

How To Land A Higher-Paying Job

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How To Land A Higher-Paying Job

There's probably more potential in your present job.

Most people don't realize that they can get more out of their present job-by putting more into it! You may think that the only way to get a big money job is by going to another job somewhere, but the truth is that if the fault is in you, changing jobs won't help!

So before you go looking for that pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, take a good look at yourself. Are you really doing all you could to help your employer right now? Or are you stuck in a rut, just doing whatever you have to do to get by? If the latter, it's no wonder the boss isn't giving you any raises, or only those token 5% raises that don't keep up with inflation.

If you have the possibility to make a substantial difference in your output, whether of quality or quantity, then do it. NEVER take the attitude "well, why should I put out for what he's paying me?" because, that way, he never will pay you any more. You've got to take the first step. He's got to see that you're worth more. And don't think that you ought to get it because you've got five hungry kids at home, while Bill has only one skinny wife to take care of. That is totally irrelevant. You're not paid because you need it, but because the boss needs you. And if you ever do get more than Bill, it'll only be because you worked for it.

Do you really have the cards in your hand?

Now if your objective appraisal makes it clear to you that you are already doing a super job for your employer, and that you are vitally needed to do that job, then you may hold the cards in your hand right now to get a really good raise, a longer vacation, better medical coverage, etc., etc. But even if you hold the hand, don't overplay it. If you back the boss up against a wall, or are offensive about it, his natural defensive instincts will come into play immediately, and he may decide to get rid of you even though he knows you're good, and that your dismissal will cause him considerable loss, agony and delay. Make it easy for him to say "yes", but leave him a graceful way to say "no", at least temporarily, without severing relations. Both of you have got to "save face", in the oriental sense, which is more applicable to the U.S. than we usually realize or admit. Don't tell him you've got another job offer if you haven't (unless you're the kind of reckless poker player who likes to go for broke),

because that doesn't leave you any way to retreat and keep your present job if your boss refuses to meet the theoretical new boss's offer. You just can't lose that much face-to grove in the dirt and admit you were bluffing.

If you quit a job, quit gracefully!

If, on the other hand, you do have a new job offer at more money (and, we must assume, at better or equivalent benefits), then don't just quit your present job right off without notice or in any sort of impolite way. The only person you hurt by doing that is yourself. Because if you handle it properly, explain that you're leaving because you have a much better offer, and that you'll be glad to stick around until your replacement's hired, and help him get acquainted, etc., not only will you leave a pleasant taste in everyone's mouth, assure yourself of a good reference if you should need one later, and not screw up your final check or your accrued vacation pay and sick leave, etc., but, and this is the important but, your boss will have time to think it over without feeling threatened or blackmailed by you, and he may decide that you're just too valuable to lose, and make you a counter-offer of even more than the raise the new job offered you.

What to do if you're in a no-future job!

But if, on the other hand, your objective appraisal leads you to the conclusion that there isn't any future for you with your present employer, and assuming you don't have another job offer right in your hand, then don't sit back and wait to be offered one, because you know that won't happen in a thousand years- instead, go out and get one for yourself. Get moving!

Start, of course, by reading the classified ads, not only in your hometown paper, but also in out-of-town papers from cities you wouldn't mind relocating to (these newspapers can always be purchased at some major downtown newsstand in your own city).

If you don't see the job you want advertised, try placing your own ad, classified, or even, if you are ambitious, display. Tell them about yourself, not only your official and/or technical qualifications and/or achievements, but also the special qualities which make you especially good for the job you are seeking. Sell yourself-you're the only one that can do so.

Invent a job for yourself

And once you've considered what it is that you really like

doing, think about creating your own job, uniquely suited to your skills or interests. You would be much happier selling model railroads to hobby shops if you're a model buff than you would be selling bathroom fixtures. Think about a niche that no one is filling, in an area that you know about or have worked in before. Then try to interest companies along those lines in your abilities. If they don't have a job opening...but you can show them how hiring you can save them money, double their sales, or dramatically improve a money-losing department, you may wind up doing what you like, and getting paid for it!

The right resume is very important!

Early on in your job campaign, in fact the first thing before you start, is the preparation of a resume. Too few people know the proper way in which to set about this, or even that it is a desirable thing to have. But really, for any job but the most menial, it is almost a necessity. It is your representative when you apply for any position by mail, and it is a most useful aid to leave behind, as a summary and reminder, when you apply for a job in person.

Always orient your resume to your future, not your past. Of course, however, you must include your education, your past work experience, and any special honors, awards, prizes or other trophies you may have won. Most importantly, you must list your job objective. Keep in mind that any future employer wants to know what you can do for him; not what he can do for you. This means that he will evaluate your past experience in view of his own future needs, so you should do that too. A list of your responsibilities in your past job might not mean anything to your future employer if he's in a different business, but your skills in managing people, or saving the company money, or creating a new product or selling method might be the most important thing you could put on your resume-even if those things were not part of your past job but things you come up with on your own time!

You need not tell everything!

What if parts of your background might not look good on your resume? You have a gap of one year when you were unemployed, for example, that you don't want your resume to include. There are several ways to deal with this, depending on how you want to orient your resume! If you want to stress your independence and go-getting ability, you might want to "invent" your own consulting firm, or neighborhood service company, or other business of your own that you "worked for" during that time gap. (But be prepared to have letterheads or business cards printed up to make this seem real, in case potential employers

want proof.) Or if your uncle owns a company, ask him to give you a reference stating what a valuable employee you were for him during that period.

Remember that the point of your resume is to present you in the best way possible, and unless you need to be bonded or get a security clearance for your new job, many companies don't check job histories very thoroughly, except for perhaps your most recent one.

Looking your best

Just as you want to look your best on your job interview, so too your resume must look its best. A carefully laid-out, typeset resume, with the most important information about you set up in easy-to-read blocks of space, is like a gift to a personnel director. Remember that as many as a hundred people may be applying for the same position that you seek, and a favorable remembered resume gives you a headstart over the other applicants.

One point that I want to stress that is often omitted in manuals on the subject is that you should not let your local copy center or printer do the resumes on the cheapest lightest paper they have around, or have the original typed on an old beat-up manual typewriter. The presentation affects the reception given to your facts. Perhaps it should not, but, let's face it, it does. That's why manufacturers of consumer goods spend so much money on packaging! As the old proverb says, "Put your best foot forward!"

Make \$2,000 a year more with this idea!

So put your best foot forward, and don't save \$5 in printing your resume, it may cost you \$2,000 in the salary you are offered (if indeed they want to hire you at all, after they see your "sleazy" resume).

Go all out in your job hunt!

Make looking for the new job a real challenge to your creativity. Come up with new and different way in which to present yourself and/or your qualifications. Lift yourself above the heap, let your resume be the one that attracts their attention, and gets you that job!

Your guaranteed job where you can't be fired!

If you'd like to have a guaranteed job where you can't get fired, you have several ways of doing about this. The simplest, if you are really valuable to your boss (as we have discussed before), is to ask for an employment contract new time you're negotiating with him over your salary and terms of employment. Time periods of two, three, or even five years are not uncommon. But remember, while the security may be something you want, you are giving up something too, your freedom to move around and or negotiate, and binding yourself to agreed salaries (whether escalating or remaining static) for those years, disregarding both potential inflation and possibly greater performance and productivity on your part.

Another way of achieving that non-firing status, aside from being the boss, is being a partner in the business, or a major stockholder, with the clout to make your job firing-proof.