Navigating Pay, Promotions and Power at Work

The Unspoken Truths for Career Success

Tessa White

A PDF Companion to the Audiobook
The Problem with Companies

The Scales Aren't Tipped in Your Favor

Company

Employee

where are your results?

I deserve more pay!!

Cullyn Cowell
The Problem with People

My Beliefs About the Workplace

Write down your score from 1 to 10 on each statement, with a 10 meaning you strongly agree with the statement.

- “If I push to improve my work-life balance, my job will be in jeopardy.” ________
- “If I work harder, the company will eventually see it and reward me.” ________
- “Only those who play the politics game can get a promotion.” ________
- “If I have the right title, I can be more strategic.” ________
- “If there is a problem with my performance, I will know about it.” ________
- “If I push back and create conflict, it will hurt my career.” ________
- “If I get overloaded at work, the best approach is to push hard to get caught up.” ________
- “If I’ve been a great performer, I should be able to get a solid raise at annual appraisals.” ________
- “If I had a clearer understanding of my job description, I could be more successful.” ________
- “There’s not much I can do about company burnout other than change jobs.” ________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>90–100 POINTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>70–90 POINTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>60–70 POINTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>40–60 POINTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0–40 POINTS</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would it surprise you to know that every single one of these statements is false—or at least mostly false? The higher your cumulative number, the tougher it will be for you to reframe your beliefs, because it’s a reflection of how you have framed the workforce already. The higher your number, the more skeptical you may be as to whether the company or anything you do can create a positive career experience. I don’t disagree that your experiences have shaped your views, but I may disagree with your reasons for why these experiences occurred. If this is the case, know that the work ahead will be harder for you than for someone with a lower score because you will be looking for negative points that reinforce your beliefs.
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Lies About Performance

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This is YOU

10%
Below Expectations

70%
Meets Expectations

20%
Exceeds Expectations

Performance Appraisal Distribution

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FIGURE 1
5

Lies About Power

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# GAP WORKSHEET

## CONSIDERATIONS

**GAP**
- What isn’t working right?
- What slows business or processes down?
- What is being overlooked that could give better business results?
- Is there an action or outcome I can control that aligns to company initiatives?

**EVIDENCE**
- What data or evidence do I have that tells me there is a problem?

**DESERVED OUTCOMES**
- How would I know I’ve solved this problem? What would success look like?
- If you can, detail how you would measure improvement.

## CONSIDERATIONS

**ACCESS**
- What do I need in order to take this on?
- People/Teams
- Tools
- Budget
- Skills
- Buy-in

## CONSIDERATIONS

**PLAN**
- What is the first step I can take to solve it?
- 01.
- 02.
Getting Comfortable with Conflict

The GAP Model
CONFLICT RESOLUTION

01 IDENTIFY THE GAP?
What Was Expected?
What Was Observed?

02 IDENTIFY CONSEQUENCES
To you
To project/task
To others

03 PROBLEM SOLVING
Who does what by when?

04 THE HAND-OFF
Is there something going on I don’t understand?
Is this what you intended?
How do you see it?

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FIGURE 2
Lies About Promotability

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FIGURE 3
Promotability: Early-Stage Careers

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FIGURE 4
10

Promotability: Mid-Stage Careers

6th Grade Tessa
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**FIGURE 5**
Promotability: Senior Leadership

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FIGURE 6
Lies About Pay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example: Paul Versus Annie</th>
<th>PLODDING PAUL</th>
<th>ACCELERATOR ANNIE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age Start</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age End</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years Worked</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starting Salary</strong></td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Raise %</strong></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in Lifetime Earnings</strong></td>
<td>2,161,370</td>
<td>4,065,126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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FIGURE 7
14

