

Are You Inadvertently Killing Your Career?

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Everyone wants to succeed, to move up the ladder. To ensure success, we strive to attain advanced degrees and multiple certifications. What we don't think about is how little missteps can sabotage a promising career and ruin one's reputation to boot. While these gaffes are not of catastrophic proportion, they add up and undercut any future advancement. See if you are in the danger zone by reading below.

- **Negativity.** Are you a complainer, someone who always picks apart an initiative and finds fault with something? Do you find yourself gossiping about others regarding their work habits, their clothing or their personality? People who spread negativity and complain get noticed, but not in a good way.
- **Unwillingness to change quickly.** Some people are fearful of change. Is that you? Do you like the routine of doing things the same old way? When the boss says, "We're moving to a new computer system, do you want to scream? People who get ahead, easily adapt to a fast-paced, ever-changing environment.
- **Myopic focus.** It's easy to get caught up in minutia and forget the big picture of what the

division or corporation is trying to achieve. Have you lost sight of how, for example, meeting and exceeding customer expectations is first and foremost? If your focus is not on the end game, it is can be one more nail in your coffin.

- **Low EQ or emotional intelligence.** Are you that person who says, "Oh," when someone tells you their father is dying or their wife filed for divorce? When they ask for personal time off to care for a sick child, do you roll your eyes? A lack of empathy will catch up to you and mar your reputation as someone the company wants in a managerial position
- **Poor follow-up.** A willingness to succeed often makes us over-promise with statements like "I'll get that to you by the end of the day." Even if you get the document to the manager 24 hours later, the manager may not comment, but for sure, he or she will notice. A better approach is to under promise and over-deliver.
- **Credit taker.** While we all want to impress our manager, it's downright wrong to claim credit for someone else's work. Rather, put the spotlight back on the individual or team.
- **Chameleon syndrome.** Chameleons change colors depending on the situation. Are you someone who supports a program/project to ingratiate yourself with the person in charge? Do you let people know how you really feel or do you do flipflops? Your viewpoints are important.
- **Invisible.** Maybe your modus operandi is to do your job and keep your head down. To some managers, you may have become invisible. Because you never speak up at meetings or offer opinions, no one sees your capabilities. To move to the next step on the ladder, managers have to hear your ideas and see them as helping the company.

As you can see, career advancement hinges on a lot of things. Many of these may seem inconsequential, but they are noted. If you want to soar to the top, pay attention to the little things you do.

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***Question:** Consider a time when you didn't get promoted. What might have been the reason? Do any of the points listed in our article apply to you? For next time, what will you remember? We're interested in your opinions. [Click here](#) – to comment on this article, share your concerns or ask questions. Judy will respond to all questions.*

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