

Actively and confidently seek promotion

How to get ahead in the workplace

After your time and your money, an area in which we can really get ahead of other people is in the workplace.

And by getting ahead in this area you will be rewarded with:

- More responsibility
- Promotion
- Greater job satisfaction
- More money

So, how do you get ahead at work?

Well, the surest way to success is to render more and better service than is expected of you. If you just do enough to get by in your job, don't expect your boss to be impressed enough to put you forward for a promotion.

Likewise, the *Mr & Mrs Jobsworth* in this world are also destined to be in the same position in five or ten years time.

What follows is an important exercise that you can do to put things into perspective:

I'd like you to imagine that you are the boss.

Now, write down the qualities, attitude and output that you would want to see in your workers in order for you to put them forward for a promotion.

The list that you have just produced is detailing some of the activities that **YOU** must perform if you are going to get ahead in the workplace. Ideally, you should work at all of them.

Please remember this - your requirements would be exactly the same as your bosses, so there will be no great difference.

The secret to success in the workplace can be summed up in one sentence:

YOU MUST SELL YOURSELF & DO SO AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY

You were successful in selling yourself to the company during your interview, and you must also sell yourself to gain a promotion and to progress.

Whilst at work you must seize every opportunity to demonstrate your ability to hold a higher position.

You must also be able to take on extra responsibilities and show how competently you can deal with it.

Don't shirk responsibility - GO OUT AND SEEK IT!

See every challenge and responsibility as an opportunity to sell yourself to your boss and to the company. Show everyone what you can do and impress.

Remember, to grant you a promotion the company will want to have witnessed you in action and evaluate your past performance as well as what you would bring to the role.

An important facet to getting ahead is that you must demonstrate your ability to the right people.

It is no good demonstrating your ability to perform presentations, if the audience is composed of your workers or friends - they will not be able to promote you.

Instead impress your boss, your boss's boss and even their boss.

Use each opportunity to impress the right people every time.

One of the qualities that company's are always looking for when evaluating a possible promotion is the contribution and ideas that you have introduced or recommended to improve working practices, profits and processes.

If you haven't produced any ideas or suggestions to date, start right away.

How can your job be made more efficient?

How can processes be performed faster?

Better?

More cheaper?

Start to think of these improvements and whether or not they are successful or not, your boss and the company will be impressed with your attitude and commitment.

Start with a working brief, investigate all of the relevant information and data, analyze your findings and then come out with your recommendations.

Remember, it is no good just coming out with an idea if you haven't got any evidence to back it up with.

The company will want to know the costs and the benefits and why the change.

Next, produce a professional looking document and offer to present your ideas to the management.

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Rest assured, you will definitely impress and leave a lasting impression if you can get to the stage whereby you can perform a successful presentation within a managers meeting.

Most people use flip charts or whiteboards for their presentations - I would strongly recommend that you either use an overhead projector with acetates or use computer aided slides.

Plan out your presentation and rehearse it over and over again.

Don't forget to make it interesting and add a touch of humour!

It is an excellent opportunity for you to sell yourself to the people in the pound seats.

If done correctly, you will have attracted the attention of the people and that is what counts at the end of the day.

To achieve recognition you must make your successes evident but that doesn't mean that you should be over-modest.

No-one likes a big head so be careful, but make sure that everyone knows what you have done and what you are doing - especially your boss.

If you are seen as a big head or boastful, you will tend to find that those people who will need to support you, will not, and support from your boss, colleagues, subordinates and family is critical if you are going to get ahead.

Learning new skills are essential if you want to progress at work.

If your company offers you the chance to go on courses then do so.

In addition, check out what courses are available at you local school, college or learning centre.

To maintain your versatility, you must constantly update your range of skills and if you are not computer literate, I would strongly recommend that you attend a course.

Remember, in order for you to get ahead you must sell yourself and these added skills will enhance your **MARKETABILITY**.

Too many people set unattainable goals when they are at work and in order to get ahead you must be realistic.

