

How-To Recover After a Mistake in a Job Interview



You've done everything you can do to prepare for that important job interview. You've researched the company thoroughly. You've looked at the interviewer's LinkedIn profile. You enlisted the help of a close friend or colleague to practice. You've chosen examples of previous successes to highlight why you're the right candidate for the job.

Now, you're in the middle of the interview and you've answered a question poorly. Maybe you noticed yourself acting anxiously. It happens to everyone at some point. They make a mistake. It happens. You're only human.

When most people make a mistake during an interview, they panic and dig themselves deeper. The truth is, seasoned interviewers know that people make mistakes. The key is in how you recover. Below are the best ways to help you recover after a blunder.

Acknowledge and Own Up

The worst thing you can do is act like nothing happened. You know you goofed up and so does the interviewer. Instead of trying to sweep it under the rug, stop and acknowledge your mistake. Your best bet is to apologize and openly discuss what went wrong. This shows the interviewer that you have the capacity to admit when you're wrong and learn from it, and that you respect others.

Be Yourself

It's easy to think of interviews as a performance. You have to say the right thing, act the right way and be the person the interviewer expects you to be. In reality, the best strategy is to be your authentic self. If a mistake happens, own up to it with a little honest humor. It can be as simple as saying, "I guess I must be a little more nervous than I thought, I would like to correct what I just said" and then go on to give you answer you intended. Doing so demonstrates your ability to be mindful of your actions and demonstrates high emotional intelligence.

Turn that Frown Upside Down

It's only natural to be discouraged after you make a gaffe. In your mind, you might think you've blown any chance you had. Your stomach is probably in knots. You can't let the despair you're feeling show, though. Instead, you have to keep smiling. If you're able to do this after acknowledging a mistake, it shows the interviewer that you can handle adversity.

That's one of the most admirable traits hiring managers look for in a candidate. Even if you're the most qualified person for the position, it's important to demonstrate your ability to handle unseen problems when they arise. Think of it this way; making a mistake might actually work in your favor if you're able to handle it with dignity and class.

Ask to Go Back

Interview questions are tough. You're bound to answer some better than others. If, at some point during the interview, you feel as though you haven't provided the answer you want, ask the interviewer to go back. Take time to collect yourself and give the thoughtful answer you meant to in the first place. A good interviewer will appreciate your attention to detail and how important it is to you to communicate effectively.

References are Your Asset

Your references are worth their weight in gold. They want to see you succeed. If

you feel like you've shown less than your best in a job interview, let your references know. Make sure they're armed and ready to highlight your strengths and accomplishments when they receive that post-interview phone call.

Follow Up Diligently

When you walk out of an interview, there's still work to be done. Even if you don't think you've nailed it, make sure you send a genuine follow-up note. This is your last opportunity to express your excitement about the position and reiterate the most notable points of the conversation. And if you're working with a recruiter, follow up with them as quickly as possible as well and they too can help you relay your enthusiasm, and help you correct any errors you may have made during the interview. Do this effectively and you're sure to leave a lasting impression.

Learn and Move On

If you interview for enough jobs, you're going to have some experiences that are better than others. After those interviews that aren't as memorable, it's easy to beat yourself up. Unfortunately, that doesn't do any good. Instead, chalk mistakes up to learning experiences. Acknowledge what went well, what didn't, and put in the work to perform better next time.

Interviewing for a new job is stressful. No matter how well-prepared you are, mistakes are going to happen. That doesn't mean that all hope is lost, however. In fact, they can even be to your benefit in some cases. What matters is how you handle your mistakes. If you show some humility and employ the strategies above, mistakes will become something you can move past with grace and ease.

Again, working with a good recruiter can help you prepare for the interview, and can also help in the follow up to restate your interest and also clarify any answers you feel didn't come across as you intended.

Planning the Perfect Holiday Party



Your team has worked hard all year to achieve the results you expect. They've come in early, stayed late, and performed duties far beyond those listed in their job description. You've set the bar high. Everyone knows what's expected and they respect you as a leader. You've remained highly professional throughout the whole year.

Now that Thanksgiving has come to pass, you find yourself feeling a little sentimental about the holidays. Sure, there's still plenty of work to be done. But, you've taken a step back to really appreciate the effort everyone's put forth for the past 11 months. To show them your appreciation, it's time to plan a company holiday party. You don't want to do the typical catered appetizers and cheap wine. You really want to show everyone a good time. Planning a party that everyone's sure to enjoy isn't easy. If you're not sure where to start, check out our list of best tips below.

