

APRIL 2024 | VOL 04 E4

# EA FACTION™

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# FEATURED EA



**What do you believe are the most important qualities or skills for an executive assistant to possess?**

Be focused and understand the priorities of your executive. Try to read his mind and mood, and be efficient in providing the solution. You should always be one step ahead of his thinking, but be careful not to overtake his actions. Only intervene when asked or when required in extreme situations. Overreacting may result in being labeled as **"OVERLY SMART"**.

**How was your first day as Executive Assistant?**

As mentioned earlier, this was not by choice but by chance, so I really do not remember my first day as an EA. For me, every day feels like the first day, as there is always a new challenge or, I would say, new learning each day, making it always feel fresh. This mindset helps me perform better every day. Though there are many upsetting days, I take them as opportunities for learning.



## How do you prioritize and handle multiple tasks or requests from different executives?

Prioritizing the work, whoever it may belong to, helps me concentrate and execute tasks properly. Instead of doing half of many things, I focus on completing one task at a time entirely. Sometimes, everything seems important; in such cases, I delegate tasks and make notes accordingly. I use Google Keep, a notepad, and post-it notes to list down all tasks and execute them concurrently.

## Tell me about a challenging situation you faced while supporting an executive. How did you handle it?

As mentioned earlier, it's an everyday challenge we manage. We strive to complete the assigned tasks to the best of our abilities. There are several instances where questions arise about our integrity and honesty, as we are closely connected to the Executive and the family. There's a very thin line between knowing certain things and not knowing them. We are privy to many family secrets but must pretend not to know them, as it's in the best interest of their privacy. However, there are times when demands require us to breach that privacy and execute tasks, essentially breaking the rules for the greater good. Sometimes, policies restrict us, but the situation demands action. We are constantly tested and evaluated by our company/executive, which is quite challenging.

## What steps do you take to stay organized and ensure you meet deadlines consistently?

Simply focus on the work, prioritize tasks to ensure the smooth functioning of the office. Maintain an efficient team and strong connections with everyone to facilitate productivity. We serve as the bridge between the top and bottom levels, each with their own egos to manage. We don't have the luxury of selecting one over the other; we must maintain a delicate balance for our survival.

## What are your strategies for staying updated on industry trends and best practices in executive support?

Stay in constant touch with your peers and professional network. Be active on various media platforms, including social, print, audio, and video, to avoid missing out on opportunities (FOMO). Attend numerous workshops whenever possible to understand industry trends. Keep appearing for interviews and explore opportunities to gauge your market value; it's not necessary to switch jobs, but it helps you understand your position. This will assist in assessing your competencies and improving your skills wherever necessary.

## What motivated you to pursue a career as an executive assistant?

Although I never pursued this as a career, it came to me by chance rather than choice. However, I enjoy it as I find it very challenging every day.

## What do you enjoy most about being an executive assistant, and how do you handle the challenges that come with the role?

I enjoy being in this role. Firstly, it holds the power to shape systems as you desire. Secondly, there are learning opportunities every day; you meet new people with new ideas. The system fosters creativity by default, even if you aren't naturally inclined, as you must approach tasks differently each day, offering opportunities to explore various aspects of life. Being associated with a highly reputed executive alone earns you respect in society. People view you from a different perspective altogether. You can navigate policy within certain limits to achieve results for your boss.

~ **Brijesh Dinesh Shah**

EA - Zydus Lifesciences Limited

# FEATURED EA



**What motivated you to pursue a career as an executive assistant?**

At College, when I met the Senior EA to the Principal while I interacted with her for my admission, at that point of time I decided to be an Executive Assistant. Hence after college i joined PG diploma in office managment at YMCA. I have a strong passion for my Job as EA from day one of my carrer journey . It is now approx 17 Years in this profession

**How was your first day as Executive Assistant?**

The Institution wherein I studied, employed me as an EA at their corporate office, that was my first job. I joined as a fresher and learnt a lot from my mentors. Whatever task was given to me I tried to finish it within couple of hours and used to ask for more work, as I can't sit idel without work.





