

POWER

UP

**YOUR
TRAINING
DOLLARS**

The
Importance
of
Making
Mistakes

One of my first summer jobs was as general dogsbody for a patent and trademark illustration firm. I would answer the phone, run errands and keep everyone supplied with coffee. One day, I set a cup of coffee down on my boss's drafting table, and with a flick of my wrist, destroyed six hours of painstaking, detailed, complicated patent illustration.

Lesson learnt: never set any liquids down near work surfaces.

We all have those cringe-inducing memories of on-the-job mistakes, but we forget that each mistake leads to some hard-earned learning.

In learning circles, it's called negative knowledge, and it's about knowing what not to do in certain situations. In fact, the ability to avoid serious errors is one of the defining traits of an expert. When you make a mistake, you reflect on what just happened, and that becomes part of your growing expertise. The more mistakes you make, the more you learn, and the more expert you become.

The training room – whether real or virtual – is the perfect place to make mistakes: it's safe, it's controlled, and there will be someone there to help you make it right.

So next time you take on a new training endeavour, go ahead and make mistakes. No one has ever become an expert without them.



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