Budget

As you start planning your holiday party, all sorts of ideas are going to run through your head. Maybe it would be cool to have a DJ. Perhaps it's a fancy offsite venue with room for all trappings imaginable. While all these ideas sound like a blast, you have to keep your budget in mind. Yes, you want to throw a party that everyone will remember. However, the last thing you want to do is spend a chunk of quarterly profits on one night of fun.

Before you start putting down deposits and ordering the finest sushi in town, do some research and make sure you stay within your budget.

Decide on a Theme

Themes are fun. That's the bottom line. And the best part? Your options are limitless. A good place to start is taking a poll. Come up with a few ideas and circulate them through your organization. Maybe it's a casino night. What about a masquerade party? Who doesn't love a luau when it's frigid outside? Whatever theme you choose, make sure it's fun and won't raise any red flags with HR.

Book a Venue

Your employees spend the majority of their waking hours at the office. That's the last place they want to cut loose and have a little fun. If it's in your budget, book an offsite venue. Maybe it's the county fairgrounds. What about a bowling alley or roller rink? Whatever you choose, make sure it's a place people can get to that's within your budget.

Icebreakers

Your employees love the fact that you're throwing a holiday party. They get to bring their significant others and have a night of fun. That doesn't mean that they're going to be super comfortable mingling with everyone in the group. Chances are, Greg from the engineering team isn't going out of his way to say hello to Sam from accounts payable.

Holiday parties are a great time to foster cross-departmental integration. This is easy when you set up activities that encourage bonding. Set up teams for charades. What about trivia? Again, you can get as creative as you want. Just make sure they're fun and allow people to let their guard down.

White Elephant Gift Exchange

Who doesn't love an old-fashioned gift exchange? Well before your party commences, communicate that everyone should bring a gift for a white elephant gift exchange. It's a good idea to set a limit on how much money people should spend on their gift so it doesn't become a financial burden in any way. Usually \$10 or \$20 is affordable for everyone.

Entertainment

Entertainers are a hit at every party. Whether it's a hypnotist, magician or Santa, entertainment adds a fun dynamic to any party. Whatever entertainment you decide on, make sure to reserve it well in advance. The holiday season is where entertainers make their money and they book up quickly.

Transportation

The idea of having a holiday party is for everyone to have a good time. As they should. It's inevitable that some folks are going to have a little too much to drink. You shouldn't, but some people will. It's important that they get home safely. Spend the extra money to have transportation arranged for people that shouldn't drive. Hire a local cab company. Post an ad on Craigslist for Uber and Lyft drivers letting them know that there will be plenty of fares once the festivities end. The last thing you want is someone making the wrong decision and having to deal with the consequences.

Holiday parties are meant to be fun. They're a chance for everyone to come together, bond and share in some holiday cheer. Throwing a party that's memorable goes a long way in not only showing your appreciation for your employees but, boosting morale and carrying momentum through the end of the year. As long as you follow some of the advice above, stay within budget and make sure everyone is safe, your holiday shindig is sure to be a success.

Common Mistakes to Avoid During a Job Interview



You're out of practice. You were in your most recent role as a manager or team lead for a number of years. You conducted plenty of interviews and saw a wide spectrum of performances. Now, for whatever reason, you're sitting on the opposite side of the desk as the interviewee. You're probably thinking that you've got it down based on all your experience. Did it ever occur to you that it might be a good idea to brush up a little just in case? It's true. Even the most seasoned job applicants make mistakes.

If you're on the hunt for a new job, keep in mind some of the common interview mistakes below.

Not Starting on Time

This one seems obvious. You always give yourself plenty of time when showing up to an interview. Finding your way through an unfamiliar building, getting through security, filling out paperwork - there's a lot to get done before the interview even starts.

But, being on time mentally is just as important as showing up physically. You're going to be nervous in the first moments of the interview. Your mind will be racing and your palms a little sweaty.

That's only natural. The key is to be sharp from the second the interview starts. Make it a point to actively listen to the questions being asked and wait until the interviewer has finished asking the question before jumping in with your answer. Take your time giving thoughtful answers and speak slowly. Even though most interviewees settle down eventually, it's to your advantage to be fully present from the start.

Talking Too Much About Yourself

It seems a little counterintuitive but, talking about yourself too much in an interview is a mistake. Sure, the interview is your chance to prove you're the right candidate for the job. But put yourself in the shoes of the interviewer. They're focused on finding the person that's going to benefit their company the most. In your answers, talk about projects you worked on as part of a team, and what your contribution to the team was. This shows what you can do as an individual, and that you can act as part of a team.

