



Unit 5 — Climbing the Career Ladder

Reading: Climbing the Career Ladder

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Having studied hard for several years, it is normal that university graduates don't want to start at the bottom in their chosen career. They have to realize however that the background knowledge they gained in university needs to be supplemented with experience that can only be got from working in a company. Unfortunately, sometimes that will mean taking an entry level position to start with.

Many graduates are unwilling to do this as they feel that they deserve a better position and will only accept that. It is important to bear in mind that this first position is just a starting point, a chance for you to show your employer what you are really worth. This means that you will be in competition with other new recruits to prove you are the best.

There are, however, some steps which can be taken to make sure that you soon progress up the career ladder.

It is important that when looking for your first position, you take into account the prospects that the firm offers such as training which will turn you into a more valuable employee. If you have the chance, you should speak with your peers within the the company to see if they are happy working there.

You should also consider the type of company you apply to as a lot of larger firms offer a fast track program for graduates which will allow them progress through their career path much faster than is usually possible. These programs are a great way to get a quick promotion if you can impress your supervisors and managers and show them that you deserve to be promoted.

However, even if you are not fortunate enough to enter such a firm it doesn't mean that you will not be able to progress quickly to your desired position as most firms big or small have staff appraisals at least once a year. During this appraisal, you will have the chance to argue your case for promotion providing you deserve it. Although, it is always possible that if your performance does not meet expectations you could face demotion too.

It has always been the case that an employee who can demonstrate superior ability in their work will be marked by management for rapid promotion.

Of course nowadays in a changing business environment, nothing is guaranteed. The trend for restructuring has meant that employees who should have been in their dream position ended up in a completely different area of the company. This is why it is now more important than ever that you can adapt to face new challenges.

So, remember that the saying 'knowledge is the key to success' may be true, but in the modern business world it is just one of the keys and that to make a success out of your career you have to be prepared to start lower, work harder and change your expectations when needed. Providing you follow the advice in this article, you should be able to avoid ending up in a dead-end job and be able to reach the position you want.

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Discussion Questions

What are your career ambitions?

Are fast-track programs a good idea? Why / why not?

Do you agree that nowadays people need to be more adaptable in their work?
Why / why not?