

The Tool Box

Serving the Electrical, HVAC & Plumbing Industries Since 1912

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How To Let Go of Perfection

By Ann Elliott



To the perfectionist, it is a badge of honor to struggle to get everything done exactly right. Being a perfectionist creates stress, frustration, and anxiety. Why do some consider being a perfectionist a positive thing? The rigidity and inflexibility required to create perfection leaves no room to deal with change. Perfection is unattainable, yet for those blinded by the need for order, the pursuit is endless.

For example, my friend, an architect who is such a perfectionist that subcontractors will not bid on his projects because he is so difficult to work with. Another strategy, however, is the electrical contractor I encountered a week before the beginning of the bidding process for a large project. I asked if he planned to submit a bid for my friend's project and he replied, "On any of his projects, I always add 10% to my bid."

What Can We Celebrate about the Perfectionist?

There are many strengths for a perfectionist. You can rely on a perfectionist to be punctual. They show up to meetings on time or early with their appropriate documents with them. You can bet their electronic devices have a fully charged battery, too. Do not expect a perfectionist to make it up as they go because they thrive on predictability. A precise methodology makes them comfortable. When others do not meet their exacting standards, perfectionists harshly judge them and themselves as well. It is hard being a perfectionist. Nothing is ever good enough. When these strengths are taken too far, they become a weakness.



Because the perfectionist is adamant about the correct way to do something, they demonstrate a strong opinion and often sarcastically. Have you noticed that perfectionists are tense?

Organization and structure provide a level of comfort for the perfectionist. When others do not operate at this level of organization, the perfectionist works overtime to make up for this. Not only is the perfectionist doing their work but that of others to make up for the messiness.

A common refrain is “If you can’t do it right, just don’t do it at all.” If you are leading a team, this mindset creates an environment where it is not safe to make a mistake. Learning occurs when you discover what does not work through a mistake.

The Root of the Problem

The thinking of the perfectionist is to be beyond the judgment and reproach of others by doing things perfectly. It is understandable to use a sense of order in the middle of the dynamics of a chaotic family experience. A method of gaining acceptance from demanding or emotionally distant parents is to be the perfect child. Who could be unhappy with a kid who got excellent grades, kept their room neat, willingly helped with the family chores, and used good table manners? Being the perfect child is a method of control in an uncontrollable circumstance.

Perfectionists go to great lengths to defend themselves from the criticism of others. They use self-control to make certain they are not in the cross hairs of others who judge them. You can see why they are on edge and waiting for the other shoe to drop.

First steps to let go of perfectionism

Recognize the problem.

You are using negative emotions to propel your action. You have learned to rely on beliefs that do not serve you. Early in life you kept yourself feeling safe by making no mistakes. You removed yourself from the possible anger and judgment of a parent with your perfect behavior, at least temporarily.

Identify the cost of the problem.

How much do you invest in the most minute details that make no difference in the big picture. The cost of sleepless nights, too many changes to a project, frayed tempers, lost productivity, or missed deadlines is too high.

Determine if you are willing to develop new thinking and behaving.

Change begins with a decision to do something differently. Albert Einstein said, “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.” Understand that it took you a long time to develop this way of thinking. It will take time to create new mental pathways to a healthy way of thinking. Once you begin developing the mental muscles, you experience a difference. In as little as 21 days your brain will show dramatic change.

Learn the situations most likely to spark the “perfectionist.”

Starting a new project that you are deeply interested in, triggers your need to have everything perfect. If your promotion depends on the results of the outcome of your team’s performance, you resort to making everything perfect.

Use blameless discernment to choose what action requires precision.

Everything does not require precision. Keep an eye on the big picture. There is a point of diminishing returns. How much difference will it make to the final proposal to continue to edit, tweak, and change the nuances?

Act with clear-eyed focus on what is most important.

Small steps in the right direction produce better outcomes. This requires discipline to know what is necessary for the success of your project. Consider the possibility that perfection is impossible. Excellence is good enough.

