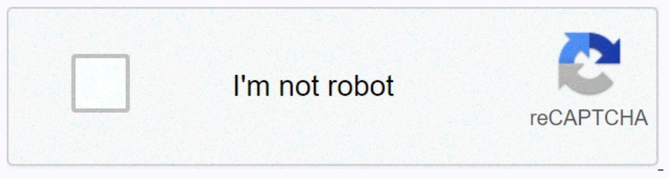

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Blue collar brilliance mike rose

In the article Blue Collar Brilliance Mike Rose states that we, as a society, base intelligence on degrees and evidence, but based on their various experiences and observations he claims that the blue collar line of work can often require more mental activity than they are attributed to them. This is due to conditions that apply to the blue collar line of work, such as cost effectiveness, productivity, efficiency, problem solving skills, communication and more. Along with the most important condition when working, time. Blue collar workers need to be quick on their feet, Rose says, so they can use their cognitive skills quickly and effectively to complete their work. These tasks became muscular memory with experience, were learned by observation, trial and error, and, physical or verbal assistance from a coworker or coach. Roses affirms that formal education is not the only way to achieve intelligence and that we, as a society, must realize that intelligence is diverse. Dinner in Pawtucket, Rhode Island (Photo by Carol Highsmith/Library of Congress) My mother, Rose Meraglio Rose (Rosie), shaped her adult identity as a waitress in cafes and family restaurants. When I was growing up in Los Angeles during the 1950s, my dad and I would occasionally hang out at the restaurant until her shift ended, and then we'd ride the bus home with her. Sometimes he worked the register and the counter, and we sit there; when he waited for booths and tables, we found a stand on his back where the waitresses took their breaks. There wasn't much for a kid to do in restaurants, and just as the hours stretched, I saw the cooks and waitresses and listened to what they said. When it comes to eating, the pace of the kitchen staff and the dinner of the guests picked up. Weaving in and out of the room, the waitresses warned behind you in impassive but urgent voices. Standing in the service window in front of the kitchen, they shouted abbreviated orders. Fry four in two, my mother would say how she cut a check on the metal wheel. Their tables were deuces, four tops, or six tops depending on their size; living areas were also called. The circuit, for example, was the fast billing front section. Lingo conferred authority and noted the know-how. Rosie took customer orders, poisoned pencil over the pillow, while questioning about the food. She walked full tilt through the room with plates stretching down her left arm and two cups of somehow cradled coffee in her right hand. He stood at a table or cabin and removed a plate for that person, another for that person, then another, remembering who had the burger, who had the fried shrimp, almost always doing well. She would quarreled with the cook over a returned order and the rush for us, saying, She gave me lips, but I got it. It would take a minute to fall into the cockpit. Cabin. my father. I'm all in, I'd say, and whisper something about a client. Grabbing the outer edge of the table with one hand, she looked at the room and the note, in the flow of our conversation, that she needed a recharge, the order of which took longer to prepare than she should, who was ending. I couldn't have said it in words when I was growing up, but what I observed in my mother's restaurant defined the adult world, a place where competition was synonymous with physical work. Since then I have studied the working habits of blue collar workers and come to understand how much of my mother's kind of demand for work from both the body and the brain. A waitress acquires knowledge and intuition about the ways and rhythms of the kitchen business. Waiting between seven and nine tables, each with between two and six customers, Rosie devised memory strategies so she could remember who ordered what. And since I knew the average time it took to prepare different dishes, I could monitor an order that took too long at the service station. Like anyone who is effective at physical work, my mother learned to work smart, as she put it, to make every move count. She would sequence and group tasks: What could she do first, then second, then third as she hovered around her station? What tasks could be grouped together? He did everything on the fly, and when problems arose –technical or human- he solved them within the workflow, taking into account the emotional state of his coworkers. Was the manager in a good mood? Did the cook wake up on the wrong side of the bed? If so, how could you make an additional request or effectively return an order? And then, of course, there were customers who entered the restaurant with all sorts of needs, from physiological ones, including the emotions that accompany hunger, to a desire for sometimes complicated human contact. Her tip depended on how well she responded to these needs, so she became an expert in reading social signals and managing feelings, both customers and theirs. No wonder, then, that Rosie was intrigued by psychology. The restaurant became the place where he studied human behavior, puzzling over the problems of his regular customers and refining his ability to deal with people in a difficult world. He prided himself on being among the public, I'd say. There isn't a day that goes by in the restaurant that you don't learn something from. My mother left school in seventh grade to help raise her brothers and sisters. Some of these brothers made it through high school, and some dropped out to find work in railroad yards, factories or restaurants. My father ended up grade two at primary school in Italy and never obscured the school gate again. I didn't do well at school either. In high school he had accumulated a stained academic record and many hours of nefarious disaffection. I spent a few on the vocational path, but in my senior year I was inspired by my English teacher and managed to squeeze into a small university on parole. My freshman year was academically shocking, but gradually I began to see formal education as a means of fulfillment and as a way to make a living. I studied humanities and later the social and psychological sciences and taught for 10 years in a number of situations: elementary school, adult education courses, tutoring centers, a program for Vietnam veterans who wanted to go to college. Those students had socioeconomic and educational backgrounds similar to mine. Then I went back to graduate school to study education and cognitive psychology and eventually became a faculty member in an education school. Intelligence is closely associated with formal education –the kind