

# **Get Ahead, Tips for Career Advancement**

**John Mehrmann**

What is the magic formula for getting ahead? What can I do to accelerate my career advancement? What should I do to get noticed and promoted? These are common questions, and the secret to unlock potential for career advancement is nearly as common.

## **A few tips to get ahead:**

### **Apply Yourself**

A great idea alone will not succeed as much as a good idea with great effort. Thomas Edison did not invent the light bulb with a single stroke of genius, but rather with consistent applied effort to test, study the results, and try again. Inspiration springs from busy hands and busy minds. Keep challenging yourself, keep applying yourself, and you will amaze yourself.

Some people allow themselves to be limited by accepting lower expectations or making minimal commitments, but not you. You have talent, skill, and experience that make you unique. As you apply your talents, you will learn more about how to use your skills. Like a professional athlete or an artisan, consistently exercising your talents will not exhaust them, but rather make them even better. Surprisingly, the more that you do, the more that you are capable of doing. You do not need to wait to be challenged, or wait for responsibility to be thrust upon you. Rather, set very specific goals for yourself and apply yourself to attain those goals. Every achievement will build more confidence, more excitement, and more desire.

### **Helpful**

If you want to get ahead, hone your personal skills, but keep constant attention on opportunities to help those around you to succeed. It may seem contrary to think that building personal success is predicated on supporting the success of the people around you, but it is a fundamental truth. Some people call it Karma, and some people call it common sense. The way that you treat your peers, your partners, your customers, and your coworkers will all come back to you.

Perhaps you are too pragmatic to believe in Karma. If this is the case, contrast the two potential extremes of your actions as a method to compare the result. If you achieve success by taking advantage of customers, coworkers, partners, and peers, how long would you expect that temporary success to last? If you achieve success by deceiving clients, would you expect them to remain loyal? If you achieve success at the expense of coworkers or peers, would you expect them to continue to give you support, dedication, and cooperation? What would

happen to your success if it is at the expense of others?

On the contrary, if you invest your time and effort in the attainment of the aspirations of customers, coworkers, partners, and peers, then what is the result? If you earn a reputation for taking care of customers, could that help you to earn more customers? Will customers be more loyal if they know that you contribute to their success and satisfaction? If you assist coworkers, peers, and partners to succeed, will they be more likely to help you in return? Will successful partners and peers be more able to help you than the ones that are sacrificed for personal benefit? If you make other people more successful, then will it be more beneficial for you to be surrounded by grateful satisfied people? When measured in these simple terms, karma is not so mystical after all.

### **Ethics**

Act with integrity. Regardless of what position you have or what you do, ethical behavior is critical to your personal success. Integrity is built on ethics and is the cornerstone for credibility. If you can be trusted, then your commitments can also be trusted. Customers are reluctant to make purchases, even at discount prices, from an individual or an organization that does not have a reputation for ethical behavior. Why is this so? How can a good price commitment be trusted if the quality, commitment, or integrity of the individual or organization can not be trusted? By contrast, if the individual or organization can be trusted and continually demonstrates a commitment to ethical behavior, then isn't it more likely to have confidence in a good offer? The same logic applies to customer service, finance, and even management.

Ethical behavior is especially important for management. It creates standards and a culture for the rest of the organization. Workers and peers have more confidence and commitment in a leader that demonstrates ethical behavior. In the absence of ethics there is trepidation, fear, and a risk of contagion. The guidelines are established by leadership, good or bad. Leadership can come from anywhere in the organization that ethics are strongly supported, even if it is not demonstrated by management. Ethical leadership is like a bright light, causing unethical behavior to hide in the shadows. Carry a torch of integrity, especially if you are in a management position.

### **Authentic**

Be yourself. You are a one of a kind blend of talent, experience, knowledge, and skills. There is nobody else like you, and nobody else has lived your life. Being authentic requires the integrity to be honest about your talents and feelings, confident enough to share your experience and skills with others, and the dedication to do it daily.

You may discover your personal strengths by watching the success of others,

reading a book, attending a class, or in a workshop. It is common to see the actions, and the results of actions, in other people, and to adopt some of those traits in our own lives. If this learning is successful for you to seemingly develop new skills, then you are actually merely discovering something about yourself that had not yet been realized. On the other hand, if the tips and techniques taught by others is not effective for you, then it is not because you are bad student, but rather that the techniques may not be a match for your personal strengths. If some techniques do not work for you, then explore to find new ones that do. In the course of this activity, you will learn more about yourself. How you share your strengths and this knowledge will determine how authentic you are to other. Dare to authentic.

### **Diligent**

You work hard. You get tired. You want a break. That's fine, you deserve to take a break, but that does not mean that you take a break from being diligent.

Daily diligence means a focus on the seemingly little things that contribute to the overall success. Diligence requires dedication and attention to detail. It requires concentrated effort in the direction of specific goals. Diligence does not mean that you never take a break, but it does mean that your efforts are truly meaningful, directed, and have attention to detail. It means follow-up, and not merely assuming that everything will work out in the end. It means giving your full effort, even when you think that other people are not working as hard or seem to have given up. Diligence is the drive that keeps you going, even when the motivation in your tank is running low.

### **Tips for Career Advancement**

Advancing your career is not merely defined by getting a promotion. Creating opportunity for career advancement is the result of continually developing your personal skills, supporting the success of others and your organization. In the process of developing your personal strengths and habits, you will discover career choices that can maximize and leverage your talents. In supporting others, you may unlock new opportunities to expand your horizons, or propel your personal advancement. These things are byproducts of the process, but should not be the focus of your efforts. If you focus on the process of continual improvement, success will naturally follow.

Apply yourself, be Helpful, Ethical, Authentic, and Diligent.

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Words of Wisdom

"Common sense is not no common."

- Voltaire

"He who labors diligently need never despair; for all things are accomplished by diligence and labor."

- Menander

"If you are not open to advice, then you are breathing your own exhaust."

- Dan Tafel

"Few things are impossible to diligence and skill. Great works are performed not by strength, but perseverance."

- Samuel Johnson

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John Mehrmann is a freelance author and President of Executive Blueprints Inc., an organization devoted to improving business practices and developing human capital. John Mehrmann and Mitchell Simon are authors of *The Trusted Advocate*, the fundamental guide to achieving extraordinary sales and sustaining loyal customers. This revolutionary sales guide applies peak management techniques and leadership skills to the sales profession, showing you how to utilize authenticity and integrity in your sales to achieve maximum success.

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