



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

Article from:

# Stepping Stone

October 2008 – Issue No. 32

# Raise Your Visibility

## AN EDITORIAL

by John West Hadley

**Would you like to  
accelerate your career  
growth?**

**Are you interested  
in key executives  
knowing who you are?**

**Do you want  
interesting new oppor-  
tunities to constantly  
seek you out?**

**The most important  
thing you can do to  
achieve these goals is  
to raise your visibility.**



John West Hadley is a career counselor who works with job seekers frustrated with their search, and professionals struggling to increase their visibility and influence at work. He can be reached at [John@JHACareers.com](mailto:John@JHACareers.com) or 908.725.2437. His free Career Tips newsletter and other career resources are available at [www.JHACareers.com](http://www.JHACareers.com).

In the January 2008 issue of *The Stepping Stone*, I described one easy way to begin doing this using LinkedIn.com. Many of you reached out to ‘connect’ with me after that article. (If you’d like to know more about LinkedIn, or would like to ‘connect’ there, just drop me an e-mail at [John@JHACareers.com](mailto:John@JHACareers.com).)

Today I’d like to point out another great way to raise your visibility—the Self Appraisal.

Many people on both sides of the table, bosses and employees, dread performance appraisal time. Instead, you should look at it as an opportunity to market yourself!

Obviously, you need to be working throughout the year to make sure that you are doing a great job, and that this is visible to your boss, your co-workers and other key influencers in your organization. When you get to performance appraisal time, it’s your chance to do a good summary to cement your performance in your boss’s mind.

Many companies start the appraisal process with a self-appraisal. If yours doesn’t, don’t let that stop you—do one anyway! Assemble your thoughts and provide them to your boss ahead of time. Offer it as a way to help make his or her job easier.

When you do your self-appraisal, don’t get stuck in all of the details of what you did. Think about your highest-level goals, and particularly which will be most critical to your boss, and then use that to focus and order your presentation. Concentrate on what major actions you took, and what results that created for your unit, your department and your company. You need to articulate that part very clearly, because in the end the results are the **ONLY** reason your salary is being paid.

Also think carefully about what challenges you encountered and succeeded in overcoming along the way. One of the most important benefits you bring to your boss is your ability to overcome challenges, particularly if you are able to make it look easy. If you do a great job with that, how likely is it that your boss truly recognizes what you are accomplishing? It’s easy to notice an issue; it’s much more difficult to notice and remember an issue that goes away!

The self-appraisal is your chance to clearly articulate those challenges you dealt with, and remind your boss of all of the value you are adding to his or her organization!

In addition, the self-appraisal offers several other benefits to help raise your visibility. It will:

- Improve the ratings you receive, and ensure that what you’ve accomplished is well-documented in your personnel files.
- Enhance your boss’s perception of your contributions.
- Better equip your boss to describe to others (his boss, other key executives) the value you are adding to his or her operation.

And last, but certainly not least, by having done this careful introspection into the value you are adding, you equip yourself to answer the question “What do you do?” or “What have you done lately?” in a concise, compelling way that clearly communicates the results you have produced for your operation. ●