

Shed the Tag of a Poor Performer



WHETHER YOU deserve it or not, an 'underperformer' tag can be hard to shake off. More so, at a time when the job market is seeing a slowdown and increments and promotions are harder to come by. Sreeradha D Basu shares some tips on how you can shed the tag and get your career back on track

1 Introspect Hard

If you have the tag of an underperformer, it could be because you actually haven't delivered. "Introspect," advises Ronesh Puri, MD of head hunting firm Executive Access. "Even if it's for a moment, see how you could have done things differently. Have you put in sufficient effort? To get results, change your strategy, your approach. Self-denial is the wrong way. Don't blame the whole world."

2 Assess the Situation

See where you stand and do an internal assessment of how you should move forward. Says Vinay Grover, CEO of executive search firm Symbiosis Management Consultants: "About 20-25% of people in an organisation underperform given the target. Communicate with your first-line bosses about the situation hampering your work, and understand their expectations in terms of performance, behaviour, etc. Work harder, and figure out what is needed, including training, to turn the situation around."

3 Think Positive

Namita S was a star performer in the private bank where she worked till marriage and a subsequent transfer landed her in a back-end job in a small town. Her work suffered and soon she was saddled with the tag of an underperformer. But she decided to turn things around. With extra hours, learning about the nuances of her new job and training, she was back in the reckoning. "Don't get bogged down into thinking you're not good," she says. "Think positive, have faith. Act, behave, deal like a winner. Once you do, you will get your solutions and your wins," she says.

4 Look for Quick Wins

Instead of looking at the medium and long-term, focus on getting some quick wins. "Tags have a history and to erase that, you have to deliver," says Ronesh Puri.

"Look for what you can deliver in a hurry. Identify some things you can come up with soon to stand out in the organisation."

5 Match it Up

Sometimes, it's more about the fit, rather than individual performance. For that, you need a clear understanding of what went wrong.

"Sometimes, being moved to a different team or function can make all the difference," says Vinay Grover.

"Your skills could be much better suited to another area. It could turn you from an underperformer to a star one," he says.