

48 ways you can take initiative in your life and work:

1. Make a habit of asking “what if” instead of accepting the status-quo
2. Schedule creative brainstorm sessions by yourself or in groups
3. Challenge yourself to try new things every day for a week
4. Ask a lot of questions
5. If you are spending a lot of time doing boring tasks, ask yourself if it really needs to be done. If it does, find ways to make it more efficient. Consider outsourcing some of those tasks.
6. Do different self-awareness exercises every day for a month. Take personality tests. Document your day in a journal. Ask your friends and family about your strengths and weaknesses.
7. Make a list of all the things you’ve been meaning to do for a while – whether it’s something as small as cleaning the house, or something as big as writing a book - and start doing at least one thing from that list straight away.
8. Find a mentor.
9. Form a mastermind group.
10. Join a class to learn something new, even if it has nothing to do with your career.
11. Make a list of your biggest mistakes. Journal about the lessons you learned from those mistakes.
12. Speak up. Next time someone asks you for an opinion, or if you are in a meeting, don’t hold back. Present your ideas, or say exactly what you think. You have to be comfortable with yourself and your beliefs, to get used to taking an initiative.
13. If you see something that needs to be done, go do it – even if it’s not a part of your responsibility.
14. Admit your mistakes.
15. Set goals.
16. Participate. Make your presence known by taking part in any discussion or activity with enthusiasm.
17. Take advantage of new opportunities.
18. Discover your values. Do you know what you stand for? Your core values are an essential part of the life you want to create, so spend some time thinking about them.
19. Make a list of things around you that are not quite good enough, the ones that you know could be better. Pick one, and brainstorm how you’ll make it better. Then, immediately implement the idea.

20. Make decisions. When something needs to be decided, don't just worry or think about it and prolong the situation. Do your homework, assess the situation, and then make an informed decision.
21. Follow the 80/20 rule. Focus your efforts on the things that will deliver high impact results.
22. Make a conscious effort to give your absolute best to every task at hand.
23. Be persistent. If you want something, and you know you are right to want it, then keep at it. Don't let the fear of rejection hold you back.
24. Influence is power. Experiment with different ways to improve your influencing skills.
25. Send a hand-written "Thank You" card to someone who has helped you.
26. Approach one person who's good at something you want to improve in, and ask them for help. You could either ask them to be your mentor, or make a mutually beneficial offer where you provide them with something they need in return.
27. Praise someone publically for something they did well. If your spouse did something nice for you, thank them or praise their effort in front of others. If your employee took an initiative, went out of their way to do something, or did a really great job, make a pointing of commenting on it in front of other colleagues.
28. Praise someone who's in a higher position than you. If your parents did something well, or if your boss did something very helpful, or gave you good guidance, tell them that, and thank them.
29. Lead by example. If you are trying to get someone else to do something, do it yourself first. Inspire action in others. Don't force it.
30. Help someone with zero expectation for any reward, or even a thank-you. Help them because it's the right thing to do.
31. Find an informal leadership position. Organize events in your local community; offer your help with school projects; start a group that brings like-minded people together. You don't need to wait for someone else to tell you that you are a leader. Leaders lead – whether they get paid for it or not.
32. Find one way that you can improve your communication skills, and practice it every day for a fortnight.
33. Find out how other people prefer to communicate. Wherever possible, use the medium of their choice.
34. Bring solutions, not problems. This is a cliché for a reason. No one likes naysayers and whiners. If you see an issue, by all means bring it up. But have something constructive to say as well.
35. Anticipate your manager's, partner's, children's, friends' needs. Do something for them that they need, without their having to ask you.
36. Regularly ask people in your life for their feedback on your strengths and weaknesses.

37. Be honest. Be yourself. Success without authenticity is meaningless.
38. Be your own best supporter. Learn to present your ideas and plans in positive and effective manner to others.
39. Volunteer for difficult or weird assignments.
40. Smile at people. Greet them. Friendliness is the most effective way to create connection.
41. Minimize negative comments that come out of your mouth.
42. Give what you want to receive. This is similar to “do to others what you want done to you.” If you want respect, give respect to others. If you want opportunities, give the opportunities in your power to people who would benefit from it.
43. Find a work environment that supports your authenticity. Don’t try to fit in a place that is totally wrong for you.
44. Create a plan for where you want to be in five years’ time.
45. Actively break-off association with all negative influences in your life. Surround yourself by people who support, motivate or inspire you.
46. Regularly review your progress on your goals, and adjust your course as required.
47. Pick one skill that is important/necessary for you but you aren’t very good at, and focus on improving it to a high level within 4-6 months.
48. Simplify your life.

ACTION YOU CAN TAKE TODAY

Pick at least one of these 48 items, and start work on it today.