Instead of solely highlighting your previous experience and making it known that you're gritty and up for the challenge, ask about the company. What are their priorities, goals and objectives? What about their culture do people love? Are there any gaps that need to be filled? When you ask poignant questions, you convey to the interviewer that your primary concern is adding as much value as you can.

Body Language

This one seems obvious but, it's a mistake that too many interviewees make. Most communication is non-verbal. The interviewer is going to be watching how you comport yourself. Do you shake hands firmly when you walk in the door? Do you make eye contact? Or are your eyes darting every which way? Do you slouch in your chair? Or does your posture let the person across the desk know that you're fully engaged? Do you tend to fidget or have happy feet? And what about your tone of voice? Is it low and lethargic? Or is it upbeat and excited? Even though these nuances seem trivial, they go a long way in creating a first impression and in letting the interviewer know who you are.

Not Being Specific Enough

When you're in the process of trying to find a new job, it's easy to fall into the mindset that you'll take any job over your last position. When this happens, there's a tendency to get into the habit of talking about your qualifications. That's not enough in an interview. You need to highlight how your qualifications are fit specifically for the job you're applying for, and what you were able to accomplish for your employers. When you do this successfully, you convey that you really

want this job, what you might be able to accomplish for them, and set yourself apart from the competition.

Not Preparing for a Phone Interview

You might think that a phone interview is easier than a live interview. It's actually the opposite. In a live setting, you're able to read and give off non-verbal cues. All of that communication is lost when you talk on the phone. As a result, what you say becomes all the more important. If you have a phone interview scheduled, take the extra time to practice with a colleague or someone with phone interview experience. Also make sure your phone is fully charged and you are in a location that gets good reception. You'll be glad you did.

Being on the job hunt can be stressful. Between the unknowns, customizing resumes, and waiting to see if you landed a job or even an interview, there's a lot to juggle. Not to mention the stress of interviewing itself. The good news is, if you take the time to prepare, and are aware of some common mistakes to avoid, your chances of being successful increase exponentially.

The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace



Emotional intelligence or, EQ as it's come to be known. It's become a buzz word in the last decade or so. It sounds cool, sophisticated even. But what the heck does it mean? As defined by researchers Peter Salavoy and John Mayer, who

coined the term, emotional intelligence means being aware that emotions can drive our behavior and impact people positively or negatively. Furthermore, it is the ability to manage those emotions, especially when under pressure.

With that definition in mind, it's easy to see how EQ, or lack thereof, can have a significant effect in the workplace. In an office where people exhibit low EQ, distrust, frustration, anger and lack of productivity can run rampant. Conversely, when team members exude high EQ, the results are the complete opposite. Trust, communication, openness, happiness and high productivity will likely be found.

If you're curious to learn a little more about EQ and how it can improve your career, read on. We've compiled a list of the top ways that high EQ can be a benefit.

Awareness and Reflection

The first step to increasing your EQ is to become aware of your behaviors and reflect on them. That doesn't mean finding all your worse traits and beating yourself up. Rather, it involves having an honest conversation with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses. Maybe you've found that you're short and curt with your team of engineers. Upon reflecting on this behavior, high EQ dictates that you set about improving.

Fast Decision-Making

Thanks to technology, we're able to communicate faster than ever. Gone are the days of interoffice memos. Instead, emails, texts and zoom meetings allow information to be shared freely with the masses. As a result, some people are quick to react, positively or negatively, when they hear something new. People of high EQ however, choose to respond, instead of react. They take time to process what they've learned, and consider the implications their response will have for those around them. In other words, they calculate their next move based on a number of factors, instead of shooting from the hip.

Increased Perception

People of high EQ are always aware of what's going on around them. They can sense when big news is on the horizon. They're perceptive enough to notice even the smallest of changes in someone's behavior that might indicate they are struggling. With this heightened perception in their arsenal, they're able to spot issues ahead of time and address problems before they get out of hand.

High Morale

Whether you're leading an entire organization, department or a small team, it's your job to make sure that everything and everybody is functioning as smoothly as possible. You're charged with solving issues of productivity, employee engagement, communication, cohesiveness and a whole host of other issues that arise. In order to do so effectively requires high emotional IQ.

At some point, you'll have to deal with an employee whose being unreasonable in one way or another. You have two choices. Either become angry and escalate the situation (low EQ) or, find a way to mitigate the problem and resolve it as quickly and calmly as possible (high EQ).

