

# TEN REASONS YOU WON'T GET PROMOTED

Marilyn Moats Kennedy MSJ



You've been campaigning for a promotion into management. You've enlisted your boss's help and you've read job postings until you're bleary-eyed. You've been promised a promotion by everyone who could make such a promise, including your boss's boss and two of your boss's peers "should anything open up." Nothing has. You're frustrated as hell. What's going on here?

*Your people skills are weak.*

You may be a technical star but when it comes to people skills, you're a dud. One of the reluctantly learned lessons of the past five years is that, even in techies, people skills matter. Why haven't we heard more about this? Managers tell us it's the equivalent of beating a dog for not being feline. There is a current belief that people skills can be enhanced but they can't be learned from scratch. Is this right? It doesn't matter. If management believes coaching works only with those who have a talent for managing people, it's unlikely you will have a chance to prove them wrong.

*The organization is flat.*

Management knows you're restless. You've made that clear. Unfortunately, unless your boss moves on - and she/he shows no signs of doing so - there is no place to move you. Ditto his/her peers. If you are told, "forget it. We've got no place to put you,"

your boss knows your quick exit would leave burn marks on the carpet. Management's collective hope is you'll continue to work - even if you continue to agitate - but will not leave.

*Your peers are as worthy as you are.*

Nothing can cause management paralysis as effectively as the fear that if one person gets promoted, six will leave. As long as no one is promoted, you and your peers are equal. As soon as one of you gets a promotion, any myth of equality disappears. We see many thirtysomethings whose peers are each one more attractive and competitive than the next. A boss that promotes one of them over the rest can expect the worst. Those passed over leave. A boss who can dangle six people and keep them working at top speed chasing a carrot, rivals scheherazade.

*They know you'll leave for a better offer.*

If you were promoted, how long would you stay? That is the question that haunts every manager. You may vow that you'll happily-ever-after with the company but that almost always goes against management's experience. That's what your predecessor said. Management's strategy is to move slowly, keeping you on the job as long as possible. Meanwhile, you're in limbo.

*They want an outsider.*

Your boss knows that his/her boss believes in cross-pollination. You can't fill that role because you're home-grown. Again, telling you this will cause you to leave, and bitterly. This is a management trend that seems to have eternal life. The theme that organizations are "leavened" by outsiders has been a constant since the 80's. Not everyone subscribes to the ever rising turnover.

*Your credibility is in doubt.*

You've been agitating for a promotion for years, but you haven't presented an offer from another company or even hinted that you'll move on. Unfortunately, coercion is effective; your tactics aren't. Instead of looking carefully at their ethics, management has decided to question your sincerity. This is probably the biggest hurdle people who want promotions must face. How do you politely blackmail a boss and maintain a good relationship?

*The chemistry doesn't work.*

You realize that you and your boss are not compatible. What you haven't factored into your thinking is how important that is to him/her. Your boss respects you but he/she doesn't like you. You might, if all of your peers left and your boss was absolutely desperate, be promoted. In no other circumstances will that happen.

*You don't really want to manage.*

You talk the talk but your body language gives you away. In your soul, you only want the title. In fact, you sometimes wear entitlement like eau de cologne. You've read the employee handbook from cover to cover to make sure you're getting everything that's possible. Being promoted is just another perk. Don't delude yourself that this is a secret. The grapevine has already rendered judgement and passed it on. Your boss agrees with the common wisdom.



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**Capillary Blood Gases** *Continued from page 29*

mind that oxygenation is much better monitored by pulse oximetry, acid-base status can be adequately determined using capillary blood gas results. Using "normal" levels, pH should be in the range of 7.30 to 7.40 and PCO<sub>2</sub> should be in the 45 to 55 torr range. PO<sub>2</sub> levels are usually in the 40 to 50 torr range, though, as stated, is much less reliable.

Another quandry recently looked at consists of the use of plastic versus glass blood gas specimen collection tubes. Many issues arise therein, such as the safety factor when using glass and any distortion of results with glass versus plastic. Plastic capillary tubes are safer to use because they will not break during or after specimen collection.

Does the composition of the collection tube alter results? Looking at blood gas syringes, Knowles, et. al. reported significant changes in PO<sub>2</sub> and PCO<sub>2</sub> in specimens stored for up to 30 minutes at various temperatures from 0 to 22 degrees C in plastic as opposed to glass syringes. Can this be extrapolated to capillary blood gases? It is an interesting finding but probably lacks significance with capillary samples due to the fact that analysis is, or at least should be, performed as soon as possible after collection. Any delay in analysis can easily cause specimen clotting, which, in itself, drastically changes results and causes major difficulties with the blood gas analyzers themselves. Plastic specimen collection devices have been scrutinized a great deal. Plastic is a porous material, much moreso than glass. This leads to greater gas diffusion. The degree of gas diffused is dependent upon the amount of time the specimen resides within the collection device.

Do we abandon the practice in order to follow evidence-based medicine? I'd like to hear from the clinical community on their opinions and practices.

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*You're a control freak.*

Your calendar is used as a model for demonstrating what a Palm Pilot can do. You believe that if it's worth doing, it's worth doing perfectly. You had your car washed on the way to work after a snow storm. You sometimes overwhelm your boss with your singlemindedness and judgments on good work versus bad. Your co-workers don't dislike you, but they don't report to you and hope they never will. You may be one of the best doers in the department but nothing you've done so far indicates you have the least aptitude for motivating others.

*You're pretentious.*

You? Yes. Weren't you the one talking about your child's near perfect score on the SAT? Everyone knows - because you've told them - that your spouse's career is through the stratosphere. Your boss has tried asking you to "tone it down." He/she has even cut you off in mid-sentence when you were extolling the virtues of a \$47 bottle of Merlot but you didn't get it. Your boss tolerates you because you do very good work but promoting you would ruffle a lot of feathers.

If you saw even a partial truth in any of these situations, you need to think about your ambitions and your possibilities. even if you beg your boss for the truth, it's unlikely you'll get it. You need outside evaluation. Find a peer in another company and tell your story. If you provide enough facts you'll get an answer truthful enough to shed some light on your problem. Undesirables can become desirables. We've given the formula often. What matters is how strongly you want what isn't presently available. Only you know the answer to that.

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