

LifeMapSM



"LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more enjoyable and abundant life."

February 6, 2007

This Week's Message:

Movin' On Up

Paths Forward

Resources

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Movin' On Up

Gauging by the number of emails I received immediately after sending the last issue of LifeMap ("Saving Your Own Life"- on the topic of increasing your savings) I certainly struck a chord. The deluge of responses were about 50 / 50. A little bit more than half said, "Okay, good ideas, I'll try, try again". To them I say, "Great, go for it and when you

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make more, you'll be able to save even more and reach your goals even more quickly."

But almost half said, "Saving ten percent of my salary is unrealistic" or "I'll only be able to save that much when I get paid more." With this group my feelings are mixed. On one hand I hear excuses why they should be able to spend a larger proportion of their income than is prudent for most people, I hear discomfort with delaying gratification and I hear a desire to "keep up with the Joneses" (as if the Joneses – whoever they are – give a hoot about your long term financial security). On the other hand, for the majority of employees the reality is that salaries have not kept up with the increasing costs of housing, education, health care, and (except for the top 1%) taxes.

Though some suggest the way to get paid more is to be a non-performing CEO who gets fired by his pals on the board of directors, I have a few better (perhaps more practical) ideas. We've dealt with the issue of getting a pay raise before. (See LifeMap Archive 7/25/06.) So, maybe it's time for us to come at this from a different angle: getting a promotion – which often brings a nice pay raise along with increased responsibilities and authority.

Paths Forward

- **Don't Wait To Be Discovered.** We've all heard those prophetic tales of a waitress being discovered by a big movie producer as he walked by the soda fountain where she was working. The next thing you know, *voilà!* — she's a big star with her name in lights. I doubt this really happens in Hollywood and I know it doesn't work in the real workaday world. So if you want a promotion you've got to be willing to work towards it, be on the lookout for promotion opportunities and when one arises you've got to have the gumption to get up and go for it. Sometimes you'll succeed; sometimes you'll fall short. I can't guarantee that you'll always succeed but I can guarantee you'll always fail if you don't even try. And you'll spend a long, long time at that soda fountain.

- **Be An Ace.** A great way to get promoted is to have others push you forward. How does this happen? It happens by you being great at your job, by you being proficient at every aspect of your job, by you becoming the "go to" person in your group or department. Thus, when a better slot opens up, many (though not your competitors) will

automatically put you forth as a logical and strong candidate.

- **Be A Mentor.** Another great way to get promoted is to have a cadre of loyal supporters whom you have assisted with their professional development. Some of those you have mentored will help spread your great reputation as a “thank you” for what you have invested in them. Others will realistically observe that since you have helped them grow from where you are now, that it stands to reason you’ll be able to help them even more as you rise in your career. But, regardless of their reasons, having other people supporting you and rooting for your promotion is sure a success strategy.

- **A.B.N.** Always Be Networking. Yes, I know, it’s hard to concentrate on succeeding at your current job and at the same time be building an extensive and useful network for the future. But I never said getting promoted was easy; what I’m saying is that getting promoted is easier if you know what to focus on. Develop relationships with people in departments or divisions other than your own. (They are often looking to do the same thing, which makes this a bit easier.) Join your technical, industry and professional associations and actively participate in their committees and training opportunities. If you have a particular department, function or company in mind for your future, use these contacts to develop “insider intelligence”.

- **This Is An Interview.** When going in to speak to one’s boss about a promotion or meeting with a manager about a better job in another department many people forget something very important. This is a job interview. It is not just a water cooler conversation, it is not just a friendly chat, and it is not merely a perfunctory introduction. Despite the level of formality or informality it is, at least, a screening interview and you should prepare as rigorously as you would if this was to be a big interview with someone outside of your current employer. Be prepared with research about the department’s challenges and the role you are seeking, be prepared to ask intelligent questions, and be prepared to overcome any potential objections to your landing this assignment. Polish your interviewing skills by role-playing with a trusted colleague or friend. Heck, you can quickly read *“Winning Job Interviews”* which I wrote and you can get through Amazon or your local bookstore

- **Become The Person You Would Promote.** Imagine you are a manager with the task of promoting someone into a

job that will be critical to the success of your department, whose performance could affect the entire organization and who has the power to make you look like an excellent judge of talent and a great manager . . . or not. What kind of person would you promote? Once you know the person has the technical skills required, you would probably start looking at personal qualities. You'd want someone who would, if asked, take on the occasional extra task. You would want someone with good work habits: reliable, calm, with a "can do" attitude. You'd want someone who gets along with people (even difficult people), is enthusiastic and who knows that a positive attitude is essential especially when the going gets tough. This is the person who you would hire; this is the person I or anyone else would hire. Work to make these traits part and parcel of who you are and your reputation and career will grow accordingly.

LifeMap is about helping you achieve career success and satisfaction by sharing what I have learned from over 25 years of helping thousands of people, at all levels of organizations, find and succeed in jobs they love.

Resources

Someone you know job hunting or thinking about it?

To order the best, concise, all-round job changing guide available. "Winning Job Interviews: Reduce Interview Anxiety, Outprepare the Other Candidates, Land the Job You Love" by Dr. Paul Powers, click the link below.

Stalled at work? Still struggling to find your true vocation?

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Sincerely,

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