Take the saboteur assessment at Positive Intelligence (PQ).

Discover which mental saboteurs are responsible for your stress and impeding your productivity. This free assessment www.positiveintelligence.com/saboteurs gives insight into how your strength becomes a detriment when taken to extremes.

A dyed-in-the-wool perfectionist knows the drill

It is hard for a dyed-in-the-wool perfectionist to start something. The pressure to produce something perfect is daunting. This is particularly true when you are not an expert on the subject. I recall when I was considering the possibility of a monthly newsletter. People I respected advised me to do it and be sure to provide something of value to the reader. For someone not well versed in technology, graphics, mass mailing, building an email list, it was overwhelming. And something of value, too! The impetus that got me into action was when I promised to add the audience where I was

giving a presentation to my list of subscribers. I felt compelled to admit I had not sent out the first newsletter. However, I promised to put them on the list of recipients for the inaugural edition of “The Leadership Strategist.” The first edition came to life just weeks later and has been published since 2010. I am a recovering perfectionist and have learned to put my attention on the most important things. Even with an occasional relapse, I do not judge myself so harshly.

The wrap up

Sarah Ban Breathnach, author of *Simple Abundance*, quotes the writer, Ann Lamott in the chapter titled, “Little Miss Perfect.” Lamott says, “Perfectionism is the voice of the oppressor, the enemy of the people. It will keep you cramped and insane your whole life.”

The price is too high, and the return is not worth it. Striving for perfection is stressful not only for the perfectionist but those around them. It is not achievable, and others do not notice the attention to the minutiae that is all consuming.

If you recognize these thinking patterns in yourself, think how life would be different to operate in easy and flow. The seven-week course developed by Shirzad Chamine with Positive Intelligence methodology has helped thousands of successful people create success without stress.

Discover your saboteurs by investing five minutes to take this free assessment www.positiveintelligence.com/saboteurs

My invitation to you. Reach out to me at aelliott@berkanacompany.com. I will help you discover how to take your insights from discovering your saboteurs, the perfectionist (Stickler) and others, to better relationships, confidence, higher productivity, and peace of mind. You may qualify for the next POD to develop your [mental fitness](#). We will explore how this seven-week program benefits you.



Ann Elliott, founder of The Berkana Company, excels at leadership strategy. An expert at helping business leaders enjoy more profits and improved productivity with less stress, she blends fun and excitement with executive coaching and training to yield results for her clients.

Motivational Thoughts

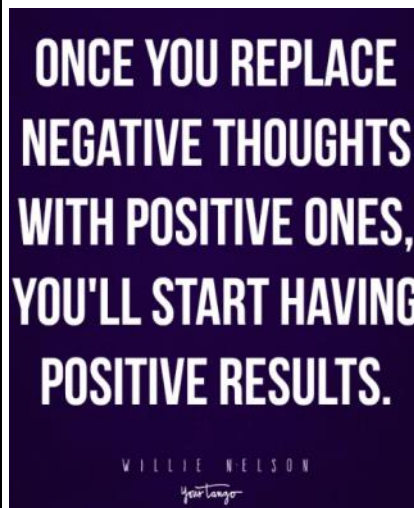
Inspirational Quotes



10 WAYS TO STAY MOTIVATED

1. Understand your why.
2. Define your goal.
3. Create a clear vision.
4. Produce a plan.
5. Keep it positive.
6. Choose to be successful.
7. Break goals into manageable tasks.
8. Stay in the zone.
9. Keep it fun.
10. Visualize yourself succeeding.

CHANGE YOUR MINDSET 5



**ONCE YOU REPLACE
NEGATIVE THOUGHTS
WITH POSITIVE ONES,
YOU'LL START HAVING
POSITIVE RESULTS.**

WILLIE NELSON
Your Largo



“
Mondays are the
start of the work
week which offer
new beginnings
52 times a year!

