless
than you.
It makes you look
spectacular.

o one hates you more than the people who have to train you. They don't get paid extra to do it and they would consider it embarrassing if you learned their entire job in an hour.

I LIKE TO START EACH DAY BY SENDING THREATENING E-MAIL TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.



OUR DIFFERENTIATING VALUE-ADDED STRATEGY IS TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE.

earn to speak gibberish. It's easier than acquiring knowledge and it will put you on the management fast track.

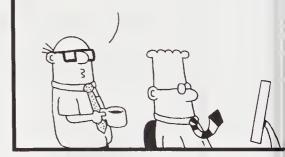
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CARING ABOUT the quality of your work causes stress.

Stress can kill you. Maintain good health by remembering that the stockholders are complete strangers who have never done anything for you.

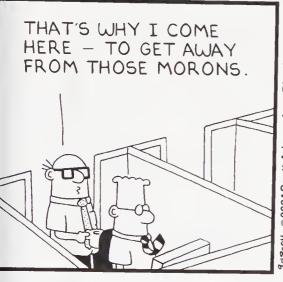
CAN YOU ONLY IF TEACH YOU HAVE ME TO BE A STRONG APATHETIC DESIRE LIKE YOU? NOT TO LEARN.

HAVE YOU EVER
NOTICED THAT PEOPLE
CONTINUOUSLY BOTHER
YOU WHEN YOU'RE
TRYING TO WORK?



Chapter 2

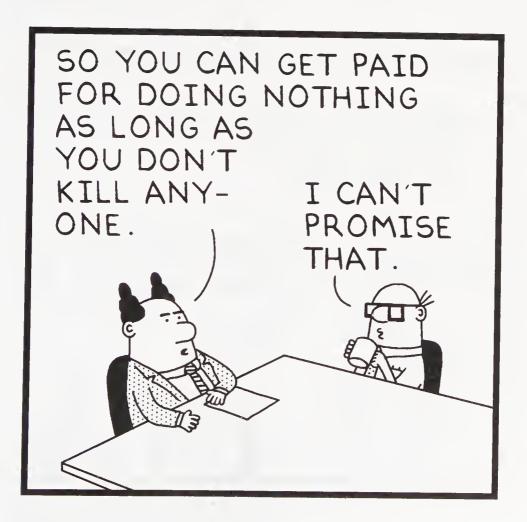
CO-WORKERS



I'M HAVING AN UNPLEASANT REALIZATION.

THEY'RE ALL LIKE THAT.

THERE'S NO POLITE WAY to tell a coworker to leave your cubicle. Your best bet is to say you have a meeting and then hide in a restroom stall until the coast is clear.

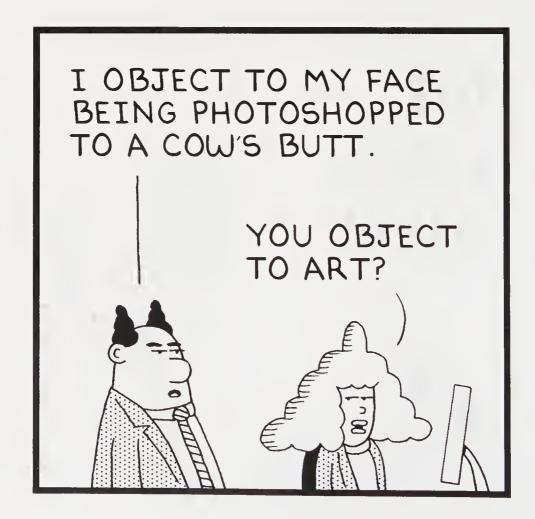




IT'S EASY TO TELL which of your coworkers are tragic bores; they're the ones who are talking.

f money doesn't buy happiness, you might wonder why the people who are paid the least are always the most disgruntled.

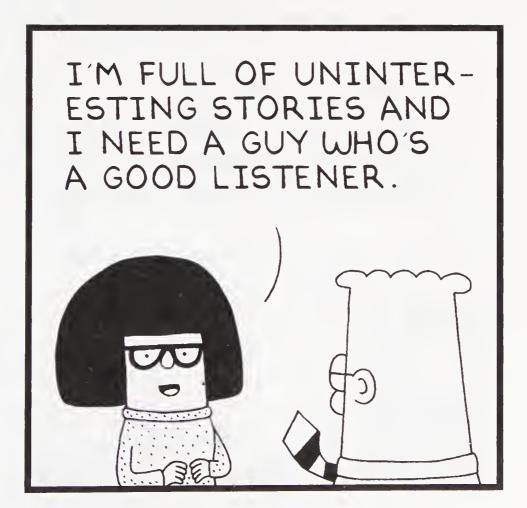




Co-Workers

HUMOR IN THE WORKPLACE is a good way to improve morale, not counting the people you are laughing at.

ou might find your soul mate at work. That will be your first clue that there's something seriously wrong with your soul.



