

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

FORTY-ONE WAYS TO GET PROMOTED

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EMAIL

joel@GarfinkleExecutiveCoaching.com

PHONE

510-339-3201

CAREER ADVANCEMENT: 41 WAYS TO GET PROMOTED

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CAREER ADVANCEMENT

**41 WAYS
TO
GET PROMOTED**

The most successful and effective executives implement these top 41 actions. The fastest way to career advancement, to gain ongoing promotions and to downsize-proof your career is the application of these 41 action steps.

Upward promotion often can be out of your personal power. Regardless of how deserving you are of a particular promotion or career advancement, many circumstances that are out of your control can derail your progress and negatively affect your chance of a promotion. Various company-specific situations cause disappointment and dejection regarding promotions, such as: a job opening or future opportunity is cancelled; a re-organization occurs within the company, which directly or indirectly affects you; last-minute departmental recommendation receives precedent above you; internal political battles and office politics sway the decision; personality conflict influence the final decision; or the position isn't a good fit for you. Even with all of these out-of-control circumstances, you can still take control of your career and position yourself for a promotion. Let's begin.

1) KNOW YOUR WORTH

You know you're good and deserve recognition, increased responsibility, and a promotion to the next level, but does anyone else know? Many executives are passed by or completely overlooked for promotion simply because senior management doesn't know how valuable they are. To make the most of your talents and ability, you must know your worth and be comfortable communicating it to others.

2) PROMOTE YOURSELF

Promotion begins by realizing that your work will not speak for itself. You need to self-promote by sharing your accomplishments with people of influence. You must take on projects that you can lead which will help create visibility, influence and impact. You need to look for activities inside and outside your current responsibilities that will get you noticed and increase your visibility.

3) POSITION YOURSELF FOR GREATER VISIBILITY

Being constantly aware of opportunities to promote your accomplishments and demonstrate your talents is key to increasing your visibility. You have to be prepared at every moment to take advantage of whatever opening presents itself without going overboard with your efforts to become visible.

4) BRAND YOURSELF

Branding is simply the process of setting yourself apart from the competition in a way that makes you stand out as the best. No matter what position you hold in your company, you can brand "you" and promote your new brand for advancement up the company ladder. Tom Peters suggests that you, "start by identifying the qualities or characteristics that make you distinctive from your competitors – or your colleagues." "What," he asks, "have you done lately – this week – to make yourself stand out?"

5) MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY

Opportunities for visibility occur every day. Your task is to become aware of those opportunities, be open to them, and be prepared to take full advantage of them. Focus on situations in which you can do the following: (1) create impact, (2) exercise influence, or (3) be recognized for your accomplishments.

6) ACTIVELY SEEK OUT PROJECTS

Rather than waiting for opportunities to come to you, actively seek out projects that will showcase your abilities and talents. Take the lead in a project, if possible. If you hear about a new idea that management is considering that might require your special skills, volunteer your help. Or come up with a project on your own that could solve a problem in your department.

7) PARTICIPATE IN MEETINGS WITH PEOPLE AT HIGHER-LEVEL POSITIONS

Get involved in meetings that will provide the chance to share your expertise, especially meetings with people at higher-level positions. Meetings provide excellent opportunities for visibility and they can, as well, provide new contacts who might become advocates. If you don't already know the individuals in the company who have great influence, you're likely to meet them during the meeting. But be sure to write down the names and positions of everyone at the table.

8) ACT ONE LEVEL ABOVE

You want to land your next position, so do what you can now to act as if you are already at that level in the company. If you want to become a director, act like a director even though you might hold a position below that level. Attend meetings where directors will be present. Volunteer for projects and activities that provide opportunities to do what directors do. Review the job description. Talk with directors. Find out as much about the position as possible. Look for opportunities in your

current job that allow you to fulfill responsibilities that relate directly to your target position. Every day, ask yourself, “How can I act more like (whatever position I am going for) in my current job?”

