



Don't Ask for Career Advice Until You Read This

Just asking for career advice is good for your professional life. On the other hand, you may want to think carefully before you act on it.

According to a recent study by Harvard Business School, asking for advice has important benefits for your career. Your colleagues will feel flattered and tend to view you as more competent. On the other hand, you have to figure out what recommendations are appropriate and useful for you.

Learn how to recognize advice that is compatible with your unique career path. Take a look at these suggestions for sorting out the guidance that you receive.

Benefits of Receiving Career Advice

1. **Enhance your relationships.** Asking someone for guidance suggests that you value their expertise and insights. Colleagues will tend to like you because they feel that you like them. If you're concerned about appearing weak, keep in mind that showing a little vulnerability may deepen your personal connections.
2. **Share information.** We can achieve more when we pull together. When you give and take advice, you're adding to the knowledge base in your workplace.

3. **Promote objectivity.** While you need to make your own decisions, receiving feedback helps. *Others can see solutions that we miss because we're hesitant to make changes or face difficult issues.*

Strategies for Encouraging Career Advice

1. **Clarify your purpose.** Know when you want advice and when you're really seeking something else like validation or sympathy. Asking for what you need increases your chances of receiving effective support.
2. **Set an example.** Be tactful and generous about sharing helpful advice. Your co-workers will be more likely to do the same for you.
3. **Express your thanks.** Let others know how much you appreciate their time and effort. Tell them how their guidance helped you to land a job or ask for a raise. *Making positive changes in your actions will show them that you're putting their pointers to good use.*

Strategies for Evaluating Career Advice

1. **Listen carefully.** Quality input requires listening to each other so that we understand the situation and our objectives. A wise counsel will hear you out before making recommendations.
2. **Consider the source.** You can learn something from each person you meet, but think about how much experience they have with the subject matter you're dealing with. Also, try to determine if their personal bias may be coloring their views.
3. **Welcome opposing views.** *You'll probably find that your most treasured advice comes from colleagues you respectfully disagree with.* It gives you an opportunity to change your mind or examine the reasoning behind your position.
4. **Assess relevancy.** Someone who has faced similar challenges may have practical insights into how to handle a social media campaign or convert your database. You also need tips that are suitable for each stage of a career. What works for an intern may be off base for a senior executive.
5. **Seek consistency.** Some brilliant ideas may be out of the mainstream. On the other hand, you may wind up off track if you pursue a course that conflicts with the conventional wisdom.
6. **Browse online.** You can find teachers on the internet too. Professional forums give you access to a wide range of opinions. The relative anonymity may also make it easier to have candid discussions.

7. **Determine the impact.** Remember that you're the one who will be living with the results of your decision. *How much effort and risk can you tolerate to achieve your goals?*

Welcome career advice, but be cautious about how you apply it. Gather facts, listen to your intuition, and take control of your own destiny.