

Good leaders are also good decision makers

Without realising it, you are constantly being assessed for promotion at work. You see, each time you make a decision, you reveal a little more about yourself. Since good leaders make good decisions, that's a logical place to look, don't you think?

When it comes to decision-making, there are two statements of advice that seem at odds with each other but are actually very sound. The first is "Never make a decision when you are angry". The other is "Never make a promise when you are happy". When we make a decision in anger or a promise in joy, we are predominantly using our emotions to derive the outcome, which are often illogical. And when we act on impulses, we would most likely end up correcting or regretting our decision, or worse, creating a new problem. Your boss and colleagues won't be pleased. So, how do we ensure we do not make bad decisions and ruin our chances of being promoted?

Gather your facts

Remember this - you don't have all the answers. In fact, knowing a subject very well may actually prevent you from making the right decision. You see, because you are so familiar with the subject, you may already have unconsciously made assumptions, which prevent you from getting to the truth. Hence, you might do well to ask for and examine all the facts about the case before you make a decision. This advice is especially useful if you are emotionally affected - either angry or happy - by the case. No matter how well versed you are with the subject, go gather all the facts needed to make an informed decision.

Take time out

Even when you have all the facts you need of the case, you may still be emotionally affected by it. Making a decision now may still lead to regret. Take time out to consider your options, even with a happy occasion because you may tend to be over-optimistic. Analyse the pros and cons of the options you have. If at all possible, discuss them with someone you trust. But do this only when your emotions have cooled down and you are ready to objectively listen to views on the subject. This is especially crucial when you are angry.

Be a person of your words

Integrity is everything. It is doing the right thing all the time and in all situations. Integrity is also about taking responsibility for our decisions. Integrity does not find excuses, meaning "I'm only human"

should never be used to explain why we made a mistake. Imagine slaving away at something your boss instructed, only to have him change his mind and going the opposite direction instead. If you wish to know just how quickly you lose the respect and trust of those around you, continue changing your mind or not keeping your word. Therefore, to avoid being labelled a person with no integrity, you would do well to avoid making decisions and promises until you have all the facts and are emotionally neutral.

Say the right thing - make it known that you are logical

Remember that you are constantly being assessed at work. If you're someone who wears your heart on your sleeves, it is probably hard for you to hide your emotions. So, what do you do when everyone knows exactly how you feel about the situation? You can start by NOT banging tables and using expletives. Instead, demonstrate how much in control you are, for instance "This is bad...but let's not panic. If we put our heads together, I'm sure we can find a solution." Let people around you know that you are logical, on top of the matter and will eventually make the right decision. In fact, by displaying positivity, you also defuse the tension and put them in the right frame of mind to work on the solution.