DAVID DWEK

Mechanical Member



Many years ago Tuck & Howell Plumbing, Heating & Air started as a father son appliance business from the Tuck family. At the age of eight, Jerry Tuck was working in his father's appliance repair business which then became primarily a heating business before air conditioners were used in homes in Greer. After his father's death, Jerry took over the business and added his great friend, Hayden Howell, to form Tuck & Howell Mechanical Contracting Company around 1969.

Over the 50 years that Tuck & Howell has been in business, Jay Mahaffey (Jerry Tuck's nephew) that grew up in the business bought the business with his partner, JP McConnell, (a 20 year employee) from Jay's family. Tuck & Howell is mostly in the light commercial & residential HVAC replacement market. Jay & JP decided they could better serve their customer base by adding plumbing to their services offered. They also rebranded the company to give it a more modern look. Today, Tuck & Howell still serve their customers the way they always have with the same quality and principals that built the iconic company over a half of century ago. . . .one customer at a time.

Associate Member



Eastern Industrial Supplies opened its doors in 1980 in Greenville, SC. Independently owned and operated, growth has led the company into markets including NC, SC, FL, GA, TN, and AL.

Eastern currently has 19 locations throughout its footprint. We specialize in supplying pipe, valves, fittings, engineered products, commercial plumbing, and so much more. Outside our vast product offerings, our service is second to none, in our humble opinion. We have 28 fundamentals that we hold ourselves accountable to and that we hope our customers will hold us to. "Take Care of the Customer" is on that list as well as "Honor Commitments." Caring is the heartbeat of Eastern's culture. Eastern Cares, created in 2002, is a driving force in defining our culture and fueling Eastern's growth. Caring is also a pivotal component in Eastern's vision: Enjoy Today, Embrace Tomorrow, and Enhance PVF. We're committed to doing more than selling PVF products. We're most passionate about engaging, developing, and strengthening our people, values and faith.

We know when you're selecting a distributor to purchase from, the most important criteria can be making sure those products are on the job site on time and in good condition. Our trucks make deliveries every day to job sites and between our locations making sure the stock you need is where you need it, when you need it. With a 24-hour emergency line, we are here to help your projects stay on track.

Give us a call or visit one of our locations today to learn about your next great distributor relationship. Phone: 864.451.5285 Email: contact@easternfirst.com Web: www.easternfirst.com/locations

Happy Birthday Members!

Coleman Boyd	2/2	Carolina Insulation Contractors	
Richard Miller, Jr.	2/2	City Plumbing Company	
Don Ward, Jr.	2/4	Carolina Insulation Contractors	
Al Hitchcock	2/10	Honorary Life Member	
Billy Zimmerman	2/13	Charlotte Pipe & Foundry	
Dennis Brunink	2/14	Honorary Life Member	
Joe McMurry	2/17	Honorary Life Member	
Laura Hendrix	2/19	Wife of Honorary Life Member Manuel	
John Williams	2/19	Cashion Electricians, Inc.	
Chris MacQueen	2/21	Gateway Supply Company	
Bob Smith	2/21	Honorary Life Member	
Rosa Williams	2/21	Widow of Honorary Life Member Eddie	
Brenda Poplin	2/25	B & L Electric	Wife of Henry
Debbie Hill	2/27	Hill Plumbing & Electric Company, Inc.	Wife of Frank

We would like to announce your Birthday too! If you would like to be listed, please call 803-772-7834.

Anniversaries

Mr. & Mrs. John Babson	2/9	Propel Insurance Agency, LLC	Bibs
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Berry	2/17	MCASC	Michelle

Condolences

The Whitt family in the loss of
 Jim Whitt
 December 25, 2023
 Morelli Heating & Air

The Walkup family in the loss of
 Nellie Richardson Avin (Terry's mother)
 December 29, 2023
 Walkup Electrical Construction

The Mullaney Family in the loss of
 Terry Mullaney
 January 2, 2024
 Mullaney Agency

The Lamb family in the loss of
 Clarice Lamb
 January 4, 2024
 Honorary Life Member

The Brewer Family in the loss of
 Steve Brewer
 January 10, 2024
 Easley Mechanical

