

Stick up for yourself!

Here's a fact that shouldn't be the case in a team environment, but it is: if you don't stand up for yourself, nobody else will, either.

Oh, sure, there's the occasional person who will speak up and defend you when times are getting tough, but most of the time, you should be your own best champion -- and it's almost certain that if you aren't your champion, you'll be your own loser.

It's this way in business, and in life as well -- and truth be told, it's sad to say. Most of us would prefer a situation where other people became our champions -- where people would stick up for us, volunteer our names for great assignments, recognize our potential as leaders and mentors -- anything other than the situation where we need to stick up for our own interests.

Frankly, I wish it were otherwise -- and in a few environments, where a caring atmosphere is created, like a home environment, others will stick up for us -- because they love us.

But in the everyday business world, the squeaky wheel will get the grease, and the person who makes his or her case is likely to be the person who gets the nod.

I've seen numerous times where people expect their abilities to be well known. Sometimes they are, but people admire the gutsy person who will stick up for themselves -- they admire the self-confidence that such a maneuver brings -- and as nice a person as you might be, if you're not making your abilities well known, they're likely to be overlooked, at least by people in power -- particularly if those people don't know you all that well.

Leaders in organizations change, and the mentor who knew your every ability will likely not be there the next time around. They'll be replaced possibly by a person who may not know what you're capable of, or a person who may choose to overlook your abilities, sometimes bringing in a "pet" along with them, for "special assignments" (the definition of a pet here has nothing to do with small furry black-nosed animals, but with large, usually brown-nosed ones).

If you stick up for yourself and your abilities, you are more likely to get noticed, get promoted, get respected -- don't be the person who labors all his or her life in obscurity, doing a great job, but never being admired or respected for it. Even if

people do respect you, it's likely they will never let you know, often until it's too late and you're on the doorstep of retirement.

It'd be a great utopia if everyone was put in a place where they belonged, were all paid a significant salary, and never had to campaign to have their voice heard -- but that kind of utopia, like almost all Utopian societies, is usually not found in common business today.

If you're hot stuff, then make your abilities known. If you're working hard, make it apparent. If you turn out quality work, then help others to understand. Some lines of work lend themselves easily to recognition; still others need a bit of a push to help the boss to see what you contribute.

Don't be afraid to stand up for yourself. Don't ever be afraid to toot your own horn, even if it's just a little bit. In the increasing din that forms the modern office, you really have to toot your own horn, just to be heard and recognized.

The time where people would recognize great work, even if it is done by a long-suffering, quiet person, is still here in many organizations -- but it never hurts to give such a possibility a little push.

Stick up for yourself and your abilities. You're worth it. You can expect the other people to be sticking up for themselves -- sometimes at your expense. You are the one who can best point out your worth. Never expect someone else to do it for you. Never expect others to know of your worth, unless you help them to understand it.

You are the one who can best sing your song. Outside of those who love you, nobody else is likely to stick up for you, unless you stick up for yourself.

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