

# How To Position Yourself For Promotion



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Don't be the person who gets an unexpected 10 minutes with a VP in the lobby, having nothing in mind to discuss but the weather, the cafeteria menu, or the Uber route.

**By Dianna Booher**

Do you feel stalled in your organization? Maybe like the chameleon, you've started to blend into your surroundings rather than stand out. Have you begun to think, act and communicate like colleagues satisfied with the status quo?



7 Ways to Reposition Yourself for Promotion ICLIPART

Maybe it's time to reposition yourself apart from the pack—to let your executive team know you're ready to move up in the organization.

## 1) Talk Big-Picture

Yes, you and your team probably have metrics, data, charts, graphics, and standards and know what needs to get done on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. You have forms, acronyms, checklists that help you work productively and well. But never discuss raw information of your department's internal workings outside your department.

Instead, translate to the outside world. How does your project or team's work contribute to the overall goals of the organization? Don't be the techie that knows




only one thing—the person who can't see the forest because you're working on only one tree.

## **2) Be Situational Savvy**

Stay informed on what your executive team has top of mind. What are their quarterly goals? What are the key problems puzzling them at the moment? What's the competitive challenge on the horizon? How's your company's stock price trending? What are the latest industry trends?

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## **3) Expand Your Reach and Role**

Rather than lower your eyes to your digital device when the boss is asking for volunteers to serve on the committee to draft a new policy, be the first to speak up. Doing a stellar job on the trivial often leads to added responsibility on the significant.

If such opportunities don't come your way naturally, look for them. Ask for a stretch project or role. The more often that project or role extends across department lines, the higher visibility for your skills and your successes.

## **4) Find Multiple Mentors**

Mentors become sponsors for the step up. When you've learned all you can from the current sponsor, look for new mentors with different perspectives and new contacts. Remember that all mentors may not work above you in the food chain. You may gain digital skills from a Millennial two levels below you and negotiation perspectives from a mentor two steps above you.



## 5) Let the Powers-That-Be Know Your Specific Goals

A VP of operations recently commented about his frustration with those who wanted his help to find a new position inside their organization—but did not give him the appropriate information. “People will often stop by my office and say something like, ‘I’m thinking about making a change. I’ve spent five years in IT and a couple of years in supply chain. I’ve got a general business background, so I really could go in a lot of different directions. If you hear of something opening up, let me know.’ Now what am I supposed to do with that? I’ll do nothing with it. I have no idea what that person has in mind.”

Identify those people who can help you move up and then let them know your *specific* goals.

## 6) Take Feedback Professionally, Not Personally

Not all feedback aligns with your goals. Ask questions to make sure you understand the feedback. Probe for examples. Apply what’s helpful to you professionally. Then ignore the rest.

Obviously, coaches and critics should fine-tune their phrasing before giving feedback—even “constructive criticism.” But they don’t always. Roll with it. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose if you do the sorting— between what to use and what to lose. The coach, critic or colleague doesn’t want to have to concern themselves with “your reaction.” So assure the boss or other higher-up that you can move on—no hurt feelings to affect the working relationship.

## 7) Keep Confidences

The higher you go in an organization, the more access you have to confidential information. If you open your mouth, thus proving that you can’t be trusted with sensitive information, few will likely want to take the risk in giving you access to even more sensitive information that a promotion would entail.

Guard against the temptation to flaunt inside information as a status symbol.



Being promotable is not about luck. It's about preparation, positioning and communication.

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