I FEEL LIKE A FAILURE...DARKNESS FILLS MY DAYS...I DREAM OF THE GRAVE. very group has at least one sadistic loser who is trying to grab your ankles as he circles the drain. If you can't identify someone like that in your group, you probably already have your hands on someone's ankles.

IT'S A GOOD IDEA to accuse coworkers of heinous acts before they do the same to you. That way their credibility will be in question when you have to explain why you've been selling pallets of printer paper on eBay.

A CO-WORKER WHO SHALL REMAIN NAME-LESS HAS ACCUSED YOU OF UNSPECIFIED SHORT-COMINGS.





The less you know about what your coworkers are thinking, the happier you will be.



Chapter 3

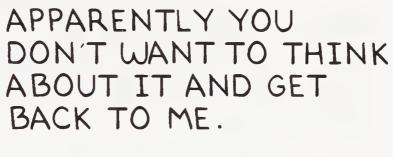
MANAGEMENT



I'M REORGANIZING
THE DEPARTMENT!

EXCUSE ME
WHILE I BEAT
MYSELF WITH
MY KEYBOARD.

aturity is understanding that you are not the center of the universe and that you don't know everything. If that doesn't work for you, try management.





ASOK, AS MY NEW BODY DOUBLE, YOUR JOB IS TO WALK INTO AMBUSHES.



If you steal a little bit of money, you are a criminal. If you steal a lot, you're a leader.

Dispatches from Cubicleland

f you label people "headcount," it makes it easier to abuse them later without wondering if you have turned into some sort of monster.





YOU CAN DETERMINE your value to the company by timing how long your boss stays on the phone when you are sitting in his office. Anything over an hour is a bad sign.

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IF YOU WORK HARD, your boss will recognize how much harder he worked when he was your age.





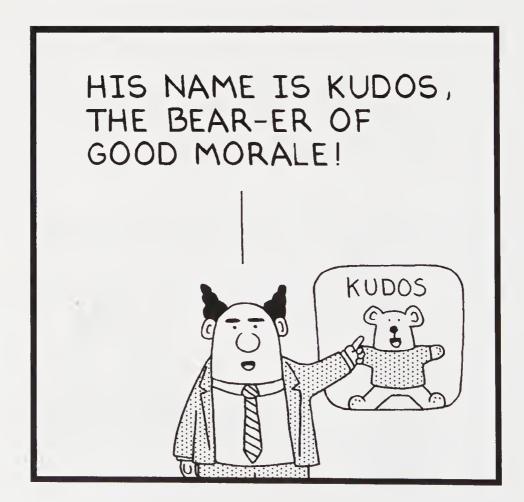
othing that you tell your manager will be as important to him as the things he's hallucinating while you are talking.

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WHEN YOU FEEL THE URGE to pound your boss on the

head—and you will—try to do it metaphorically.





A leader's goal
is to convince
employees that
insincere gratitude
is every bit
as valuable as cash.

t's a good idea to pretend you are indeed motivated by slogans and tee shirts, because the alternative will be worse.

THEN HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY MOTIVATE US TO SAY WE'RE HAPPY TO WORK . . . UH-OH .

I'M WELL ON MY
WAY TO AN EARLY
DEATH FROM
OVERWORKING.

Chapter 4

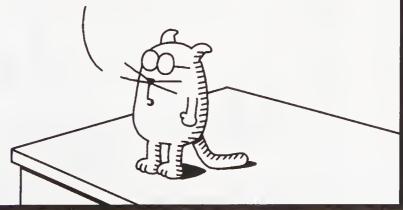
WORKLOAD





he biggest obstacle to your productivity is your stubborn insistence on being happy. Once you release that, you can get a lot done.

I RECOMMEND A BOOK CALLED "NO ONE WILL EVER LOVE YOU." IT'LL CRUSH YOUR HOPE FOR A PERSONAL LIFE AND FREE UP MORE TIME FOR WORK.





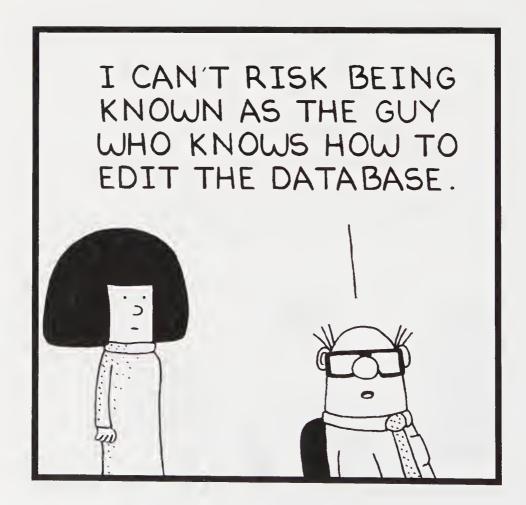
The quality of your assignments depends on your distance from your boss's office. Farther is better.

