



Common Mistakes People Make: Part 2

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Abstract: A mistake may be regarded as a behavior that results from an error in judgment, inadequate or inaccurate knowledge. Mistakes can be used as a valuable means of personal growth. Success in life requires a tricky balance between learning and doing. It involves minimizing our mistakes and learning from them. This paper contains additional ten common mistakes people make. For every mistake we identify, we define it, explain how it is a common mistake, and then suggest how to fix it if possible. We offer practical ideas for self-correction. For convenience, the mistakes are arranged in alphabetical order.

Keywords: common mistakes, error in judgment.

INTRODUCTION

Making mistakes can be good for us if we know how to handle them right. We sometimes feel compelled to shift blame to others for our mistakes to avoid the feelings of shame and discomfort. This is nothing but irresponsibility. Life is full of opportunities and choices, and making the wrong choices can cause mistakes that we regret later. We must take responsibility for all of our actions and choices. In life you have to do what is best for your situation because ultimately, you are the one that will live with the decisions.

COMMON MISTAKES

There are two types of mistakes: ones that eventually make you a better person and ones that make you a worse person. Some mistakes are out of your control. These are mistakes that keep us from thriving and living our best lives. The mistakes you make every day make life more difficult, and you can avoid making those mistakes again. One must stop failing at life and avoid making bad choices that you subconsciously make all the time. In this paper, we consider another ten common mistakes people make. These mistakes are presented in alphabetical order.

1. *Instant Gratification:* Instant gratification is a common mistake which can be avoided.

Examples of instant gratification are everywhere. Our food, entertainment, online shopping, and even dating have been designed to make it incredibly easy for us to obtain whatever we want in a very short time. Instant gratification-fueled, impulsive behaviors may be detracting from quality of life. Instant gratification ruins a long-standing human virtue: the ability to wait. Your ability to wait is a sign of just how much self-control you have. People who lack the self-control to wait for something

they want run into real trouble most of the time. It is this far-reaching impact of self-control that has led psychologists, educators, policy-makers, and parents to emphasize cultivating self-control or delay of gratification at a young age. Children would benefit from developing self control or self-discipline, rather than instant gratification. As long as everything from ice cream to marijuana is just one click away, you are fighting an uphill battle for self-control. The Internet encourages instant gratification and is eroding some core human virtue. Online gratification is making us impatient and impoverishing the human character, making us distracted and socially disconnected. We are responsible for making good choices about what we do online, guided by the kind of character we want to cultivate [1]. Sometimes there are no shortcuts or cutting corners when it comes to life challenges. Avoid any get-rich-quick schemes that require little to no work. You must resist the strong desire for instant gratification.

2. *Lack of Rest*: Lack of rest is a common mistake. It may take the form of too little sleep or sleep deprivation. Sleep is crucial for our health. It is important for various activities of brain function. If you eat well and exercise regularly, but do not get at least seven hours of sleep every night, you may be undermining all of your other efforts. Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep. A body that is poorly nourished, overweight, and out-of-shape will make you feel bad in every way. Some of the most serious potential problems associated with chronic sleep deprivation are high blood pressure, diabetes, heart attack, heart failure or stroke, obesity, depression, reduced immune system function, and lower sex drive [2]. Exercise your body and eat healthily. As shown in Figure 1, exercise is good for your body [3]. Take flu shots and other vaccines to protect you from lots of diseases and lessen the odds you will spread diseases to others. Do not make the mistake of failing to take care of your body.

3. *No Goals and Plans*: Not having goals in life and plans to achieve them constitute a common mistake people make. Without a clear vision and purpose in life, we drift on the ocean of life. We lose focus and bypass the real issues of life. A couple that lacks family goals and priorities cannot be fully committed to each other. Commitment has no meaning without goals. Besides obedience to God, goals are motivation to the long-term commitment that a happy, successful marriage takes. Husbands and wives should support themselves in achieving their career goals. They also need to have common goals like buying a house and saving for children's education, among others. The goals could also be financial or spiritual. Having common goals as a husband and wife encourages commitment by giving you direction and purpose in life. Marriage goals will help your marriage to thrive and contribute positively to the health of your marriage. They also help you to keep your marriage a top priority and are a great way to grow your marriage. They give your marriage a better chance of being happy and fulfilling. In the pursuit of your goals, you will spend more time together, have more conversations, and create more intimate moments. Just as your daily goals keep you moving from one task to the next, marriage goals will infuse your relationship with passion, commitment, and vital momentum. While a goal is what you believe you need to be, a plan is what you need to do to be what you need to be. Goals are destinations, while plans are journeys to reach the destinations. Planning is figuring out how to achieve your goals. A wise man once advised: "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established" (Proverbs 16:3). Having goals and plans is not enough, we must have priorities.

