

# Dick Baker's Magic Words-My Workplace Miracle

By Burt Dubin

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These words change my life. They inspire me with belief in myself.

This belief in what I can do sustains me. It sustains me through many crucibles. Through many crucibles in the years that follow.

Here's how it happens: At 17 I quit high school. It's not that I want to quit in my senior year. It's my father. He ups and leaves us flat with no notice. No notice and no money. The "us" is my Mom and my 2 little sisters. There's no means of support. No cash to pay the rent. And the food. And all the rest.

So I take the noble action. I quit high school. I go to the nearest large factory. It happens to be RCA, in Camden, New Jersey. I lie about my age. They believe me. They believe me because they need people now. There's a war on. They only know they need people to do the essential work. They need people now.

An electronics enthusiast, I bump myself up. Up and off the assembly line in just a few weeks. I get myself assigned to the Test Cage. The Test Cage is electronically isolated from the rest of the world. No signals can enter. No signals can leave.

I love working with the CRT, the various meters and the alignment tools. It's a Union Shop. Did you ever work in a Union Shop? If so, you'll recognize what follows. The Shop Steward works along with everybody else. And he watches everything with the object of protecting and preserving jobs.

My job is to test and align electronic equipment destined for the USA Department of Defense. The Time and Motion Study folks have established 45 minutes as the allowed time to complete one procedure.

After a few weeks, I figure out how to do this job in 15 minutes. And I do. Instead of turning out 12 procedures per 8 hour shift, I do 36 complete procedures. The Shop Steward has a little talk with me. I resist his recommendation that I slow down. There's a war on, I tell him.

He's not happy. So he gets 2 engineers, guys with white shirts and neatly pressed navy blue trousers, (You know the type, their suits come with 2 pair of pants!) to visit me. They don't just visit. They bring their yellow legal pads. They stand behind me. They stand behind me for 2 full shifts. When one has to visit the bathroom, the other watched me with eagle eyes.

After the 2 shifts, 16 hours of observing my every move, they file a Report. In essence, they say, "the kid's right." (I, a late bloomer, was not even shaving yet.) The kid's right! This means they rewrite the procedure. Now my every motion becomes the prescribed motion for the whole 30-person group.

And they require someone to train the other in this simpler procedure.

Who do ya' think they pick. I'm the only one available. So, at 17 I show the 29 others what to do and how to do it.

Wait, there's more. They bump me up. off the line, to new responsibilities. I'm now the Troubleshooter for the whole group. This means when someone runs into a problem, they call on me to solve it.

When I can't figure out what to do, I go to the Shift Supervisor, Dick Baker. He's from Green Bay, Wisconsin. His religion is football. The Green Bay Packers are his heroes. His Gods. Every other word out of his mouth is Green Bay. (You've met the type.) He always solves the problem.

Here's the scene: I'm hunched over a work station. I'm staring down the CRT and the perplexing problem. Dick Baker, a few feet away, quietly speaks to the person he's with: "That young Burt is so good at what he does--he never has to call on me for help any more."

I'm moved by those words. (They prove to be magic words.) Someone believes in me. Someone believes I'm better than I know I am. Maybe he's right. Let's find out.

I scrunch down addressing the problem. The sweat pours from my brow. I break through and solve the problem. I never have to call on Dick Baker for help ever again.

Because someone believes in me, I tap into a power I never knew was there. Now I believe in myself. I believe in my power to transcend perceived limits. This proves to be my workplace miracle!

Ever since that tender moment, thanks to Dick Baker, thanks to one person believing in me, I've shattered perceived limits again and again.

"Think you can, think you can't, either way you're right." So said Henry Ford. And you, dear Reader, can transcend the perceived limits of your life.

Simply believe in yourself and your power. Then do what you must to create the conditions and circumstances you desire. That's all it takes.

Burt Dubin, a 20 year veteran of the business of speaking, mentors speakers and wanna-be's world-wide. Burt works with people who want to be speakers and with speakers who want to be masters.

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