

Don't expect Human Resources to plan your career

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Some people skip through their careers with the notion that someone in Human Resources (HR) will be their guiding angel who will lead them up the ladder to great heights within the organization. Then one day they find themselves sitting in a cubicle with a mediocre job and no bright outlook. So what happened in between the expectation and the reality? Nothing. Not because the HR department didn't do anything, but because the individual failed to take personal responsibility for his or her own life and career.

Many people in today's workforce think their HR department is responsible for constructing a career path for them. They think their company or organization actually has a grand plan for them as if there is some kind of preordained job ladder similar to those that exist in the military or police departments. Maybe in some places this expectation is valid, but in most it doesn't work that way. If you have this expectation of your HR department, it's time to change your thinking.

Most corporations and organizations typically don't have career plans for future presidents. It is doubtful they have them for anybody. Your destiny and your career growth are your responsibility, no one else's. You have to know what you want and design a plan to get there. You have to determine what skills, education, and functional expertise are needed to get where you want. It is then your responsibility to acquire that knowledge and capability --not your HR department's. Sure, they can help guide you and provide information and resources for which you can make decisions, but they are not going to lock elbows with you as you follow the yellow brick road.

If you seek legitimate assistance from your HR department or representative and don't feel they're providing you with the required service, reengage with them. Competing issues or a demanding situation may have hijacked their time and efforts. (You are not their only case.) Sometimes things get hectic and schedules get distorted. So check back in the with them. If that still doesn't work, then elevate your issue to the HR

director or another high-level manager in your organization.

You can also seek counsel from a trusted mentor or someone who has already traveled the path you're traveling. But don't expect that person to hold your hand down the path either. Absorb their advice and move on your own. Hopefully their insightful wisdom will help you avoid similar roadblocks they encountered or at least to navigate with more efficiency and effectiveness.

The bottom line is this: Regardless how much HR support you have or don't have, you must grab your career by the horns and make it go where you want it to go. This isn't easy. It takes a high degree of confidence, courage, tenacity, discipline, commitment, research, and possibly some degree of risk. But no one will or should be as committed to your cause as you. If you don't care, no one else will. If you don't plan your career, no one else will. And if you leave your career in someone else's hands, then you end up where someone else puts you.

Take charge of your career!

~ The End ~