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The Two-Step Formula To Articulate Your Value To Your Boss

Being able to articulate your value is a key tool for success and advancement.



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No matter where you are in your career, you can seize the opportunity to take leadership of your own path to reach higher-level positions. So, when it comes to articulating your value to your manager to be promoted into these positions, this kind of verbal metric is a new way for leaders to think about owning their careers and advancing themselves.

Being able to articulate your value is a key tool for success and advancement. Here are three ways to successfully do just that for your next review:

Start by asking yourself these questions: Are you able to gracefully, elegantly, and clearly articulate the value that you bring, the contribution that you make? If you feel that you've had difficulty answering these questions in the past, it's likely not that you haven't met expectations, but rather that you have not clearly articulated how you've met expectations.

When you sit down to answer these questions, give yourself permission to be formulated and robotic. First, just get your words on paper, and then you can practice saying those words so that they can become more natural. Then, look for the correct and appropriate context in which you layer them in to a larger statement.

Align your value to matrix and measures. What have you done to create those results, what role did you play, and how do you feel about that? This is when you pull exact numbers to support your case, or, as I often say to leaders I coach, these are your "concrete measureable results."

The way you articulate concrete measurable results is to say something like: "As a result of my effort to do [identify your action], I have achieved [results] which provided the following specific benefits to the company, [fill in numerical data]."

To give you an example of the two-step formula in action, I'll use the story of a recent client who is an Executive Vice President in a Fortune 500 company. She felt that she should have a seat on the Executive Committee, and she had a meeting with the committee to make her case. Many of her bosses and managers agreed that she would be a good candidate, but not everyone saw that she had made concrete contributions. So, we sat down and we identified what she had done to earn that C-level title. She identified that as a result of her effort to think about the entire enterprise-wide contribution of their team to the end-goal results of their company, she was able to transform the organization and significantly improve their impact, including a figure that she could identify in real dollars in the seven-figure range. By being able to articulate the sentence: "As a result of doing this, I've achieved these results, with this specific benefit for the company," she got clear and more confident about what she had actually achieved, and what she had led her team to do. Then she was able to look for appropriate ways to say to the executive committee members: "This is the team that started here, these are some of the things we've accomplished, here's how we've benefited, and here's how the company is moving forward--and I'd like to lead a discussion on where that actually takes us next."

Remember, being able to articulate your value isn't bragging--your statement is simply a fact put into context. Verbalizing your contributions for others in a way that deepens understanding of the bigger picture of what's working for the company as a whole can be a real contribution to your organization as well.

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