

Getting Ahead on the Job

Finding a job is tough. Finding a good job is even tougher. When you've found that perfect job, it's important to then find opportunities to move up the workplace ladder. Here's how.

An Honest Day's Work for an Honest Day's Pay

Give them what they're paying for. It may sound obvious but employers look for workers who are at work, at their work stations and working! If you're away from your desk, talking to a co-worker about your upcoming ski weekend, it won't impress your supervisor, director or foreperson.

Show up on time and ready to dig in. Sure, take breaks. They rejuvenate the mind and refresh the spirit. But if you work hard, you'll get noticed.

Volunteer

If your employer asks for volunteers to work over the weekend, raise your hand. Of course, you don't want an employer to take advantage of you, but every now and then, it's good to go the extra mile. It shows you're dedicated to the employer's goals.

Volunteer to organize the company picnic or to attend that conference no one wants to go to. Employers like volunteers because of their value to the company.

Bring the Donuts Once In a While

In other words, be nice to the people with whom you work. The workplace is a great place to make friends and friends work better together. Let the friends at work know how you feel. Thank them when they help you out. Ask, don't demand. Say 'please' and 'thank you'. Manners count. They really do.

Be a Team Player

Part of workplace success has to do with your ability to cooperate with co-workers. Cooperation among employees on the job increases the company's productivity. If part A is done, but you're still waiting for part B from another department, the project is stalled until part B finally makes it to your desk. Work together and cooperate to make the business successful.

Be Diplomatic

During the course of a busy work day, there are bound to be disagreements between people sharing the same space and tasks. If a problem arises with a co-worker, calm yourself before discussing the problem. Give your praise generously and publicly. Criticize privately and quietly.

Learn On The Job

If you've got your eye on a middle-management job, learn all you can about the job and its responsibilities. Learn the procedures, the resources, the deadlines and delivery dates. But don't stop there.

Learn about every job in your workplace to get a 'big picture' view. Learn by watching. When you discover how all of the pieces fit together, you'll be able to do your job better today and transition into that middle-management job when it opens up.



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Go Back to School

You can't beat it. The more you learn, the more you earn. Talk to your supervisor, or the people in human resources, about what courses would most benefit the company. Many businesses will even contribute money to defray some of those education and training costs.

Review Your Reviews

It's hard not to take criticism personally, but remember criticism at work can be used to your advantage. An annual review by company management provides a much clearer picture of your professional strengths and weaknesses. It also provides a veritable checklist of employer expectations. Think of reviews as your guidebook to success – and don't take it personally.

Let Them Know You're Ready

There's nothing wrong with talking to your supervisor or the people in HR about your goals. Let them know that you want to stay with the company, that you want to contribute more and that you want to move up. Ask to be informed of new job postings. It shows initiative and drive.

Make Yourself Indispensable

If you're the only one who can fill out a Form 1072/DAS rev.11/05, the department needs you. If you're the go-to source in the company, management wants to keep you around.

Learn everything – from how to make the coffee in the morning to how to open the one file drawer that always locks. It won't be long before you're the recognized expert – the one the business just can't do without.

You already know what you need to know to be a success at work. You learned it years ago. Play nice with the other kids. Work hard. Pay attention. Accept criticism and be a good friend (as well as a co-worker) to the guy two cubicles down.

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