

# ADMIN ADVANTAGE

The Exclusive Online Magazine for Administrative Professionals

**April  
2016**



## Helping Administrative Professionals with New Ideas to Work Happy

**Interview with Chris Campbell of Poppin**

### **FEATURES:**

15 Salary Negotiation Do's and Don'ts  
Top 5 Ways on How to Make Credit Cards Work for You  
Waggl Distills - Handle Negative Employee Feedback

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# ADMINADVANTAGE

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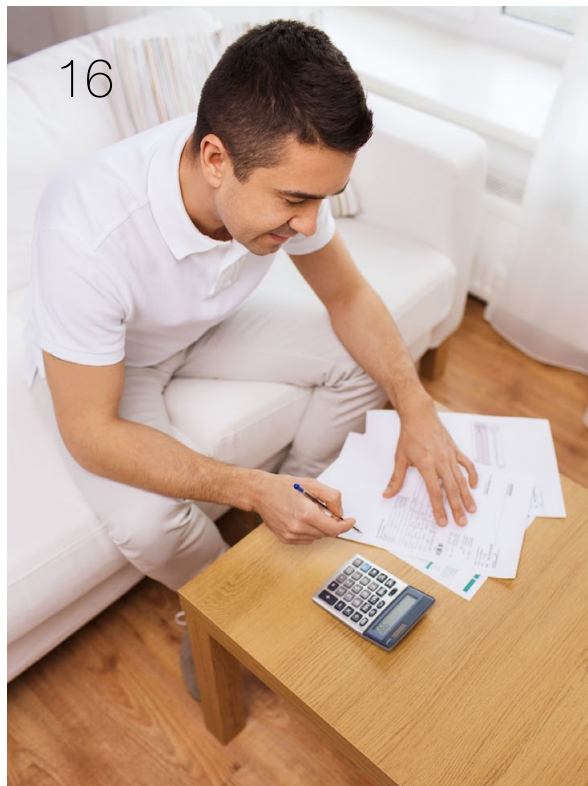
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# 7 Things to Start Doing Today to Be Happy

by Richard Brody

## 1. Decide to be happy.

Make a decision today to be happy. Then start doing things that will make you happy. Stop settling for what others expect of you and start going after what really matters to you. Have the tenacity to get over fear barrier and really chase after those things that matter to you.

Most of all, don't just decide. Really decide. You'll know it when you feel it in your guts. You've made decisions like this before, where you will do whatever it takes to make things happen because you're committed and able. Decide. It really is as simple as that.

## 2. Practice affirmations daily.

What's the difference between an affirmation and the negative talk that goes on in your mind constantly? Nothing.

Affirmations are no different than the negative thought patterns that pop up whenever you're about to do something that scares you and excites you.





So, start off small, with just one affirmation. Recite it at least a hundred times a day for the next week, until you start to reflexively say it in your mind whenever something comes up that would have normally had you going to negative thoughts.

Most of all, make sure that you're at least slightly emotionally invested in your affirmations. You'll have to feel good about it in order for this affirmation to become your new paradigm. You might even find yourself in disbelief the first few days or weeks that you start reciting it.

As long as you can get to the point where you start believing it and start feeling good about it, you're on the right path.

### **3. Practice gratitude daily.**

Start being grateful for what you have rather than what you lack. When you practice gratitude, you put your mind in a different vibration.

Gratitude reframes our mind and starts helping us see what's possible and what's abundant rather than what's impossible and scarce.

Most of all, even practice gratitude for the things that you do not have but want. When you start thinking on this wavelength, invariably your mind will start coming up with creative ways to help you get what you really want.

### **4. Meditate daily.**

I have to admit that affirmations are hard when

you are first starting out. A big part of the challenge is just generally lack of belief and investment. Being in a positive frame of mind is such a shift when you have been living a life of lack and scarcity your entire life. So, it does take quite a while for your affirmations to take hold. You, however, can help yourself along by practicing meditation. Meditation not only sharpens your focus, it also quiets the mind and helps you to become impartial and non-judgmental to the random thoughts that enter your mind. I've heard somewhere that we have about 30,000 to 50,000 thoughts a day!

### **IMAGINE TRYING TO CONTROL IT ALL. ▼**

Here's something that will surprise you about these thoughts: Many of them occur at the unconscious level! By being able to dismiss these thoughts without judgement, you stop feeling bad about things.

