

Bring Added Value by Connie Podesta

WHAT ADDED VALUE DO you bring to your job that directly contributes to the financial stability, success, and growth of your organization? If your manager asked you this question, how would you respond? Would your response be persuasive? Your ability to demonstrate through performance and behavior that you are a vital part of the team can determine your future employability.

Decision-makers are often overwhelmed with demands. As a result, they are often unaware of your positive contributions. Negative things come to their attention first, so you need to demonstrate and document the value you add. Don't expect your boss to notice your extra work, additional training, creative ideas, and special projects. You may be enthusiastic and intelligent, communicate effectively, exhibit strong leadership skills, embrace change, work efficiently, and possess technical competence and strong interpersonal skills—yet still find yourself unemployed simply because you fail to persuade your boss that the skills, ideas, and commitment you bring to your work are vital to team success.

Help make money:

If your organization is committed to making a profit by providing top-quality products and services along with extra value to its customers, then you must show how your job contributes to that pursuit.

Organizations make money by retaining current customers and bringing in new customers. Your value will be related to the positive impact you have on these goals. If you do not have direct customer contact (either servicing existing customers or attracting new customers) or work for or with those who do, your job may not be perceived as vital.

The customer ultimately determines the ability to make a profit. As Sam Walton, founder of Wal-Mart, said: "There is only one boss—the customer. And he can fire everybody, by spending his money elsewhere."

This means that you must be 100 percent committed to bringing in new customers and keeping the ones you have. Make the customer your focus daily by doing your job in a way that will have a positive impact upon those who deal with customers. You must bring added value in the form of profits by focusing on the impact on customers.

Stand Out in a Positive Way:

You stand out when you add value to your job and your decision-makers know who you are and what you do. Your presence must be felt in a positive way and linked to the contributions you personally make.

Many people argue, whine, and complain about their jobs, duties, customers, equipment, and co-workers. If you attract attention by being negative, don't be surprised when you lose your job! Negative attention does not help. People should associate your name, face, and expertise with positive feelings about your work, your teamwork, your customer commitment, and the value you bring.

Do your customers, co-workers, and supervisors know who you are? And if they do, would a discussion about you and your work be positive and favorable? Are you essential to your organization's growth? Are you the one person your company should retain and never let go? Even if all your answers are yes, you still need to document your contribution. You don't need to brag or boast, but you do need to maintain a healthy self-confidence and blow your own horn a bit to sell yourself. You should be able to say: "I do some very special things for this organization. I should be recognized as someone they need to keep because of the added value I bring to my job. It's up to me to let them know how and what I contribute." Have a positive attitude, and soon your energy and enthusiasm will help motivate your colleagues and customers.

Communicate assertively and work cooperatively in team settings. Be flexible and accept change when a new idea seems appropriate. Let your employer know how you can best help increase productivity and profitability. And keep your negative thoughts, complaints, and energy to yourself. To stay employed, determine how you bring added value and discover ways to share or demonstrate your value with those in charge. Think of the ways you can help make money, save money, inform management about your accomplishments, and position yourself as a valuable and vital employee. Once you determine these

factors, you can answer the all-important question: “What added value do you bring to your job that contributes directly to the financial stability, success, and growth?”

ACTION: Prove your value to your organization.