Dispatches from Cubicleland

THE KEY TO TEAMWORK is to be a capitalist while convincing your coworkers to be communists.

DID ANYONE WARN YOU THAT WE HAVE A STRONG CULTURE OF GETTING SUCKERS TO DO OUR WORK?





nowledge is the same thing as begging for more work with no extra pay. In the event that you develop any knowledge, try to keep it to yourself.

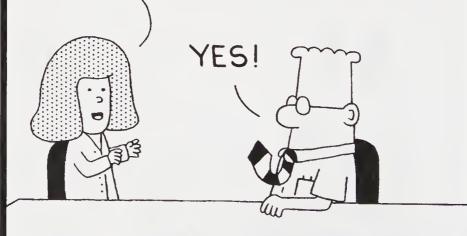
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STRATEGIC INCOMPETENCE is like a super power for deflecting unnecessary work.

OH...NEVER MIND.
I SEE THAT YOU'RE
RADIATING AN
AURA OF EXTREME
INCOMPETENCE.



...SPECIAL PACKAGING, RFID TAGS, AND GRIND YOUR BONES TO MAKE STORE BRAND FOOT POWDER.



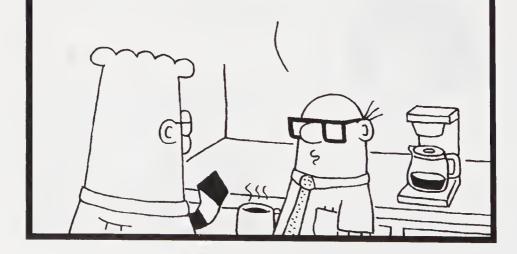
Workload

AGREE TO EVERYTHING. Do nothing. Blame a vendor.

o avoid work, it's a good idea to create the impression that you are already overloaded. If anyone asks you to do more, just sigh, agree, and say, "I'll throw it on the pile." Wait a week and someone else will cave in and do it for you.



I'M HAVING ALL OF MY UNNECESSARY BODY PARTS REMOVED SO I CAN GET TIME OFF FROM WORK.



eep a written list of the excuses you have already used. You don't want to explain why you are having your appendix removed for the second time.

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IT'S ONLY POSSIBLE to be creative for a few hours a day. After that, all of your productivity is a form of fatigue-induced dementia that will have to be unscrewed the next day.



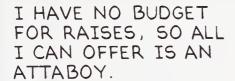
PERFORMANCE REVIEW

YOU DID TWO JOBS FOR A YEAR AND DID THEM WELL.



Chapter 5

PERFORMANCE AND COMPENSATION





THE PROBLEM IS: I DON'T WANT TO CHEAPEN THE WHOLE ATTABOY SYSTEM.



here's always someone willing to do your job for less money. Your only hope is to find a boss who hasn't heard about India.

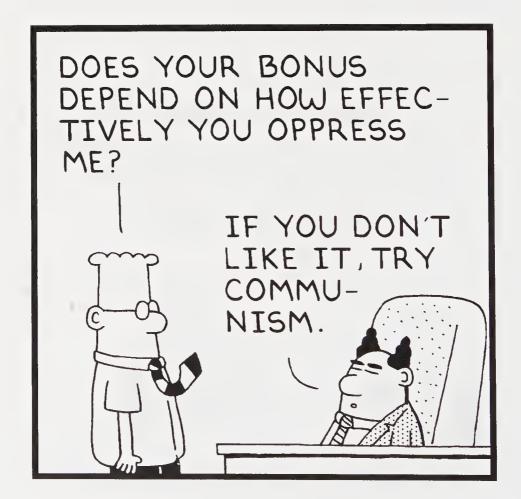
I NEED YOU TO WORK UNDER THE SEWAGE AND BREATHE THROUGH A STRAW. I GET A STRAW?!!



YOUR BOSS WILL TRY to induce in you a feeling of worthlessness that is just enough to prevent you from asking for a raise but not enough for you to quit.

If you can't say ridiculous things with a straight face, there's no room in management for you.

I CAN'T GIVE YOU THE SALARY THAT YOU DESERVE BECAUSE THEN THERE'D BE NO ROOM FOR A RAISE NEXT YEAR.



he purpose of a performance review is to limit your pay so that your CEO can afford a trophy spouse who enjoys sailing.

he workplace balance of power has shifted somewhat since your parent's day. It used to be that an employer could demand long hours and pay peanuts. Now the employer can demand long hours and pay half a peanut to someone in another country.