“Tool Box Talks” – Safety Tips

Basic Electrical Safety - Avoiding the Hazards of Reverse Polarity

[Reference 1910 Subpart S / 1926 Subpart K] Polarity

We discussed in an earlier toolbox talk about how electrical tools or equipment which are double insulated have a power cord with a two-pronged plug on the end and no ground prong. But have you ever noticed how one of the two prongs (or blades) is wider than the other? And perhaps you have also noticed one of the two vertical slots is also larger on most electrical receptacles (refer to handout to see examples of these). The reason for this is because it is critical to our safety that the electricity flowing to and through the tool or equipment and back through the wiring system follow the proper path.

When electricity flows to and through the receptacle to the plug to the tool or equipment, it should be traveling through the “hot” wire. Once it gets to the tool or equipment, it typically flows to the on-off switch or control, and once the switch is turned on or activated, the current flows on to the motor, heating element, light bulb or whatever else needs electricity to make the device function. From there it flows back out of the tool or equipment to the receptacle via the “neutral” wire, and from there back through the electrical system to the ground.

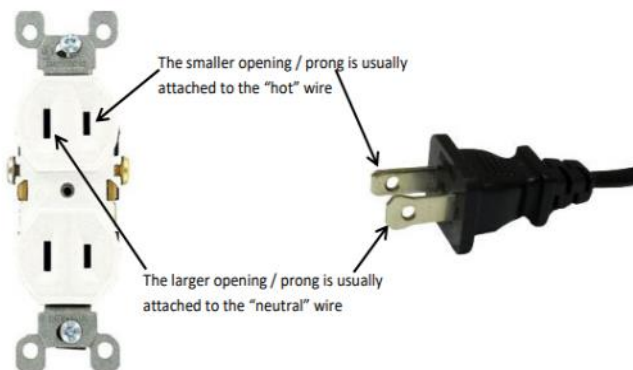
But if for some reason somebody switched around the “hot” and “neutral” wires in the system, a condition known as “reversed polarity” occurs. The electricity no longer stops at the on-off switch, but instead runs through the entire circuit inside the tool or equipment up to the point where the off-on switch or control is located. This may not seem like a big deal because the tool or equipment will typically run like normal when the on-off switch is activated (even if it is wired backwards). But reverse polarity can present a very serious potential danger for a couple of reasons.

First of all, if a tool such as a portable grinder wired in a reverse polarity situation were to short out, the grinder would suddenly turn on and start to run even without the on-off switch being activated. To make matters worse, you would not be able to turn the grinder back off unless you unplugged it from the receptacle. Also, with devices like lamps and light fixtures with standard screw-in light sockets, the neutral wire that is attached to the socket would effectively become a hot wire in a reverse polarity situation, energizing the screw-in portion of the light socket. That means that anyone who accidentally touched the screw-in part of the socket while installing or removing a bulb could be accidentally electrocuted. These are reasons why plugs and receptacles are polarized; to prevent them from being plugged in backwards.

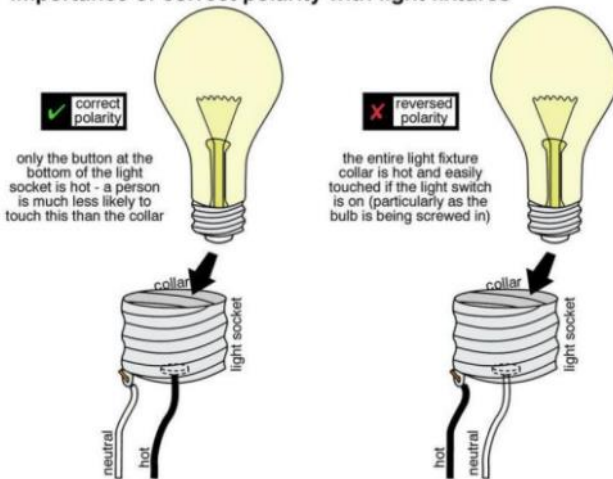
So why should we be aware of the hazards of reverse polarity? Because most electrocutions and other accidents that occur due to reverse polarity do so because someone who is not a qualified electrician decides to try and repair a broken or non-functioning circuit, switch, receptacle, tool, or piece of equipment, and they mistakenly get their hot and neutral wires crossed. So long story short, it is **VERY CRITICAL** that you **DO NOT** ever make any unauthorized repairs on any electrical circuitry, tool, or piece of equipment. Instead, report the condition to your supervisor or safety rep, so the work can be done by a qualified electrician who can also conduct tests necessary to ensure everything is wired correctly.