## How do you prioritize and handle multiple tasks or requests from different executives?

I follow "The Eisenhower Matrix" is divided into four parts:

1. Important and Urgent
2. Important but not Urgent
3. Urgent but not Important
4. Not Important and Not urgent

## Tell me about a challenging situation you faced while supporting an executive. How did you handle it?

Challenging situations do come,

Eg. Alingment between two teams or individuals. However with strong determination, will power and with the help of Gods grace, I handle it in a colloborative way by fixing up joint meetings and with clear agenda's and take aways . I seek help from seniors and handle the situation well.

## What steps do you take to stay organized and ensure you meet deadlines consistently?

My key is to be Self Displined, Humble and Being truthfull.

I try to reach office on time and list down all my to-dos and check what is completed or not by the end of day.

## What are your strategies for staying updated on industry trends and best practices in executive support?

Follow the similar industry people in Linkdln.

Read about the Market situation and industry in journals, news, magazines, etc.

## What do you believe are the most important qualities or skills for an executive assistant to possess?

1. Team Player
2. Adapatability
3. Proactive
4. Clear communicaiton
5. Customer service

## What do you enjoy most about being an executive assistant, and how do you handle the challenges that come with the role?

I enjoy doing multitasking work and like trouble shooting and With the help of Gods Grace I am able to handle each situation that comes on my way. As an EA you need to be prepared for challenges and be ready with solutions.

~ **Jedidah David**

EA - MMTC-PAMP India Pvt. Ltd

As an Executive Assistant (EA), navigating the demands of the role often leads to heightened stress levels. Nevertheless, effective stress management is vital for sustaining productivity and well-being in the workplace.

This article delves into a systematic approach to handling workplace stress, integrating real-time examples and actionable recommendations tailored for EAs.

# Introduction

## UNDERSTANDING THE SOURCES OF STRESS:

Before exploring stress management strategies, it's imperative to pinpoint the specific stressors inherent to the role of an Executive Assistant, including:

1. Tight Deadlines: Balancing numerous tasks and projects within stringent timeframes.
2. High Expectations: Meeting the expectations of executives and team members alike.
3. Constant Interruptions: Managing frequent disruptions and shifting priorities throughout the day.
4. Complex Communication: Navigating communication channels among diverse stakeholders.
5. Work-Life Balance: Striving to maintain equilibrium between work responsibilities and personal life.



~ Surbhi Sethi ~



## REAL TIME EXAMPLE:

Envision having a looming project deadline, only to receive an urgent task from your executive demanding immediate attention. This abrupt shift in priorities can induce stress as you navigate conflicting demands.

## METHODICAL APPROACH TO STRESS MANAGEMENT

Let's outline a systematic approach to addressing stress as an Executive Assistant:

1. Prioritize Tasks: Employ prioritization techniques such as Eisenhower's Urgent/Important Principle to categorize tasks based on their significance and urgency. Focus on completing high-priority tasks first, while delegating or rescheduling less critical ones.
2. Effective Time Management: Implement time-blocking techniques to allocate dedicated time slots for specific tasks and minimize interruptions. Utilize tools like calendar apps or task management software to schedule and track daily activities.
3. Set Boundaries: Clearly communicate boundaries with stakeholders regarding availability and preferred communication methods. Establishing boundaries helps prevent burnout and ensures uninterrupted periods of focused work.
4. Practice Assertiveness: Learn to assertively communicate workload and limitations to executives and colleagues. Politely decline additional tasks if already overwhelmed or negotiate realistic deadlines based on current workload.

5. Utilize Stress-Relief Techniques: Integrate stress-relief practices into daily routines, such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness meditation, or brief walks during breaks. These techniques alleviate tension and foster mental clarity.

