

How to Self-Promote without Sounding Arrogant

Shifting your mindset to authentically boost yourself and your work

- Contextualize your contribution on how you help and can help.
 - If someone says something like "I heard your project is going really well.", take this as an opportunity to plug how you have helped the team succeed. When you put it in the context of "helping" it feels and sounds more selfless.
 - For example, you may respond with "Oh yes! I have been doing work to uncover insights which is helping us better understand our customer. The insights are helping our sales team to do some fantastic work in fine tuning our sales pitches." What the listener heard is "Interesting...maybe I could use similar work on my project to uncover insights."
 - Here is the clincher, you say "I would be more than happy to set-up some time with your to take you through it in more detail." Now, you have established yourself as an expert resource and you are helping to build capability within your organization and your business.
 - Mindset shift: If you aren't being overt on how you can help, you are really doing a disservice to your organization and your business. This really is an art and it takes time to finesse. It may feel awkward at first as you work to shift your mindset, but it is an essential tool and such a good way to take ego out of the conversation. We all like to feel helpful. This is not "pulling a fast one." That is the wrong mentality to take.
- Flatter others as you promote yourself.
 - When you lift others up, it doesn't sound conceited to lift yourself up in the process. And, it elevates the impact of your work. This speaks to aptitude, that you understand how your work impacts the organization and the business and that you are in-tune to what the org and business needs to be successful.
 - This is also a way to promote your team as you promote yourself. Many will sacrifice their contribution for the sake of the team to share credit and avoid sounding arrogant. This is especially true of managers.
 - People's tendency is to follow up their own accolades with the accolades of others way too quickly. Which makes you sound uncomfortable and unappreciative of the accolades. And worse, they will use self-deprecating behavior which serves no one.
 - Mindset shift: You can promote yourself AND your team. You don't have to sacrifice yourself in the process. It is okay to say thank you and take the compliment.
- Emphasize the effort behind the accomplishments.
 - We have a tendency to undermine our accomplishments with phrases like "Oh, it was nothing." Even if this is true, why say it? It comes from a natural tendency to be humble, but this is where that characteristic may not be moving you towards your goals.
 - Making sure people appreciate the level of effort to takes to deliver great impact is super important. Even if it is in fact easy for you. The effort isn't diminished because you are just better at doing it.
 - Humble, high-performers need to be especially careful. If you say or act like it isn't a big deal or it is so simple to someone who legitimately doesn't understand or appreciate it, you run the risk of sounding arrogant (which is contrary to your intention) and making people feel stupid. The extreme of this is imposter's syndrome when you don't feel like you have anything of value to add even though people know you do. You just come off looking aloof and condescending.
 - The watch-out here is to not throw people under the bus to make yourself look good.
 - Don't sand-bag by making it more complicated than it really is. This is not job security. This is a scream for process facilitation.
 - Mindset shift: Give yourself credit for being good at what you do by respecting the effort. There is no arrogance in doing it this way. If you work hard and get great results, you deserve the recognition.
- Volunteer to lead training or give a presentation around something you excel at.
 - If the training doesn't exist, develop it. It can be something as simple as a lunch-and-learn. If you provide free lunch, people will come. If you are virtual, offer other incentives you know people would like and as the boss to come. People are more tempted to be there if they think the boss will be there regardless if s/he shows up.
 - Provide useful tools and processes as take-aways that can be utilized. AND take ownership for them. You don't need to be so overt in saying "Anne's rules for social strategy", but you can put your name and date in the footer. Which is helpful as they travel so that people know who to come back to if they have questions, etc.
 - This is a very tactical way of executing point #1 which is all about being of service. It also has the natural tendency to make you the expert in the eyes of your colleagues, management, etc.
 - Case studies are another great of self-promoting. Again, by default, you get the credit because you are giving the presentation. It is just human nature. Your name becomes associated with it in conversations.
 - Mindset shift: Be a teacher. Put your name in the footer. Also, consider recording the presentation so it can travel with the deck. Then, you get the credit for the info AND the way it was presented.