of schooling that a person has, how much and how long- and most people seem to comfortably move from that notion to the belief that work that requires less schooling requires less intelligence. These trans assumptions run through our cultural history, from post-revolution warfare, when mechanics were characterized by political rivals as illiterate and therefore unable to participate in government, to this day. More than once I've heard a manager label his workers as a bunch of dummies. Generalizations about intelligence, work and social class deeply affect our assumptions about ourselves and others, guiding our minds to learn, build knowledge, solve problems and make our way through the world. Although writers and scholars have often looked to the working class, they have generally focused on the values these workers show rather than thinking their work requires - a subtle but widespread omission. Our cultural iconography promotes the muscled arm, the sleeve rolled tight against the bicep, but without shine behind the eye, with no uniculation image of the hand and brain. One of my mother's brothers, Joe Meraglio, left school in ninth grade to work for the Pennsylvania Railroad. From there he joined the Navy, returned to the railroad, which was already in decline, and eventually joined his older brother at General Motors, where, during a 33-year career, he went from working on the assembly line to overseeing the paint and body department. When I was young, Joe took me on a tour of the factory. The floor was strong –in some deaf places- and when I turned a corner or opened a door, the smell of chemicals hit my head back. The work was repetitive and valued, and the rhythm was inhuman. Not this, for Joe the shop floor always what the school does not; it was like schooling, he said, a place where you're constantly learning. Joe learned the most efficient way to use his body by acquiring a set of routines that were fast and preserved energy. Otherwise I would never have survived the line. As a fore foreas, foreas, he constantly faced new problems and became an accomplished multi-tasker, assessing a number of demands quickly, attaching physical and mental resources, keeping a number of ongoing events on his mind, returning to any task that had been interrupted, and keeping a cool head under the pressure of grueling production schedules. In the midst of all this, Joe learned more and more about the automotive industry, the technological and social dynamics of the shop floor, the processes of machinery and production, and the fundamentals of paint chemistry and the elaboration and cooking. With more promotions, he not only solved problems, but also began to encounter problems to solve: Joe initiated the redesign of the nozzle into a paint sprayer, thus eliminating costly and unhealthy overspray. And he found a way to reduce energy costs in ovens without affecting the quality of the paint. He had no formal knowledge of how the machines worked under his supervision, but had direct experience with them, practical knowledge, and was intelligent about their peculiarities and operational capabilities. I could experiment with them. In addition, Joe learned about budgets and management. Stepping out of line as he did so, he had a perspective on worker needs and management demands, and this led him to think of ways to improve efficiency down the line while relieving some of the stress on fitters. He had every worker in a unit learn their co-worker jobs so they could rotate through the stations to relieve some of the monotony. He believed the rotation would allow fitters to get longer and more frequent breaks. It was an easy sell to people on the line. The union, however, had to approve any changes to labor duties, and managers were wary of the change. Joe had to discuss his case on several fronts, providing him with a kind of rhetorical education. Eight years ago I started a study of the thought processes involved in work like that of my mother and uncle. I catalogued the cognitive demands of a range of blue collar and service work, from waitressing and hair style to plumbing and welding. To get an idea of how knowledge and skill develop, I have observed experts as well as beginners. Based on the details of this close examination, I tried to model what I call cognitive biographies of blue collar workers. Biographical accounts of the lives of scientists, lawyers, entrepreneurs and other professionals are rich in detail about the intellectual dimension of their work. But the life stories of working class people are few and usually stories difficulties and courage or the achievements that has done the hard work. Our culture –in a Cartesian way- separates the body from the mind, so that, for example, we assume that the use of a tool does not imply abstraction. We reinforce this notion by defining intelligence solely in grades at school and numbers in IQ tests. Intellectual. we use social biases related to a person's place on the occupational scale. The distinctions between blue, pink and white collars bring with them attributions of character, motivation and intelligence. While we rightly acknowledge and widely compensate for the game of mind in white collar and professional work, we decrease or erase in considerations about other efforts: physical and service work in particular. We also often ignore the experience of everyday work in administrative deliberations and political decision-making. But that's what we find as we get closer. The plumber who seeks leverage to work in tight neighborhoods and hair stylist adroitly handles scissores and paints manage their bodies strategically. Although work-related actions become routines with experience, they were learned at some point through observation, trial and error, and often the physical or verbal assistance of a co-worker or coach. I have often observed novices talking to themselves as they take a task, or shaking their heads or hand as if to erase an attempt before trying again. In fact, our traditional notions of routine performance could avoid us appreciating the many cases within the routine where quick decisions and adjustments are made. I am surprised by the moving thought that some work requires, for all the mental activity that may be involved in simply arriving from one place to another: the waitress running back through her station in the kitchen or the forerather walking down the line. The use of tools requires the studied refinement of posture, grip, balance and fine motor skills. But manipulating tools is intimately tied to knowledge of what a particular instrument can do in a particular situation and