

### BE SEEN, GET KNOWN, MOVE AHEAD

BY ROBYN HENDERSON

**How to secure your next promotion and fast-track your career**



As you identify your career goals over the next five years, it's important to make sure you are noticed for all the right reasons! The basics of career progression include being organised, polite and an expert on the procedures and products within your organisation. So let's break that down into manageable segments.

If you are not strong in all of the following areas, focus on improving this area by 10% each year—your superiors will notice the difference.

#### 1. Pull Your Weight

If you are pulling your weight, you don't stop when you've finished your allotted tasks. You look around to see if someone else is struggling under a heavy workload, and offer to help. You think about the overall health and well-being of the team, not just yourself.

TIP: Treat people the way you would like to be treated.

#### 2. Acknowledge The Contribution Of Others

Most of us have been in a situation where one person does all or most of the work, and someone else lines up to take the credit. This often happens when someone is new on the job, and has to do all the groundwork. Meanwhile, someone else gets to polish their work and make it look good. Good leaders and master networkers always give credit where credit is due. Your superiors will be impressed by your leadership qualities in getting others to work as a team, and those who are helping you will be pleased that you acknowledged their efforts.

TIP: If you generously give credit to others, you'll find it always comes back to you tenfold.

#### 3. Don't Be Afraid To Ask For Help

If you don't know how to do something, ask. If you don't catch on the first time, ask again. There is no shame in not knowing "how". Plus you will get more respect from others if you show more concern for getting it right than trying to cover up a lack of knowledge.

TIP: Costly mistakes have been made by people who don't want to admit they lack knowledge or expertise.

#### 4. Always Stay Positive

What a boost a positive person gives to a workplace! If you remain positive no matter what the day throws at

you, people will always seek you out and find pleasure in your company.

TIP: Keep in mind a good laugh helps to break a tense situation.

#### 5. Don't Gossip About Others

Not even a little bit! Somehow or other, it always seems to get back. Stick to the principle: "if you haven't got anything good to say about others, don't say anything at all."

TIP: If someone starts gossiping, change the subject or turn it aside with a comment like, "I guess she thought she was acting for the best." It won't take long for others to realise that you won't be drawn into gossip sessions. They may not your response, but they will respect you for it. They will also know they can trust you to keep a confidence.

#### 6. Work To Deadlines

In business, deadlines are a part of life. If you are in management, you may have to lead staff to achieve set goals and quotas. If you're part of the staff, you have to meet those deadlines or let others down. However, there is nothing like a reputation for being reliable and delivering on time.

TIP: When you are asked to give an estimated completion time, calculate a reasonable span of time (one that won't have you stressing to finish it) and add a couple of hours/days, depending on the complexity of the task. It's far better to under-promise and over-deliver.

#### 7. Stay Calm In A Crisis

It's easy to get carried away by the general feeling of panic when there's some sort of crisis, but you'll earn more respect if you take a deep breath, roll up your sleeves up and look for the best way to deal with the situation. – work out what is needed immediately to "plug any leaks", so to speak. Do whatever has to be done to prevent the situation from getting worse. Work out whether the most important thing is to go back and fix what went wrong, or to look into the immediate future to prevent trouble further down the line.

TIP: Look for all causes and effects, and deal with them in order of importance. Then see if you can recommend a course of action so the problem won't crop up again.

Often the people who are promoted are not necessarily the best person for the job, rather they are the most visible. Increase your visibility, expand your network and always be professional.

Always remember the window of opportunity is so clear, that sometimes we miss it.

#### **Robyn Henderson**

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