9) LEVERAGE YOUR SUPERVISORS

Unfortunately, because so many supervisors are stepping into larger and more responsible roles with very little preparation, they have little time to develop their employees. It’s up to you to take the initiative and reach out to your supervisors for help, guidance, and overall direction. Let superiors, management, and even peers praise you for things you have done well. Ask them to send you written notes or to verbally inform you of positive things you have been doing.

10) EXPOSE YOURSELF TO EXECUTIVES

It's not just who you know that counts. It's who knows you. Whenever possible, put yourself in situations where you can interact with top executives. Seek out new projects, new opportunities, volunteer in groups, task forces, and meetings in which these executives might participate. If you’re rarely in meetings with people even one level above you, ask supervisors for guidance. Seek ideas from them to land invitations to meetings that provide high visibility.

11) GAIN SUPPORT FROM CORPORATE CONFIDANTS

A confidant is a supporter with whom you are comfortable disclosing information about your experiences at work. Because these discussions often involve private matters, sensitive issues, fears, frustrations, and your innermost doubts and concerns, a confidant must be completely trustworthy. Confidants are there to listen, to provide honest feedback, and to support you as you face major challenges.

12) COMMUNICATE YOUR WORTH TO OTHERS

Communicating your worth to others is one of the most effective and important ways to advance your career. You will make yourself visible to the people who have the power to promote you to the next level. There are many more ambitious and talented people than there are great positions, so it's vitally important that you strategically inform others what you have done, what you can do, and why you are the best person for the position. The likelihood that you'll be promoted into the position you want next may hang on your ability to persuasively present the value of your achievements to the right people.

13) MAKE THOSE ABOVE YOU LOOK GOOD

Come up with ways to make those above you look good. Think through your answers to these questions: (1) How will it make them look good to promote me to a senior position within their division? (2) How can I make their life less complicated? (3) How can I show them that having me in their division will create an advocate who believes in their vision and direction?

14) DO MORE THAN WHAT IS BEING ASKED OF YOU

If you take on increased responsibilities and do more than what is being asked of you, executives will take notice of your initiative and proactive behavior. Employees who are rewarded and promoted are the ones who stand out. By increasing your responsibility and doing more, you're less likely to stagnate in your position and you raise your chance of finding more interesting projects that challenge you.

15) TAKE INITIATIVE AND BE PROACTIVE

Take the initiative and be proactive every time the opportunity arises. Your desire to constantly look for opportunities and improve current situations involves not accepting the comfortable, stable, and existing environment. You must train yourself

to always improve a situation. To be proactive, you need to look for opportunities, new and old, and find creative ways to make them better.

16) LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES WHERE OTHERS AREN'T LOOKING

To notice and identify unique or unknown opportunities, you'll need to think differently than your peers. You'll want to liberate yourself from the confines of your current way of thinking and be creative and unconventional. This will involve how you evaluate topics such as business conditions, demand, competition, industry knowledge, and technological advances. You want to come at each situation with a completely different perspective. Business leaders seek opportunities where others aren't looking.

17) GO BEYOND YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Stretch your capabilities, take risks, and go beyond your comfort zone. Although you may fear taking risks because it might damage your career, it's important to still do it. Maintaining the status quo and just being average, allows others to pass you by regardless of talent or skill. Try to be consistently aware of opportunities in which you can try new challenges. As a doer who stretches beyond your comfort zone, you will be noticed, rewarded, and promoted.

18) CREATE INFLUENCE INSIDE THE COMPANY

It's not just who you know that counts. It's who knows you. If you've come up with a creative marketing plan, if you help reduce the time of a new product to market, tell people about it -- particularly those who do the promoting. Identify who has the most influence within your company. Start with the top of the organization. Next, think about the subtle key role players who have influence at all levels within the company. Once you have identified 3-5 people of influence, elicit their opinions, ideas, feedback and encouragement. You'll want to understand who they are and why they would

want to help you. What is in it for them? What could be their expectations of you? What can you do to help them?

