

The 2 Ways That Professionals Can Grow Their Career

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For most people, the desire for **career growth** is a given. They'd like to grow their career over the long term, moving up the "career ladder" and accomplishing everything that they wish to accomplish.

The problem is that while many people pine for achievement and satisfaction, not enough people recognize what's involved and the crucial role they play. The goal of this article is to help define and articulate more clearly what's involved and the things of which professionals should be aware.

Let's start with this: there are **two ways** that professionals can grow their careers:

1. They can grow their career with their current employer.
2. They can grow their career by finding a better employment opportunity with another organization.

Now that we've established that, we can explore these two paths to career growth and outline important aspects of each.

Value: the currency of the day

Some professionals are under the mistaken assumption that the only true way to grow their career is by getting a new job, working it for a few years, and then getting another job. The assumption is that each job will be progressively better than the previous one, providing the rungs on the "career ladder" that the professional needs to move up.

This assumption is **false**. You can enhance your career just as much with your current employer as you would by making a move to another employer. It's all about mindset, mentality, and approach. Speaking of which, every organization, whether you work for them currently or not, wants employees that will do certain things. In fact, they want employees who will do one of **three things** specifically:

1. Make money for them.
2. Save them money.
3. Provide some type of value in place of or in addition to the value supplied in #1 and #2.

In fact, what organizations really want is somebody who will do **all three** of the things listed above. That represents a top-level employee. So let's say that you want to grow your career with your current employer. Then you must provide **value**. That could take the form of making the company money, saving the company money, or some other form of value altogether.

Or let's say you want to grow your career by getting a new job with another employer. The same principle applies. You must provide **value**. That value could, once again, take the form of making the company money, saving the company money, or some other form of value altogether.

Let's once again use the example of growing your career with your current employer. Perhaps one of the ways in which you want to grow your career is monetarily. In other words, you want a raise. Well, the amount that you're currently compensated for your services is commensurate with the level of value that you provide for the organization. There is a direct correlation between the two. So if you want more money . . . that's right, you must provide **more value**.

The Principle of Reciprocity and taking risks

If you want to grow your career, then you must add value to others first. You can't expect the growth to happen without you providing the value. You aren't going to be given raises and opportunities without first proving that you've earned them. The world, including the world of employment, does NOT work like that.

There is also an element of basic human nature involved. When somebody gives something to us, we feel compelled to give something in return. This is called the **Principle of Reciprocity**. This is the #1 philosophy to keep in mind if you're interested in growing your career, either with your current employer or with a new one. You should always focus on **giving first** and not taking. If you give first, then others will give to you.

The next critical element when it comes to growing your career is the **taking of risks**. Taking risks is necessary to grow your career. It's almost impossible to achieve growth without taking some sort of risks along the way. And it doesn't matter how you grow your career—with your current employer or with another one—you still have to take risks. Those risks will just be different in nature.

For example, here are some possible risks you'll have to take if you want to grow your career with your current employer:

- Talking with your boss about a promotion
- Talking with your boss about other positions or growth opportunities within the company
- Talking with your boss about what's making you unhappy in your current position

On the other hand, here are some possible risks you'll have to take if you want to grow your career with another employer:

- Accepting a job with another company that involves more responsibility than what you have now
- Moving to another part of the country for a better opportunity
- Moving to another country for a better opportunity

I have been a recruiter for **more than 20 years**. I've seen people take risks, and I've seen people not take risks. And I have to say that in my experience, the people who are willing to take risks are often rewarded for those risks and often enjoy more successful careers as a result.

For a professional to grow their career, they must have the ability to provide value and increase their value, they must adhere to The Principle of Reciprocity, and they must have the willingness to take risks.

Those are the elements that are crucial to long-term **career growth and satisfaction**.