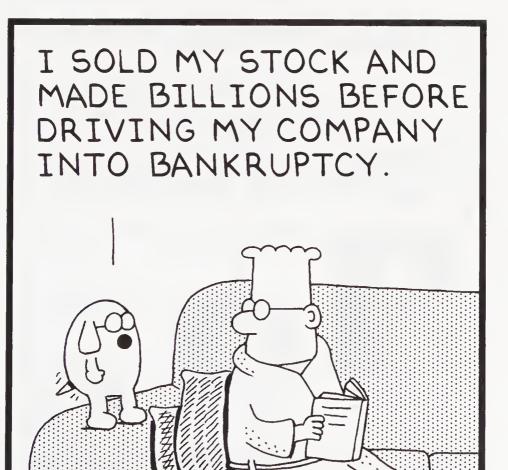
Performance and Compensation

YOUR CEO DESERVES to be paid more than you because very few people are qualified to wait around until something lucky happens and then take credit.

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IF YOU BECOME A CEO, success will be richly rewarded.

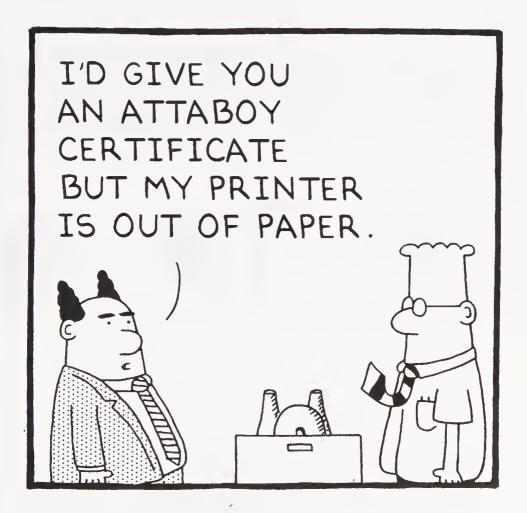
So will failure. You won't do too bad in a coma, either.



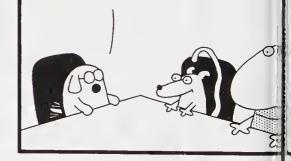


Management
is the art of trading
something
imaginary for something real.

o matter how many non-monetary incentives you earn, you can never trade them for a new couch.



WE'LL ARTIFICIALLY BOOST REVENUES BY SELLING TO OUR OWN OFFSHORE SUBSIDIARY



Chapter 6

BUSINESS ETHICS

THEN WE'LL BOOK OUR EXPENSES AS CAPITAL, LIE TO THE MEDIA ABOUT OUR PROSPECTS, BRIBE AN INDUSTRY ANALYST, AND CASH OUT!



I KNOW I'M DOING SOMETHING RIGHT WHEN MY BUSINESS PRACTICES GAG A RAT.



he key to happiness is working with people who deserve your abuse. Otherwise you'll just feel bad while you're doing it.

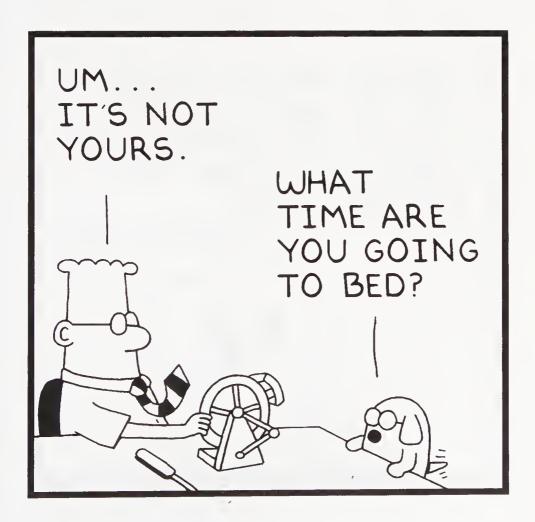




Business Ethics

THE MAIN DIFFERENCE between marketing and fraud is that criminals have to pay for their own alcohol.

f you conduct your business in an ethical manner, no one will take advantage of you. That's because you won't have anything to steal.



YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO LIE, BUT I EXPECT PLENTY OF OMISSIONS, MISDIRECTIONS, EX-AGGERATIONS...

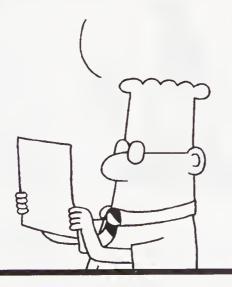


Business Ethics

LYING IS UNETHICAL. Leading people to the wrong conclusion is competitive.

onesty is always the best policy for people who have already given their notice and will never need a job reference.

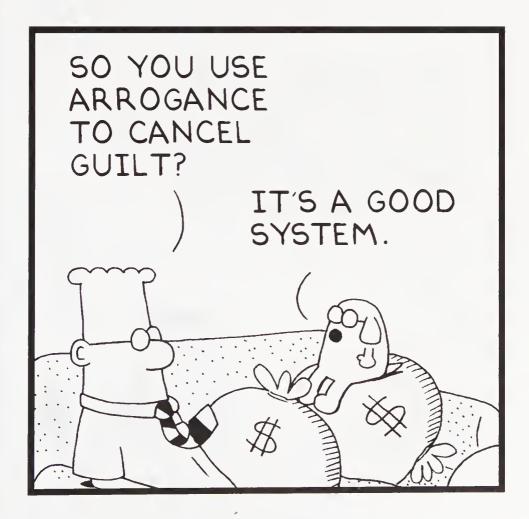
I'LL BE HAPPY TO MAKE THESE UNNECESSARY CHANGES TO THIS IRRELEVANT DOCUMENT.





