

## Managing Your Own Promotion

Dan was a rising star at his multinational manufacturing company. He started in sales, got promoted to sales manager, then regional sales manager, and finally national sales director.

The president called Dan into his office and told him the vice president of global sales was going to take early retirement for health reasons, and they were considering him for the position. While Dan was pleased, he knew this meant he would have to relocate to the East Coast, where the global headquarters was located. Dan thanked him for his confidence and said he wanted to think about it and talk to others.

What the president didn't know was that Dan had been considering leaving the company. Dan was originally from Southern California, moved to the Midwest when he was promoted to national sales director, and now, if he took the VP of global sales position, he would have to relocate to the East Coast.

Since Dan and his wife both grew up in Southern California, they longed to return to family, friends and a lifestyle they missed. Dan also felt the need to put more balance in his life by spending more time with his young family.

He remembered growing up in a household where his father traveled extensively for his job. His dad was rarely around to watch his baseball games, participate in birthdays or attend school events. Dan and his father were never close because of his father's extensive traveling, and Dan vowed he wouldn't let that happen to him.

Dan and his wife discussed it, and they agreed the promotion wasn't in their best interest. Dan met with his career coach to explore other options before flatly rejecting the president's offer.

Dan knew the company held him in high regard. He also knew his subordinates liked him because he took an interest in their job satisfaction, their career paths with the company, and their personal situations.

Dan felt he had developed a strong succession plan. He'd been grooming a regional sales manager to take over as national sales director if he left the company. They complemented each other, with Dan coming from the West Coast and his regional sales manager hailing from the East Coast.

Dan knew the VP of global sales position would require constant travel to Europe and Asia. He knew that if he accepted the position as currently structured, he would probably suffer burnout and leave, as was the case with the current VP of global sales.

One of Dan's admirable characteristics was his ability to take a step back and think before rushing into decisions. He knew that if he declined the position, the company would have to search outside for a new VP of global sales. This could adversely affect his job and possibly that of the regional sales manager he'd been grooming.

The company had grown rapidly, and Dan thought this might be a good time to rethink how the top sales functions were organized. He met with the president and expressed his concerns about the position, the reasons why the current VP of global sales was retiring, and his own desire to put more balance in his life.

He proposed that the global sales responsibilities had grown so much that the position should be split into two jobs. One would be the VP of global sales/west, responsible for the western United States and Asia, while the other would be the VP of global sales/east, responsible for the eastern United States, Europe and Africa. They could divide South America between the coasts, as they did for the U.S. market.

The president agreed and soon promoted Dan to VP of global sales/west. Dan and his family returned to Southern California, where they preferred to live. Dan's regional sales manager was promoted to VP of global sales/east and remained on the East Coast.

Each lived where they wanted to live. Each could give more attention and understanding to their overseas sections and the cultural differences. The company had better control of global operations and, since it developed a better feel for local issues, it was able to allocate resources more effectively.

Plus, Dan and his eastern counterpart didn't have to spend large amounts of unproductive time on airplanes. Everyone benefited.

Now go take charge of your career!

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