### **5. Stop blaming other people and start being more proactive.**

Successful and happy people learned a long time ago that ultimately the only person that they can blame and subsequently change are themselves.

Everything they have in their lives is a result of themselves, both the good and the bad. When you realize that you yourself are ultimately the only one to blame for your circumstances, you also realize that you alone have the power to change those circumstances.

# LIFESTYLE

There's another word for blaming other people and the environment for your problems: It's called the victim mentality.

And here's something that will shock you about victim mentality. It comes fundamentally from poor self-esteem and self-hatred.

## 6. Make time for yourself.

While life is best lived in the service towards others, you have to ultimately make time for yourself. You have to eventually face the music. By making time for yourself, you learn more about yourself. Do things that make you happy. Work on your affirmations. Daily, write out ten things for which you are grateful. Meditate to help you focus and be more successful in reciting your affirmations.

## 7. Start a Journal of Healing.

When you have time to yourself, consider writing into a Journal of Healing. Simply put, you write down the things that are bugging you. When you are able to concisely and clearly put your thoughts into words, you can exactly define what's bugging you.


After you've ranted and vented, start another section in your journal called Healing. In this section, discuss some of the things you can do to start the healing process. It could be to verbalize your problems, think of how different people perceive the problem and potential solutions, talk to a friend, just write more later

to vent (believe it or not, this one actually helps over time in helping you to let go), or perhaps go hiking or do something physical to help you take your mind off these thoughts.

## CONCLUSION ▼

So, start doing these 7 things today to be happy. First, make the decision--really make the decision--to be happy. When you feel it in your guts, you know that you have really decided. Next, practice affirmations and gratitude daily. If you need to, write down your affirmations on a small card and carry it in your pocket so that every time you put your hands into your pocket, you'll feel it and pull it out to read it.

Next, stop playing the victim and start taking responsibility for the things that happened to you in your life. You alone have the power to change things. Make time for yourself and start a Journal of Healing to help address some of the past issues that are keeping you from being happy.

So, you see. Happiness is a decision you have to make. Then, you have to start doing things to get you towards that happiness. 

***Want to find out more about why you have the life you currently do and what you can do to make it better? If so, then check out this article on why your life sucks.***



# Excel Tip - Create an Icon Set That Shows Only 2 Conditions

by BJ Johnston

The new Icons sets that arrived with the introduction of Excel 2007 conditional formatting functionality are really useful, and can really make you data display really pop by guiding the readers' eyes directly to the data you want then to read. »

This tip I am going to show you is great if you only need to show 2 icons, let's say for positive and negative numbers with a green tick and red cross respectively like my data example below - with no icon next to the zero.

green tick... 7  
green tick... 6  
red cross... -4  
red cross... -6  
no icon... 0  
green cross... 5

By default when setting up these icons sets within conditional formatting, Excel forces you to use 3 conditions so in theory the zero value should have a yellow exclamation mark next to it.

I don't want Excel to do that so how can we do this?. Easy, by adding in another conditional formatting tool, which is the Stop If True function.

So let's walk through the process in Excel to get these 2 icons up and running and showing in our data set

# TRAINING

- Select your range of cells that you want to apply the formatting to
- Go To The Home Tab - Conditional Formatting - Icon Sets - More Rules
- Use the default of Format All Cells Based On Their Values option
- Set up the rules like the example below...

Green Tick when Value is  $>0$  and value type is a number

Red Cross when value is  $\leq 0$  and value type is a number

- Change the Type to Number and the Icon Set you want to use
- Hit Apply and your rule will be applied to the selected cells. You now have the 3 Icons in your data set
- We now need to hide the yellow exclamation mark
- Select the cells again
- Choose New Rule from the Conditional Formatting Menu
- Choose "Format only cells that contain" and set up this rule in the example here

Cell Value is equal to 0

- Hit OK
- It will look like nothing has changed and you will see the message No Format Set
- Click Format
- On the "Fill" tab, click "No Color" for the background and click OK twice



Here is where the magic happens.

