

Are You Irreplaceable?

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Three Ways You Can Become an Irreplaceable Employee

By Kelsey Meyer

The most important interview question I ask prospective employees for my [online PR](#) firm is, “How will you add value to our company?” This single question gives me a good idea about what they believe makes them valuable, and it sheds light on why they might just be irreplaceable. Once they are hired, we don’t stop asking this question. I believe employees who truly care about their jobs and the companies they work for are consistently evaluating how they can add value. Creating value is what distinguishes good employees from those you simply can’t do without. Creating value is what makes you irreplaceable.

Here are three ways you can add value and make yourself an irreplaceable employee:

1. Form genuine relationships with clients/partners

Irreplaceable employees keep their eyes open for relationships and partnerships that will bring true value to their companies. They work tirelessly at these relationships in order to help grow the company. An example of this would be Peter Campbell in the show *Mad Men*. In the first season, Don Draper was ready to fire Pete, but was told he couldn’t because Pete held the key to many vital relationships. I am not advocating that you act like a bad employee while zealously protecting relationships to secure your safety. Instead, I’m suggesting that you genuinely care about the clients you deal with and the relationships you form for your company. This way, the company as a whole sees your value and wants you to continue forming genuine relationships that are mutually beneficial for the company, the clients/partners, and you!



2. Contribute to an amazing company culture

Company culture is important. Even with the recent trends of remote work and more flexible workplaces, most of the time, co-workers are still required to interact. Irreplaceable employees understand the importance of contributing to a positive company culture by not only supporting their co-workers, but by also finding ways to bring the company together and promote a positive environment. This can range from being the person who organizes a company get-together, to bringing a card for everyone to sign for birthdays, to simply being the one to pick out the best music for the office playlist. People don't want to fire people who make them enjoy coming to work. If you want to be irreplaceable, make sure that you are helping others enjoy their jobs even more.

3. Do more to add value

I thought I would save the best for last: do more. That's it; do more than you are asked, do more than your employers expect, and do more than your customers/clients request. Irreplaceable employees don't arrive at 8 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m. after having done just a "good job." They think about how to grow the company constantly. They suggest improvements on everything. Then, they act on these suggestions and show the results. Irreplaceable employees understand that the status quo is not good enough and they strive to be one step ahead of what's going on.

One of our employees comes to almost every meeting with a suggestion on how we can improve something. This employee is not bringing everyone down by picking at things that can't be solved; instead, she comes with an answer that solves a problem we didn't even realize we had. I cannot stress this enough: do not come with problems, come with solutions. That is the difference between a high-maintenance employee and an irreplaceable one. Employees who do more are irreplaceable because employers know that they can always find someone who will do a task well. It is much more difficult to find someone who will do the task well, and then find a way to improve upon it. As a caveat, I want to clarify that doing more does *not* mean working more hours. If you can add more value in 6 hours than your counterparts can in 10, then by all means, do not stay late to prove a point! Doing more simply means adding more value in the time you do have.

You have the ability to make yourself an irreplaceable employee. You simply have to identify your strengths and determine how you will work harder on establishing genuine relationships,

contributing to a positive company culture, and adding more value. If that doesn't seem too difficult, you just might have the right mindset for becoming an irreplaceable employee.



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