LEADERSHIP IS A FLAVOR of evil. Obviously no one would need to lead you to do something you wanted to do anyway.

it to guilt you into doing their work. When someone routes a Get Well card around the office, your best strategy is to write "Ha Ha!" and sign your name.



I'M GOING TO RAM MY FIST DOWN YOUR THROAT, GRAB YOUR PANTS AND TURN YOU INSIDE OUT.

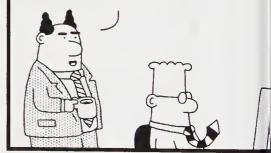
t's a good idea to have a credible implied threat to accompany any request you have of your coworkers.

It helps them focus.

You don't have to hate people to be successful, but it helps.

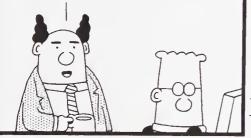


MAKE YOUR "POWER-POINT" PRESENTATION SO BORING THAT OUR CEO WILL SLIP INTO A TRANCE.



Chapter 7

B U S I N E S S C O M M U N I C A T I O N THEN I'LL WHISPER TO HIM SUBLIMINAL SUGGESTIONS TO INCREASE OUR BUDGET.



MORE BUDGET.

KILL THE POINTY-HAIRED MONSTER

MONSTER

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IF YOU START MAKING SENSE, people will think you

have no business experience.





emember that throughout history, the only people who have been wrong are the ones who expressed opinions. Avoid that trap.

Dispatches from Cubicleland

THE LESS YOU KNOW, the more you should talk to make up the difference.

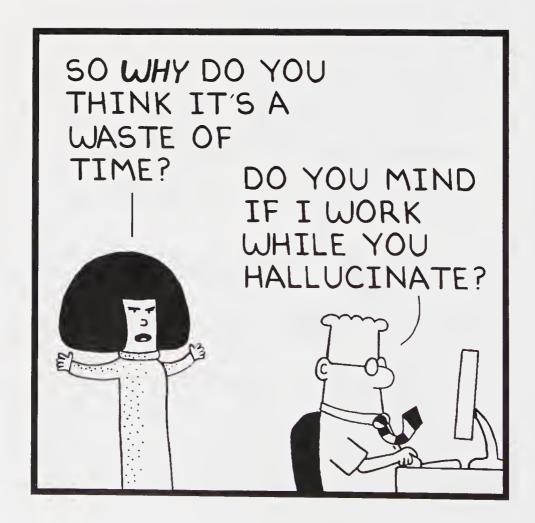
WE'LL INCLUDE A PET GERBIL IN EVERY BOX. WE JUST NEED TO MAKE SURE IT'S IN A SEALED PLASTIC BAG SO IT WON'T CHEW ON THE CABLES.



f you make the mistake of providing useful information to people, you might as well paint a target on your forehead.

Instructions should be given verbally and vaguely. Otherwise you lose all powers of deniability.

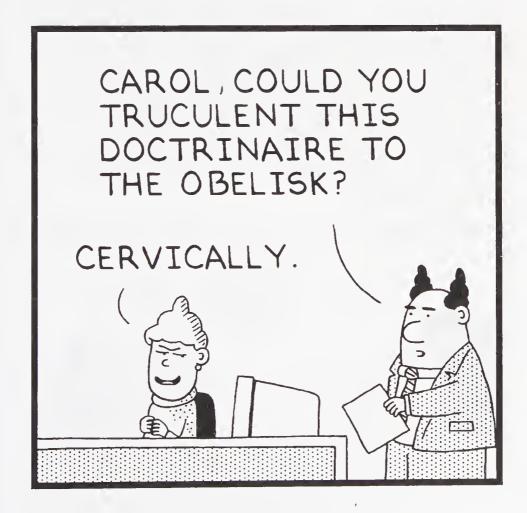


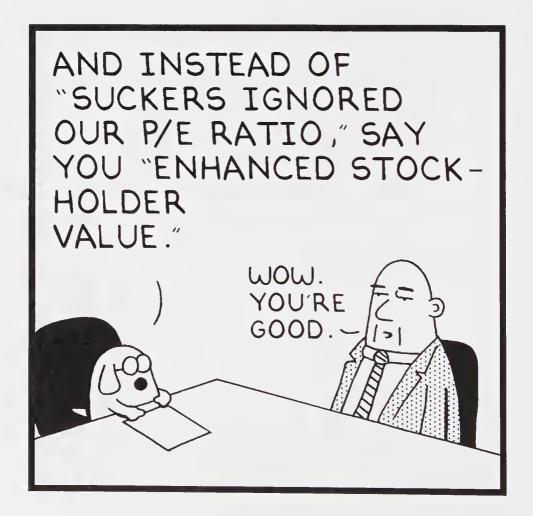


Business Communication

AVOID ARGUING WITH NUTS. You can't cure them but they can certainly turn you into a nut.

he best way to mock the nonsense that comes out of your boss's mouth is by embracing it enthusiastically. You'll amuse yourself while still looking like a team player.



