

Quick Guide: Improving Profile & Visibility (Secretaries and PAs)

In a perfect world, people would judge us by results and the quality of our work. Life isn't perfect though. People who work hard and are loyal can be overlooked for promotion or pay rises – while those doing a good PR job on themselves tend to be thanked and appreciated more often. So here are the **top ten tips** to get yourself more noticed:

1. **Do yourself justice** and convey an air of pride in your role. Stop harbouring an inferiority complex about your profession: "I'm just a secretary", "You didn't say it was urgent, how was I supposed to know?". This 'bottom of the heap' attitude will be detected by others who will then treat you as such.
2. **Identify and develop your own areas of responsibility.** If an area needs improvement, DO something about it – research the situation, offer a solution, initiate a project...
3. **Increase your business knowledge and awareness** – find out what your firm's or departmental business plan says. Then you can contribute to your firm's aims with a clear understanding of what is going on.
4. **Put on your armour!** Wear clothes that are appropriate and which make you feel fit to take on the world. If you think you look good, you feel good. And people will notice you.
5. **Meet and greet your clients.** Maybe not all of them on every occasion, but when you feel it will improve client relationships and so impact on your relationship with your manager.
6. **Go to social events, seminars and the occasional meeting.** Get to know your internal and external clients. More importantly, get yourself seen!
7. **Self-promote tactfully.** Be a team player; share your best practices with colleagues; share your knowledge and skills; contribute to others' development (eg new starters, other secretaries, trainees). The results can be amazing.
8. **Cultivate superior skills** and qualities through advanced training and learning, as it is always superior performance that pays off, not good intentions.
9. **Make sure people know who you are** – introduce yourself to people; smile and say "good morning" (no matter how moody you feel!); start a conversation in the lift instead of silently staring at the floor-level indicator.
10. **If you are not in control of your own profile and visibility,** then someone else is controlling it for you.

Compiled by Des Whitehorn