do better than other similar tools. A worker must also know the characteristics of the material that one is involving - how it reacts to various cutting or compression devices, to degrees of heat, or to force lines. Some of these things require judgment, the weight of options, the consideration of multiple variables and occasionally the creative use of a tool in an unexpected way. In the manipulation of material, the worker is in tune with aspects of the environment, training or deiplination of perception that enhances both knowledge and informs perception. Carpenters have an eye for length, line and angle; solving mechanics problems by listening; Hair stylists are atypized with shape, texture and movement. Sensory data merges with the concept, such as when an automatic mechanic relies on sound, vibration and even smell to understand what cannot be observed. Planning and problem solving have been studied from the days of modern cognitive psychology and are considered basic elements in Western definitions of intelligence. Working is solving problems. The big difference between the psychologist's lab and the workplace is that in the first are isolated and in the latter are embedded in the workflow in real time with all their disorder and social complexity. Much of physical work is social and interactive. Movers that determine how to achieve an electric range by a flight of stairs require coordination, negotiation, planning and the establishment of incremental objectives. Words, gestures, and sometimes a quick pencil sketch are involved, if only to get the right rhythm. The important thing is, then, to consider the social and communicative dimension of physical work, as it provides the means for so much work intelligence. Given the ridicule that has been made with blue collar speech, it may seem odd to rate your cognitive content. However, the talk flow at work provides the channel for organizing and distributing tasks, for troubleshooting and troubleshooting, for learning new information and reviewing age. A significant amount of teaching, often informal and indirect, takes place at work. Joe Meraglio saw that much of his work as a supervisor involved instruction. In some service occupations, language and communication are fundamental: observing and interpreting behaviour and expression, inferring mood and motive, taking on the perspective of others, responding appropriately to social signals, and knowing when they understand you. A good hair stylist, for example, has the ability to turn vague requests (I want something light and summery) into a proper cut through questions, images and hand gestures. Verbal and mathematical skills drive intelligence measurements in the Western Hemisphere, and many of the types of work I have studied are believed to require relatively little competition in either. Compared to certain types of white collar occupations, this is true. But written symbols flow through physical work. Numbers occur in most workplaces: in tools and indicators, as measurements, as indicators of pressure or concentration or temperature, as sequence guides, in ingredient labels, in lists and spreadsheets, as markers of quantity and price. Some jobs require workers to perform, check and verify calculations, and to collect and interpret data. Basic math may be involved, and some workers develop a good sense of numbers and patterns. Consider, too, what might be called material mathematics: mathematical functions embodied in materials and actions, such as when a carpenter builds a closet or a flight of stairs. A simple mathematical act can quickly extend beyond itself. Measuring, for example, may involve more than recording the dimensions of an object. While watching a cabinetmaker a long strip of wood, read a number off the tape out loud, looked back over his shoulder at the kitchen wall, turned to his task, took another measure, and stopped for a moment at the thought. He was solving a molding-related problem, and the move was important for his deliberation on and appearance. In the blue-collar workplace, directions, plans and reference books are based on illustrations, some representations and others, such as plans, that require training to interpret. Esoteric symbols —visual jargon— represent switches and containers, pipe fittings or types of welds. The workers themselves often make sketches at work. I often watched them grab a pencil to sketch something on a piece of paper or on a piece of the material they were installing. While many types of physical work do not require a high level of literacy, more reading occurs in the blue collar workplace than is generally thought, from manuals and catalogs to work orders and invoices, to lists, labels and forms. With routine tasks, for example, reading is integral to understanding production quotas, learning how to use an instrument or applying a product. Written notes can initiate actions, such as in restaurant orders or reports of machine malfunction, or can serve as memory aids. It is true that many uses of writing are abbreviated, routine and repetitive, and require infrequent interpretation or analysis. But analytical moments can be part of routine activities, and apparently basic reading and writing can be cognitively rich. Because workplace language is used in the flow of other activities, we can overlook the remarkable coordination of words, numbers and drawings needed to initiate and direct the action. If we believe that everyday work makes no sense, this will affect the work we create in the future. When we devalue the full range of everyday cognition, we offer limited educational opportunities and do not make fresh and meaningful instructional connections between disparate types of skill and knowledge. If we think that the entire categories of people – identified by class or occupation – are not so brilliant, then we reinforce social separations and paralyze our ability to speak through cultural divides. The affirmation of diverse intelligence is not a throwback to a soft definition of the mind. To recognize a wider range of intellectual ability is to take seriously the concept of cognitive variability, appreciate in all Rosies and Joes the thinking that drives their achievements and defines who they are. This is a model of the mind that is worthy of a democratic society. Permission required for reprinting, reproduction or other uses. Mike Rose is a research professor at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA. He is the author of 12 books, most recently an edition of the 10th anniversary of The Mind at Work. Work.

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