- Open up the Conditional Formatting Rules Manager and click Stop if True

Hit apply and the yellow exclamation mark disappears 

*BJ Johnston has been an advanced Excel user for 15 years and is the creator of <http://www.howtoexcelatexcel.com> a site that shares Excel tips and tricks with its enthusiastic members. To join in the discussion, where users are working smarter and faster with Excel sign up for the FREE newsletter and as a bonus receive a FREE EBook- 50 Top Tips and Tricks.*



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A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a white shirt with blue polka dots, is smiling and looking towards the right. A woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a blue denim jacket over a black and white patterned top, is also smiling and looking towards the right. They are in an office environment with blurred background elements like shelves and lights.

**INTERVIEW**

# Helping Administrative Professionals with New Ideas to Work Happy

**Interview with Chris Campbell of Poppin**

by DeskDemon.com

DeskDemon reached out to Poppin and had the honor of speaking with Chris Campbell, Director of Sales. Chris has a genuine enthusiasm for the products as well as some insightful ways administrative professionals can take Poppin products to the next level and not only “Work Happy” but look good and impress the boss as well! ►►



### *Hi Chris, can you let us know a bit about Poppin?*

Poppin officially launched in 2012 to make the process of creating an inspiring office effortless. It's really exciting to see how we can change the way people work by helping them change their offices. We're getting people to work happy one desk at a time!

### *What is your role within Poppin?*

I'm the Director of Sales here at Poppin. I run the B2B sales department that services our business clientele. It's really exciting to see how we can change the way people work by working with them on their offices. Our motto is work happy and by working with business we're getting people to work happy one desk at a time.

### *Poppin has "Workstylists." What does a Workstylist do?*

We call our sales people "Workstylists because a big part of what they do is help our customers achieve their desired "work-lifestyle." Sometime it's through the creative process of designing an office, other times it's creating a customized product that really reflects their brand.

### *Do ever find new and creative ways people can use Poppin products?*

Sure, when we have customers who are moving or remodeling they usually want an open office plan with room for collaboration but aren't sure where to start. A creative use of space and our furniture is to use Poppin's Block Party Lounge

pieces in small conference rooms to make phone booths or quiet areas. Everyone is excited to move to open offices but there are bound to be employees at your company that need privacy or a quiet space during the day. Lounge furniture in a conference room is also great for less formal meetings or for brainstorming meetings. Not every conference room needs a table and chairs and we love helping people think outside the box.

### *Office managers, executive assistants, I think ALL administrative professionals like to look good! When we first talked about Poppin, you shared a few ways Poppin can make an admin shine.*

### *Can you share those ideas with AdminAdvantages's readers?*

One challenge is most admins can relate to dealing with onboarding new employees. It's stressful to get all of the supplies and paperwork together for a new person, make sure they have somewhere to sit, and make a great first impression on them.

We recommend creating a branded new hire welcome kit in your brand colors that will be ready for your new hire on their first day. That way it's easy to get their supplies situated and your new hire will feel special when they see their desk all decked out. If you don't want to go the branded route you can also ask the new employee what their favorite colors are in the onboarding process and have their desk set up

# INTERVIEW

for them in their colors on their first day. We do that in my department and my new hires love it. it makes it easy to make a good impression, even at the last minute.

*That is a great way to promote a positive first day experience! Do you have any other creative ways admins can use Poppin products to look good?*

A really great use for our products is important meetings. If you have any big board meetings or management training events coming up a nice touch is creating a place setting with a branded Poppin notebook with your company logo and a pen. It will make your board room table look beautiful, show people where to sit, and make sure that everyone is ready to take notes and pay attention. If you're working with a larger event you can place them on the seats. We've even done events at our showroom here where we created patterns with colored notebooks across the audience area.

Thank Chris! Wrapping up, I have a few quick Poppin questions for you....

***Your favorite Poppin desk product?***

Grip Grass

***Your favorite Poppin furniture product?***

Our new Series A Ping Pong Conference Table

***Your favorite color?***

Yellow

***Which product you use the most?***

Navy Signature Ballpoint Pens 



***Poppin really can make admins look good! From everyday use to onboarding and making boring meetings.. pop! I would love to invite DeskDemon's audience chime in and share creative ways they would use Poppin's products.***

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# 15 Salary Negotiation Do's and Don'ts

by Brandi Britton, OfficeTeam

**Y**ou deserve fair pay for your work, but asking for a higher administrative salary can be intimidating. If you've just been offered the job, salary negotiation with a new employer feels risky. Even if you've been in the role for several years already, approaching your boss about a raise is still daunting. ►►

Although a recent survey suggests you may prefer an IRS audit to a salary negotiation (<https://www.roberthalf.com/officeteam/blog/is-asking-for-a-raise-really-worse-than-an-irs-audit>), the payoff is usually worth it. The manager could come back with a “no” or “not now,” but if you have in-demand skills and plenty of experience, chances are good the answer will be “yes.” Check out these do's and don'ts when you're ready to request a bigger administrative salary.

