

# Why Your Career May Stagnate

By Judith Filek—President  
Impact Communications, Inc.

Don't think because you have an MBA or Advanced Certifications that you will automatically rise in an organization. We all know people who move up quickly without the credentials you have. When someone fails to move up, we notice the following problems.

- **Small networks.** “Stuck” professionals are not well known. They may have developed some networks, but typically these are within their own work group, not so much across the organization and their industry. They rarely reach out to their network to ask for advice, share insights or ask for referrals. They shy away from joining professional groups or becoming actively involved, stating they are too busy.
- **No mentor.** Senior leaders share that they sought out someone to mentor them and help them with their career development. With the help of a mentor, they were able to shortcut the time it took them to be successful, to learn how to get things done or who to go to for help. “Stagnators” don't seem to know how to ask others to mentor them.
- **Weak leadership qualities.** Those that don't move up don't seem to take charge. They are happy “doing their thing.” They prefer implementing a task. They rarely volunteer and don't take on additional responsibilities inside or outside of their organization.
- **Rarely speak up.** When they have a good idea, they don't necessarily speak up. If they do, they may bury their ideas in too much detail or get off track. They aren't proactive about reporting their accomplishments. Thus, they don't get recognized for their good work.
- **Weak communicators.** Stagnators do anything they can to avoid presenting. They don't look for opportunities to get in front of senior people so that they can display their good qualities or be remembered. When forced to speak, they are uncomfortable and show it.

They do things like read from their slides, look at the floor, speak quickly or stumble with filler words. No one would describe them as confident.

- **Poor people skills.** Those that are successful are very careful of ever offending, whether speaking upwardly or downwardly. On the other hand, those that seem to stagnate have a tendency to “step on toes” or work around a person that seems to be in the way. They don't necessarily work well with others. Their poor behavior is noticed and becomes a black mark working against a promotion.
- **No career plan.** If asked, Stagnators don't really have a plan for how to get the next promotion. They haven't set goals or measured their progress against them. They may not have discussed with their boss that they want to move up or asked for feedback on what it would take.

Moving up isn't automatic. Gone are the days of keeping your head down and doing your work. Employers today want to see passion, leadership and a “can do” attitude, not someone who whines or complains. Those that get promoted are mindful of what they need to do and, most importantly what they should avoid doing.

***Question:** What issues are you still unsure of related to being promoted? We're interested in your reaction to this article. Click here – to comment on this article, share your concerns or ask questions. Judy will respond to all questions.*

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