

## My life and my career are my own adventure

By Belinda Engelbrecht

### 7 way to actively manage your career

You go to work, you do your work, and you come home wondering where this is all going. You wonder what your next step is. What you can be doing to elevate your career. So, you ask your manager. And your manager stares at you blankly and points you to your bids and presentation. You're confused and head back to your desk.

It is too easy to continue this routine until you get frustrated with your current situation and start looking elsewhere. What's the problem with this story? You're not managing your career. You're doing your work. You're talking to your manager, but you aren't actively managing your career. You're looking for your boss to manage it for you. Problem is: Your boss is busy managing his or her career. So.... you need to start managing yours. You need to own it.

Apart from the seven steps, you can also check out how to advance your career with certification at the [Certification Syllabus](#)



**Set and communicate clear goals**

The key to getting what you want is knowing what you want. You must know what you want out of your career and you should be clear about these goals with your manager and your mentor. These goals are also great ways to measure your progress through the year and years in your regular performance reviews.



**Create an open feedback loop**

The hardest thing to do is to hear honest feedback, because it isn't always positive. But, the ability to listen to all feedback and adjust accordingly is what will elevate your career. Be sure you are open to the good, the bad and the ugly feedback. This will help you adjust your work and your goals.



**Think about your accomplishments differently**

Try to think about your work in terms of NEAR: Numbers, Examples, Achievements, and Results. We all have responsibilities. But the people who stand out talk about their responsibilities in terms of numbers, achievements, and results and they have examples to back it up. What numbers, examples, achievements, and results did you produce this year?



**Manage your work samples**

You probably do a great proposal or two per quarter and one that definitely meets the NEAR criteria. You know, a project or deliverable that you are super proud of that contributed to the success of the company. Take that work and store it in a special folder on your computer or in the cloud.



**Get in the conversation**

Read industry publications, websites and blogs. Share the best articles and have a point of view of your own. Position yourself as a voice of the industry and a valuable resource within your professional community. When you see great content, make an insightful comment and connect with influencers in the industry.



**Raise your hand**

When a new proposal comes up and it aligns with your goals, raise that hand. Let your manager know that you want to learn some new skills or gain new, more advanced experience. Be clear on what you can offer to the project and get involved.



**Spend time maintaining it**

I know you're busy working and getting things done. This is the extra stuff that's required to take ownership of your career. I personally spend a few hours a week in the conversation and connecting with new people. I also spend about an hour a quarter maintaining my best work files and my social profiles. It isn't a ton of investment; it's just a new habit to create in managing your own career trajectory.