REVERSE POLARITY – The Hazards and How to Avoid Them

How Properly Wired Polarized Receptacles & Plugs Work



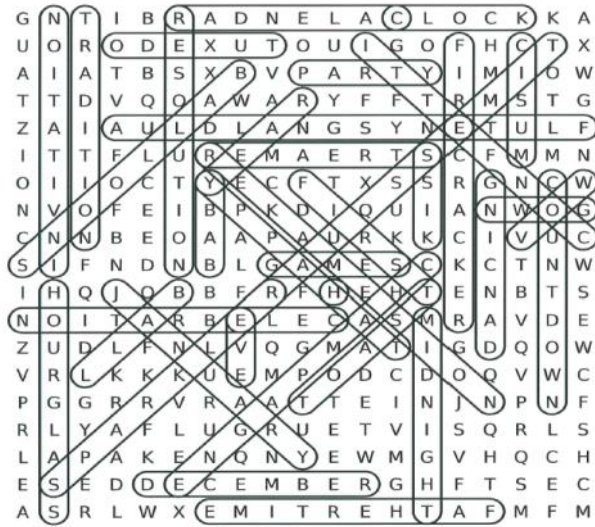
Importance of correct polarity with light fixtures



Source of image: White House Inspections

Happy New Year!

SOLUTION



**MCASC
STATE
BOARD
MEETING
01/24/2024**



**Presentation
Of
Presidents
Plaques**

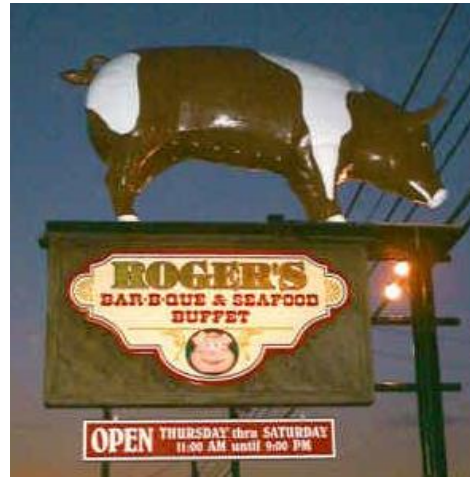


Midlands Area Social at Quaker Steak & Lube (hosted by Ferguson Enterprises) 1/9/2024



Pee Dee Area Monthly Meeting (hosted by City Plumbing Co.) 1/11/2024

CITY PLUMBING COMPANY
Your family owned and operated plumber for
over 60 years
Serving the Pee Dee Area
Residential | Commercial | Emergencies
833 S. Santivaga Drive, Florence SC
843.662.2365



Piedmont Area Monthly Meeting (hosted by Yandle-Witherspoon Supply) 1/16/2024



Charles Appleby—Guest Speaker



Coastal Area Meeting (hosted by Atlantic Coast Electric Supply) 1/23/2024



**THE COASTAL AREA
MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO THEIR
ANNUAL OYSTER ROAST**

MCASC Members & Their Spouse/Significant Other Are Cordially Invited.
The Attendee Capacity this year is limited to the first 150 people that sign up on Ticket Spice.



DATE: Thursday, February 22, 2024



TIME: 6:00 – 11:00 PM

PLACE: James Island Yacht Club

DRESS: Casual

COST: \$50/person In Advance OR \$55/person at the Door

MENU: In addition to local oysters, hot chowder & hot dogs with all the trimmings will be served.