19) TRACK YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As an executive, your accomplishments are the currency you use to calculate your value to the company. Not only does tracking your accomplishments create concrete examples of the value you provide, but the tracking process itself will give you confidence. As you review all that you have accomplished and become aware of the progress you have made, you will become more comfortable telling others, in very specific terms, how you can provide value to the company.

20) LEVERAGE YOUR SKILLS, STRENGTHS, TALENTS, AND GIFTS.

In our quest for excellence, it's easy to take our innate abilities for granted. It's not that we don't value them; they're simply overlooked as we attempt to develop more noticeable accomplishments, such as landing the big account. As you document your accomplishments, devote some time and attention to the qualities that come naturally. Learn how you can use your skills and abilities to excel at your job. Once you've become acquainted with your gifts, come up with a plan that will showcase them at work.

21) SEEK FEEDBACK

Your goal is to receive specific and clear feedback in such a detailed way that you learn exactly how to move up within the company. Ask your supervisor for feedback during performance evaluations or any time you feel he/she might be willing to listen and motivated to help you. Ask about any areas that could use improvement and obtain concrete suggestions for making the necessary changes.

22) OVERCOME YOUR RESISTANCE TO SELF PROMOTION

It's been said that we are our own worst enemies. That's certainly true for people who want to advance in their careers but who avoid, consciously or subconsciously, taking the necessary actions to succeed. Their resistance may be the only thing that stands in their way, but before someone can overcome the tendency to resist, they must become aware of it in themselves.

23) DELIVER YOUR LEADERSHIP SUCCESS STATEMENT

A leadership success statement (LSS) is a thirty-second communication that commands attention and creates influence. This carefully constructed message should be delivered in a brief, concise, and clear manner and tell the listener about you as a professional. A LSS can be enhanced by creating a "story" that can easily be remembered by others. A compelling story that describes you and what you have accomplished creates a memorable mental picture. Use your LSS to communicate who you are and to influence the company, individuals with whom you interact, and senior management to see you in a favorable light. You'll make a strong first impression that will help insure that people have a positive perception of you.

24) OFFER SUGGESTIONS TO MANAGEMENT

At appropriate times, offer suggestions to management that might help the organization improve product quality, financial stability, customer service, or staff morale. Prepare thoroughly before sharing your ideas so that what you say will be heard, understood, and respected. Offering innovative, workable ideas can help you be seen as someone who can make a difference. But be ready to take on take ownership and responsibility for your suggestions. You don't want to be viewed as an idea person who fails when it comes to initiative and follow-through.

25) GAIN POLITICAL ADVANTAGE

Politics is about perception and gaining favor with the people who can be instrumental in getting you where you want to go. It's important to present the right image and create the energy that gets people to notice you. You want to stand out from the crowd in the best way possible.

26) MINIMIZE SELF-DOUBT AND LACK OF CONFIDENCE

If you don't believe in yourself and your abilities, it can be nearly impossible to convince others that you have what it takes. Self doubt persuades you to keep a low profile and blend in so that no one will challenge you to prove yourself. You tend to play it safe and avoid the limelight. That kind of behavior is at the opposite end of the spectrum from the behavior necessary to become promotion material.

27) DON'T BE TOO BUSY TO PROMOTE

We're all so busy these days. But if you're too busy to promote yourself, you could end up stuck in your current position far longer than necessary. It's tempting to let the daily grind take over day after day, hoping that at some point you'll have time to prepare for your next position. The only way to break the cycle is to decide that self-promotion is as important as any other task on your list and then commit to giving yourself time to do it on a regular basis.

28) CREATE A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A career development plan helps you move from point A, where you are today, to point B, where you most want to be. A career development plan directly affects your professional growth because it requires you to assess your future potential and position yourself to excel through your areas of strength. It also enables you to develop the skills to avoid unnecessary challenges and setbacks. A plan creates

consistent opportunities to work more closely with top executives and increases the likelihood of positive performance evaluations and promotions.