**Do come prepared with numbers.** Before you ask for more pay, you have to know what you're worth. To benchmark the latest salary range for your job title, experience level and location, consult the OfficeTeam Salary Guide and Salary Calculator (<https://www.roberthalf.com/officeteam/2016-administrative-salary-center>).

**Don't start off the conversation with money talk.** Whether it's the third job interview or your annual performance review, discussing



administrative salary right away in a conversation will make the manager think that's all you care about. Instead, start with the value you will bring or have already brought to the company. Lay the groundwork before diving into a salary negotiation.

## **Do give reasons you feel you deserve a salary**

**increase.** To boost your chances of getting what you want, you have to make your case. For new employees, this could mean mentioning special administrative skills or knowledge you possess. For those who have been with the company a while, it means proving your worth by listing credentials and past accomplishments. Include as many figures and specifics as possible.

**Do keep good records.** It's much easier to present specifics when you're in the habit of tracking all the ways you are virtually indispensable. In a physical or digital folder, file away kudos from colleagues, relevant courses you've taken, compliments from top clients and examples of how you made the company more efficient, profitable and successful.

**Don't name a figure first.** For a new job, let the employer suggest a starting figure and go from there. This puts you in a position of power during the negotiation process. You don't want to risk asking for too little when the employer was ready to give you more money.

**Don't go too low or too high.** However, if hiring

managers ask about your salary expectations during the final interview, it's best to give a range. If the top end is an unrealistically high figure, they might dismiss you altogether rather than attempting to negotiate. Likewise, the other end of your range should be the lowest salary you would be willing to accept.

**Do ask for more responsibility or projects.** Show your employer you're willing to do more for the higher salary you're requesting. This will demonstrate that you're not just after extra money, but you're also truly committed to the company and enjoy your position.

**Don't forget perks.** A salary negotiation could also include workplace perks and benefits. If your employer can't increase your administrative salary, bring the discussion around to professional development, tuition reimbursement, performance bonuses, extra vacation days, flextime or telecommuting options to see if they can offer something else of value to you.

**Don't make it personal.** Financial woes such as student loans or medical bills are not the employer's concern. In fact, bringing them up is unprofessional. A salary negotiation should focus on the job description, your expertise and why you deserve more pay.

**Do prepare for pushback.** Before the discussion, consider your request from the employer's point of view. Be ready if they turn you down.

# CAREER

Prepare yourself with possible alternatives, such as asking if you can revisit the issue again in a few months.

**Don't ignore timing.** For current employees, performance reviews are ideal times to talk salary. But if you don't have one coming up in the near future, schedule a meeting and make sure your employer knows you want to discuss your administrative salary. Don't spring the topic on them; managers deserve the chance to prepare, too. Avoid trying to schedule the discussion during particularly stressful times in the workplace, such as right before a major deadline or client event.


**Do tell the truth.** If you're applying at a new company, remember that hiring managers can verify your current and past salaries. Be honest about what you've earned, even if it's low. Then be prepared to detail all the reasons you believe you deserve to make more in this position.

**Don't make a hasty decision.** It's easy to get excited over a great offer or upset over a poor one, and say "yes" or "no" too quickly. Once you and the employer have reached the end of the salary negotiation, feel free to ask for a day to consider the compensation package before accepting.

**Do get the offer in writing.** Documentation is important, particularly when numbers are involved, so don't rely on verbal promises and a handshake. Be sure your final written

offer includes the annual salary, any bonuses, vacation days, paid holidays and other nonmonetary perks.

**Do decide when it's best to walk away.** When negotiating salary for a new job, know your "floor" — the point where it doesn't make financial sense to accept the position. If an organization can't afford to pay you what you're worth, you won't be happy working there. The same goes for a salary negotiation in a current role. If your boss says "no" and you haven't received a merit raise or cost-of-living increase in a couple of years, then it might be time to start a job search.

Although discussing compensation can feel awkward, it's often necessary to ensure you're earning the administrative salary you deserve. With preparation and an understanding of current hiring trends, you'll find salary negotiation is easier than you think. 

