



8 Habits for Career Success

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For most people today, their career is an important part of their life. And it probably is also something they spend a lot of time on. Because career is associated with pay, status, security, and opportunities to learn and grow, very few people are not concerned about how they can be better in their career. They want to excel, they want to be recognised and rewarded for what they do, and they want to move up in their careers.

Below are some habits that people who are successful in their careers practice. And they don't just act like this once in a while, they are consistent in their behaviour and actions.

1. *They think about the experience and skills needed for the next job they want.*

When you are new to a job you most probably are still learning tasks you need to know to be good at your new job. After some time though, once you are fairly proficient in your current job, you need to start preparing yourself for your next position. And that means you need to start thinking about what you need, what the requirements are, to get into the next role you want. Don't only just think about them, look and see where you can build the skills and get the experience you require.

2. *They are visible and known by senior people, especially those involved in their next career moves.*

No matter how great you are at your job, and no matter how much value you bring to your employer, if no one knows what you are doing you are not going to advance much. You need to be visible in the workplace. This doesn't mean you have to be over-the-top and a social butterfly. Colleagues, and especially senior management who work in your department and related departments, need to know who you are and what you are doing. Having sat in succession planning discussions and promotion discussions numerous times over my career, if no one knows who you are, except perhaps your line manager, it is difficult to convince others of the reasons to promote you.

3. *They take charge. They take action. They find a way to solve problems.*

You simply must be action oriented. When a problem comes up, look at how to solve it. When you have an issue with your work, take the concern, together with solutions, to management. Have a bias

for action. Tackle tasks as soon as you can. Become known as someone who gets things done and is solution focused.

4. They look for opportunities to showcase their skills and abilities

To some extent this ties in with point 2. If you are good at what you do, and if you tackle assignments that add a lot of value to your employer, you need to tell people. It doesn't have to be an over-the-top bragging exercise. You mention, when you get the chance, what the situation was, how you fixed it, and the results of your actions. You can mention these in meetings, you can send out emails, or you may have a company newsletter or noticeboard where you can highlight achievements. If talking about your own accomplishments makes you want to cringe, then talk about your team and what was achieved.

5. They act as if this was their own business

Fundamentally, every decision you take in business should be for the good of the business. It's not about feeding ego's and making people look good. It is making the business as successful as possible. If you think and consequently take actions with this in mind, you will start being recognised as a real asset to your employer.

6. They listen to and act on feedback

There is no such thing as perfection. We all have strengths and weaknesses. That is one of the reasons why you will be asked in an interview what your weaknesses are? The interviewers want to know that you acknowledge you have areas you need to develop and you are prepared to develop them. In any job every person is going to mess up at some point, or not do their tasks as well as their bosses would like them to do. A perhaps not so easy way to impress the bosses is to be open to feedback and show that you have learned from it by doing differently in the future. I say "not so easy", because it takes courage and maturity to acknowledge our faults and change.

7. They understand what is going on in the business as a whole

To do your job well, you need to know how what you do impacts on others in the company. You need to know what is happening in the company as a whole. You need to know what the focus is for the business and what is really critical to get right. Don't only know your job or your department. You need to know the bigger picture which will help you make better decisions in your role as well as helping you know what to focus on.

8. They don't say yes to everything.

This might sound like a bit of a contradiction to the point about being proactive but it's not. Life is a balancing act. So is work. Yes, you do want to put yourself forward for opportunities where you will be noticed. No, you don't want to do so many things you can't focus, you can't finish them, and you

land up with burnout. Be selective about what you do. That will mean saying no to things. Just make sure you say yes to what really counts.

Getting ahead in your career is not always about being the smartest. When it comes to the workplace, it is your actions, and in particular your habits, that get you noticed and get you fast tracked. You might be the most intelligent person in the company, but if no one knows who you are and what you are doing, you will stay where you are. You may have exceptional ideas and be really creative and innovative, but staying in your cubicle in your corner will not help you. To succeed in life you need to take the right action and this action needs to be noticed. Above are some core actions you want to be taking regularly to ensure you shine in the workplace, get noticed, and move ahead.