

Minesweeper

I work in the government. Needless to say, this involves little to no work. What it does involve, however, is a lot of wasted time. People waste their time in different ways. Some doodle, some type e-mail, some try to pick their nose with their thumb, and some sit there like that bottle of Dijonnaise in my fridge. I, however, have a different time-waster on my agenda, and it can quickly be summarized in one word: Minesweeper.

I have become so unbelievably good at Minesweeper that I have attracted the attention of many an old lady in my office. "Whatcha doooooin?" they purr, their eyes glazed over as they watch the mouse pointer uncover grey square after little grey square. "Oh not much," I reply calmly, "just saving the world from its impending doom at the hands of a dangerous minefield." 43 seconds on Intermediate level this time around. "Did you really just save the world?", she asked, in a very sensuous tone of voice, breathing heavily as her nose whistles loudly from snot buildup. That's when I instinctively put myself into Mack Daddy mode. "Yeah, I saved the world. Want me to rock yours?"

So she leans over to me and swears loudly in my ear. Then she pours a full can of Schweppes Ginger Ale on my head and tells me where I can stick my red flags. I can see I'm going to have to do better than 43 seconds if I want to have a chance with this lass.

I am so very good at Minesweeper (or "sweeps", as us hardcore players call it) that I am thinking about permanently putting it on my resume. I tried it once for a job with Cognos, in Ottawa. "I notice you have a very impressive set of computer abilities, Mr. Taylor", the interviewer said, her eyes scanning the high-quality glossy paper quickly. "I do what I can to get by," was my witty reply. "What is this 'Minesweeper' you speak of, Mr. Taylor? Is that like the Windows game?" she asked, visibly interested. "Yes sirree Bob in a dump truck" may not have been the response she was looking for, but I quickly recovered by asking "Do people play much Minesweeper around here?" to which she replied "No. We don't allow it. There's work to be done."

Without even thinking, I blurt out "How about you and I get some work done tonight?" Yes, Mack Daddy mode had gotten the best of me again. I was greeted by a sock full of batteries to the head. I think I may get the job if I just work on my Visual C++ a little bit.

Minesweeper brings out the best qualities in people, I think.

Nick "Succa" Taylor

