

q advice: 5 CAREER-DAMAGING MOVES

AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

For some, careers seem to naturally take off, magical and blessed. Opportunity and luck were on their side. Or so it seems. What appears like good luck or right place, right time is more like consistently good decision making. Here are five career-damaging moves those 'blessed' seem to charmingly avoid.



1. Not being seen: Most poignant in our post-pandemic world. The advantages of working remotely are indisputable but come at a career cost if not navigated correctly.

Strong working relationships and networks critical to career success are negatively impacted when working remotely. The consequences are slow to realise and, if left too late, an uphill challenge to retrieve. Your achievements and efforts also risk not being recognised. Instead, take opportunities to be in the office every week if possible. Attend all virtual meetings with your camera on. Contribute to each session and put your hand up for projects outside your normal realm. The idea is not just to maintain but feed and grow your network. It will require effort on your part, but to do the opposite will see regression and career opportunities lost.

2. Abuse of power: It is not just managers who hold power. We all have some form of power in our roles. You can be the administrator who deals with company suppliers or the chairperson. How you wield it says everything. People abusing their power feel entitled to do so, typically through their position and sense of importance. They either don't see the consequences of their behaviour or believe they are immune to them.

Apply Empathy and self-awareness. See yourself as others might, i.e., through their lens and not yours. Cognitive Empathy allows you to understand and accept others' views. It is about detaching from the need to be right and accepting human differences. Understand the impact you have, positively or adversely.

3. Leaving your job on bad terms. With the great resignation on everyone's lips, this point has never been more acute. It doesn't matter how horrid your boss or work environment is or how dissatisfied you might feel; always resign with grace. How you hold yourself in these last few weeks protects your reputation and career for years to come.

Give the right amount of notice according to your contract. Speak directly to your boss, don't leave a message, or send a text and do so with respect, no aggression, or passive-aggressive vibes. Don't bad mouth your boss or organisation, and no posts on social media. Work out your notice as if you were never leaving. You never know who knows who, and with LinkedIn and unseen networks, it's no longer six degrees of separation, it is probably only three.

4. Disclosing confidential information. If the disclosure is significant, you could find yourself in court and the legal system to be publicly viewed. Understand what constitutes confidential information and intellectual property. Anything to do with customer/client information, company policies, terms of business, fees, even salaries fall into this category.

Whether from home or in a café, when working remotely, be hyper-vigilant in protecting company information. How visible is your laptop's screen, is there company paperwork lying around, can you be heard on your video call or mobile? It doesn't matter if it's your husband or the café owner. It's a breach of confidentiality. Slips in judgement like these, have significant ramifications, jeopardising your job and career.

5. Tantrums, meltdowns, hissy fits and the like. I am not talking about micro stress upsets or having a bad day. I am referring to the episodes where employees walk out, throw things, threaten to resign, thwart deadlines, projects etc., usually brought on by stress and pressure. I am sure there are times when we would all love to do this. But we don't. It is counterproductive, not professional and a major headache for managers. It is also a clear sign of emotional immaturity, sending the message, 'I can't rely on this person!'

Instead, apply self-control and work on your critical responses, detach, analyse and resolve with calmness. Manage timelines better and if you are concerned about a deadline or workload, let your boss know well before it becomes critical.

It is about your reputation. How do you want to be remembered? That's what distinguishes those who make career-enhancing moves versus career-damaging ones. How do you want people to view you at work? A strong work ethic, trustworthy, honest, high integrity, reliable, dependable, great interpersonal nous, resilient? These are just some of the words used to describe those whose careers seem to magically soar!

Roxanne Calder, author of 'Employable - 7 Attributes to Assuring Your Working Future' (Major Street \$29.95), is the founder and managing director of EST10 - one of Sydney's most successful administration recruitment agencies. Roxanne is passionate about uncovering people's potential and watching their careers soar. For more information on how Roxanne can assist you in your career visit www.est10.com.au

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