



**BIG
BOSS**



TIP SHEET

How to Navigate Promotion Discussions with Confidence

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS READY TO LEVEL UP

josie*



LEADER

As a parent, you advocate for others every day. It's okay to do it for you, too.

Whether you're pregnant, newly back from leave, or beyond, it's easy to second-guess your timing when it comes to asking for a promotion. But here's the truth: great work deserves recognition...no matter the season you're in.

LET'S START WITH 5 GROUNDING TRUTHS:

Your leadership isn't sidelined by parenthood.

→ *It's strengthened by it.*

Stepping away doesn't mean stepping back.

→ *Your skills, leadership, and value don't hit pause when you do.*

Timing will never feel perfect.

→ *But waiting for "after the chaos" often means waiting forever.*

It's not just about what you've done.

→ *It's about what you're ready to do next.*

Advocating for yourself sets an example.

→ *For your kids, your team, and other working parents.*



Before the Ask: 3 Ways to Build Confidence

Reflect on Your Wins

Make a list of what you've accomplished. Think:

- Projects you led or contributed to
- Results you drove
- Positive feedback you've received
- Moments where you showed leadership or went above and beyond

💡 **Bonus:** Connect your impact to business goals, not just tasks.

Get Clear on What You Want

What would growth look like for you? A new title? More leadership? Different scope? Different comp package? Ask yourself:

- What energizes you at work?
- What are you naturally good at?
- What do you want more of in your role?

Practice Your Ask

Say it out loud. Practice with a friend, mentor, or coach - someone who will cheer you on and give honest feedback.

- Try different phrasing to see what feels right to you
- Ask your practice partner to ask you anticipated questions



Scripting Scenarios

If You're Pregnant and Asking

Try this:

“Before parental leave, I wanted to make it clear that I remain deeply committed to growing in my role here. I’d love to explore what a next step might look like, both in terms of scope and timing. I’m eager to expand my contributions to this team.”

Pro Tips:

- If you're ready, you're ready. **Don't wait until after leave to ask.** There's often a long runway to get decisions made or transitions planned.
- Share your interest in both the role and better understanding the timing - even if it's post-leave. You don't need everything to happen right away, or even have all the answers - **you just need to start the conversation.**
- Framing your ask as part of **succession planning** or long-term growth can help decision-makers see the opportunity more clearly.

Bottom line: Don't assume pregnancy disqualifies you from advancement. Ask about timeline flexibility, but **make your interest visible.**



Scripting Scenarios

If You've Recently Returned from Leave

Try this:

"Since returning, I've realized even more how much I care about the work we're doing and want to grow within the team. I believe I've already built a strong foundation here, and I'd love to explore what a next step might look like. I'm open to feedback and would appreciate the opportunity to talk about how I can continue to contribute at a higher level."

Pro Tips:

- Don't wait to "prove yourself again." Returning from leave can feel disorienting...like you have to "earn your place" all over again. But the truth is: ***you've already earned it.***
- Acknowledge the transition, but **anchor your ask in long-term value**, not just post-leave reentry.
- Reinforce that time away **didn't dilute your ambition - it clarified it.**

Bottom line: Parental leave often gifts us with clarity. Many parents return with a sharper sense of purpose and a renewed appreciation for meaningful work. Don't keep that to yourself - share it!



What if the Answer is “No”?

Rejection doesn't mean the door is closed - it might just mean it's not open yet. Here's how to respond if the promotion isn't happening right now:

“Thanks for your honesty, and I appreciate the clarity. I'd love to understand what success looks like at the next level and what I can be doing now to work toward that. Would you be open to revisiting this conversation in 3–6 months?”

Turn “No” Into Next Steps

Here's what to ask for if the promotion isn't happening now:

- Specific feedback: What skills or impact do I need to demonstrate?
- A clear timeline: When would be a good time to revisit this?
- Support: Can we align on a development plan or mentorship opportunities?
- Visibility: Are there projects or stretch opportunities I can take on?

Keep in Mind:

- A “no” today doesn't define your worth.
- Sometimes leaders need a nudge or a reminder. Keep the conversation alive.
- You're not starting over. You're building momentum.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Get in touch with team Josie:



hello@myjosie.com



[Josie](#)



[@myjosieinc](#)



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josie*