



Dear Chief

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COLUMNIST

DEAR CHIEF: I work hard and people don’t appreciate it. I move fast, talk fast, walk fast, and work fast. I’ve told my boss many times how hard I work and how many personal hours I put it in. You’d think she would be delighted but instead seems to not really care. Why is this?

HARD WORKER



DEAR HARD WORKER: Okay, you’re a hard worker but are you producing valid results? I’ve known many people who bragged about how hard they work but I also knew first-hand their self-proclaimed sacrifice was nothing more than a cry for attention. They ran around frantically all day long and achieved “zero” results.

Why are you constantly boasting about how hard you work? Do you want people to admire you? Do you want affirmation? If you truly want these things, here’s what you should do and not do:

- 1) Produce results. People notice results--albeit some may be jealous or bitter because you’re making them look bad but most will be impressed (or at least acknowledge that you’re effective).
- 2) Avoid asking for an extension to

Never let anyone know how hard you work

deadlines. Always strive to get things done on time and better than expected.

3) Never admit you are in over your head. Instead, simply ask for guidance, advice, information, an opinion, but never for help. Contrary to the popular belief that asking for help is the noble thing to do, don’t do it--you’ll come across as incompetent, incapable of figuring things out, lazy, or maybe even unmotivated.

4) Never moan or complain about how much work you have to do. This sends signals that you don’t manage your time very well, are trying to get out of doing something else, or are simply a whiner who can’t handle responsibility.

5) Be assertive so you don’t get overloaded. When taking the initiative, you’re putting your own work on your plate instead of waiting around for someone else to fill up your plate. When I was an academic superintendent, I often picked the person standing in the back with their hands in their pockets when I asked for a volunteer for an additional duty rather than the person up front with their hand raised. I didn’t like overloading the true go-getters because it would turn them into no-getters.

6) Never be seen breaking into a sweat (unless it comes with the territory of manual labor or strenuous activity). This gives indication you may not be

very confident in your abilities.

7) Always discreetly look for ways to ease your workload or ways to speed things up. This helps you personally manage situations and time, allowing you to appear efficient and in control.

When it comes down to it, you should appear suave, easy, relaxed, and very calm, cool, and collected. You should never run, never panic, never even seem to be in a hurry. Will this require you to be up late at times? Sure. Will you sometimes have to work on weekends or days off in order to ensure your work week is off to a great start? Yes. But you will never let on, never moan about how hard you work or the hours you put in. To the outside observer you are coasting effortlessly, taking it all in stride, and not worried about derailing.

So give it a shot. Instead of boasting and being frantic, slow down and let your results do your talking. In time, people will be delighted with how hard you really do work!



For an opportunity to have your question, issue or concern addressed in the Dear Chief column, go to www.DearChiefAdvice.com and submit your comments or email them to Jeff@DearChiefAdvice.com.