Foster a High-Functioning Culture

This is the ultimate for leaders with high EQ. High-functioning cultures directly correlate with high production and profitability. As the leader of such a culture, you exemplify what high EQ is. You've invested the time and learned the skills necessary to lead others in the most effective way possible.

So, what does a high EQ leader look like? You're able to build and manage healthy relationships with others. You listen actively to what everyone has to say. You maintain a level head and make it a point to respond instead of reacting.

As a VP, Team Lead, Manager, etc., you've proven that you have the skills and know-how to perform at a high level. Your experience speaks for itself, and you're in a position of leadership for a reason. As you know though, there are always ways to improve. Not only for yourself, but the company as a whole. Learning, then demonstrating emotional intelligence is a great place to start. Once you learn what it takes to practice high EQ, the results just might blow your mind.

You, and everyone around will stand to benefit. You'll be happier, less stressed, more productive and more profitable as a result.

What's Holding You Back In Your Career



Maybe you're in a situation where you feel like you're just going through the motions. You show up, do your job, go home. Wash, rinse, repeat. The days and months all seem to blend together. It might not be that you're miserable, you're just not as excited about your job as you once were. You haven't seen a raise or promotion for quite a while. It's not that your jobs in jeopardy. You just seem to have hit a glass ceiling.

If any of this sounds familiar, you're not alone. Millions of people feel stuck in their jobs. But, guess what? Sometimes, the obstacles that are in your way are ones you put there. I know, that might sound a little harsh. There's good news though. If you're willing to take an honest look in the mirror, identifying some mitigating behaviors is easy.

Explicit Goals

You have some goals in mind. You want to become a project leader or get into the next level of management? Great! Have you written these goals down? Better yet, have you formulated the steps to achieve them?

While long-term goals are wonderful, they require short-term goals to get there. Short-term goals need attention too. Think about what steps you need to take to achieve those long-term goals. Is it additional training, or more experience in a particular area? Setting these smaller steps as goals is something you can do now to get you closer to the long-term goals.

Handling Criticism

If you ask any successful businessperson how they got to where they are, learning from past mistakes will be a significant part of their answer. Part of learning from mistakes is taking constructive criticism to heart. Think about the last time your boss came to you with a suggestion or new idea about how you could improve. How did you react? Did you welcome the feedback? Or did you get defensive and confrontational?

If you're able to put your ego aside, and learn from constructive feedback, you'll quickly set yourself on the path to future success.

Waiting for More Responsibility

You know this one. It's how you got to where you currently are. We're talking about asking for more responsibility. If you now find yourself sitting back, waiting for the torch to be handed to you, you might be waiting for quite a while. Employers love people who are self-starters and go-getters. When you actively seek more responsibility, it shows that you're eager to learn and to get better. If you've become complacent, this one simple change could make all the difference and put you on your boss's radar for more responsibility or opportunities.

Seeking New Learning Opportunities

In the age of technology, learning has never been so fast paced. What was cutting edge two months ago might be obsolete now. In other words, if you aren't constantly learning, you're falling behind. We aren't saying that you need to attend every new tech promo available. However, it's essential that you keep yourself abreast of the latest skills and industry trends if you want to move up.

Networking

Networking is a buzz word, we know. But, it's one that isn't going away any time soon. Whether your job relies on it entirely, or you work by yourself, you're going to have to network at some point. The good news is that networking is something you can do all the time. If it's at an organized networking event, you should go. If it's a weekend round of golf with some strangers, same story.

In the end, it's a numbers game. The more people you know, the better. Even though the business world has become flatter thanks to the ability to communicate electronically, there is still no substitute for building relationships in person.

Asking for Raises or Promotions

There's an old axiom that says, "the worst thing that happens when you ask, is that you end up in the same place." When was the last time you asked for a raise or promotion? You've taken on more work, more stress, more responsibility. But you're making the same amount of money as when you started.

What gives?

Even if you haven't taken on more responsibilities, you can ask what you would need to do to get that promotion or raise. At least then you will know what the expectations are and you can start working towards it.

If you want to advance your career, you have to ask for more at some point. Yes, it's going to be uncomfortable. Yes, you're going to have thoughts and feelings that you're overstepping your bounds. That's ok. But, if you've proven yourself time and again, you owe it to yourself to ask that question. You might very well be surprised by the response you receive.

In an age where everything changes in the blink of an eye, it's only natural to seek comfort and stability. You can pay the bills, achieve some level of fulfillment and feel secure. After a while though, you become bored, maybe even apathetic. When it gets to that point, the onus is on you. If you want more - more money, more meaning, more success, ask yourself some of these questions. If you answer them honestly and take some small steps, you just might find what you've been

waiting for.

