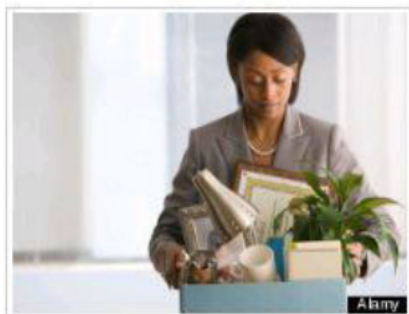


Marsha Haygood, Career Coach: How To Handle Workplace Shakeups



The department I work in is constantly in flux, there has been quite a bit of turnover in the last year and positions have been shifted around. How do I move forward with my own career goals in such a tentative work environment?

MAKE A DECISION

The first thing is deciding what it is that you want. Do you want to be promoted within your current department/company? Are you looking only for more money or is your goal to take on additional responsibilities? Are you ready for the changes that you are looking for? Have you demonstrated that you can and will rise to the challenges of the new role? It's a soul-searching time and conducting this self-audit can be difficult but imperative to your growth.

You may have been working hard, but hard work alone does not make you unique. Many of us grew up thinking that if we put our heads down and work hard, we would be recognized. However, there are other things that must be done to be recognized and if you are not strategic or have a plan that goes along with your hard work, you will get stumped every time. Putting your head down also means that you are missing things that are going on around you. Just working hard doing your job could mean that you are too tired to take those necessary steps to help you move ahead. If you are only working hard at your tasks with no time for other things, people may perceive you as one-dimensional. It is important to be viewed not only as a hard worker, but as an interesting person as well.

BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE

As we all know, change is inevitable. But change does not have to be negative. It can be the gateway to incredible opportunities if you are well prepared.

The good news is that when a company is undergoing shifts, there is often an opportunity for you to take on additional assignments and show what you can do. Make those changes work in your favor. You just have to position yourself for the change rather than fight it.

All companies are undergoing some transition. But if you believe that your current work environment is just too much for you to handle, prepare before you leap. Think about the type of job, industry and work environment you work best in. Research companies you would like to work for and make efforts to connect with employees of those companies to learn more about the company culture and work environments. Chances are, these companies are also undergoing some change. Determine what the company values and how you can best demonstrate what you have to offer.

In your current company, you might try the same approach. What do you have to offer that would be of value during this time of change?

You can be angry and negative because of the changes or you can be flexible and show what you have to offer. Often times, your attitude will determine your altitude ... it's your choice.

Pay attention to who has been hired or promoted during this time of flux. Looking at what these employees have brought to the table (experience, attitude, relationships, etc.) will give you insight into what the company values.

The key to moving forward with your own career goals in any work environment is to be flexible, be strategic, know what you have to offer, and build relationships that will help you now and in the future.

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