

Find Your Power at Work

Here's how to master your job and your future.



Feeling like you're just another worker bee in the hive can affect more than your morale: A perceived lack of power at work may make it harder to organize your thoughts, prioritize, and make decisions, a recent study says. But before you blame "the man" for your apathy, evaluate your own attitude. "You — not your boss — are responsible for developing your skills, setting your goals, and building your résumé," say Milo and Thuy Sindell, authors of [Job Spa](#). Here's how to master your job and your future.

- **Set a goal.** What do you want most? A new set of responsibilities? A different job entirely? Figuring out what you want to achieve and working toward that goal will make you feel more in control of both your day-to-day duties and your overall career.
- **Stop sabotaging yourself.** Do you habitually slide into work five minutes late? Or do you roll your eyes behind

your supervisor's back? Lose the negative attitude and chances are your boss will notice the improvement — and perhaps begin to trust you with more responsibility.

- **Find a Work friend.** Having an on-the-job buddy makes work feel more fun. "And when work is fun, you're more motivated to contribute, which in turn makes you feel powerful," say the Sindells. Just make sure your pal is a positive influence, rather than a sarcastic sounding board — someone who shares your take-the-reins attitude, so you can support each other from one work triumph to the next.
- **Reward yourself.** Going unnoticed will gradually chip away at your confidence, say the Sindells. So if your bosses aren't ponying up the praise, you owe it to yourself to learn when to pat your own back. "Recognizing your own standard of excellence could give you a sense of satisfaction and control over your work," say the Sindells, and can inspire you to keep improving. So savor the thrill of a job well done, whether or not anyone else takes notice.
- **Show your team spirit.** Ask your boss what you can do to lighten her workload. Once she sees you as an ally and a go-getter, you'll be the first person she turns to to spearhead the next big project. Who's the worker bee now?

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