It is really important that you are fully aware of both your strengths and your weaknesses and that you are in a role where you can exploit your strengths to the fullest and minimise your shortcomings.

Write down your strengths and weaknesses at work right now.

Play to your strengths and set yourself a goal of improving your development areas.

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Write down what action you will need to take and then GO FOR IT!

It is important that after you have identified your weaknesses, that you form an action plan on how you are going to improve upon them, whether it be by books, role plays, courses or seminars.

Another area that has a direct correlation to your success at work is your attitude and behaviour.

The manner in which you communicate and your interpersonal skills are also very important indeed.

Effective communication is vital if you are going to succeed no matter what you are doing.

The way in which we communicate with people is broken down into component parts, and it is popularly believed that people to whom we are speaking understand what we say by interpreting these different elements in varying proportions:

VERBAL

- 7% of our message is interpreted from the words we use.

VOCAL

- 38% is picked up from our voice - speed, tone , pitch, rhythm etc

VISUAL

- 55% is what the other person sees - our body language

Please bear the above in mind when you are communicating to people.

We have already discussed the importance of a positive mental attitude in an earlier topic and the same rules apply at the workplace.

Positive attitudes are far more fruitful than negative ones.

Anger and resentment promote isolation and destroy personal motivation, and the majority of people lose their jobs because of their attitudes and behaviour rather than incompetence.

Showmanship

Another thing which you should develop at work and in your life is showmanship.

Remember, to stand out from the crowd and to be noticed we must do the things that the majority of people do not do.

Showmanship is an entertainment value which gives you a little something extra which distinguishes and sets you apart from the rest.

It should attract attention to yourself but without being boastful and without you looking like a complete idiot.

Something that I have done at work conferences in the past are impressions.

I become the centre of attention making impressions of famous people and the executives of the company, everyone gets to know who I am and I make everyone laugh which is a very powerful tool.

I possess a collection of cufflinks which have become a trademark of mine and I am well known as being a snappy dresser.

You needn't be an entertainer to demonstrate showmanship.

Showmanship can range from wearing particular items of clothing such as waistcoats or earrings to having office gadgets such as mobile phones or electronic personal organizers.

Anything to set yourself apart from the crowd.

Showmanship demands ingenuity and a good sense of timing.

Develop it and watch how much easier it is to become more popular and to climb the ladder of success.

In most cases getting yourself favourably noticed is a winning move. And as I mentioned earlier, you must sell yourself to become a success. In essence, you should become your own Public Relations Consultant.

Ten steps to building your confidence and getting that promotion

Have you been waiting quietly for someone to acknowledge your contributions?

The late nights you've put in.

The occasional weekends.

The mega-sale you made last month. Well, stop waiting. Let me show you how to take charge of your career, and get that promotion!

1. Generate a list of your accomplishments over the last year and highlight those of which you are especially proud (e.g. that mega-sale—one of the company's biggest).

2. Generate a list of your qualities—the ones you feel are especially helpful to the team (e.g. your team spirit).
3. Have a clear idea about where you want to go. What position? What additional responsibilities you want to take on? What salary you'll command?
4. Learn as much as you can about the expectations of this role and the requirements for the position (e.g. education, experience, responsibilities)
5. Align your credentials with the requirements for the position you seek—prepare a case for yourself.
6. If your credentials are a clear match, go for it! If not, learn more from your boss and/or HR about what you might need to meet the requirements in the near future.
7. When you are ready, send a meeting request to your boss to discuss your role, and follow-up until the date has been set.
8. Be ever the consummate professional—wear appropriate business dress. How do those who currently occupy the position you seek, dress? Emulate them as best you can, of course within the range of your personal style.
9. When you meet with your boss, present your case confidently, speak clearly and help him/her make the same connections you've already made.
10. Should your boss not agree the time is right, be sure to inquire about specific skills, knowledge and performance you can demonstrate in the coming months to ensure your growth. Specify a timeframe in which you intend to obtain them, and agree to revisit this discussion once that period expires.

"Be courageous. It's one of the only places left uncrowded."

—Anita Roddick