4. *Not Valuing Family & Friends*: Neglecting your most prized relationships is a common mistake people make. Our relationships are the most important parts of our lives. But our most valued relationships get neglected as we allow less important activities fill our time and attention. An untended relationship may eventually wither and die. In marriage relationship, neglecting our spouse may eventually lead to divorce, a painful experience. Experts have cited overcommitment as one of the top relationship killers. Overcommitment is not good for your marriage. It can lead to loss of credibility, stress, health-related problems, and a bad marriage [4]. More will said about overcommitment in the next section.

5. *Overcommitment*: Being overcommitted is a common mistake busy individuals make. Overcommitted individuals are doing way too much, trying to handle too many things at once. You may be a superman or a high-achieving woman, you are probably not a good material for marriage. Overcommitment is an enemy of your relationship, especially marriage. Overcommitment,

overpromising, overextending, and overdoing do not help us live a balanced life. Some of the causes of overcommitment include busyness, lack of goals and priorities, and pleasing others. It may be due to involvement in church activities, shopping, urgent assignments at work, visiting relatives, pleasing people, etc. Your to-do list has exploded. Stress and burnout are expected outcomes of overcommitment. Overcommitment can lead to depression, diabetes, sleep problems, poor blood sugar control, inflammatory disease, and cardiovascular disease. Overcommitment has negative impact on your relationships, including marriage. It does not provide time for husband and wife to adequately communicate with each other, pray together, enjoy a sexual relationship, or raise kids together. You need to avoid overcommitment to lead a balanced life. The following tips will help you avoid overcommitment [5]:

- The breathless lifestyle that most Americans engage in leads to overcommitment and is unacceptable.
- Overcommitted individuals do not live a balanced life and cannot give to their spouse and children the time they need.
- Make every effort to resist the temptation of overcommitment because it is not healthy for your marriage.
- Do not let overcommitment crowd out your valued relationships.

6. *Overspending*: We often spend money on impulse, buying to satisfy a brief whim or to impress others. Overspending is a mistake because it will eventually lead to debt, which is simply your inability to meet an obligation you agreed upon. It is easy to get in debt these days; we must find a way to get out of it. You are in debt when your payments are due and you cannot meet them or when the amount owed (liability) exceeds the value (asset) of an item. When you buy something on credit, you are under a contract and not in debt. You are in debt when you fail to meet the terms of the contract. The use of credit has become widely accepted and an integral part of the American economy. We are bombarded at every corner with the media screaming, "Buy now and pay later." What you are not told is that if you buy now without cash, you will pay much more later and you will be the loser. Credit is a privilege for which you must pay. Interest on charge accounts varies between eighteen and thirty-six percent, but many couples fail to read the small print. Credit is a good servant but a bad master. Using the credit carelessly often leads to overspending and causes debt. Debt occurs when you let your expenses exceed your earning. If you cannot make your payments, you are in debt and should do whatever is necessary to get out of debt as soon as possible. Question yourself every time you make a purchase. Do you really need it? Does it offer long-term satisfaction? You should avoid reckless spending at all costs. If you do not overspend, you will get in debt [6].

7. *People-pleasing*: This is pleasing others at the expense of yourself and it is a common mistake. We all exhibit various people-pleasing tendencies to differing degrees. It is fine to help other people when in need, being there for family members and friends, and looking for opportunities to give back to your community. We must differentiate between people-pleasers and helpers. People pleasers neglect their needs and insist that they are more than happy to help others. Examine your motive for helping others.

Do you try to please others out of obligation? Does pleasing others make you feel better? If so, shift your pleasing efforts to yourself. Find ways to love and please yourself. We often think that if we can figure out what people want and give it to them, they will be happy with us. But people are difficult to please no matter what you do. People-pleasers are like chameleons, always trying to blend in. Being a chameleon can be a survival skill in unsafe relationships. There are six problems with people-pleasing [7]:

- ✓ It is impossible to please everyone
- ✓ You lose yourself
- ✓ Your worth is tied to pleasing others
- ✓ You say yes when you really mean no

- ✓ Your needs come last
- ✓ You become resentful when your needs are not met

A people-pleaser has a need for external validation and a strong desire to be liked. They find it hard to disagree or confront, even though disagreement is a healthy part of relationships. Keep in mind that people-pleasing is not pleasing anyone. It is a capital mistake trying to please everyone.

