

## Self-sabotage: Job Disappointment May Be your Own Fault

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Have you ever been in a position where you've applied for an internal promotion but didn't get the job? Have you yearned for a high-profile assignment but failed to achieve this goal? Or have you been disappointed because you didn't receive your expected bonus at work? Are just plain unhappy and don't know why?



Otherwise, believe me; you'll always be un-promotable, you'll miss those prized assignments and you'll be stalled in your present position.

Immaturity -- Immature individuals don't understand their own personal needs and thus frequently act out in inappropriate ways. They're the ones who

engage in gossip, manipulate fellow employees and "stir things up" at work. Yet, they don't take responsibility for their behaviour or actions. Their decisions are self-centred and emotional, accompanied by unexpected outbursts.

If these questions are familiar, I'll bet you're also fighting mad with anger and blaming others for your situation. In fact, you're probably blaming your boss for not seeing you in the same bright light as you see yourself. After all, believing you are a star contributor, you assume management sees this trait as well.

You're probably also focusing blame on your co-workers. Perhaps you believe that someone stabbed you in the back with vicious gossip that tainted your boss's view. But no matter what, you're also having a great deal of difficulty hiding your disappointment.

I could suggest the problem is one of a greatly inflated ego, but I truly believe the real issue is that some employees sabotage themselves without realizing it. These individuals simply don't understand how their behaviour damages important interpersonal relationships and therefore their career.

I've listed several of the most common and well recognized behaviours that result in career self-sabotage. If you recognize yourself in any of these behaviours, take note. Develop an action plan to change as quickly and quietly as you can.

Constant negative attitude -- Negative people view all life and work through negative blinders -- in other words, something is always wrong and nothing is right. This also creates a personal self-esteem issue. Their negativity shows in everything they do. This type of person is exhausting to have around and soon the supervisors and people avoid them at all costs.

Singular group clique -- While every workplace has natural groups of people who see eye to eye with each other, isolating yourself with a single group of folks can easily sabotage your career. This creates a clique of favourites, cuts out others and prevents employees from making a broader set of relationships. Strong, positive and trusting relationships are what you need to support career growth.

Undermining decisions -- While you may not fully understand the rationale behind a management decision, your job as an employee is to follow directions and to support the mission and vision of your organization. Challenging decisions in an

appropriate manner and/or sabotaging decisions and resisting change are a sure death knell to your career with that employer.

Avoiding challenging risks -- Career sabotaging employees rarely take opportunities to learn and grow. They lack initiative or spunk. They simply wait for their supervisor to tell them what to do and then they limit their actions to those specific directions. They are reluctant followers at best, not leaders even of themselves.

Failing to add value -- You can't expect to be promoted if you aren't dedicated or productive in your current job or if you fail to meet deadlines and always have an excuse. And if you are the type of person who begins to pack up for home well before closing time or if you lazily return from your lunch break several minutes late, then you are sabotaging your own career.

"Not my job" syndrome -- Failing to help your colleagues and/or to undertake a task that is not your usual assignment creates the well-known not-my-job syndrome. Because of their narrow view, they rarely take the initiative to learn about other jobs around them or to lend a hand, and then are surprised when the opportunity to move into a new job passes them by. This attitude is a real career killer. Organizations favour team players.

Personal rigidity -- Some employees are so systematic in their work processes that they become rigid and stuck in doing things the same old way. This also applies to how they manage their work station. They are the kind of person whose coffee cup must be in the same place in the cupboard every time or they will get upset. Any sign of disorder will send them into a rage. Who needs it?

Dependency -- Individuals who won't undertake any task without being told and who require an inordinate amount of encouragement and/or feedback from a supervisor, suffer from a sense of dependency that is definitely a career blocker. Dependent people put a lot of stress on management as they can't work for long without some sort of supervision, guidance, advice or simple praise.

Sporadic attendance -- Individuals who are not committed to their job and frequently fail to attend and/or arrive just in the nick of time are at risk of blocking their career. They are also the individuals who at the slightest thought of an illness, book off work and use up all of their annual sick leave. These individuals see their job as a "have to" rather than a "want to" event in their life and that is exactly the message they give their employer.

Stubbornness -- Stubborn employees often make decisions too quickly without much thinking and then stick to their views or the results of their actions. They have a difficult time admitting to mistakes because they see this as failure rather than a learning experience. They are often referred to as people who won't listen or who don't hear what is being said to them. Stubbornness is indeed a sure career killer.

It's true that high-profile senior executives typically have high-profile career derailers, yet there are also many subtle career derailers that are just as dangerous for any employee at any level in an organization. These derailer behaviours represent negative and inappropriate personal actions on the part of an employee and it poisons the perception people have of them. As you can imagine, a poisoned view will ruin any chance of career success. However, the sad thing is that many employees do it to themselves. They literally self-sabotage. Too bad!

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