



So You Want a Promotion?

I am going to wear my heart on my sleeve and tell you an embarrassing event in my career past. There was a time when I seethed with indignation (so hard to admit as this is so not who I am today!) that a co-worker received a promotion and I wasn't even considered.

Apparently the co-worker recognized a need for a customer service liaison and worked her way into the position.

Obviously I hadn't thought of it, and simply felt entitled to it because I had earned a degree and she had not. Did I mention how hard it was to admit to this? My only excuse was that I was young and in retrospect, quite silly.

Which leads me to ask: Have you given strategic thought to how you might land that supervisor's job you know is coming available soon? Or do you glide through life leaving those sorts of things to luck?

Many successful people agree that luck follows hard work. And others will tell you that even hard work needs recognition to result in a raise or promotion.

So back to strategy – here are a few easy-peasy “get promoted” strategies!

- Schedule a meeting with your boss. Scheduling gives a meeting more importance than a drop in convo. Ask for his or her advice on career advancement. Ask for projects, management training, and talk about your commitment to the company and its goals.
- Read up on your role to find ways to take on and contribute more, and to make sure that your work is tightly connected to corporate goals. Even reading on non-related roles can spur creative ideas on how to get noticed. Read up on the industry, on competitors etc., and be prepared to speak up at meetings.
- Find people to talk to. (Also known as “networking.”) Don't speak only to your boss. (I once asked a boss about a position I'd heard was going to be available in the company, only to be told that it's an unlikely scenario. A few months later, someone else got appointed to that position and I was steamed! Wish I knew then what I know now.) Career advancement requires networking with those in higher positions. Career advancement requires that you promote yourself to the leaders in your organization.
- Invest in yourself. Learning is always a good thing. Source a good local course, or enroll in a company-sponsored or online course, in management skills, public speaking and presentation skills, business case or report-writing skills – anything related to your goal.



- Ask questions, dig deep! Find out what, specifically, your company requires of someone in the position that you covet. And it might be stuff like being open to hearing criticism, welcoming problems because you love to problem-solve, staying on an even keel and available as others over-react or hide, and showing other leadership traits related to emotional intelligence!
- Not avoiding the question! Everyone in sales knows the importance of asking for the sale –so ask for the promotion! Certainly do not assume that your boss knows you want it and are ready for it. When you ask, present it as a business case – a well-founded, backed up proposal.

Don't rest on your performance. Even an internal promotion requires an excellent resume and outstanding interview skills. After all, there may well be another internal candidate that you are up against and it's up to you to outsmart, out-strategize, and beat-out all other competitors!

Promotions don't "just happen"; you can bet that the recipient put thought and strategic action into the appointment. It's not difficult, requires no degree or special training, but it does require your input.