Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Being Promoted Into a Job That Does Not Suit Me

In today's society, many of us feel under constant pressure to move ahead in our careers and make more money. Promotions are seen as the goal and are generally viewed as a positive and necessary reward for our hard work. In reality, however, promotions don't always turn out to be positive experiences. When companies are reducing staff numbers to save money, they may give increasing responsibilities to remaining employees without first ensuring that the "chosen" are qualified for their new roles. Additionally, some people simply don't want the added demands that a promotion brings. If you are among those feeling uncomfortable with a recent promotion, determining where the problems lie will be the first step to finding a solution.



Tips and Tools You Can Use

It's important to identify whether your unhappiness stems from a lack of qualifications for your new responsibilities or a poor personality fit, or whether the problem lies instead in increasing demands that conflict with your personal needs and goals. Here are some great tips to help you find the right solution:

Before Accepting a Promotion

- Check the job description against your strengths and skills.
- Talk to the former employee in the role to find out what works for the new job.
- Decide whether you will be able to bridge the gaps between your strengths and the new job requirements.
- Consider whether skill upgrading might be required.
- Communicate openly with your boss about any concerns and suggest ways to overcome them e.g., training courses, work delegation, etc.
- If you fear the promotion may leave you with little personal flexibility or eat into your personal time too much, ask your boss about flexible hours.
- If you are certain the new job is not for you, let your boss know why you are declining and, if need be, suggest options that could make you change your mind.

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Already in Your New Job

- Reflect on your current unhappiness and try to identify the cause.
- List the things you dislike about your new role.
- Do you feel you are lacking the skills for your new responsibilities?
- Is work overload the real culprit?
- Do you have the skills but dislike your new role?
- What is it about the new role that you dislike?
- Are you unhappy with the extra demands on your time that have accompanied your promotion?
- Are job demands conflicting with your personal or family needs?
- Were you perfectly happy in your previous job with no ambition to climb any higher?
- Recognize that if you are the first to take on the job title, you are experimenting with what works and can expect to have to make speedy recoveries from mistakes. Be patient as you feel your way and keep communication lines open with your boss.

Finding Solutions

- Review your job description to ensure it reflects the actual job requirements.
- Discuss any discrepancies with your boss.
- Assess the job description against your strengths and weaknesses.
- If your strengths aren't a good fit, consider whether skill upgrading could solve the problem. Suggest courses or on-the-job training that could make you more effective in your new role.
- Take a positive attitude with your boss. Make it clear you want to help find the right solutions for the company.
- If work overload is the issue, keep a log of where your time is going. Problem-solve with your boss to find ways to handle the overload.
- If the new job is simply not a fit with your personality or your life goals, consider what the chances are of regaining your previous position. If it has already been filled, begin a job search while still in your current job.

Being promoted into a job that does not suit you can affect your emotional and physical health and well-being. Taking the time to consider the benefits as well as the consequences of a promotion is especially needed in today’s economic climate. Utilize the tips above before accepting a new position or if you have already done so, consult with a professional who can provide you with additional assistance and help get you on the right track to a successful career.