

## How to get promoted to a supervisory position

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Have you experienced frustration when trying to get promoted to a supervisory position? Quite often when someone isn’t selected to be a supervisor, it is because of one or more of the following reasons: 1) They are not an outstanding performer in the area or skill-set to be supervised; 2) They don’t possess some supervisory or leadership experience; or 3) They lack emotional intelligence.

First, it doesn’t make managerial sense for a company or organization to hire someone who isn’t good at the job they’re expected to supervise. So before applying for a supervisory position be sure you have documented proof or testimony that you’re an outstanding performer.

Over the years, I gave the following advice to people aspiring to be an outstanding performer: The more often you get things done better and/or faster than what you were directed to, the more often you’ll be recognized as an outstanding performer by those who can positively influence your life and career. For instance, if you have to vacuum the rug, do that and also quickly dust the furniture. File the reports? Do that and maybe add color coding tabs to complement the alphabetical system.

Or, if you have a one-week deadline, try to accomplish the task a day or two sooner. Have just a day? Have it done in 5 or 6 hours if you can. By always striving to do things a little better and/or faster than expected, you’ll gain a reputation as someone who delivers on time, every time--and believe me, everyone will notice!

Second, a company or organization will usually want someone who has previous leadership and management experience before they hire them as a supervisor. How can you get that experience when no one gives you the opportunity to learn or practice it? Volunteer! Find out if there are any additional duties within your work environment that need someone to lead or manage. If there aren’t, then maybe a non-profit organization or social group needs help from someone to lead people or manage a project. By volunteering when you’re “off the clock,” you could very well be put in charge of someone or something. Perhaps a local Toys-for-Tots program needs someone to lead the seasonal collection effort, or the Meals-on-Wheels program is looking for an evening volunteer to help lead and manage the delivery of dinners. Local soup kitchens continually need volunteers to lead people who prepare and serve meals to the homeless. By

stepping up to lead in scenarios like these, you’ll gain valuable leadership and management experience, and yes, you can list this experience on your professional résumé.

Lastly, even if you are excellent at completing tasks associated with your skill-set and you have some experience leading, you still may not be promoted if you lack emotional intelligence. In most scenarios, if you are unable to understand and improve the way you handle your own and other people’s emotions, you will probably be contributing to a toxic work environment. As a supervisor, you have the leadership power to sway everyone’s emotions. If people’s emotions are pushed toward the range of enthusiasm, performance can soar; if people are driven toward rancor and anxiety, they will be thrown off stride. If you need to improve in the area of emotional intelligence, read *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* by Travis Bradberry and Jean Graves, or you may simply contact me or another consultant or counselor for advice.

So, to tip the scales in your favor the next time you’re being considered for a supervisory position, be an outstanding performer, practice leadership, and maintain or improve your emotional intelligence.

~ The End ~