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Fifteen Ways to Show Your Value at Work

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Jan 24, 2019

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The unemployment rate is higher than in the past and for many companies, business isn't exactly booming. The best way to keep your job is to show your employer that you are so valuable that they simply can't live without you.

Here are 15 sure-fire ways to increase your value to the organization:

Organization.

1. **Be part of the bottom line.** If you want to be valuable to your company, then you need to help it make money. The company measures its ROI on you, so you should measure the ROI on yourself as well. Focus on the activities that use your time, skills, and resources most effectively to connect back to the bottom line.
2. **Remember that time is money.** Your most valuable commodity is your time; spend it wisely. Don't invest eight hours in putting together a presentation when you can deliver the same results with less prep time. Management will value the content of your message, not a bunch of fluff and pretty artwork.
3. **Sing your own praises (but not too loudly).** Your work generally won't speak for itself. You must speak for yourself. Make sure that managers understand the effort you put into your job and the results you produce. A bit of modest bragging will not only help you come promotion time, but it will also help discredit any attacks levied against you. Provide the right amount of information about yourself, but don't beat your accomplishments to death. Too many trips to the boss's office may work against you.
4. **Recognize "deal or no deal" situations.** Most people don't negotiate well because they really want what the other person has and they don't want to risk losing it. But whether it's a big contract, a job, a promotion, or a new car, you have to be willing to walk away. When you are willing to do so, you will be pleasantly surprised at how much better your negotiations turn out. Suddenly, what you offer carries value, and the tables often turn.
5. **Get smart.** Too many people don't understand the basic operation of their companies. Familiarize yourself with the organizational chart and reporting structures. Study and understand the financials. You never know where your life may lead. Learn as much as you can along the way, even though what you're learning may not seem relevant at the time.



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6. **Be a confident innovator.** When you pitch your ideas to management, be prepared to defend your views and also to receive criticism. Management will challenge you simply to test your level of enthusiasm for the idea and its viability. There are a lot of variables to consider, and management wants to know you've thought about them. If you support your ideas with solid research and show some passion, management will be more likely to embrace your concept. Continue to build on your work value with our seminar class on developing "set up" skills.
7. **Keep an eye on your e-trail.** Save all important e-mail and electronic data. If you have ever received an e-mail from someone asking you to confirm something, that person is likely covering himself. This is not a bad thing, and in many cases can clear up any confusion later. Disk space is cheap compared to the trouble it may save you.
8. **Don't be afraid to say no** (assuming that you're doing such a great job your company can't afford to get rid of you). If you don't set limits, you will find yourself on a perpetual treadmill.
9. **Know which rung on the ladder is right for you.** Do you want to be responsible for the success or failure of your company? If so, move up the ladder. Do you want to go home at five every day and forget about work until the next morning? Then moving up the ladder is not for you. The important thing is that you do your job to the best of your ability and that you are happy doing it.
10. **Shut up and listen.** If you don't know what you don't know, then seek out some experienced advice. A mentor can warn you about things you may never have considered and keep you from being blindsided by unforeseen events or costs. As difficult as it may be, admit to yourself that you don't know everything.



11. **Learn the difference between e-communication and *real* communication.** Communicating with people is an opportunity not only to transfer information but also to build relationships with them. In an age of electronic communication, our conversations are becoming increasingly impersonal. Effective employees must be able to interact with people and solve problems. If you can't interact with people directly, you have no value.
12. **Add sales to your skill set.** When it comes to You, Inc., there is only one person on the sales team: you! Despite what your resume says, adding sales to your skill set is a must. Whenever you are trying to pitch a new idea to your company, you'll need a sales pitch that is convincing and sound. Moreover, if you are vying for a promotion or raise, you'll need to be prepared to pitch yourself. Be ready to defend your views and have answers for the tough questions. If someone disagrees with you, be ready to support your ideas with solid research and your own enthusiasm. You'll soon persuade people to see things your way.
13. **If it isn't broken, don't fix it.** The only reason to change something is to make it better. In business, change is often confused with progress. Likewise, employees feel the pressure to constantly make changes to keep up the appearance of productivity and to prove their worth. Put a time limit on your own goals so that you don't chase a bad idea longer than you should. In addition, if the system, idea, or product you currently have in place works well—then let it be, and concentrate your efforts on changing the things that truly need it.
14. **Get a life.** It's good to be committed to the company, and corporate accomplishments are rewarding; but when all is said and done, a lifetime goes by quickly. Try not to take your job home with you. I am a firm believer that you get what you give. If you are happy, those around you will be happy as well.
15. **Say “no” to working vacations.** When you take your vacation, *take your vacation!* Don't offer to check e-mail and voicemail while you are away. I have made this mistake and I can tell you if you do it, you might as well have stayed at work. A lot of companies offer rewards and perks like club trips or weekend getaways. Although these are great and can be a lot of fun, they are not



vacations. They are still about the company, and you will still be working. You'll just be out of the office.

Finally, if you spend your workdays worrying about losing your job, you are probably headed for trouble. Push those negative thoughts out of your mind and focus on the work you do and how you add value to your company. Demonstrate positivity and a can-do attitude to your team. Work smarter than your competition and you'll get ahead, every time. Continue to build on your skills to be an integral member and join our [on-demand class](#) on the subject.

Part of increasing your value at work also includes motivating yourself to take control of your own career. Click [here](#) to learn more about this AMA webinar.

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About the Author(s)

Blaine Loomer is the author of *Corporate Bullsh*t: A Survival Guide* (Mitchell Publishers Inc., 2009). He has consulted with thousands of companies, from enterprising individuals of mom and pop shops to executive officers of some of the largest corporations in America.

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