

TOP 5 REASONS YOU NEED EVERYTHING IN WRITING!

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Did your mama ever tell you “Follow the actions, not the words”? Well, mama knew what she was talking about, especially when it comes to your career. There is nothing worse than being strung along. Whether in a relationship or on the job (especially on the job), nobody wants to be kept waiting for what’s been promised. And trust me when I tell you the best way to ensure this doesn’t happen to you is to ask for everything — and I do mean EVERYTHANG — in writing.

Let’s use what happened to my friend as an example. He essentially left one sinking ship of a job and jumped into a frying pan at another company in order to stay in his industry and still have a j-o-b. Well, when he jumped into the frying pan, which was on fire due to a crisis, he was promised that if he took the position immediately, he would be given a raise and his duties and position would change once they got through this very rough patch. Because of my friend’s integrity, he put his head down and went to work.

He did such great work that he just knew that when it was time for his quarterly review, there would be talk of the promised pay raise and job change. Do you know that one year later he is still waiting? And because he was so excited just to have a job and trusted the integrity of the hiring manager, he failed to get the finer details of the agreement regarding the new duties and salary increase in writing. Big mistake. Or “YUGE!” to quote one politico known for hyperbole.

It can be intimidating to get things in writing, especially when the onus is on you to ask for it, but it really is for your own protection. Here are five reasons why anything and everything concerning your career should be written up:

- Bosses move on, but the promises they made to you shouldn’t
- Hiring managers get amnesia, intentionally or unintentionally
- Details that are specified in writing can’t be disputed, so everyone has clarity
- You can better CYA (cover your azz) if it’s in writing
- You never know when you’ll need proof

These days, getting all the finer details in writing doesn’t have to be uncomfortable. In fact, thanks to email, social media platforms that are all about building your network and enhancing employability (think LinkedIn), and text messaging, you can Hansel-and-Gretel it and leave a trail that takes you back to what was promised to you.

It can be as simple as a confirmation email that says:

Hi (boss’s name),

I just wanted to let you know how excited I am about our conversation earlier today. I am looking forward to having the bigger cubicle space by the end of this month. I am copying (so-and-so) on this message, so they will be prepared to help with the move, if necessary. I’ve assigned a follow-up flag to this message to ensure everything goes smoothly on the scheduled date of April 29, 2018. Thanks again for making this happen.

Boom! You have written verification that a conversation actually happened on a particular date.

While emailing and texting aren't formal contracts, they are valid forms of written communication. They have staying power and make it a tad more difficult to dispute that a conversation about a certain topic took place.

In the example of my friend, luckily he did have his original offer in writing, but it didn't define a date. He is currently seeking a lawyer to help him get what was promised. He now knows the importance of getting all the facts nailed down in writing up front.

And let this be your takeaway message for today: even if you think you trust the person making you the promise of a promotion, job, or new corner office; and even if you think nothing can go wrong between the promise and its execution, don't fall prey to the okey-doke. GET. IT. IN. WRITING.

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