



Forward



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Give Credit & Elevate the Ideas of Others

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Graphic by KCS employee, Valerie Schoolcraft

We all have different talents, of course.

Some folks can generate ideas like chocolates coming down the conveyer belt at Lucy Ricardo – I'm guessing most of you have seen that scene from "I Love Lucy," a classic scene from a very old sitcom. I had a colleague once who could generate really cool ideas such that. I didn't even have time to think through the first one before he threw four or five more at me. He was amazing. I, on the other hand am slower to create ideas, but faster at thinking things through and implementing ideas. This is just one of the many differences among people in our workplaces.

I am writing about this particular topic for a sad reason. In my coaching, I have had numerous clients tell me that when they shared an idea they were stewing on, with a colleague or with their boss, that



Are you seeking a
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I am an
experienced
career coach. I work with folks who are in the early stage of their career all the way to individuals in the C-Suite who are seeking a new position or promotion, internally or externally, and those starting a new role. Let me share a little about the process I use to help

person took the idea and presented it to either the team or to leadership as their own. Maybe you too have been a victim of such appalling behavior.

Feel free to reach out to me for some ideas on ways to prevent others from stealing your ideas and what do you do if you've been victimized by someone stealing your idea.

I have sincere empathy for those of you who are confronted in your work lives with such lack of ethics on the part of colleagues and even more, from superiors. Stealing someone else's ideas for one's own benefit, to get ahead, to look good to those above or to get promoted is, in my opinion, just simply unethical! It's more than unethical though, it breaks the trust with others.

So, if you are tempted to do that, let me present you with an alternative. Instead of taking the idea, elevate the idea.

Give Credit & Elevate the Ideas of Others

I once did an activity with my team and have recommended this as a great team-building activity to many of you. Ask each team member to write down at least one thing that they see as a strength in each of their other team members. It can be a personal quality, a skill, a value they bring to the team, etc. Then, each person is to share with each specific team member, individually and in-person or over an online meeting, what it is that they appreciate about the other person. When teams do this, each individual receives affirmations from every other member of the team. It increases everyone's self-confidence! It also helps to break down barriers between team members because the focus moves to the positive attributes of each other. It increases trust. When I did this with my team, one of my direct-reports shared that he appreciated how I always gave credit to other people. He said whenever I talked about something I was thinking, if it started with something someone else said or an idea from another person, I always prefaced my remarks with something like, "when I was talking to Julie, she had an idea that started me thinking..." and that I took time to share the success team members had in trying something new. I had never thought about that before. I just did it automatically, because it's part of my personal value system of honesty and being truthful about having gotten an idea from someone else.

you land in the RIGHT job and then start strong to show that you were the right choice!

First, I will work with you to understand and help you get clear about what you want.

Second, I am skilled at helping you uncover strengths and skills you don't recognize in yourself. I'll show you how to dig deep and raise your awareness of the value you bring to a potential employer.

Third, it's not enough to recognize your value. I will help you develop your "elevator pitch" and learn how to characterize and communicate your value, skills and strengths in ways that cause networking contacts, interviewers and hiring managers to sit up, take notice and remember you in a very positive way.

Fourth, I will show you effective ways to broaden your network and open doors.

Continually, I will be a thought partner through your job search or promotion process and beyond. I will help you strategize for interviews, serve as a consultant in preparing for and negotiating job offers, and walk you through a process to prepare for your first days on the job and make onboarding a tool you use to fast-track your success in the first few months.

Reach out for a

Here are some ways to give credit & elevate others' ideas:

1. When you are building on someone else's idea, share that it started with the other person's idea.
2. When someone has a great idea, ask them for permission before you share their idea with others – either colleagues or leaders above you – because they may have shared it with you for some initial feedback. They may want more time to flesh it out before it is shared with anyone else. If you share it with someone else who steals the idea, how will you feel? Or what if the leader you shared it with didn't like it and the author didn't have a chance to polish it and present it in their own way? Ask first.
3. If you are a leader, always be sure to give credit to the individual(s) who came up with it or are working on it when the idea is presented to others.
4. If someone is not sure about presenting an idea, if you see potential in it, help them see the value in it, and offer to support their idea if they do decide to present it.
5. When you hear someone struggling with a challenge, and you know another person has some solutions they haven't yet presented, connect the two people without sharing the specifics of the solution. You can suggest to those presenting the challenge that they should talk with so and so. Say that you think they might be the right person to talk to and that they might have some ideas that could be helpful.

Why Should You Give Credit & Elevate Others When You Are Trying to Move Ahead Yourself?

(The numbered items below correspond to the numbered suggestions above)

1. If you are building on someone's idea, giving them credit too, shows you as not only able to build on other's ideas, but also for being a team player to give others credit.
2. Because there are people who steal ideas, if it is your colleague's idea and they share it with you, you build trust by keeping the idea between the two of you until your colleague is ready to put the idea out there publicly. If you cause them to lose credit by sharing it without their permission

**complimentary call
and let's chat.**

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to someone who steals it or rejects it, you could lose the trust of that colleague.

3. If you are a leader, know that your success comes from the success of your team, and no longer necessarily your own ideas as when you were a subject matter expert. Take a look at a previous article I wrote, [“The Secret to Recognition as a Leader”](#). Part of your job as a leader is to grow talent and develop your direct reports. You do that by encouraging them, coaching them to further develop their ideas to full potential and helping them take on new challenges to grow both their confidence and their skills. So presenting ideas of your direct-reports and giving them credit in front of your superiors is a feather in your cap. If, however, you steal their ideas by presenting them as your own, you lose the trust of your direct-reports and, if they find out, likely the trust of your superiors.
4. By encouraging your colleagues, helping them to develop their ideas and **supporting** them in presenting those ideas, you build a stronger teammate and others will see more value in that person. You make your team a higher-level performing team with behaviors such as these! You're modeling teamwork to others!
5. When you refer others to someone, you show others you know where to direct them for the right expertise. You become a go-to person as a resource which also elevates you! You encourage, build self-confidence and get others to see the value in the person to whom you are referring them. Team members who help each other build stronger teams.

Here's the bottom line - in my experience, people who always have to appear to have the answers themselves, have to grab the attention, have to take the credit and are highly competitive to make themselves look good so they will move up, get noticed, but not for what they think. People who behave in these ways are often noticed for their big egos, their selfishness, and their willingness to step on other people on the way up the ladder. If you work in a cut-throat culture where all that matters is the bottom line, maybe that works.

However, generally, highly successful organizations where people want to work, are successful in both profits and employee retention because they value teamwork, ethics, diversity, equity, inclusion and a

positive culture. They want people to stay with the company so they want to recognize, develop and grow talent. They want a culture where values such as integrity and trust matter. In this kind of culture, elevating others plays well into all those aspects.

Giving Credit & Elevating Others Builds Positive Culture, Teamwork and Organizational Success!

Would you like to build a stronger team or a better culture? Contact me and let's chat. Helping teams grow and shift the culture is my specialty!

Joy Conley Kacik

Joy is a conference speaker, team and leadership development consultant, customized trainer and facilitator and a Certified Professional Coach with expertise in personal career coaching, job offer and salary negotiations and leadership coaching.

As an Insights Discovery® licensed practitioner, Joy provides clients the added value of the Discovery® Portfolio of tools when working with individuals, teams, leaders and organizations to create inspiring visions for collaborative, cohesive teams to produce superior results.

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