**Fourth Self-Reflective Assignment**.

This section of the course is about overcoming obstacles and coping with setbacks.  It is important to integrate this learning into your own life and experience.  Write a brief, one page essay in which you:

1. Describe an organizational situation in which you faced substantial difficulty (for example, you were fired (not laid off, fired), you were demoted, you failed to get a job or a promotion you wanted and thought you deserved, you were embarrassed or lost face because of some situation, etc.).
2. What did you do that contributed to the problems you experienced?  To what extent were the obstacles and difficulties the result of chance events over which you had no control?
3. Based on the course material, what would you do differently if you encountered the same situation today?  In other words, what is the learning or what are the ideas that have emerged in the class that you would use to help you in similar situations?

I work for a management consulting firm which entails solving clients’ technical problems with innovative solutions. As part of this I have to lead a team and interact with the client technical team to get the solution ready and implement it. I did a great job (according to my internal team and client too) and received accolades for the same. I also received a quarterly award which is given to individuals who perform exemplary client work. We have twice a year promotion cycles, and I had submitted my intent to be considered for a promotion. I had created a slide to show my accomplishments so far and why I deserved to be promoted. According to protocol, my manager is supposed to present my case in front of the executives who ultimately decide on the promotion. When the day came for the promotion list to be announced, I was surprised that my name was not in it. Everyone in my team and my manager was sure that I would be promoted given my recent work at the client and the quarterly award. I was very angry with the decision and called up my manager to find out why I was not considered for promotion. My manager was surprised as well, and he did not have a clear answer to my questions. I was still in a bad mood, and I immediately wrote an email to my director (manager’s manager) and to my Managing Director expressing my frustration for not getting promoted. I wrote in length where people who didn’t deserve promotion (according to me) were promoted. In hindsight, I shouldn’t have done this, and regret having sent that email. My director and MD took this matter seriously and set up a call with me. They handled the situation very professionally and were able to walk me through the different factors that lead to someone being promoted. They explained to me that doing great client work was only 1 of the aspects and there were other things that a consultant had to showcase to be promoted.

As I look back on this, I realized that there was a lot I could have done to avoid this situation and made my case for promotion stronger. I should have checked the different aspects of the promotion criteria and focused on all of it rather than just 1. I should have built trust and relationships and promoted myself more outside of my direct circle to get better visibility. I should have managed my expectations and controlled my emotions even though I did not get promoted. There are many things that were out of my control like the office’s budget which dictates only a certain number of people getting promoted, market conditions and the office requirements to have certain people at a certain level. But keeping that apart, I think there were still a lot of things that I could have controlled from my end too.

A lot of lessons that I learnt in this class would have been helpful for me in this situation. Office politics always comes into play when promotions are concerned. Also, advocating and self-promotion plays a major role in getting your name out there and being considered for promotion. I was focused solely on doing a good job from a technical perspective at my client. Building relationships, promoting yours and your teams work within the organization helps build your brand. I will be focusing more on those aspects in my next round of office promotion and help build my case.