Lies About Company Loyalty

Order Matters

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## Identify the Time-Wasters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME-WASTERS</th>
<th>TIME SPENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much time did you spend reading emails where you were cc’d (but didn’t need to reply)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much time did you spend answering or organizing emails?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much time did you spend in meetings that weren’t relevant or useful or could have been handled differently (through a shorter meeting or email)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much time did you spend on hold (either on personal or business calls)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much time was spent on nonproductive talk or taking extra breaks?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Identify Critical Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITICAL WORK</th>
<th>TIME SPENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much time did you spend working on department initiatives?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much time was spent working on speeding up processes or adding more value to existing processes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much time was spent on the work that you think makes a meaningful difference?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Politics Report Card**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Current Company - Tech</th>
<th>My Old Company - Healthcare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Speed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast</td>
<td>Fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>Slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Line of Sight</strong></td>
<td><strong>Line of Sight</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short - 1 yr</td>
<td>Short - 1 yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long 3-5 yr</td>
<td>Long 3-5 yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Innovation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Innovation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk</strong></td>
<td><strong>Risk</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimentation</td>
<td>Experimentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get it Right</td>
<td>Get it Right</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**FIGURE 8**
5 Principles of Politics

- **Speed**: Fast/Slow
- **Risk**: Experimentation/Get it Right
- **Innovation**: High/Traditional
- **Autonomy**: Independent/Collaborative
- **Line of Sight**: Short- 1 yr/Long 3-5 yr

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**FIGURE 9**
# Politics Report Card

## My Company Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speed</strong></td>
<td>Fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Line Of Sight</strong></td>
<td>Short-1 yr, Long 3-5 yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Innovation</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk</strong></td>
<td>Experimentation, Get it Right</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## My Work Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speed</strong></td>
<td>Fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Line Of Sight</strong></td>
<td>Short-1 yr, Long 3-5 yr</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Innovation</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk</strong></td>
<td>Experimentation, Get it Right</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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CONCLUSION

Should I Stay
or Should I Go?
Work Values Rankings

**SCORING**

10

1

**GROWTH/LEARNING**

- It’s important I’m constantly stretching myself learning and growing.
- I get bored if I’m not stretched.

**FLEXIBILITY**

- I prefer to have power over my own work hours and location of work (such as remote)
- I am comfortable working in a traditional 9 to 5 office environment

**RISK**

- I could take a risk at a start-up or experimental job title
- I need a stable company or job that is well-defined

**AUTONOMY**

- It is important I can develop how and when the job is done
- I thrive in an environment with training and structured processes.

**CONNECTION**

- It is important to have an environment where there is connection with people I enjoy
- I can work with about anybody and don’t need a strong team connection

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**My Personal Values Ranking**

- GROWTH/LEARNING: 8
- FLEXIBILITY: 4
- RISK: 6
- AUTONOMY: 7
- CONNECTION: 7

**Company Values Ranking**

- GROWTH/LEARNING: 2
- FLEXIBILITY: X
- RISK: 9
- AUTONOMY: 4
- CONNECTION: 8
VALUES ANALYSIS EXERCISE

1. In this exercise, you will give two sets of 1 to 10 rankings. The first will be your own personal rankings for each of the categories. The second set will be to rank your company (or the company you want to join).

2. Cross out any value categories you have personally ranked at a 5 or below (they do not meet a threshold of a high value to you).

3. Circle any areas where the company value ranking is at least two points less than your personal ranking. This shows areas where the company is not aligning with your values ranking.

4. Ignore areas where the company value ranking is at least two points more than your personal value ranking. In these arenas, the company is overdelivering.

After completing the exercise, reflect on these questions:

- Where are the biggest gaps between me and the company?
- What does this tell me about what I need?
- Can I see a path in my current company to close the gaps?
- If I cannot see a path to stay, what do the scoring gaps between me and my company suggest I need to look for?
My Personal Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING</th>
<th>GROWTH/LEARNING</th>
<th>FLEXIBILITY</th>
<th>RISK</th>
<th>AUTONOMY</th>
<th>CONNECTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>It’s important I’m constantly stretching myself learning and growing.</td>
<td>I prefer to have power over my own work hours and location of work (such as remote)</td>
<td>I could take a risk at a start-up or experimental job title</td>
<td>It is important I can develop how and when the job is done</td>
<td>It is important to have an environment where there is connection with people I enjoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>VS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I get bored if I’m not stretched.</td>
<td>I am comfortable working in a traditional 9 to 5 office environment</td>
<td>I need a stable company or job that is well-defined</td>
<td>I thrive in an environment with training and structured processes</td>
<td>I can work with about anybody and don’t need a strong team connection</td>
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My Personal Values Ranking

Company Values Ranking