

Title:

Five Job Skills to Get You Promoted

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Summary:

You know in your own mind that you deserve a raise or promotion, but you can't seem to get the attention of your boss to prove it. Once you've mastered these five simple skills, you'll be sitting pretty in your new office.

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Article Body:

You know in your own mind that you deserve a raise or promotion, but you can't seem to get the attention of your boss to prove it. What's a girl to do? In a post 9-11 economy where many employers are content to stick with what is proven and comfortable, convincing your company to take a chance on you is a real challenge. Here are five simple ways you can let your potential shine, no matter what field you are in.

1. Whatever you do, do it well.

McDonald's has gained a reputation for being the classic Plan B for high school dropouts and college graduates. "Would you like fries with that?" Few people know that even McDonald's has their own internal competition for employees with the best job skills. Each year, hundreds of young employees compete using their service and food preparation skills. I'm sure the competitors would agree that they are being judged on techniques that most employees are totally oblivious to.

No matter how insignificant you believe your job to be, you can do it with class and pride. So you're stuck in a crappy intern position, spending your days serving coffee and filing papers. Simply do your job, and that's what people will expect of your abilities. Serve the coffee with style and become the fastest filer in the office, and people will see that these skills are below your IQ and that you are capable of so much more.

2. Think like a chief.

When you've been trained to think like an indian for so long, it is a real challenge to acknowledge the perspective of a chief. Chiefs must be thinking

about the big picture, the long-term effects of projects, the financial aspects of the business, and how changes will affect the welfare of the overall organization. They are expected to be creative, understand all the areas within their span of control, recall important data off the top of their heads, and leap tall buildings in a single bound. They are looking at their team for the people who stand out and show an interest in expanding their duties. While you may not aspire to be Superwoman, propose new ideas to your boss and explain how they will benefit the company. Spend time asking questions about other functions of the company.

"When I first joined the volunteer fire department, I asked a lot of questions about my area, and things outside my area," says Kimberly Dawn Wells, a freelance writer from Wisconsin. "I went to a lot of meetings and learned about the functions of the department and firefighting as a craft. The chiefs really noticed my interest and thought of me as a leader, right off the bat. They thought of me as intelligent, just because I asked questions and had an interest. They saw that I could hold my own."

If you never step outside of your current role, people won't see you as capable of growth. You can't be promoted if you don't know how to handle the responsibilities of your position.

### 3. Don't be irreplaceable.

Especially when you are in an organization where you have a very specialized duty, don't do your job SO well that your boss would rather keep you where you are at than promote you. Share your knowledge with others. Teach people how to do their job well and make sure your boss notices this.

"We have a lot of teachers who are so great at what they do that hiring them for an administrative position would be a loss to our district." Kimberly also serves as school board clerk. "We love that these people are around to mentor our other teachers so that they CAN move forward in their career and we still get the benefits of their expertise. They help all our teachers grow."

### 4. Understand how you contribute to your organization.

No matter where you are on the seniority list or pay scale, it is important to understand where you fit in your company's future and why you are a valuable asset. First of all, you want to make sure that you could defend your job if you had to. If you can't explain to your employer why they need you, they might see your job as expendable. Second, if you don't know what specific value you bring to the bottom line, you are missing out on the opportunity to negotiate for something better. Third, if you choose to leave your current job and seek employment elsewhere, you need to make a powerful, competent, and profitable

first impression with your new boss.

5. Dress for the job you want, not the job you have.

This statement goes way beyond clothes. You have an opportunity to "be" your promoted self in everything you do. When you give presentations, don't just be Kate the secretary. "Be" the essence of Kate the team leader. Don't handle complaints as Alyssa the barrista. "Be" Alyssa the manager. Don't come to work with a vague idea of what you need to do during the week. "Be" Valerie the Senior VP of Finance and master that weekly planner.

Step out of your title and consider how you can act the part of your ideal position. Of course, be aware that your acting doesn't include overstepping boundaries that could compromise your job. Ask yourself, "If I were planning this campaign as the executive director, what would I do different?" Add those last few details so your work really shines.

You may be thinking, "This is a lot of extra work that I'm not getting paid to do. What's in it for me?" Unfortunately, we graduate from high school and college with a lot of memorized facts and very few applicable soft skills. Too many people who are getting promoted are the best out of their applicant pool, but not necessarily the best person for the position. By developing these job skills, you are showing a heightened emotional intelligence that employers agree is just as or more important than the hard skills. It will take a little time and extra effort to get the attention you need, but it is well worth the satisfaction of knowing that you're finally in the position you deserve.