8. *Resistance to Change*: Life is change. Staying stagnant works against our potential for happiness. In the corporate world, resistance to change manifests itself in many ways, from foot-dragging to petty sabotage to outright rebellions. While resistance to change is somewhat natural and inevitable, it is not insurmountable. To overcome it, you must understand the reasons behind the resistance and work to move past them. Without awareness, change is impossible. We are born with an enormous capacity for continued learning, personal growth, and new ways of living in the world. The top causes of resistance to change include the following [8]:

- Mistrust and lack of confidence
- Emotional responses
- Lack of training and help resources
- Fear of failure
- Poor communication
- Unrealistic timelines
- Existing organization culture and norms

Change happens every day in organizations all over the world. Leadership is about change. Figure 2 shows a leader trying to explain changes in his company [9]. Although leaders may not be able to make people feel comfortable with change, they can minimize discomfort. For many people, change can be scary.

9. *Selfishness*: Being selfish is a common mistake people make consciously or unconsciously. As Oscar Wilde said, “Selfishness is not living as one wishes to live, it is asking others to live as one wishes to live.” In our society, selfishness reigns. This should not surprise us, because the Bible says that in the last days men and women will be “lovers of themselves” (2 Timothy 3:2). There are forces in our culture today that contribute and encourage selfish behaviors. These include pornography, two-career families, and cohabitation (a man and a woman living together without marriage). Selfishness is doing things your own way or insisting on your rights. A selfish person is mainly concerned for their own personal welfare without taking into consideration the welfare of others. Selfishness in marriage demonstrates itself in many ways, such as not praying together; having separate bank accounts; pursuing separate goals; not agreeing on how many children to have; and living as if the other partner does not exist. Selfishness threatens oneness in marriage. Love is the way to overcome selfishness. Selfishness is insisting on your rights, while love does not insist on its own way (1 Corinthians 13:5). Selfishness is all about getting, while love is all about giving. The first step in overcoming selfishness is learning to put yourself second and prioritize your partner’s needs before your own. Like Paul said, “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4). Keep the following items in mind concerning selfishness [10]:

- ✓ Selfishness is insisting in your way or insisting on your rights.
- ✓ Selfishness causes disunity, disagreement, sexual issues, and separation in marriages.
- ✓ Love is the antidote of selfishness and it does not insist on its own way (1 Corinthians 13:4).
- ✓ When you address an issue, let it produce a win-win solution, not a win-lose.

10. *Wasting Time*: Wasting time is a common problem with almost all of us. Alan Lakein said, “Time = life; therefore, waste your time and waste of your life, or master your time and master your life.”

Every individual, whether a student, professor, professional, manager, entrepreneur or home-maker, has limited time available to do things. We all have 24 hours a day, 86,400 seconds a day, and 168 hours in every week. How do you spend yours? Why do some people seem to achieve more with their time than others? The answer: good time management. Time is a commodity and a resource that is well worth maximizing. The highest achievers manage their time exceptionally well. Like money, time is both valuable and limited. It must be protected, used wisely and effectively. As shown in Figure 3, time is the most precious thing in this world [11]. Time is the great equalizer—everybody gets the same twenty-four hours each day. Wasting time is worse than wasting money because you can recover the money, but you cannot recover time. We must apply wisdom on how we spend our precious time and prioritize our commitments. You need to spend more time with God, your partner, and kids. Learn to say no and turn down new opportunities to serve if they would stretch you too thin. Procrastination is delaying till tomorrow what you can do today. It is an indication of poor time management [12].

CONCLUSION

Making mistakes is an effective and efficient way to learn. One would think that our collective wisdom would have evolved to the point where we know better, but unfortunately that does not seem to be the case. It seems that we have to make these mistakes if we want to learn and move forward. Making mistakes and blaming others and not learning from them is the worst mistake a person can make. Give yourself the time to reflect on the mistakes covered in this paper in your own life. Make necessary adjustments if possible. More information about common mistakes people make can be found in the book in [13-21].

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Figure 1. Exercise is good for your body [3].



Figure 2. A leader explaining changes [9].



Figure 3. Time is the most precious thing in this world [11].