How to Reinvent Yourself in an Unforgiving Job Market



Maybe it's happened to you. If not, it's certainly happened to someone you know. You show up to work one day and find out that you're being let go. Maybe, it's just no longer a good fit. Maybe, your position is being replaced by technology. Perhaps, you were part of a corporate downsizing.

Whatever the reason, being let go is one of the worst feelings in the world. You feel lost, unwanted and want to go crawl in a hole. In your eyes, you're letting yourself and your family down. No one can blame you for feeling this way. But, you can't wallow in your own misery forever. As hard as it might be to recognize in the moment, it's not the end of the world. If you find yourself in this position and aren't sure how to proceed, read on.

What People Say or Think Doesn't Matter

You're probably used to folks looking up to you. Now, you're wondering how you're going to pay the dues at the country club, or your child's private school next month. Or, how you're going to tell your friends you can't make that weekend couples trip to wine country. None of that matters. It's going to take some time to come to grips with your new reality. The bottom line is that what

other's think, do or say isn't a reflection on you as a person.

Starting from Scratch isn't a Bad Thing

Even though it seems like you've hit rock bottom and there's no way out, it's quite the opposite. You're now free to do whatever you want. No boss to answer to, no teams to manage. You get to call your own shots.

This is a time for introspection. Ask yourself some big picture questions. What are your core values? What do you want out of your next job? Are the skills you currently possess still valuable? If not, what new skills are you willing to learn or refine? This is a time without your usual day-to-day distractions to really consider what you want to do and what makes you happy.

Purpose

For years, you've woken up every day with a purpose. To make money. To make your organization better. To further your own skills. To meet the expectations of others.

All those things you once knew, are gone. That doesn't mean that having purpose is any less important, though. In fact, it's more important now than ever. The cool thing is that you now get to define it for yourself. Purpose is different for everyone. It might mean taking some time for yourself. Or, it might be jumping right back in the saddle and beginning the job search. Whatever path you choose, it's vital that you have a purpose each and every day.

Take Action

Once you've taken some time to clear your head, it's time to make a game plan and put it into action. It isn't going to be easy. If you decide to change careers entirely, great. If it's time to look for something new in the same realm, all the better. Whatever your plan of action is, the key is to pursue it doggedly. There are going to be days and moments of frustration. You're going to feel like giving up. But, you have to remember what made you successful in the first place. It wasn't doubt, angst or giving in.

Once you've committed to a new path, stay with it. Your discipline and determination will win out in the end.

Dealing with Rejection

If it was easy, everyone would be doing it. So the saying goes. Once in a while, you'll be in the right place at the right time and land firmly on your feet. More often than not though, you're going to face some rejection on your way to newfound success. How you deal with it is what makes all the difference. When you don't land that interview or job, it's easy to get down and start doubting yourself.

But maybe, there's another way to look at it. Instead of rejection being the end of the world, what if you looked at it as another opportunity to try something new? No question, it's easier said than done. If you're going to be successful, you're going to need a thick layer of skin and a positive attitude.

If you stay at it long enough, everything will work out.

It sucks. Just when you think you're on the path to success and longevity, your momentum is halted in its tracks. It seems like the end of the world, and it's impossible to see a path forward. Those thoughts are natural. The easy way out is to admit defeat and pack it in. If you want to be resilient however, there's nothing that stands in your way. Ultimately, you're the determinant of your success and happiness. If you choose the latter, and set about your circumstances in the right way, you'll find yourself back on top and happier than ever. After all, if you think back at setbacks you've had before, you may notice that the next step you took was better than where you were. And the next step you take will most likely be an improvement over where you just left. This is your chance to make the improvements.

If you are looking for a job in the [Life Sciences industries](#), contact me, Jeff King at jking@rqfocus.com or (541) 639-3501.

Top Strategies to Foster Employee Engagement



In the age of technology and the rise of the [remote worker](#), employers the world over are finding it harder and harder and to keep people engaged. Even though the days of the “company man” still exist, the concept is becoming less and less prevalent. This is largely due to the fact that changing jobs, or even careers, multiple times is no longer seen with the same disdain it once was. As a result, employers are having to get more creative about not only retaining top talent, but keeping them engaged. If you find yourself with a revolving door of quality people coming and going, you might want to consider some of the following strategies.

What Makes Employees Feel Engaged?

Before you start thinking about how to keep employees engaged, you have to understand what the term means to them.