*Brandi Britton is a district president for OfficeTeam, the nation's leading staffing service specializing in the temporary placement of highly skilled administrative and office support professionals. OfficeTeam has more than 300 locations worldwide and offers online job search services at [www.officeteam.com](http://www.officeteam.com). Connect with us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest and the OfficeTeam blog.*

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# Waggl Distills the Top 5 Ways for Organizations to Handle Negative Employee Feedback

*97% believe that negative feedback from employees can be useful*

**W**aggl, a simple way to crowdsource insight from groups of people, released new data revealing a significant shift in attitudes toward negative feedback from employees. ►►

Waggl's research division, "The Voice of the Workplace," heard from nearly 500 business leaders, HR leaders and consultants about whether or not they agreed with two key statements: 1) "Providing an open forum for employees to offer candid feedback is essential for organizational improvement," and 2) "Negative feedback from employees can be useful to help an organization improve." An overwhelming 96% responded positively to the first statement, and 97% to the second. The responses were fairly consistent across various sizes of organization, job titles, and geographic regions.

"We were surprised to see almost unanimous agreement that negative feedback from employees can be useful," said Michael Papay, CEO, Waggl. "Over the years, we've seen many instances of companies that have either ignored or attempted to eradicate negative feedback, usually with less than optimal results. But this data indicates that attitudes are shifting, with business and HR leaders alike becoming more open to candid feedback, and more receptive about how to work with it to make their organizations stronger."

"The Voice of the Workplace" was sent to HR leaders, business leaders and consultants through the Northern California Human Resources Association (NCHRA), InsiderHub, and Executive Networks and over a two-week period of time from March 8-23, 2016. Waggl also asked the open-ended question, "What is

the most constructive way for organizations to handle negative feedback from employees?"


Here are the top five answers that were crowdsourced with over 3,000 votes on Waggl:

1. "Provide a response to those giving feedback to indicate that it was heard and understood; then describe action to be taken -- this may include no action, but providing feedback indicates that the input was carefully considered. Further information may clarify the situation about which negative feedback occurred. Responses must be respectful, and not defensive."
2. "Listen, understand the real issue, probe into further information if needed to fully understand, and then address the feedback directly, honestly, and in a timely manner. Then ask if that helps or if there is further negative feedback."
3. "Acknowledge and address openly and honestly - be transparent whenever possible - communicate, communicate, communicate."
4. "Ask employees to elaborate. Individual or small group. Be honest and transparent. Assume your employees are intelligent and honest people. The dialogue may be uncomfortable, but necessary to fill understandings of issues."
5. "Acknowledge receipt of the feedback and try to understand its root cause. Be transparent about what the feedback was and what if anything can be done to address/ respond to it."

# WORKSMART

“In these open-ended responses, a clear pattern has emerged in which the participants advocate acknowledging the feedback in a transparent way rather than hiding from it, seeking to clarify and better understand the root cause, and taking timely action to address the issues,” said Michael Papay. “Strong organizations ACT on feedback (A.C.T. Acknowledge, Clarify, and Take action). They understand that to be the best possible version of their organization, they need to look to the wisdom in their own system, their own people. In some cases, the action taken might be explaining to employees why the decisions were made, which can be very powerful in building trust and alignment within an organization.”

This research project is the second of an ongoing series called “The Voice of the Workplace,” in which a Waggl Pulse has been used to poll an external audience. Waggl is typically used within organizations to collect and distill anonymous, real-time feedback from employees. The platform provides a variety of templates for users to cultivate feedback, in only a few clicks. Results are available immediately to administrators and participants in the form of easily digestible infographics. Unlike traditional survey and polling platforms, Waggl creates a virtual dialogue with participants by asking open-ended questions where favorite responses can be ‘voted up.’ It’s fast and easy to share through multiple channels, and adds a fun,

gamified aspect to the process of collecting feedback. 

*Waggl is a simple way to surface and distill real-time actionable feedback. Named after the dance that bees do in a hive to transmit important information very quickly, Waggl lives at the intersection of two organizational realities:*

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# Top 5 Ways on How to Make Credit Cards Work for You

by Shanti Wiwatowski

**H**aving a credit card (or cards) may not necessarily mean you have bad debts, I'm sure in this day and age, most adults carry one - everywhere. However, when used without planning or management, having just one card can mean a huge financial issue in the long run. ►►



So here are the top 5 TIPS on how you can utilize a Credit Card to your maximum benefit so that it works for you.

