Growing in Place with Stretch Assignments

Stretch assignments are ways to grow while still doing your primary job. Sometimes a manager will stretch you by giving you a little something to do that’s out of your comfort zone. By taking such an assignment, you will learn new skills and grow. You’ll also be demonstrating your value to the organization.

You can initiate a stretch assignment too! Do you see something that needs doing? Is there something you’d like to learn? Have you seen your manager struggling with a workload? Is there something on the back burner that you can bring forward?

A stretch assignment is based on business and departmental needs. It isn’t about what you need, it is about what the business needs and how you can help. If you see a stretch opportunity, ask about it. Don’t be discouraged if the answer is no. You’ve demonstrated your willingness to help and the next time you ask, you just may get the assignment.

MAKE YOUR STRETCH ASSIGNMENT A SUCCESS:

1. Think 70/30% – take the assignment if you are 70% confident and capable with the work – If it is a huge stretch (light years away from where you are now), you may not have the time, energy or skills to get it done well.
2. Be clear on the objectives and outcomes of the assignment – can you under promise and over deliver?
3. If your manager is not as available for you as you’d like with the assignment, see if there is someone else who can guide you and/or be your go-to-person.
4. Don’t forget about your primary job – be sure you are keeping all the balls in the air and/or delegating work to others while you are on a special assignment.

Own your career development. Always be thinking about how you can grow and learn as stretch assignments are a great way to step up and stand out.

CHECK OUT THESE VIDEOS

- Stretch Assignments for Your Team.
- Be Heard in a Sea of Cubicles.