Recent research tells us that three words define what it means for an employee to feel engaged. Money isn't one of them. **Community, Value and Security.**

Community

Employees need to feel that they're included in the process. Being included in important meetings, asked for their input and communication all go a long way. Bottom line, if something important is going on, everyone needs to be kept in the loop.

Value

In order for employees to feel valued, they need to know that their work is important. This is why regular feedback, even if it's constructive goes a long way. If someone does an exceptional job, let them know. Even just a short email or compliment goes a long way.

Security

This is a big one. With the prevalence of corporate takeovers and mergers, employees spend a lot of time on edge and looking over their shoulder. They're never sure when their position might be eliminated, or their head will be on the chopping block. If you want to keep people around and fully engaged, let them know that they don't have anything to worry about. Retirement plans, benefits, sales incentives, etc. all go a long way in easing employees' minds.

Now that we've defined what engagement means to people, let's discuss the best ways to keep them engaged.

Give People a Voice

Remember those surveys that companies would send out once a year to every employee to get their feedback? Those don't cut it anymore. Employees today, especially [Millennials and Gen Z](#), crave sharing of information, thoughts and ideas. That's why it's a good idea to have a central hub for communication not only within departments but between them. This space should be treated as a judgement-free zone. Sure, there are professional lines that need to be adhered to. But, employees should be able to be candid and share ideas and feedback freely.

Listen

It's any employee's job to listen to their boss. That goes without saying. But, guess what? It's also your job as a boss to listen to your employees. If an employee raises a concern or comes up with a good idea, consider what they have to say and put it into action. When people see that their ideas add value to an

organization, they feel like they matter.

Everyone Learns Differently

There's a lot being made about different learning styles. And for good reason. Some people learn by watching and listening. Others, by doing. That's why it's imperative to accommodate everyone and how they learn. The days of reading a job description and the employee handbook are gone. For people to be engaged, they need you to be an active part of the process. It's your job to identify their learning style and curtail your teachings accordingly. If you want to get the most out of your people, make their learning a top priority.

Creative Group Learning Sessions

You're all too familiar with the typical company training that involves a Power Point and a manager talking in front of a group. These can be impactful but, it's easy for them to become stale. An alternative is to do learning sessions in a way that involves and challenges everyone. You can get really creative here and have a lot of fun. An example might be dividing a team into groups to accomplish a certain task. Within a particular group, put someone that is shy or reserved in a position of leadership. While it might be uncomfortable for that person, you're challenging them to step outside their comfort zone. These kinds of learning activities can be a real catalyst for individual and collective growth.

There's no question that retaining quality people is harder now than ever before. The workforce has become smarter, values have changed, and technology has made it easier for people to do their job without being fully engaged. Sure, money is always a motivating factor for employees. More than anything though, they want to feel a sense of community, value and security. If you find yourself struggling to keep people around and excited about their work, try implementing some of these strategies. You just might be surprised by the results.

Questions Career Hungry Employees Ask Their Boss



When the workplace is more competitive than it ever has been, you have to work extra hard to set yourself apart. Sure, results speak for themselves. There's no question that high performers stand out for a reason. But what if you're a high performer but don't have a close relationship with your colleagues or boss? What if your priorities aren't fully aligned with those of your company? We all know that person in the office... The one that can sell, win over clients and exceed every KPI imaginable. That same person never seems to last in one place for very long. And there's a reason. There's the matter of how you go about achieving those results and learning along the way.

What's the best way to start? Your relationship with your boss. If you want to advance your career, consider the questions below that you should ask your boss.

What do You Need Help With?

It doesn't happen enough. People reaching out to see how they can help. In fact, when it does happen, you're often so caught off guard you don't know how to respond. Guess what? When you ask your boss this question, they'll be taken aback because no one has ever asked them before.

In most cases when you ask this question, you're likely to end up with some tasks that your boss just doesn't enjoy doing. They might be menial in his or her eyes, but they're your responsibility now. And you should treat them as important as anything else you do.

This question and assumption of responsibility will show your boss that you're loyal, dedicated and eager to learn.

What are Your Main Objectives and Concerns?

You probably notice a pattern with these first two questions - they're both boss-centric. It's a far cry from brown-nosing if you ask them in a genuine way. When you make yourself available and demonstrate a want to learn, you immediately build trust and loyalty.

The truth for most effective bosses is, they're always looking for their replacement. Some might communicate but, most just observe.

So, the only way for you to know if you're seriously being considered for mentorship is to ask. Ask what your boss' primary goals and objectives are. Once you have a solid understanding, it's your job to help them get there.