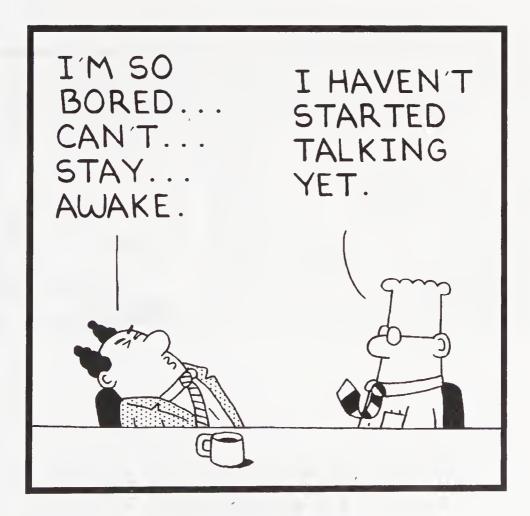


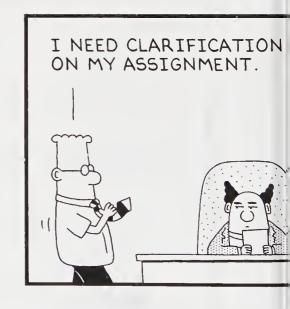
Business Communication

THERE IS NO IDEA so bad that it cannot be made to look brilliant with the proper application of fonts and color.

It's a good idea to discourage people from talking to you.

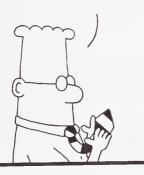
Nothing good can come from that.





Chapter 8

STRATEGY AND PLANNING SHOULD I USE MY OWN JUDGMENT AND BE FOREVER DAMNED IF THINGS GO BADLY?



OR SHOULD I USE YOUR ADVICE AND INVITE CERTAIN CALAMITY?

BOTH PLANS HAVE GOOD PARTS.



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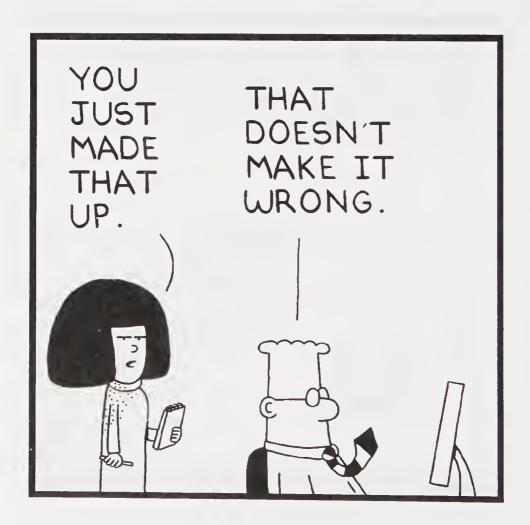
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PARTS.

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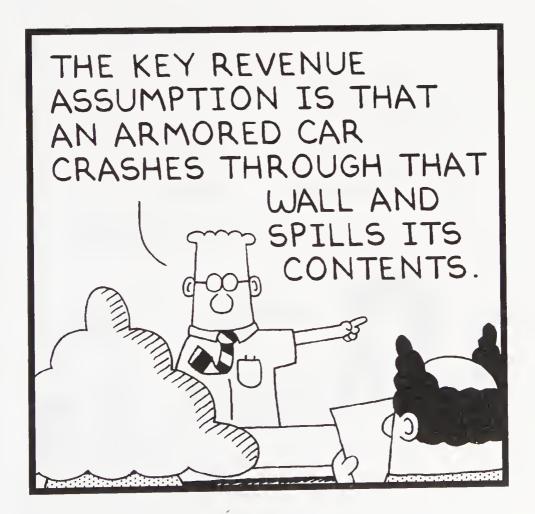
THE PURPOSE OF A PLAN is to disguise the fact that you have no idea what you should be doing.





A guess is just a guess until you turn it into a pie chart. Then it's an analysis.

ou can control your perceived future either by changing what you are doing or changing your assumptions. One of those two approaches is hard.

