How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying Junior

Book by Abe Burrows, Jack Weinstock and Willie Gilbert
Music and Lyrics by Frank Loesser
Based on the book by Shepherd Mead

CAST

Bud
Rosemary
Twimble
Finch
Miss Krumholtz
Biggley
Smitty

Song 1: How to Succeed (Company)

ALL
How to apply for a job . . .
How to advance from the mailroom . . .
How to sit down at a desk . . .
How to dictate memorandums . . .
How to develop executive style . . .
How to commute in a three button suit . . .
With that weary executive smile.

This book is all that I need . . .
“How to, How to Succeed.”

NARRATOR 1: How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical, is a brilliant satire of the world of big business.
NARRATOR 2: The show opened on Broadway on October 14, 1961, and ran for 1,417 performances.

NARRATOR 3: The show chronicles the rapid rise of an ambitious window washer named Finch who zooms up the corporate ladder by following the instructions of a very special “How To” guide.

(We move to the inside of the WORLD WIDE WICKET COMPANY, where various OFFICE PERSONALITIES are going about their day.)

Song 1: How to Succeed (continued)

ALL
How to observe personnel,
How to select whom to lunch with,
How to avoid petty friends,
How to begin making contacts.
How to walk into a conference room with an idea.
Brilliant business idea that will make your expense account zoom!

This book is all that I need . . .
“How to, How to Succeed.”

(FINCH continues to look at book.)

End of Song

NARRATOR 1: By successfully implementing the strategies outlined in Chapter 1, Finch manages to land a job in the mailroom. He shares the job with Bud Frump, nephew of the company’s president, Mr. Biggley.

BUD: Hello, Finch. I’m Bud Frump, Mr. Biggley’s nephew.
FINCH: (Offers hand.) How do you do?

(BUD ignores his hand.)

BUD: Finch, are you ambitious?

FINCH: Not necessarily.

BUD: Good. Just keep that in mind. If you just remember who I am and remember who you are, we'll get on fine. If not . . .

ROSEMARY: You’ll go crying to your uncle, Mr. Biggley, the president of the company.

BUD: I beg your pardon. I do not go crying to my uncle. It happens that my mother is Mrs. Biggley’s sister. If I feel that anything is wrong, I phone my mother. She phones Mrs. Biggley and Mrs. Biggley phones Mr. Biggley. That’s the democratic way.

(He EXITS.)

NARRATOR 2: And so Finch began to learn about all aspects of office life . . .

NARRATOR 3: . . . Including the all important coffee break!

(A MAN sticks his head out from OFFSTAGE and yells.)

MAN: Coffee break!

MISS KRUMHOLTZ: It’s about time!

(MAN pushes on a coffee machine. A long line is hurriedly formed across the stage before the coffee machine. BUD FRUMP enters, goes to the front of the line, and holds his cup under the spigot.)
BUD: There’s no coffee!

ALL: (To each other.) No coffee! No coffee!

SMITTY: No coffee?

BUD: No coffee!

SMITTY: (Spoken.) No coffee.

(They all groan and collapse.)

Song 2: Coffee Break

BUD
If I can’t take my coffee break,
My coffee break, my coffee break,
If I can’t take my coffee break,
Something within me dies . . .

ALL
Lies down and something within me dies!

SMITTY
If I can’t make three daily trips
Where shining shrine benignly drips,
And taste cardboard between my lips,
Something within me dies . . .

ALL
Lies down and something within me dies!

1ST VOICE
No coffee,
2ND VOICE
No coffee,

3RD VOICE
No coffee,

4TH VOICE
No coffee,

5TH VOICE
No coffee,

6TH VOICE
No coffee,

ALL
No coffee,

ALL
No coffee!
If I can’t take my coffee break,

SMITTY
Somehow the soul no longer tries . . .

ALL
Coffee, coffee.

BUD
Somewhere I don’t metabolize . . .

ALL
Coffee, coffee.

BUD & SMITTY
Something within me . . .
ALL
Coffee or otherwise, coffee or otherwise,
Coffee or otherwise,
Something inside of me . . .
Dies!