How do You Communicate

It's easy for your boss to stress the importance of adapting to different communication styles. Guess what, though? He or she has their own preferred communication style in the office. This is their default way of getting tasks done. And, it's your job to figure it out.

When you ask your boss what their preferred method of communication is, you position yourself to solidify a relationship.

If you can solve this equation, you'll be way ahead of everyone else.

Who Do You Need to Cultivate Relationships With?

Ask any CEO how they achieved their success, and their answer will always come down to relationships. True story, even in the age of technology. Remember that guy we talked about in the opening? He's always changing jobs because he

doesn't have the relationships to keep one for very long.

Take the time to learn how your boss got to where he or she is. Who did they look up to? Who did they seek out as mentors? Who did they avoid?

These are all important questions within a broader question. But, when someone you respect is willing to share a playbook to their success, you should listen.

The key is asking. You'll never know otherwise.

What Skills do I Need to Develop?

You're hungry. You're determined to succeed. But, you're also raw. If you're asking your boss the questions above, he or she already knows this. That's only the start, though. You have to be coachable and humble.

The next step is taking the right steps to improve your current performance and set yourself up for future success.

Bring a notepad with you and jot everything down. At this point, you have an opportunity that most folks don't get. Time to make the most of it.

During your one-on-one, ask leading questions about your performance. Then listen. Ask more focused questions. And listen again.

Your time here is limited, so make it count.

Once you've gathered all the data and reviewed your notes, formulate a game plan and review it your boss. Then, put it into action.

There's no questioning that you have to perform to survive climbing the corporate ladder. At the end of the day, it does come down to results. No one is going to deny that. However, if your goal is to stay with the right company for you, it's imperative that you develop the skills and relationships necessary to do so. There's no better place to start than your boss or manager. Afterall, if they agree to become a mentor for you, they will want you to succeed as much as you do since their training will be a reflection on both of you. If you feel inspired to achieve their success or beyond, ask the right questions, listen, and execute.

What You Need to Know When Hiring a Remote Team



Remote. It's a term you continue to hear more and more when talking about the modern workplace. Working remotely is becoming the preference of Gen Z and Millennials, especially. In fact, it's been estimated that 50% of the workforce will work remotely by 2030. Not that long ago, working remotely was unheard of. But, thanks to technology and the ease with which information can be shared, it appears to be here to stay. While there will always be a place for the corporate office, it's becoming harder to recruit quality people that are content with the nine-to-five cubicle life. If you're thinking about hiring a remote team however, there are some important things to consider.

Make Expectations Clear

Even though some of the most talented people work remotely, it's still essential that you make expectations clear upfront. One of the most important ingredients is schedules. A major benefit for remote workers is a flexible schedule. They assume as long as they get their work done on time, they're free to do it when they like. Let's say for example that your company needs someone available from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm Eastern Standard Time. Before you set about hiring someone in the Pacific Time Zone, you'd better be sure they're alright with getting up at 5:00 am local time.

Hire the Right People

Even though a remote worker might not ever come face-to-face with a client, they can still have a tremendous impact on your brand and who you are. Just like any employee you hire for the office, it's important to make sure remote workers are aligned with your company's core values, mission and brand.

It's best to vet remote workers in the interview process. Ask leading questions about what they're passionate about, what their goals and ambitions are and what strengths they possess that allow them to work remotely. Of course, make sure this person has the experience and qualifications necessary to meet the demands of the job.

Key Performance Indicators

Also known as KPI's, key performance indicators help companies meet goals and track progress from the top to the bottom. If you have KPI's in place already, great. They might need some tweaking for a remote position but, their intent and metrics should remain more or less the same.

If you don't have any KPI's in place, start by looking at what your goals are. What KPI's do you have in place to track your own results? How do the KPI's for the employees you manage align with accomplishing the company's goals? Asking these questions will provide you a foundation from which you can develop KPI's for a remote employee.

Have a Central Location

A successful business of any size has a laundry list of different things happening at a given time. Marketing projects, sales goals, customer retention, hiring, the list goes on. If there isn't a central place where everyone can communicate, it's easy for important tasks to fall by the wayside. Whether you have employees that work remotely or not, software platforms like Monday, Asana and Trello have all the tools you need to manage each facet of every project and they're easy to use.

Communication Reigns Supreme

We harp on it all the time but, there's no understating the importance of effective communication in the workplace. This is especially true for remote workers. In an office, it's easy to walk down the hall and knock on someone's door. Remote workers don't have that luxury. That's why it's important to keep these people abreast of what's going on. Sure, everyone checks their email on a regular basis. But, being able to communicate face-to-face via programs like Skype or Zoom, allows everyone to feel engaged.