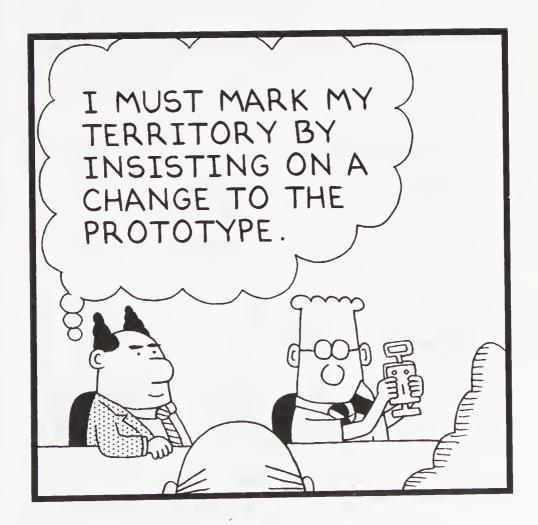




THE GREAT THING about the future is that you can't be wrong about it in the present.

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IT'S EASY TO IDENTIFY BAD IDEAS. They come from other people.





mployees enjoy it when managers pretend to value their input. It's called "getting buy-in" and, although employees will still feel like pimples on the corporation's buttocks, they will be less inclined to complain about the new plan. No one likes a whiney pimple.

o matter how bad are your company's products, there is some theoretical level of discomfort that can make your salespeople sell it.



I SUMMON THE DARK DEMON OF INEFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT TO SMITE THE PERSON WHO WANTS THIS DECISION!!!



Strategy and Planning

ONLY LOSERS MAKE DECISIONS. Winners wait

for someone else to make a decision so they can point .

out its flaws.

Dispatches from Cubicleland

STRATEGY IS whatever you are already doing plus a clever catchphrase that says you will keep doing it.

START MAKING SOMETHING ANYWAY. OTHERWISE WE'LL LOOK UNHELPFUL.



GOOD NEWS, DILBERT...
I'M PROMOTING YOU
TO MORE WORK!

Chapter 9

MOVING UP



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IT'S BETTER for your career to screw up something big than to succeed in something that no one notices.

BUT MY NEGLIGENCE COULD CAUSE THE DEATHS OF A DOZEN CUSTOMERS. THE FIRST DOZEN IS ALWAYS THE HARDEST.

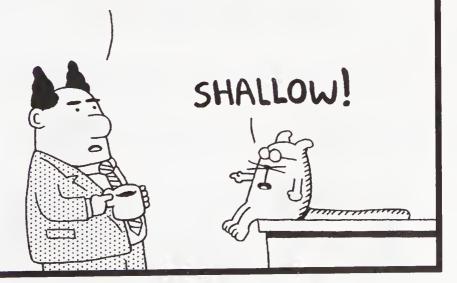


Moving Up

SKILLED EMPLOYEES are hard to replace. That's why crooks and imbeciles are promoted to management.

ard work is rewarding. Taking credit for other people's hard work is rewarding and faster.

CALL ME SHALLOW, BUT I ENJOY GETTING PAID FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S INVENTIONS.



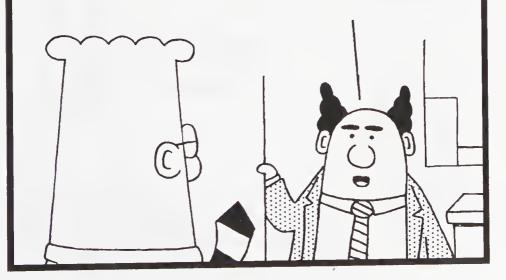


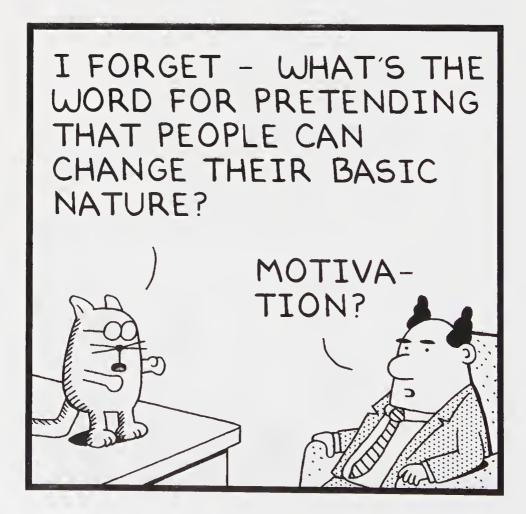
The job isn't done until you've blamed someone for the parts that went wrong.

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ONCE YOU BECOME A BOSS you are freed from the constraint of knowing what you are talking about.

EBITDA MEANS THE EARNINGS BEFORE INTEREST, TAXES, DEPRECIATION, AND UM...AMMONIA.





anagement is the art of pretending that idiots can become geniuses if you offer them enough incentive.

