

## AP4CTE AP Seminar: Building a Dynamic Workforce

### *Research Strategies for Innovating and Problem-solving Across Career Paths*

#### Module 1

### Poor Richard's Almanack

*Benjamin Franklin*

1733

Courteous Reader:

I might in this place at tempt to gain thy Favour, by declaring that I write Almanacks with no other View than that of the publick Good; but in this I should not be sincere; and Men are now a-days too wise to be deceiv'd by Pretences how specious soever. The plain Truth of the Matter is, I am excessive poor, and my Wife, good Woman, is, I tell her, excessive proud; she cannot bear, she says, to sit spinning in her Shift of Tow, while I do nothing but gaze at the Stars; and has threatned more than once to burn all my Books and Rattling-Traps (as she calls my Instruments) if I do not make some profitable Use of them for the good of my Family. The Printer has offere'd me some considerable share of the Profits, and I have thus begun to comply with my Dame's desire.

Indeed this Motive would have had Force enough to have made me publish an Almanack many Years since, had it not been overpower'd by my Regard for my good Friend and Fellow-Student, Mr. *Titan Leeds*, whose Interest I was extreamly unwilling to hurt: But this obstacle (I am far from speaking it with Pleasure) is soon to be removed, since inexorable Death, who was never known to respect Merit, has already prepared the mortal Dart, the fatal Sister has already extended her destroying Shears, and that ingenious Man must soon be taken from us. He dies, by my Calculation made at his Request, on *Oct. 17. 1733. 3 ho. 29m. P.M.* at the very instant of the xxx of xxx and xxx: By his own Calculation he will survive till the 26<sup>th</sup> of the same Month. This small difference between us we have disputed whenever we have met these 9 Years past; but at length he is inclinable to agree with my Judgment; Which of us is most exact, a little Time will now determine. As therefore these Provinces may not longer expect to see any of his Performances after this Year, I think my self free to take up the Task, and request a share of the publick Encouragement; which I am the more apt to hope for on this Account, that the Buyer of my Almanack may consider himself, not only as purchasing an useful Utensil, but as performing an Act of Charity, to his poor *Friend and Servant*

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(selected aphorisms):

Light purse, heavy heart.

Great Talkers, little Doers.

A rich rogue, is like a fat hog, who never does good til as dead as a log.

Eat to live, and not live to eat.

The poor have little, beggars none, the rich too much, *enough* not one.  
Where bread is wanting, all's to be sold.

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1734

(selected aphorisms):

No man e'er was glorious, who was not laborious.

In success be moderate.

*All things are easy to Industry,  
All things difficult to Sloth.*

All things are cheap to the saving, dear to the wasteful.

He that is rich need not live sparingly, and he that can live sparingly need not be rich.

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1735

(selected aphorisms):

Keep thy shop, & thy shop will keep thee.

Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy wealth and wise.

God helps them that help themselves.

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1738

(selected aphorisms):

Since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour.

Each year one vicious habit rooted out,  
In time might make the worst Man good throughout.

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1739

(selected aphorisms):

He that pays for Work before it's done, has but a pennyworth for twopence.

Historians relate, not so much what is done, as what they would have believed.

Blessed is he that expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed.

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O Lazy-Bones! Dost thou think God would have given thee Arms and Legs, if he had not design'd thou should'st use them.

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1741

(selected aphorisms):

Be always asham'd to catch thy self idle.

Up, Sluggard, and waste not life; in the grave will be sleeping enough.

Well done, is twice done.

Let no Pleasure tempt thee, no Profit allure thee, no Ambition corrupt thee, no Example sway thee, no Persuasion move thee, to do any thing which thou knowest to be Evil; So shalt thou always live jollily: for a good Conscience is a continual Christmass.

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1742

(selected aphorisms):

He that hath a Trade, hath an Estate.

Have you somewhat to do to-morrow; do it to-day.

No workman without tools,  
Nor Lawyer without Fools,  
Can live by their Rules.

He that riseth late, must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night.

Industry pays Debts, Despair increases them.

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1744

(selected aphorisms):

What you would seem to be, be really.

Industry, Perseverance, & Frugality, make Fortune yield.

Light Gains heavy Purses.

Keep thou from the Opportunity, and God will keep thee from the Sin.  
Drive thy Business, or it will drive thee.

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1745

(selected aphorisms):

No gains without pains.

Idleness is the greatest Prodigality.

Tis easier to prevent bad habits than to break them.

He that resolves to mend hereafter, resolves not to mend now.

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1750

Those that have much Business must have much Pardon.

Discontented Minds, and Fevers of the Body are not to be cured by changing Beds or Businesses.

Hide not your Talents, they for Use were made.

What's a Sun-Dial in the Shade!

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1753

It is not Leisure that is not used.

If you would reap Praise you must sow the Seeds,  
Gentle Words and useful Deeds.

Haste makes Waste.

Serving God is Doing Good to Man, but Praying is thought an easier Service, and therefore more generally chosen.

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1755

Speak little, do much.

The Day is short, the Work great, the Workman lazy, the Wages high, the Master urgeth; Up, then, and be doing.

Being ignorant is not so much a Shame, as being unwilling ot learn.

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God gives all Things to Industry.

Diligence overcomes Difficulties, Sloth makes them.

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*Poor Richard's Almanack* was serially published in the years between 1732 and 1758. The piece is published as the pseudonym Richard Saunders or "Poor Richard," which sold more than ten-thousand copies annually. The Almanack itself contained more than just aphorisms and poetry, but also included calendar events, discussions of weather, and astronomy and astrology. Ben Franklin enjoyed economic and social success from the publication, and the Almanack extended its influence even in political spheres and economic policy in things like the Pennsylvania State Constitution. Ben Franklin—scientist, inventor, writer, statesman, diplomat—went on to be one of the leading intellectuals of his time, a Founding Father and the first US Postmaster General.