(They all yell “Coffee!” and EXIT. FINCH enters with a basket of mail. He is reading his book.)

**NARRATOR 1:** Chapter 2:

**NARRATOR 2:** “How Not to Get Stuck in the Mailroom.”

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*End of Song*

(The story resumes as FINCH approaches TWIMBLE, the head of the mailroom.)

**FINCH:** (After a moment.) Twimple . . .

**TWIMBLE:** Yes?

**FINCH:** You’ve been with this company a long time, haven’t you?

**TWIMBLE:** Long, long time. Last month I became a quarter-of-a-century employee.

(Shows medal.)

**FINCH:** How long have you been in the mailroom?

**TWIMBLE:** Twenty-five years. Yep, it’s not easy to get a medal like this. It takes a combination of skill, diplomacy, and bold caution.
**TWIMBLE**
When I joined this firm as a brash, young man,
Well, I said to myself,
“Now, brash young man, don’t get any ideas.”
Well, I stuck to that and I haven’t had one in years!

**FINCH**
You play it safe!

**TWIMBLE**
I play it the company way;
Wherever the company puts me, there I’ll stay.

**FINCH**
But what is your point of view?

**TWIMBLE**
I have no point of view,

**FINCH**
Supposing the company thinks . . .

**TWIMBLE**
I think so too!

**FINCH**
What would you say if . . .

**TWIMBLE**
I wouldn’t say!

**FINCH**
When they want brilliant thinking from employees;
TWIMBLE
That is no concern of mine.

FINCH
Suppose a man of genius makes suggestions . . .

TWIMBLE
Watch that genius get suggested to resign!

FINCH
So you play it the company way;

TWIMBLE
All company policy is by me okay!

FINCH
You’ll never rise up to the top . . .

TWIMBLE
But there’s one thing clear;
Whoever the company fires,
I will still be here!

FINCH
You will still be here.

TWIMBLE
Year after year after fiscal,

BOTH
Never take a risk all year!

End of Song

NARRATOR 1: And after 25 years of doing it “the company way,” Twimble is offered a promotion, and Finch is offered the position of Head of the Mailroom.
NARRATOR 2: But Finch—as per the book’s careful instructions—insists that Bud, the president’s nephew, be given the job instead.

NARRATOR 3: This impresses the bosses, who offers Finch a promotion to the plum job of Head of Advertising.

NARRATOR 4: And soon, Finch is called to the president’s office. But things don’t go well for Finch in this new position.

BIGGLEY: (Turns to FINCH.) Now Finch . . . I want you to sign a simple little letter of resignation.

FINCH: Okay, Mr. Biggley, I’ll be glad to resign and go back to what I did before I came here.

BIGGLEY: (Simple curiosity.) What did you do, Finch?

FINCH: (After a pause.) I was a window washer.

BIGGLEY: No kidding. I started as a window washer myself.

FINCH: You did?

BIGGLEY: Boy, it’s been a long time since I had someone around here I could talk to. How did you happen to go into this business?

FINCH: Well, sir, I had a book . . .

BIGGLEY: Yeah? Me, too.

FINCH: You see, Mr. Biggley, even though we’re all part of the cold corporate setup . . . deep down under our skins there is flesh and blood. We’re all a part of humanity. Brothers and sisters, one and all!
FINCH
Now, you may join the Elks, my friend,
And I may join the Shriners.
And other men may carry cards
As members of the Diners.

Still others wear a golden key,
Or small Greek letter pin.
But I have learned there’s one great club
That all of us are in.

There is a brotherhood of man,
A benevolent brotherhood of man;
A noble tie that binds
All human hearts and minds
Into one brotherhood of man.

ALL
Your lifelong membership is free.
Keep a-giving each brother all you can.
Oh, aren’t you proud to be in that fraternity;
The great, big brotherhood of man?

Oh, that noble feeling,
Feels like bells are pealing,
Down with double dealing,
Oh, brother! You, you got me
Me, Me . . . I got you-oo, you-oo

Your lifelong membership is free;
Keep a-givin’ each brother all you can.
Oh, aren’t you proud to be in that fraternity;
The great, big brotherhood of man?

End of Song