29) GET SUPPORT

Support is a valuable commodity in any situation, but it's a necessity when you navigate the corporate landscape. Without it, you risk being stuck in your current position indefinitely, overlooked for promotion and passed by others who are well connected and better supported. As many people have pointed out throughout history, no one really does it alone. Supporters are people who show an interest in you and your career and who invest the time to explain what it takes to move up within the company and get the job you want. They help you reach the next level by providing resources, insights, and knowledge.

30) SEEK SUPPORT FROM PEERS AND COLLEAGUES

Don't make the mistake of limiting your search for support to those in positions above yours. Your peers and colleagues can be a rich source of feedback and assistance. Do you know someone on your level from whom you could request feedback? You will probably get far different information from peers than from your boss and people at the highest level of the company.

31) CREATE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

A mentor is a special type of supporter. A mentor provides specific information and guidance to help you do your job better and improve your overall performance and productivity. This individual will take a personal interest in your career and play a more active role in helping you meet your goals for advancement and professional success. A mentor is usually someone who has more experience than you do and is likely someone senior to you in the company. Studies have shown that a mentoring

relationship with an influential individual who invests in your career can increase your chance of being promoted to more than 80%.

32) FIND ADVOCATES TO CHAMPION YOUR CAUSE

Advocates will actively champion your cause and promote you to their peers (and even supervisors) in the company. Not only do they demonstrate their interest in your career, but they take the initiative to educate you and give you a helping hand up the career ladder. They encourage your growth and challenge you to reach higher levels within the company. They know your key accomplishments and major achievements. And they are acutely aware of your potential for future success. Armed with this information, advocates are able to effectively represent you in your bid for promotions. They campaign on your behalf, create visibility with senior management, and directly assist you in advancing up the organization.

33) OVERCOME RESISTANCE FROM OTHERS

Sometimes it's not your own resistance that holds you back, but resistance from management to your efforts toward advancement. All it takes is one determined individual at a high level to block your bid for promotion. His efforts can range from quietly undermining your reputation to becoming an outspoken critic of your work. In order to counteract this type of opponent, it helps to understand what's behind their behavior. It's also important to realize that their motives may not be as evil as you imagine.

34) GAIN EXPOSURE TO TOP MANAGEMENT

Work toward getting others, especially your supervisors, to acknowledge your contributions, both privately and publicly. Ask them to help create opportunities through which you can gain exposure to top management. Let your supervisors know that you're open to sharing your expertise and knowledge with other executives in the

company. Offering your help can boost your boss's reputation while you gain an opportunity to prove yourself and show off your talents to others who might have influence.

35) BE CONFIDENT

You are a truly confident executive when you are secure in who you are, what you can and can't do, and how you can do it. You know how to leverage your abilities and talents to achieve the best results. As your confidence begins to grow with each accomplishment achieved and influence gained, you will begin to identify and trust future successes. You will believe in yourself more and more. You will have faith that outcomes will be positive and expect success with each action taken.

36) HIRE AN EXECUTIVE COACH

Executive coaches are to business professionals what master musicians are to inspiring performers: they guide the thriving careers of their clients to help them reach the peak of their abilities. Executive coaches have the expertise, techniques, and tools to assist you in achieving what you most want in half the time. They provide direct, honest, and objective feedback and help you develop the skills and direction you need to move beyond limitations, resistance, and doubt. With the assistance of an executive coach, you're better prepared for current challenges, increased change, and future roles.

