

SAYING, "IT CANNOT BE DONE" COULD HERALD THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF YOUR CAREER



During your time at the workplace, there will be umpteen occasions, when you are asked to do a seemingly impossible task. Whereas in your youth and during your early years, you would have relished the challenge and attempted it with vigour and interest, you may have reached a complacent stage in your career when you will replace the "why not?" attitude with a rigid and terse "no way" outlook. Even though it may make sense for you to tell that the task put forward cannot be done and your playing safe mentality may seem comfortable and politically all right, it could also signal that you have reached saturation point as far as your capabilities are concerned. Employers will take it that you are shirking responsibility and this could mark the commencement of the end of your employability. Managers often grouse that employees, especially those of long standing, lack the initiative to take on new challenges and would much rather refrain from doing something rather than finding unconventional methods of dealing with them. When you are asked to do something that sounds and looks unworkable, never say "It can't be done," try and find ways and means to do it, brainstorm with colleagues, experiment, exhaust every alternate options, before you utter the words employers dread, "It can't be done." When offered the task, it would make better sense to point out the pitfalls in attempting to do it and that you are going to explore options, before you decide that it is not worth the effort. Problem solving skills are amongst the most liked skills by employers. They separate you from the herd and mark you out as someone special as someone who can be sought out in times of a crisis. Tasks that seem insurmountable suddenly become easier to do when looking at from different angles. Seeking the counsel of other more experienced employees also helps and team oriented approaches are often the best approaches for such tasks. However, negativity does creep in, when workers are asked to accomplish workloads that were earlier handled by two or three people. More and more workplaces have eliminated work titles and have stopped designating roles, making multi-tasking for employees a common feature. Most workers are so busy just meeting their targets and staying on par with their work-schedules that they don't even think of adding anything to their to-do list and do not want to step out from the confines of what they have been asked or rather what they are required to do. However, be warned that if you are busy just ticking off the bullet points on your work list and unwilling to take on anything new, you could be on your employers list of expendables when the next round of cost-cutting takes place. This does not make you a less useful worker or that you are not working hard enough to merit staying on in the company's payrolls. It just means that there is long line of people, who would gladly trade places with you and do your job, more efficiently and at a lesser cost to the company – hence, the company has to have an added reason to continue with you. You have to make it very hard for your company to let you go. Your work should make you virtually indispensable. The company should feel that relieving you would be inopportune and probably cost them more in terms of quality rather than the wage-dollars they might save. The only sure fire way to do it is by moving beyond the mundane and the predictable and to be linked with and be accountable for doing something that is different and innovative. Don't think of it as an addition to your work but be duty-bound to successfully implement pioneering ideas that will be fruitful and productive to the company and appreciated by your superiors, and your organization. By becoming part of a successful, innovative program and accomplishing tasks most other would have found hard to do, or rejected as impossible to do, you have forged an identity of being a noteworthy accomplisher and from being just another worker, you have elevated yourself to the ranks of being a prized asset, a valuable worker, who is considered necessary and indispensable. You will also make yourselves popular with your co-workers, because the team-effort that was required has also made them look good and they will surely appreciate that and it will reflect in their new-found admiration of you. Any achievement in any sphere always pays. It never goes unrecognized. If your current place of work is restrictive in its appreciation of its employees and does not reward exceptional accomplishments, don't think of your efforts as having been wasted. They will be an adornment on your resume and could at a later date perhaps create an opening for a new and potentially more lucrative position for you elsewhere. This does not mean that you embrace every new idea, even those that have the capacity to do the company and your reputation harm. Examine the task through a specific set of criteria. Ask yourself, can it be done? Are the risks worth taking? Can the risks be eliminated? Is it worth developing? What are the chances of success? Is the task in line with the goals and mission of your workplace? Above all does it offer you anything that will enhance your value as an employee and will it be a valuable addition to your resume? Don't forget to ask yourself, how much of the blame you may have to appropriate if the task fails and is there any likelihood of you doing the work and the credit being usurped by your superiors? Just doing what you are supposed to do, just does not jell with employers anymore. Employees these days have to continually look over their shoulders to see if a possible contender for your job is breathing down their neck, someone who could probably do what you are doing, more rapidly, more proficiently, and charge less for it. By taking on hard-to-do jobs, developing and initiating profitable successful new ideas, however, you'll set yourself apart from your co-workers and create a special brand for yourself, an image of a doer who brings benefits and growth and capabilities to your organization. Moreover, you will add years to your employability and the only way you will not work here anymore is when you leave of your own choice, to another job that is more lucrative and offers you more benefits than the current one – one that recognizes your true worth. The final lesson is never say, "It cannot be done." It is defeatist to assume that something cannot be done. With a little help from ingenuity, creativity, will power and determination, you will find that every impossible problem does have a solution.