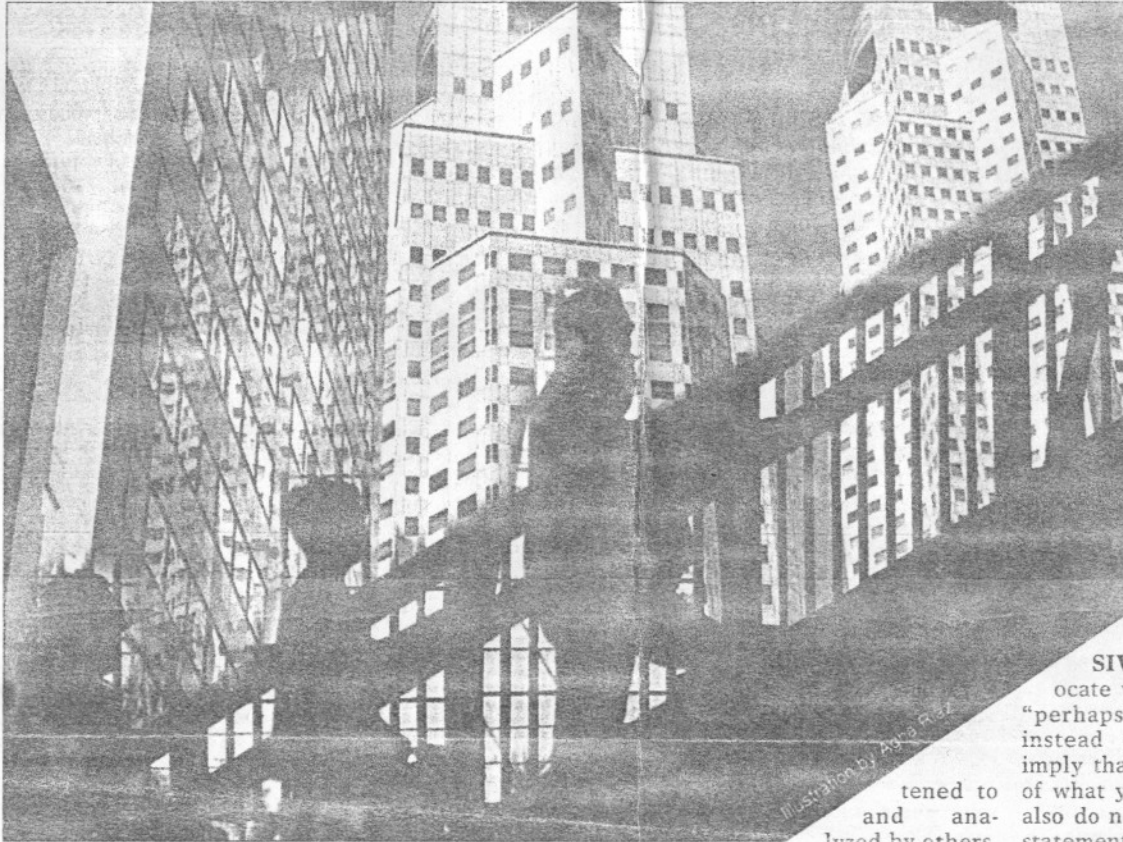


# Moving up the hierarchy

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*Illustration by Agna R. 22*

In most companies, employees are promoted based on merit, where achievement and performance are emphasized and advancement is gained through hard work. But sometimes, even highly talented employees may find their way up the ladder blocked or face termination. They might be hardworking, devoted and committed to the job, but are neither ambitious nor do they aspire for promotion. They don't consider themselves capable for a higher job and are afraid of the power along with added responsibilities. The problem arises when superiors form a negative view about the capabilities of such employees, and start thinking that even their existing job may be done more efficiently by a younger employee with a much lower salary but higher educational qualifications.

In order to create and maintain a favourable impression, one should appear confident, energetic and enthusiastic about the job. In this manner, one can secure his current job and avoid the development of negative feelings in those who matter in the stability or growth of one's career. Learning how to build social capital is crucial, as leaders promote people they like and feel comfortable with. A

business meeting is an important occasion in which the employee is exposed and has to interact with his

peers and superiors in a group. His body language, words spoken and ideas expressed are intently lis-

Therefore, his conduct and behaviour in meetings gains significance and becomes critical.

The following are some dos and donts, which can help employees in demonstrating that they are fully capable of delivering the goals of their jobs.

**POLISHED ENTRY:** Make a polished entry into the room by shaking hands and connecting with people immediately. Coming to meetings with a grim and sad face will create the unfavourable impression that you consider the meetings a necessary evil and a waste of time.

**SPEAK DECISIVELY:** Don't equivocate with words such as "perhaps" or use "we" instead of "I". This will imply that you are not sure of what you are saying, and also do not want to own the statement.

**BE CONFIDENT:** Don't end sentences with a raised tone like a question. Be confident of yourself instead of

that whatever you have said is correct.

**CONTRIBUTE IN DISCUSSIONS:** Don't leave a meeting without contributing your thoughts; you will look passive and unengaged.

**PLAN WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY:** Do plan what you will say in a meeting rehearsing beforehand. Also prepare yourself with answers to questions which may be put by the participants.

**CREATE BONDS:** Open up to senior executives in hallways or elevators, sharing information about your personal life to create bonds. Building a rapport with them will help you in getting their support more conveniently during meetings.

**SELF-PROMOTION:** Do learn to self-promote. One method could be to weave accomplishments into anecdotes. This should, however, be done carefully and discreetly. Only selective achievements should be highlighted to superiors. Projecting everything that you do in the job may have negative repercussions, and may dilute the impact of your key accomplishments.

The effectiveness of the above tips may be ascertained by looking around in your own organization. Those who have become leaders possess most of the aforementioned traits and do so as a routine.