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What Would You Do? “Disappointing News”

By John West Hadley

Here is our next entry in the What Would You Do? series. Write to me at SteppingStone@JHACareers.com to tell me what you would do. In a future issue, I'll compile the responses received (preserving your anonymity, of course), along with what actually happened in the real-life situation.

Help me craft future case studies. Write to me about your own challenging, surprising or nightmarish situations involving business, leadership, management or any of the topic areas covered by *The Stepping Stone*, and what lessons you learned from them. I'll collaborate with you on turning your situation into a simple case study, being careful to ensure no one is identifiable. And share your own thoughts (pro and con) on the series as a whole at SteppingStone@JHACareers.com.

DISAPPOINTING NEWS

Greg has been assistant vice president for a number of years, and although his responsibilities have grown, his title has not. There is another FSA whom he originally hired who is now a vice president in another department, and there are few assistant vice presidents at the company. Although his compensation is good, his annual increases have been modest for a few years. In job discussions with Sal, his boss and a senior vice president, he is told that the only way for him to secure a larger increase is a promotion.

Greg works hard over the coming year to demonstrate his leadership skills, including chairing the company's Officer Advisory Group through a sensitive restructuring and downsizing analysis. In the fall, the secretary to the company's general counsel calls him to confirm the exact wording of his new vice president title that is to be announced at the upcoming board meeting. Greg tells her



he didn't know the promotion was coming, and she apologizes and swears him to secrecy.

Greg is excited. After the meeting, Sal comes to give Greg the good news, telling him that he has been promoted to vice president, but that of course, there's no salary grade or compensation increase associated with it. Greg is floored. When he questions it, Sal acts surprised. He tells Greg that he's already well paid and should have realized there wouldn't be any increase, but that the title is worth a lot in prestige.

Greg goes home that night very upset. His knee-jerk reaction is that he should turn in his resignation.

If you were Greg, what would you do? ■



John Hadley is a career counselor who works with job seekers frustrated with their search, and professionals struggling to increase their visibility and influence. He can be reached at John@JHACareers.com or 908.725.2437. Find his free Career Tips newsletter and other resources at www.JHACareers.com.