



## It's a Popularity Contest!

- **Be popular.** In an ideal world, promotions would be based solely on merit. We don't live in an ideal world, though, and office politics will often play a role in who gets promoted and who doesn't.
- **Use and develop your people skills.** Be kind and helpful to your coworkers, supervisors, and underlings.
- **Develop relationships with people you work with,** play golf with the boss, and get to know people (other than your immediate supervisor) who make decisions in the company.
- **Be present at company events and networking gatherings.**
- **Meet people from outside your department.**
- **Take a personal interest in your co-workers lives.**
- A strong relationship with a manager or someone higher up in your department can open a lot of doors for you.
- For one thing, you'll likely learn a lot about the organization and about the jobs you might want to get in the future.
- For another, you'll have an ally who will be willing to go to bat for you when you do decide to apply for a new opportunity.
- Finally, your mentor may groom you to succeed him or her when they move up or retire.
- It's a common paradox: you're so good at your job that you're indispensable, but you're so indispensable in your current position that the company would fall apart if you were to leave that position.
- The solution to this problem is to take another employee under your wing and train him or her so that they will be ready to fill your shoes if you get promoted. Some people are afraid that their understudy will take their job if they do this, but as long as you're a great employee and continue to develop your skills, the only way you'll lose your current job is by getting promoted. Training another employee (or several) also shows that you have management skills and that you care about helping other employees develop their skills.
- If you figure out a better way to do your existing job or see the need for a new position, don't be afraid to talk to management about creating this position.
- Since you're the one who saw the need and, presumably, you're best qualified for the position, this can help you take on new responsibilities, even if you don't get a big pay raise at first.
- Look for new areas that your businesses competition are working on and see if there is a possibility to work in this sector or lead up a new challenge.