Now Is the Time for Hustlers

Your ability to help your company solve its toughest issues and bridge gaps is your greatest asset.

Grow Your Business, Not Your Inbox

Stay informed and join our daily newsletter now!

July 6, 2020 3 min read

Opinions expressed by *Entrepreneur* contributors are their own.

Getting or staying employed in 2020 has less to do with following your job description to a tee and more to do with finding and solving the hairiest problems that exist in your sphere of influence. All of us are now required to do more with less. That’s why it’s so important to think about how you add value to your employer. Any employee who can solve problems in the gap between what a company is today versus what they hope to become will find safety as well as leverage for future pay and promotions.

Here are the key questions to help you find the gaps and create innovative solutions to bridge them.

What keeps your boss up at night?

Your day-to-day responsibilities may not be as aligned to the big problems that need to be solved. Your leader is thinking about the problems that are creating logjams in your company’s functioning and preventing the team from going faster or getting work done more effectively. Asking your boss what those greatest concerns are will give you a great starting

point for how you can accelerate meaningful contributions. This discussion also gives you a great way to align with their priorities, especially if your company or boss isn't discussing this with the team on a regular basis.

Related: Top 5 Crisis-Response Steps for Entrepreneurs

If I was a fly on the wall, what would I see?

Combining your investigation of your leader's pain points with your own unique vantage point as an employee will help you see how you can contribute. Seeing your workplace like a fly on the wall, as a neutral observer, can quickly show you gaps. This is why new employees can come in and see the world through fresh eyes. Often, we get so close to the problems that we accept what "is" and stop putting in place ideas and solutions that can make our companies better. Companies are re-imagining how we work and engage with customers. Your perspective is unique and valuable.

Does this problem require a cross-functional approach?

Gaps frequently cross over into other departments, adding complexity and making it tempting not to take it on. If you catch yourself saying, "It's out of my hands now" or, "It's not in my job description," it's time to engage other team members in departments outside your own to create an end-to-end solution. Most gaps in companies are not solved without cross-collaboration. Moving into the unfamiliar is difficult, but there is a double benefit in reaching out beyond your comfort zone: You increase the likelihood of solving the issues when all relevant parties are invested, and you get to expand your own influence in the organization.

Related: How the Behavior of Job-Seekers Has Changed Since February (Infographic)

Finding the gaps and being part of the solution will increase your visibility and add to your credibility, which is the greatest job security of all. Those who are waiting for direction or who just keep doing the same job the same way day after day will fall behind. Those who bridge the gap will win.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/352690