

3 Things to Do When You Make a Mistake

By Zig Ziglar

When you mess up, how do you react?

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had as much foresight as hindsight, if we were able to avoid ever making a mistake?

Not only is that unrealistic, it's unwise... Out of mistakes come major accomplishments—because mistakes are often the springboard for success.

Once, Thomas Edison was working with a lab assistant who was coming up dry after more than 700 experiments. In discouragement, he told Edison that after all these mistakes, errors and false starts, he simply did not believe the project was valid.

Edison quickly told him that he was not wasting his time, that he now knew more about the project than anybody alive—that he had not made "mistakes" but had acquired an "education" as to what would not work. And so the assistant went back to his project with renewed vigor.

It's safe to say that if each of us took that approach to life, we would end up accomplishing much, much more. After every mistake, we need to understand that we can look back and learn so that we can **move** forward with confidence and avoid making the same mistake again.

Here are three tips on how best to handle a mistake:

1. See the mistake as a step on the road to a solution.

Don't let mistakes depress or discourage you. We must realize that depression and discouragement are negatives that limit the future.

2. Admit the mistake.

I'll admit that takes courage, but recognition of errors is a sign of maturity. Not to recognize them is to deny them. The reality is that "denial" is more than just a river in Egypt—it's something that will limit your future.

3. Know that it's only when you ignore the mistake that it is negative.

When we confront mistakes, we are taking full advantage of it as the "positive" they are.