

How to create career advantage

Creating career advantage supports us to stand out even more in our squiggly careers, pulling opportunities and possibilities our way.

This advantage is created on individual terms, supporting personal growth, rather than through comparison with others. Career advantage is not about 'winning' versus other people, but how we can achieve our own success.

If we navigate our squiggly careers in this way, we become successful by our own standards.

Coach yourself question

What has given me a career advantage in my career so far?



5 ways to create your own career advantage



1. Acceleration opportunities

Getting involved in things that move your career forward faster and helps you do some 'look-ahead learning.'

Ask yourself:

- 🔗 What high-profile problems can I help solve?
- 🔗 What high-profile situations can I get involved in (events etc.)?

Saying yes to something you've not done before can showcase your learning agility, accelerating your progress and growth.

2. Continual improvement habits

Being a work-in-progress, always willing to learn and improve by:

Seeking and giving fast and frequent feedback: *what would 1% better look and feel like?*

Creating your own operating system which helps you show up at your best: *time-blocking doesn't work, what does that mean for me?*

Taking a coaching approach: *I found my flow in that meeting; what was I doing well?*

3. Sponsorship

Sponsors have influence over areas that are important to you and can advocate for you in conversations when you're not in the room.

Ask yourself:

- 🔗 Who is a manager or a mentor that could sponsor me?
- 🔗 How can I remind them about the evidence of my impact?
- 🔗 How can I keep them updated on the support I need?

4. Known for something

Being known for something, not just the job / job title, but having a talent, a skill or a behaviour that people identify with you positively.

Having a trait or talent makes you unique and memorable.

Start by deciding what it is you want to be known for then ask yourself:

- 🔗 How do I make sure that this trait or talent is visible both in and out of my role?

5. Knowing what's needed

Early on in a conversation, asking a question that helps you to see what mood people are in and how they want to connect with you can give you an advantage.

This can help you to adapt 'enough' and create a point of connection. Ask others:

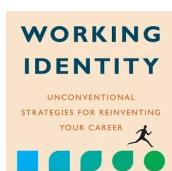
- 🔗 What's most useful for us to talk about together today?
- 🔗 How's your week going?

Coach yourself question

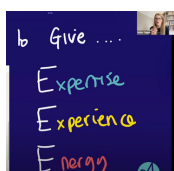
Looking ahead, what projects could create a career advantage for me?



Recommended resources



Working Identity: Unconventional Strategies for Reinventing Your Career
by Herminia Ibarra



How to create career karma
PodPlus episode discussing how to increase the value of your career community.



Helen and Sarah share what you can do to explore your progression possibilities on #220 of Squiggly Careers.