37) DON'T RELY ON CORPORATE PERFORMANCE RECOGNITION SYSTEMS

Most people rely on loyalty, merit, or a company appraisal system to advance positions in their organization. Unfortunately, annual reviews are limited in their effectiveness. It's nearly impossible to rely on an established company system to identify improved performances and reward appropriate promotions. It's imperative for you to create your own recognition system in which you review your work daily

and track your accomplishments on a weekly basis. By creating your own performance tracking system, you will be making sure that the appropriate people are aware of how well you are performing and how you and your division is financially impacting the company's bottom line. This process helps you take control of your own career advancement.

38) COMMUNICATE FROM A FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

Communicating from a strong financial framework is a common characteristic of today's executive leaders. Not only do today's leading executives understand the financial goals and limitations of their companies, but they speak about most everything in terms of finances, including accomplishments, goals, and requests. The higher you go in a company, the more you have bottom-line financial responsibilities. When speaking about professional or departmental projects and accomplishments, include financial facts, data, figures, percentages, and numbers.

39) BE A RISK-TAKER

Risk taking is a key catalyst for successful business in the 21st century. Companies that do not skillfully navigate risk are quickly superseded by more innovative businesses. The same is true for executives. To remain on the leading edge, executives must learn to embrace risk. They look for opportunities to seize new markets, find new opportunities to improve their bottom-line, enhance existing business operations and functions, make smart decisions, and have a fresh and raw ability to communicate and lead.

40) INCREASE RESPONSIBILITY

If you take on increased responsibilities and do more than what is being asked of you, executives will take notice of your initiative and proactive behavior. Employees who are rewarded and promoted are the ones who stand out. By increasing your

responsibility and doing more, you're less likely to stagnate in your position and you raise your chance of finding more interesting projects that challenge you.

41) LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Leading by example is effective because more is learned by observation than most any other way of learning. To lead by example, practice what you preach, have integrity in your communications by meaning what you say, and be a person of character. These traits create a natural magnetism that others instinctively want to follow. When someone is respected, people have a natural tendency to want to be and act like them. You are always leading by example whether you are instructing others, providing direction, communicating verbally or nonverbally, interacting with management, employees, coworkers, vendors, or clients.

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ABOUT JOEL GARFINKLE

Joel Garfinkle is recognized as one of the top 50 coaches in North America. His valuable insight has been sought after by companies, including Google, Amazon, Hewlett-Packard, Gap, Starbucks, Deloitte, Cisco Systems, Oracle, Bank of America, Citibank, Microsoft, and many more.

Joel is the author of seven books and more than 300 articles on leadership, executive presence, getting ahead at work, career transitions, and work fulfillment. He is regularly featured in the national media, including ABC News, National Public Radio, the New York Times, Forbes, the Wall Street Journal, Business-Week, Kiplinger's Personal Finance, Newsweek, and Fast Company.

For more than two decades, Joel has had firsthand experience advising thousands of executives, senior managers, directors, and employees at the world's leading companies. He draws from this experience to provide coaching programs that serve individuals and organizations throughout the world.

Joel is also a sought-after speaker who conducts workshops, trainings, and keynote addresses that empower corporate audiences. He has delivered more than a thousand customized presentations that provide fresh insight into common issues that employers and employees face.

Before starting his company, Joel worked as a consultant for Ernst & Young in Hong Kong and at Andersen Consulting (now Accenture) in San Francisco.

Joel publishes a popular bimonthly newsletter Fulfillment@Work, which is delivered to more than 10,000 subscribers in 25 countries around the world. He also is the author of seven powerful and transformative books:

- **GETTING AHEAD:** Three Steps to Take Your Career to the Next Level
- **EXECUTIVE PRESENCE:** Sixteen Characteristics to Help You Advance Up the Corporate Ladder Quickly and Effectively
- **TIME MANAGEMENT MASTERY:** Stress-Free Productivity in the 7 Key Areas of Life (Time, Projects, People, Schedules, Information, Work/Life Balance, and Abundance)
- **LOVE YOUR WORK:** Make the Job You Have the One You've Always Wanted
- **GET PAID WHAT YOU'RE WORTH:** How to Negotiate a Raise or Higher Salary
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