The benefits

of having

an assistant will be

outweighed

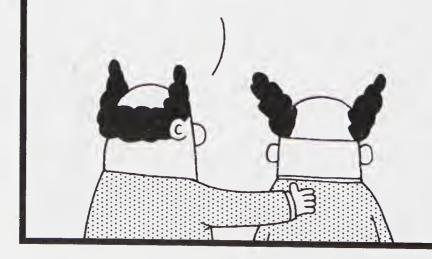
by that person's

defects.

I PROBABLY SHOULDN'T TELL YOU THIS, BUT NONE OF YOUR PHONE MESSAGES ARE REAL.



WALK AMONGST THE CUBICLES UNTIL 7 P.M. AND SCOWL AT ANYONE WHO ISN'T WORKING.



s a manager you have an obligation to train people in the chain of succession. Make sure those people are bigger morons than you are. Otherwise that succession will happen sooner than you planned.

Dispatches from Cubicleland

A MANAGER'S JOB is to allocate resources. A leader's job is to steal resources. Leaders have bigger houses.

"THE CEO STEPPED DOWN AFTER EARNING \$100 MILLION MORE THAN THE COMPANY ITSELF DURING HIS TENURE."

MY STRATEGY IS TO WORK LIKE A PARA-NOID BEAVER DURING THE MERGER.

Chapter 10

MOVING ON



mployees are your most valuable asset, especially when you downsize them to make your stock options skyrocket.





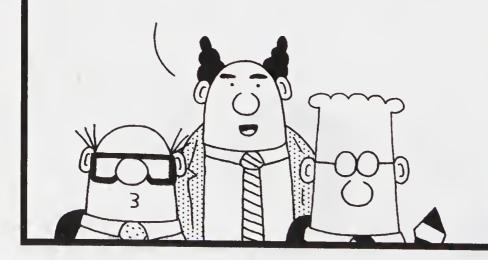
Consultants try to avoid mentioning the root cause of the company's problems, because that is invariably the people who hired them.

Dispatches from Cubicleland

t is considered sporting to give your downsized employees a severance package to augment the office supplies they have already stolen.



STUDIES PROVE THAT TWO PROGRAMMERS ON ONE COMPUTER IS THE MOST PRODUC-TIVE ARRANGEMENT.



YOU CAN TRICK EMPLOYEES into quitting without a severance package by asking them to do things differently.

Change sounds good but it hurts like crazy.

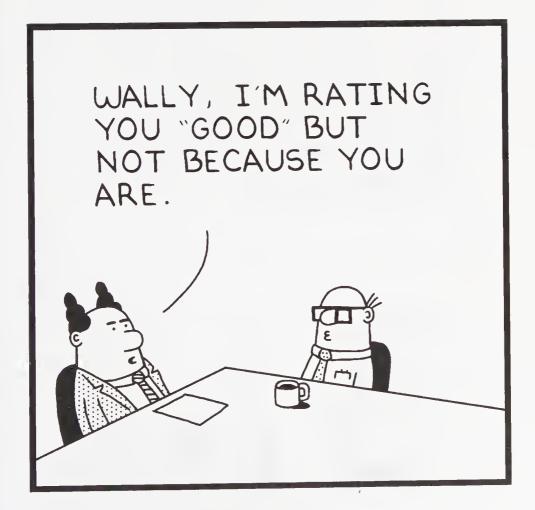
In business, a failure that isn't obvious for a few years is as good as a success.





IF YOU'RE A MORON, try job-hopping. That way you'll have a good excuse for appearing perpetually under-qualified.

he best way to get rid of a deadbeat is to give him a glowing review and then recommend him for a job in another department.



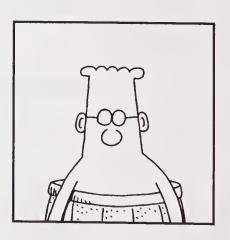


f you have worked at your company longer than the other people in your department, chances are that you are not one of the "good people."

Dispatches from Cubicleland

ALWAYS REMEMBER that as long as other people are gullible, there's no limit to what you can achieve.









(Continued from front flap)

remember that a cubicle is nature's way of saying that you should have partied less in school.

In these 10 chapters, Scott Adams will augment the worthless education you have so far acquired with the only knowledge you need to navigate idiot bosses, sociopath co-workers, and the endless series of meaningless tasks that you will call your career. This collection is guaranteed to give you a jumpstart on reality and, with any luck, allow you to complete your entire career without anyone noticing you were there.

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strip, Dilbert, which now appears in more than 2,000 newspapers, sixty-five countries and twenty-two languages. His books, The Dilbert Principle, Dogbert's Top Secret Management Handbook, The Joy of Work, and The Dilbert Future were New York Times bestsellers.

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"DILBERTED.

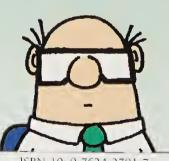
To be exploited and oppressed by your boss."

---Wired

"THERE'S A FOX IN THE CORPORATE HENHOUSE,
AND HIS NAME IS DILBERT."

-Business Week

"Thank God for Dilbert".



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