Only you can decide if hiring a remote team is the right decision. There are certainly some risks that come with not being able to physically manage someone. On the other hand, there are plenty of capable people out there that prefer to work remotely. They don't require the overhead of an office employee either. If you come to the decision that hiring remote positions is a risk worth taking, keep in mind the matters discussed. If done correctly, hiring remote workers can be a win-win for everyone.

If you are interested in growing your remote team in the [Life Sciences industries in the Bay Area](#), contact me, Jeff King, at jking@rqfocus.com or (541) 639-3501. I am an [experienced recruiter](#) that can help you find the best remote or in-house employees for your company.

Why You're Losing Millennials and Gen Z



Maybe you're at the tail end of the Baby Boomer or Gen X generation. You've put in your time, climbed the corporate ladder and are finally at or near the top. Retirement is on the horizon, but you've still got a few demanding years left. Ultimately, you're largely responsible for the company's continued growth and success. That means acquiring and retaining younger talent. You're a mentor to a select few individuals and hope they'll follow in your footsteps. There's a problem though. You can't seem to keep anyone around for more than a couple of years. You're frustrated and can't put your finger on why retaining folks is so hard. If any of this sounds familiar, read on.

Feedback

The corporate model of old dictates that it's company policy to have a review once, maybe twice a year. You sit with the boss for a half hour and talk about your performance, strengths, weaknesses and what your job looks like going forward. When you're done, he or she checks off some boxes and rates some aspects on a scale of one to five. The form goes in your file in the HR office and you move on.

This doesn't work for Millennials and Gen Z. Employees in both generations demand consistent feedback whether it's praise or constructive criticism. They need to see that there is room to grow and yearn to acquire the skills to do so. This phenomenon strikes at the core of how these generations were brought up. In school and at home, they received constant positive reinforcement and honest critiques weren't the norm. For this reason, frequent feedback, positive or otherwise, is needed to remind these generations that there's no such thing as participation trophies in the real world.

Lack of Flexibility

While their parents are used to the nine to five, Monday through Friday routine, Millennials and Gen Z aren't as structured. The way they see it, why can't they work seven to three instead? Being able to leave an hour or two earlier might allow these employees to pick their kids up from school, saving them a second mortgage payment in the form of childcare.

You knew it was coming so here we go... Working remotely. Millennials have taken to the idea of working from home like fish to water. They place more of an emphasis on work-life balance than any generation before them. It's estimated that nearly 50% of the modern workforce sees working remotely at least some of the time as "standard operating procedure."

Bottom line, if you want to retain talented people, flexibility is a MUST.

Learning and Development

Even though their elders might call them lazy or entitled, the truth is that Millennials and Gen Z have an insatiable appetite to learn and grow. So, what does this look like? Technology. Webinars, online classes and apps are the way to a younger employee's heart. The days of traveling to Vegas for a weekend sales training are much less attractive now than they used to be. The generations of today want to be able to learn on their own time and within reason, at their own pace.

The second component is mentoring. Even though Millennials and Gen Z love their screen time, there's still no substitute for face-to-face coaching and mentoring. Interacting in person bridges the generational gap and allows for thoughts and ideas to be shared freely and collaboratively.

If you want to get especially creative, you might consider implementing reverse mentoring. This occurs when junior employees mentor those their senior. If the older guard is struggling with the influx of technology in the workplace, have a Millennial or Gen Z employee help with training. Not only will this make them feel valued, your senior employee won't feel discouraged or obsolete.

Opportunity for Advancement

Millennials and Gen Z like it when they can see a clear path forward. Call it instant gratification or whatever you like, it isn't going anywhere. This is why younger people change jobs or careers so frequently. Even if opportunities for advancement are available, they're not usually communicated to employees.

When you communicate a path forward up front, and clearly state the expectations to get there, you allow new employees to see the value in staying with your company for more than a year or two.

If you're in your 40's or 50's and reading this article, you've heard plenty of talk about how Millennials and Gen Z are lazy and entitled. While there's some merit to that statement, the reality is most of them are hungry and willing to work hard to achieve their goals. They just aren't going to do it sitting in a cubicle by themselves from nine to five. The dynamics of how and where people work are changing, and there's no stopping it. If you want to recruit and retain quality people, you'd best jump on board sooner than later.

As a high quality and regulatory recruiter for the [life sciences industries](#), I help companies in the Bay Area build teams the maximum potential. Contact me, Jeff King, at rqfocus.com or (541) 639-3501.