

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.