## 1. Don't Trust Self - Organize Direct Debits Arrangement

Once you get that "APPROVED" notification, make sure you get around setting up an account where you can easily have the Closing Balance direct debited from this account at the end of every month (or billing month). This account can simply be an everyday/ most basic account (preferably one that don't cost a monthly fee) where you can budget your Credit Card spend to. This way, you will never miss any payment due dates, and will never set yourself in that trap of irrevocable-cycle of credit card interest repayments.

For example, when you first sign up for a credit card, most of the bank offers an "X day Interest Free Period (e.g. 55 days)". This means you get to spend up to your limit (e.g. \$1,000) for up to that 55th day. On the 56th day, you are expected to make the closing balance for that particular period. If you don't, you get charged the Purchase Interest Rate, which can range between 14% - 25% per annum. Now, this is charged and accumulated on day 56th onwards up until you can pay that down to \$0 owing balance!

So - imagine this chaos for a minute; On that card, you have \$999 owing balance. You are trying to repay \$100 each week. But you have

ongoing monthly contract linked to this credit card each month for your phone, internet, gas; yet that apparently-not-so-amazing piece of plastic is accumulating you 20% interest on the balance every day... Are you confused yet? Well that's how they get ya! Before you know it you are just stuck, simply stuck in this game of never ending money drainer.

The only logical way to salvage that icky situation is pretty much destroying the card, literally. So make sure you set up that Direct Debit. Pronto! Because you just can't trust self. Guess what, it will probably force you to make sure you are aware of your money, so you don't go on spending on that credit card as unless you can afford to make the repayments.

## 2. Keep Your Limits Low

Just because you can get a credit card with a higher limit, doesn't mean that you should take it. Sometimes you can get carried away knowing how much you have in the balance and walking in that same trap again. Don't lead yourself into that bad habit.

Basically the way it works is, once the bank notice how good you have been with your money management - you know, with all that direct debit set up so you pay everything on time, on budget - they tend to send a "Good news!" notification - to congratulate you for the offer to be able to 'upgrade' to a higher limit. Note to self, this is not really a 'reward', it's

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simply a nudge to say “Well done on being a responsible adult. We trust that you can manage your money so here’s more money for you to spend, but remember you STILL gotta pay us back!” Get it?

### 3. Review Shopping Habits

Now - the fun part! Think about your shopping

habits, do you go to specific grocery stores, shopping center, cinemas or even specific fuel stations? Check if they have any Points Rewards Affiliates with the credit card company or vice versa. For example, most Credit Card Companies (Banks) have affiliate programs with Airlines - and if you use that card in certain fuel stations/ grocery stores - the points are



doubled!! So if you're anything like us jet setters, or love a free or even half-priced holiday; make sure you abide to that rewards program! It really is a no brainer - you need to spend on those groceries every week anyway - might as well earn some travel points on them!

## 4. Don't spend it on Doodads

There should be a separate account for this. If you aren't familiar with Robert Kiyosaki and his famous game, the Cashflow Game, then you probably don't know the term 'doodad'. Doodads in this instance means, gizmos/ gadgets that are nice to have but you don't necessarily need.


Don't get me wrong, of course you can have your 'nice' things - like your dream home theatre, or that plush armchair you've been eyeing since your cat invaded your favorite chair. But! If you manage this right, you should have a "reward/ gift" savings account set up for you, partner and/or cat, so you don't have to dip into credit card debts.

Just don't get into bad debts if you don't have to.

## 5. Create, Maintain, Destroy

Who doesn't love having a Credit Card? I have 2, I think my dad has about ten (10) times that, purely because he loves points hoarding. Oh plus where he lives (Indonesia), you get discounted meals (50% off each time) if you use specific credit card in that restaurant. #winning

But like I said before, once you stepped into that 'never ending money drainer' game (even if it is an accidental move) - you gotta let that go. If you can't maintain it - for some reason you are not able to make repayments on those Interest Repayments then you have to stop using the card. Ring up all the providers to cancel any bills linked to it and destroy the card, whilst you try and pay it off to zero.

Once you have paid it all off, you may reapply for another card down the track. Just so you can start from a clean slate! Yay hooray!! 

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# Find the Typos

Find the 5 typos!



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