

5 Career Mistakes That Stall Promotions

Insights from 20+ years in People & Talent Management

In my 20+ years leading People & Talent Management, I've seen countless professionals stall their careers—not because of lack of skill, but because of avoidable mistakes. This quick guide highlights 5 of the most common ones—and how you can avoid them.

Mistake #1: Not Tracking Your Wins

Leaders don't remember everything. Keep a weekly log (Problem → Action → Outcome).

Mistake #2: Ignoring Cultural Fit

Culture impacts promotions more than performance. Learn unspoken norms, align with values.

Mistake #3: Not Building Visibility Beyond Your Boss

Promotions are influenced by informal networks. Present in cross-functional forums, mentor peers.

Mistake #4: Failing to Self-Advocate

Closed mouths don't get fed. Communicate career goals openly.

Mistake #5: Accepting a Counteroffer Without Thinking Long-Term

Counteroffers rarely solve deeper issues. Evaluate growth trajectory honestly.

Quick Action Plan

Start a weekly performance log. Identify 1 culture signal in your org this week. Build visibility by volunteering for 1 cross-team project. Book a 1:1 with your leader to discuss career goals. Think long-term before saying "yes" to a counteroffer.

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