EVENT & BAR SPONSORED BY: **Blanchard Machinery**



****NOTE: PLEASE BRING A DOOR PRIZE TO RAFFLE.****



TICKET ORDER FORM



RSVP DEADLINE - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024
SIGN-UP ON TICKET SPICE AT

<https://mechanicalcontractorsassociati.ticketspice.com/coastal-area-mcasc-oyster-roast-february-22-2024>

OR MAIL CHECK TO: HANNAH EHINGER, PO BOX 42398, N. CHARLESTON, SC 29423
YOU MAY EMAIL FORM TO MICHELLE BERRY mberry@mcasc.com OR
FAX FORM TO: MICHELLE @ MCASC STATE OFFICE (803) 731-0390

COMPANY NAME: _____

NAME(S): _____

PHONE: _____ **NUMBER OF TICKETS REQUESTED:** _____

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Area Meetings & Upcoming Events

Piedmont Area

Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 6:00 pm

Hosted by: Jennings-Dill, Inc.

Location: 33 Grand Avenue, Greenville, SC

Speaker: TBD

Program: TBD



17th Annual Piedmont Clays for Education Tournament

Friday, May 3, 2024

The Clinton House, Clinton, SC

Midlands Area

Thursday, February 1, 2024 at 6:00 pm

Sponsored/Hosted by: Central Controls, Inc.

221 Westmoreland Lane, West Columbia, SC

Speaker: Brandon Buchanan, Business & Industry Liaison

Topic: SC Works and Midlands Workforce Development Board

13th Annual Midlands Nine at Night Golf Tournament April 4, 2024



Pee Dee Area

Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 6:30 pm

Hosted by: Longley Supply Company

Location: 1550 Highway #501, Myrtle Beach, SC

Speaker: Chris Pearce, P.A., The Pearce Law Group P. C.

Program: “Contracting Industry Outlook—2024: Old Problems and New Issues”



Pick A Winner for Education—Winner Of Drawing Was Mark Matz

17th Annual Pee Dee Blast Sporting Clays Event

Friday, September 20, 2024

Back Woods Quail Club, Georgetown, SC

Coastal Area

Annual Oyster Roast

Thursday, February 22, 2024 6:00-11:00 pm

James Island Yacht Club

734 Wampler Drive, Charleston, SC 29412

Sponsored by: Blanchard Machinery

Please bring a door prize for the drawings!



15th Annual Coastal Inshore Fishing Tournament

Friday & Saturday, May 3-4, 2024

Location: TBD



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120 Cromer Road
Lexington, SC 29073

Phone: (803) 772-7834

Fax: (803) 731-0390

E-mail: mflowers@mcasc.com
www.mcasc.com

*Serving mechanical contractors
in South Carolina since 1912.*

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Vice-President

Steven Hayes
Treasurer

Jim Hearn
Secretary

Varity Poston
Associate President

Mona Flowers
Managing Director

**Congratulations to our Associate &
Mechanical Members who will be
highlighted in the next issue of**

"The Tool Box"

Associate Member



Mechanical Member



[Update Your](#)

[Outlook](#)

Let us know if we need to
update your Outlook or if
you know someone who

MCASC Vision Statement

The Mechanical Contractors Association of South Carolina (MCASC) will be the leading construction association in South Carolina for specialty contractors and suppliers in the electrical, mechanical (HVAC), and plumbing fields by serving its membership, the industry, and the Community in a vibrant and harmonious fashion.

MCASC Mission Statement

The Mechanical Contractors Association of South Carolina (MCASC) will provide its membership with:

- current business/technical information and support
- a proactive political/legislative agenda
- a joint industry collaboration to improve relative business practices
- an ongoing effort to offer training opportunities for both professional and craft personnel
- educational scholarships for deserving students
- the development of industry related career opportunities

The Associations objective for this mission is to enhance the future of the Construction Industry in South Carolina.