Planning Your Career Goals

Key Terms
- ambition
- role model
- professional organization
- network

Choose your goal, then develop a plan to reach it.

Case

Gabriella is a video technician in the news department of a local broadcasting company. The job uses all the skills she learned in school. She also works with experienced video editors. She is learning new skills from them.

The pace in the newsroom is very fast. Gabriella keeps up with the fast pace. She is friendly and efficient. Her coworkers and supervisor like her.

Gabriella has goals beyond video editing. She wants to be a news editor and then a news director. Gabriella knows it is possible. Sharon has done just that. Sharon is now assistant director of news operations. Gabriella sees Sharon in the halls. She’s heard that Sharon started in the video-editing room, but quickly moved on. “I want to be like her,” Gabriella thinks.

The video-editing department is used by several shows at the station. Each show likes to have its work done in a certain way. Gabriella strives to make her work flawless. She keeps up with all the latest video-processing techniques. She volunteers to do difficult jobs that others do not want. She organizes her files of footage and labels them. This way, when a request is made, she can easily access the file. When footage from a previous broadcast is needed, Gabriella can find it quickly. The department head, Greg, notices what a timesaver her filing system is. He then asks Gabriella to set up a system for the whole department.

Gabriella is assigned to help Sharon’s team. They work overtime to prepare footage for the breaking story and news special. Sharon has an opportunity to watch Gabriella at work. She is impressed. Gabriella never complains or seems tired, even though they work late into the night. She pitches in and does whatever is needed. Gabriella is not afraid to speak up. She offers suggestions and ideas without being pushy. She is able to explain herself clearly and thoughtfully. Gabriella reminds Sharon of herself ten years ago.

When a job for a newsroom video supervisor opens, Sharon recommends Gabriella. After posting the job and interviewing several candidates, the director decides that Gabriella is the most qualified. When Gabriella is offered the job, she happily accepts.
Case Discussion

After you have read the case *Working Smart*, write your answers to the following discussion questions.

1. What is Gabriella's attitude toward her job?
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2. What is Gabriella's goal?
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3. What does Gabriella do to reach her goal?
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4. Do you think Gabriella will reach her goal?
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5. What role did Sharon play in Gabriella's career plans?
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6. What did Gabriella do to show her competence?
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7. What did Gabriella do to show her initiative?
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8. What did Gabriella do to show her work ethic?
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9. What do you think Gabriella will say to her coworkers when her promotion is announced?
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Name ________________________________________________

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Part 3  Succeeding on the Job

Good job skills combined with good human relations skills are your ticket to success. A constructive attitude is important to your relationships with coworkers and supervisors. It is also an important element in career advancement. Gabriella would not have developed a reputation as an outstanding worker if she had only focused on her job skills. It was the combination of good job and human relations skills, a constructive work attitude, and the influence of a role model that assured her success.

Do a Little Extra

Take every opportunity to show initiative. Volunteer for challenging tasks. Take initiative to do something to improve your department. Gabriella took it upon herself to reorganize the filing system for her video footage. The department head noticed that her new system made it so much easier to find footage. He asked her to share her system with the department. By sharing it with the department, she helped her coworkers become more productive. She earned their respect and that of her supervisor. At the same time, she increased her visibility and drew positive attention to herself and her skills.

Know Your Company

Learn as much as you can about your company. Know the products or services it offers and what each department does. Learn how your company is structured. Who are the department heads? Who does the hiring, firing, and promoting? Are people usually promoted from within the company or brought in from outside when an opening develops? Your chances to advance are greatest in a company that promotes from within.

Know Your Field

Keep up with the latest developments in your field. Read trade journals and magazines. Keep up with the latest news in the business section of your local newspapers. We live in a society where change takes place rapidly. Keeping up with trends, influential people, and events in your field gives you food for conversation with people on the job. Being aware of developments in your field is one way to let people know that you are interested in moving up.

Join the professional organization in your field and be active. Professional organizations often provide excellent trade journals and continuing education opportunities. In addition to the educational value, their meetings are good places to meet people and network.

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Apply

Case: Promoted over Your Friends

You are the top producer in your department. Because you are happy to help your coworkers, your excellent record is not resented but respected. You look forward to going to work every day. You genuinely like the people you work with. You often socialize with them after work and on weekends. In fact, you consider two of your coworkers your best friends.

The day after your supervisor announces he is moving to another city, you are asked to be his replacement. Although this has been one of your career goals, you didn’t think it would happen in this department. Your supervisor is very young and you figured he’d be around for years. Now you are worried—how can you ever be an authority figure to your friends?

Case Discussion

1. List three options for dealing with your job situation.
   Option 1: __________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   Option 2: __________________________________________________________
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   Option 3: __________________________________________________________
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2. List the option you would choose, and explain why you would choose it.
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Review

True or False

Circle T if the statement is true or F if the statement is false.

T  F  1. Everyone has to have ambition for career success.
T  F  2. The first step in career advancement is to define the goals.
T  F  3. Goals that require numerous steps to achieve are not worth the effort.
T  F  4. Excellent technical skills are all that is needed to reach career goals.
T  F  5. It is okay to step on others to get ahead.
T  F  6. Sharing good ideas that increase group productivity is a good way to show initiative.
T  F  7. To get ahead, focus only on your department.
T  F  8. Professional association meetings are a waste of time.
T  F  9. Good human relations skills are important for career advancement.
T  F  10. When people are promoted, they should volunteer to train their replacements.
Check Your Understanding

1. Do you have to be ambitious to achieve work success?
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2. List eight general steps that will help you achieve career success.
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3. How can a worker determine the best way to advance?
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Journal Writing

1. Are you ambitious? What actions or thoughts support your answer?
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2. Describe the person you view as a role model for career advancement. What important lessons can be drawn from that person's experiences?
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3. Describe the type of career you want. Why do you think it suits your abilities, interests, and personality?
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