![Sophia logo]

Initiative

by Devmountain Tutorials

1. WHAT IS INITIATIVE?

In work and in life, there is often a large gap between seeing what needs to be done and actually getting it done. **Initiative** allows you to see this gap and take action. It's a skill that will enable you to get ahead of the competition by finding opportunities that others miss.

Practicing initiative means that you don't need to be told what to do or when to do it. When you see something that has to be done, you take responsibility and act. If you've got something to say in a meeting, say it. If you can lend a hand on a project, help out. That "get up and go" spirit is valued by busy supervisors who don't have time to micromanage everyone on their team. In fact, honing your initiative skill throughout your life will make you a desired job candidate because it shows you can think for yourself and continue to develop and grow into your role.

📄 TERM TO KNOW

Initiative
The ability to see what needs to be done and to take action without being prompted in order to improve a circumstance.

2. WHAT DOES INITIATIVE LOOK LIKE IN THE WORKPLACE?

In the past, demonstrating initiative wasn't always essential in the workplace. Many people would get one job stay there for decades, "climbing the corporate ladder" one rung at a time. Today's workplaces are very different; now, your career path is less like a ladder and more like a rock-climbing wall, where you have to identify sidesteps along the way. If you don't see a path forward, take the initiative and find a new opportunity you can pivot towards.

> ⤳ EXAMPLE We had an employee at Poodle Jumper, Amanda, who was working in our customer support team. She recognized a pattern with the support issues coming in but instead of just logging them and going on with her day, she sent a detailed analysis of the issue to the developer responsible. She collaborated with the developer and shared her insights on how the customers used the feature to ensure it was really fixed. When we had an opening for a quality assurance role, the developer recommended that we promote this individual. Because she had a history of using her initiative skill, we knew she would jump in and learn the aspects of the roles she wasn't familiar with. She has been a tremendous asset to our team.

 :{{step by step|
Anyone can take initiative, but many people simply choose not to. Here are six steps you can follow right now to begin developing your initiative skill:

1. Write out a plan for your studies, career, or personal life. (Visualizing where you want to go helps give you the initiative to take the first step.)

2. Build your self-confidence.

3. Look for opportunities and potential improvements.

4. "Sense check" yourself; in other words, make sure your ideas make sense.

5. Show persistence, even when things don't go as you hope.

6. Find a balance between your usual responsibilities and anything additional you take on.}}

These are signs that you may need to work on your initiative skills:

- You wait to be invited or told to act; wait for opportunities to come to you.

- You fail to act when needed; require reminders and follow-up from others.

- You are passive in meetings.

- You discourage initiative in others.

- You accept the status quo.

- You do only what's expected.

Don't wait, get in there and get to work!

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