

I'd like to start by thanking all of you for joining me today. I'd like to give a special thank you to Dr. Schofield for forcing me to write this speech. As many of you know, this speech was very hard for me to write. In fact, I've never done something so difficult. The thing I struggled with the most was determining what I wanted to write about. So I sat and asked myself, if I had one thing to instill in someone's head, what would it be? I immediately thought that a great work ethic would be a good topic. You can possess a great work ethic in many ways. For me, my work ethic started being formed on the day I was born. I was blessed with parents who gave me no other choice than to work hard. Other people may develop a great work ethic later in life, perhaps through an encounter with a certain person or an experience that changes their way of thinking.

Now, I don't believe that if you work hard, you will always be rewarded. Sometimes you may work at something harder than you ever have and you may still fail; on the other hand, you may see someone who is rewarded when they didn't work hard at all and it's frustrating, but that's how life is. It's not fair. No matter how hard you work, you will fail. Then fail again. Then fail some more. But how you respond to failing when working hard, is what will define you as a person. People can't learn unless they fail, so if you're learning, are you really failing? Many people argue that hard work always pays off, but it's genuinely true. Now, how you're rewarded may not have been what you had in mind when you initially started at what you're working for. Maybe you had been set on the idea of making a lot of money, but instead of having your bank accounts grow, maybe your mind did. Perhaps you tried hard to find a best friend, but instead you fell in love.

Maybe you set your mind on changing the world, but your experiences with the world changed you.....for the better.

I didn't want to use any cliché quotes that everyone has heard 100 times, but there's a quote I'm constantly reminded of everytime I think about work ethic. Vince Lombardi once said that "It's not whether you get knocked down; it's whether you get up." Coaches, teachers, bosses, and even your friends, will notice if you decide "to get up." I love this quote because he's right. At the end of the day, no one cares about how many championships you've won, how much money you make, or how many cars you have. People don't remember those things nearly as much as they remember the type of person you are. Personally, I don't want to be remembered as the kid that never worked hard. If being known as someone who doesn't work hard doesn't bother you, then you need to look in the mirror and reevaluate the things you care about.

I'm sure most of you think I'm only referring to sports. However, that's not true. You can have a good work ethic in your sports, but maybe you are lazy in school. You'll then be known as the typical jock, who works hard on the field, but not in the classroom. This topic even goes beyond school and sports. In fact, this trait will affect most of the things you do in life. Maybe you stayed at work hours after you're supposed to be done because you want that promotion your boss has been talking about. You're willing to stay at work instead of being at home with your family because you won't let anything stop you from achieving what you want. Or maybe you're a hardworking husband that won't let little things ruin something much bigger than yourself. The examples I could

use are infinite. Because they are infinite, it allows you to comprehend the importance of being a hardworker.

Everyone says they want to be successful. The funny thing is a lot of the people that want to be successful, aren't willing to put the work in. Imagine you're being held underwater and you can't breath. The only thing you want to do in that moment is come up for air. The saying goes, "when you want to succeed as badly as you want to breath, that's when you'll be successful." When I first heard those words it got me in the feels. Because in that moment, you're not thinking about what party you're going to that night, you're not thinking about what your friends are doing, you're only thinking about being able to breath. So, when you say you want to be successful, that means you're willing to cut out all the distractions in your life. And most of all, you're willing to work hard.