

Nicola Davies examines the positives and negatives of a promotion at work and offers tips on how to adjust

Onwards and upwards

Managing a promotion can be a stressful experience, as well as cause for celebration.

The benefits – recognition, responsibility and better pay – can sometimes be outweighed by the downsides of a new post. Initially, promotion can leave employees feeling isolated.

They may be in a new team having left their peers behind. Or they may have become their peers' superior, making delegation a greater challenge.

Promoted employees often find it difficult to adapt to their role. New skills and approaches to time management may be needed. The role could demand new interpersonal skills.

Preparation is key

If you are prepared for possible issues, the change is likely to run more smoothly. There are ways to grasp the challenges of a promotion while enjoying the new position.

- ▶ Adapt your mindset to the new role.
- ▶ Develop a team.
- ▶ If necessary, build a new peer group.
- ▶ Be open-minded and confident – you were promoted for a reason.
- ▶ Ask questions.
- ▶ Seek relevant training.
- ▶ Find a mentor – someone to whom you can talk to freely.
- ▶ Learn from mistakes.
- ▶ Develop coping strategies such as stress management techniques and support networks.

Managers do not expect a recently promoted employee to have all the answers. There is nothing wrong with asking for help, or for the role to be clarified. Employees should

make full use of any formal training and find a mentor who can help them navigate their way.

It is important to recognise the need to do things differently and make a commitment to meet expectations. It is worth talking to colleagues operating at a senior level as they can help identify any new skills needed.

Developing communication and influencing skills can pay dividends. So can working on stress levels and staying calm, open-minded and positive. Learn from mistakes.

If a promotion does not work out it is most likely a reflection of problems in the organisation. The organisation should convey its expectations of individual roles and provide appropriate training and managerial support to staff appointed to new positions **NS**

Nicola Davies is a writer and health psychologist



LESSONS

An RCN report has revealed ward managers believe they lack training support. Richard Staines talks to three of them about their learning opportunities

The RCN has shown that many ward sisters and charge nurses are unhappy with the training opportunities available to them. The findings were based on focus group discussions with ward managers about a range of issues, including training.

Ward sisters play a central role in maintaining high standards of patient care. They manage the clinical nursing workforce that delivers direct care to patients and liaise with managers about what is needed on the wards.

Ward sisters require a broad set of skills. As well as clinical abilities, they need good managerial skills to ensure the ward team functions as an efficient unit (see box).

Mixed response

Joan Francis, ward sister at London's Moorfield Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, says she has been lucky to receive the training she has requested, whereas colleagues in other organisations have not been as fortunate.

Ms Francis says: 'I have done the training that I wanted. I have to argue for it, but it is not a major problem for my employer.'

'If we ask for a tutorial, or to attend a module or workshop, we mostly get it. But there are other situations where it is difficult for staff to be released to do courses.'