

Tips for Climbing the Corporate Ladder by Odell L. Brown

Know Yourself (who you are at your core)

- What you want from a job or career
- Your job-related values
- What things you will not compromise
- Your hot buttons—what sets you off
- Develop your personal brand
- Embrace your own culture and respect the culture of others
- Coin or adopt some quotes or lines to live by:
 - a. ***"It is useless to keep track of time if there's no end toward which you are moving"***
 - b. ***"Until purpose is discovered, existence has no meaning"***
 - c. ***Personal Mission Statement: "Endeavoring to be the best that God would have me to be, while at the same time making a positive difference in the lives of others"***

Know What Success Looks Like to You (what are you aiming for?)

- Have a career plan or roadmap
- What does "success" look like to you?
- Success for you: Distance traveled? Obstacles overcome? Results obtained?
- Know what to chase: Dollars? Titles? Skills? Learning Opportunities?
- Seek the advice of trusted friends and/or mentors (look out for train wrecks about to happen)
- Seek sponsors and advocates
- Know that moving up or growing professionally does not have to be vertical
- Enjoy the "journey"
- Measure your success against your own potential rather than someone else's yardstick

Know Your Corporate Landscape (companies are different)

- Be Technically competent
 - a. Master the foundational or job-essential skills
 - b. Get certified
 - c. Attend classes (even if with your own dime)
- Be Socially Acceptable
 - a. Know what functions you're expected to attend
 - b. Participate in/lead company events
 - c. Learn what to share and not to share at work (even in social settings)
 - d. Develop great people skills (be a good conversationalist)
 - e. Be engaged
 - f. Network effectively (choose wisely your circle of influence)

- Be Politically Astute
 - a. Know where the mine fields are or dead bodies are buried
 - b. Learn the “sacred cows”
 - c. Know why many Leaders fail:
 1. Poor judgment
 2. Insensitive to others
 3. Relationship problems
 4. Inability to supervise effectively
 5. Inability to build a team
 6. Ineffective conflict resolution
 7. Resisting or inability to change
 8. Lead without integrity

Know What Skills Are in Demand

- Look beyond current activities or job functions to assess future skills needed
- Develop great people skills
- Develop sales; self-marketing skills
- Embrace diversity; dare to be different or “the only” at times; get comfortable being “uncomfortable”
- Take notes (have something to write with and on)
- Other

Keep Yourself Current

- Be resourceful—arm yourself with relevant job information
- Assess your skills frequently
- Know the direction your company and/or department is heading
- Seek regular feedback from your leaders and others (job performance; what to prioritize)
- Other

Prepare to Make Adjustments to Your Career Plan

- Life Events: Marriage, Birth, Death, Illness, Work Adjustments, etc.
- Live within your means
- Have an exit strategy
- Be ready to move within the system (all movement does not have to be external to your current company)
- Know that recruiters want to know:
 - a. WILL you do the job?
 - b. CAN you do the job?
 - c. Will you FIT IN?

- Other