

ONWARDS AND *Upwards*

Asking for a promotion can be tricky and requires tactful, delicate negotiation. If you want to bag that job, here's what not to do

By ERIN COE

YOU WORK HARD

You add value to your company. You meet targets and deadlines. So you ask for a promotion. As far as you're concerned, you've earned it. But your boss disagrees – she doesn't give you the promotion. Why is that? Well, perhaps you made one (or some!) of the following mistakes when asking for it:

You didn't make it a win-win

You may want to further your career or earn more money, but it's actually not all about you. You need to think about your company too. 'Working agreements are reciprocal,' leadership coach Judy Goodwin explains. 'You're paid to apply your skills and experience in exchange for your salary. In a business agreement like this, both parties should gain.'

You heard her correctly. Both parties. 'If you can show your boss how they'd benefit from having you on their team, you make it easier for them to make an informed decision on promoting you,' Judy says.

To do this, you'll need to prepare thoroughly. 'Present examples of where you have helped solve – rather than just raise – problems; where you have contributed significantly to a project; or where you have received positive feedback

ARE YOU READY?

According to leadership coach Judy Goodwin...

'Being promoted usually brings with it additional responsibility and complexity.' So think carefully – do you really want that? If you only want a promotion to avoid a tricky coworker or being told what to do, a promotion may not be the answer. 'A promotion isn't necessarily going to solve the work woes that you may be having. So make sure you actually want the new role,' she says.

from co-workers and clients,' Judy suggests.

You asked at the wrong time

According to career coach Penny Holburn: 'Even if you really deserve a promotion, and your boss wants to give you one, asking at the wrong time can put that promotion in jeopardy.' Asking for a promotion – which usually comes with a higher package – when your company is downsizing or in financial trouble, for example, won't be received well.

You should also wait if your boss has been ill, is going through personal issues or has been under immense pressure to hit a deadline. 'A good time to ask is when there have been successes in the workplace,' Penny recommends. 'Your boss is far more likely to look favourably on you when things are going well.'

You asked for too much at once

You want a promotion, but you also want a parking bay.

THAT'S HOW YOU DO IT!

Data analyst Jess Hitchcock, 27, recalls the first time she asked for a promotion

'I had been a junior in my company for seven months when my line manager left. I was then made the senior on my team, which came with a lot of responsibilities.

Because I didn't have a lot of experience, I didn't get a title promotion or a raise. However, after time

I decided I deserved a promotion. I researched industry standards, I wrote down all of my achievements and my extra responsibilities and I presented them to my boss. He couldn't say no when I had it all laid out for him like that. I definitely deserved it!'

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And flexitime. And a corner office. 'Approaching your boss with a mix of requests can make you look demanding and unreasonable,' Judy explains. 'Rather spend time identifying what is really important to you and request the one – or two – key things. When you are clear about what you want, your boss is far more likely to respond positively.'

You asked when you hadn't done anything recently to deserve it

'Promotions happen when people are so good at their jobs that they're clearly ready to move up a level,' Penny explains. This means that asking for a promotion after a mediocre performance review isn't a good idea. 'You can actually damage your

reputation by doing this, as it may make you look arrogant, or out of touch with what is expected of you.' Your boss will only consider your promotion if you're able to demonstrate that you deserve more pay and a higher position.

'The only way to demonstrate this is to first have significant achievements behind your name,' Penny explains. ■

IT'S IN THE BAG

If you're feeling a little sheepish about making some of these mistakes, never fear! Here are 5 tips from career coach Penny Holburn to help you get that promotion.

1 Volunteer for projects and different kinds of work. You stand a much better chance of being promoted if you're seen as someone who works hard and contributes to the company.

2 Discuss your career path and career ambitions with your manager and HR. It's important they know that you're working towards a promotion.

3 Read up about your company and industry. If you advance your strategic knowledge of the market and your customers, you'll be able to make more meaningful contributions, which is bound to get you noticed by senior staff.

4 Get hold of a job profile of the position you want to be promoted into. Once you know what will be expected of you, you can make a plan to acquire the skills, experience and qualifications needed.

5 Be really, really good at your job. Stand out. Be known throughout the company as a top performer. Enough said, really.

WIN

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