

OUR INSIGHTS

Practical advice on common business challenges
direct from our International team of business experts

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How to get a promotion if you are working from home?

The new WFH (working from home) and hybrid working rules are adding new layers of complexity into what used to be fairly straightforward arrangement. B.C. (Before Covid), work was pretty formulaic: you showed up, you did a good job, you went home, and at the end of the month, you got paid. If your work was really good, and you rubbed shoulders with the right people, you even got promoted.

That's all changed, now. Many organisations have adopted a flatter structure to bring management closer to employees – the 'career ladder' is more a gentle 'career walkway'. And with many corporate employees now working from home at least some of the time, visibility among decision-makers is more of a problem.

So how do you secure a promotion if you're not office-based?

The first step may sound obvious, but it's remarkable how many of us don't do it. If your manager doesn't know you want more responsibility and a broader or more elevated role – how do they know to help you secure one? If you want a promotion, whatever that looks like to you, tell your line manager. It shouldn't be a nerve-wracking conversation, but do think about where and how to tell them. An all-team meeting via Zoom or MS Teams isn't the best place for this type of chat – but an informal one-on-one call, where the two of you can have a really open and frank discussion, is a much better idea.

Secondly, don't make assumptions. If you know a stretch role has become vacant recently, don't 'assume' you don't have the skills or experience to fulfil it. Neither should you assume that someone else has already been earmarked for the role. If you're interested – say so (see

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above). Your manager should be able to guide you as to what you need to demonstrate in order to be given due consideration.

Keep building your network. This is a 'biding your time' type of tip: join special interest groups, or volunteer for activities that may not be within your immediate job description (but don't compromise your own delivery capacity). If you have a special skillset, offer to host a lunch & learn session – showcasing your expertise and your great communications style.

Applaud your colleagues. Great managers and leaders will always place colleagues that do a good job in the limelight – so demonstrate you're made of the right stuff by applauding your hard-working colleagues when they've gone the extra mile (you'll gain yourself more supporters along the way, too).

Challenge yourself. Your PDP (Personal Development Plan) – if you have one – will no doubt feature areas you need to work on. It's not enough to be brilliant at one or two things, so stretch yourself and volunteer to get involved in some of the aspects of work you know you need to improve on.



Speaking of 'improving' – what aspect of your workplace could be bettered? Is there something you could do to make a big difference to everyone? Maybe a Sharepoint clear-out, a series of lunch & learn sessions, or rationalisation of industry body memberships? Some cost-saving ideas? Promotion isn't just about the quality of your work; it's also about the difference you can make to the wider organisation.

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