## Recommendations

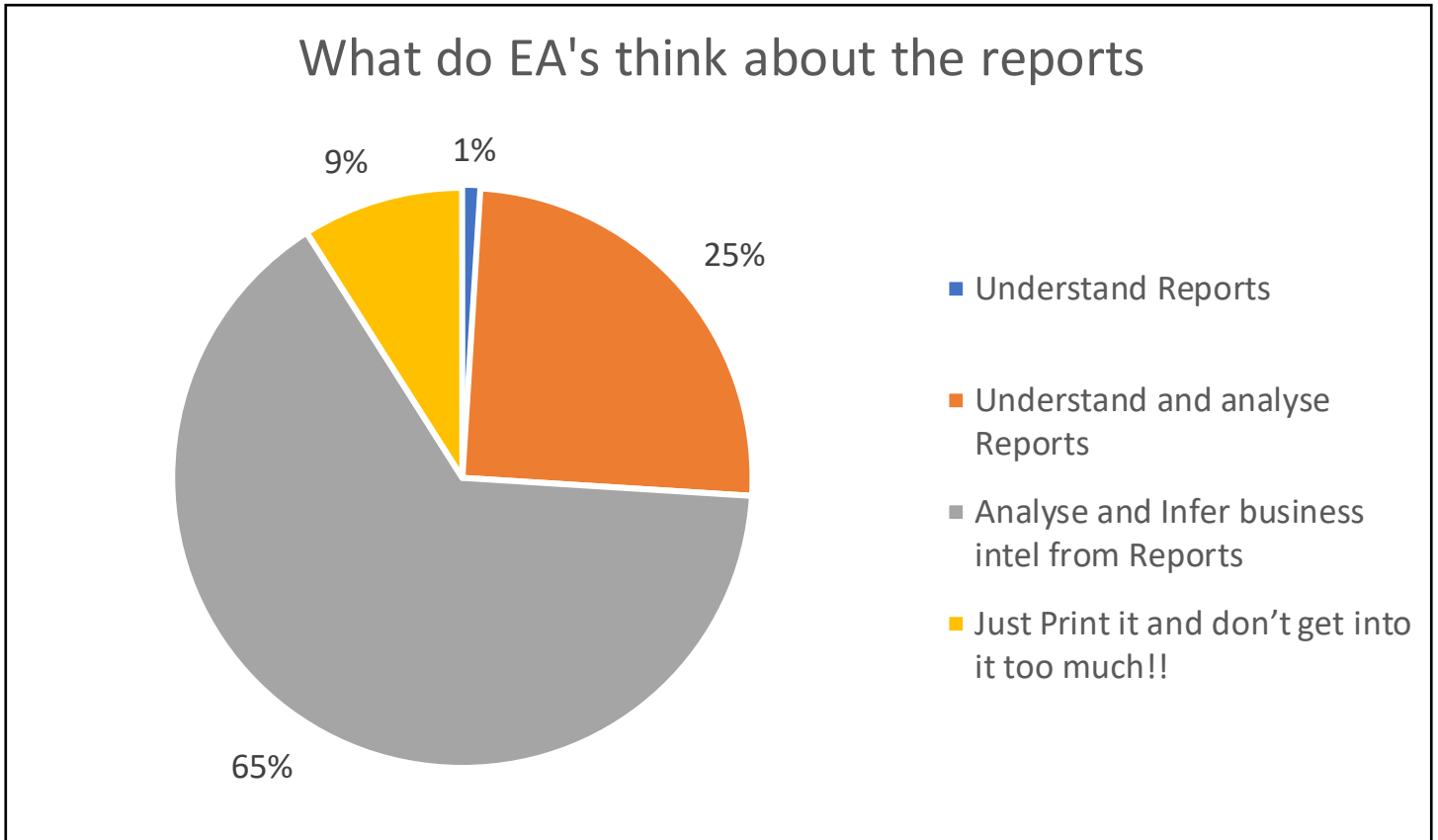
Drawing from the outlined approach, here are actionable recommendations for Executive Assistants:

1. Develop a tailored task management system aligned with workflow and preferences.
2. Enhance communication skills to effectively convey priorities and manage expectations.
3. Invest in self-care activities outside of work to recharge and maintain resilience.
4. Seek mentorship or peer support within the EA community to exchange experiences and stress management strategies.
5. Continuously evaluate and refine stress management approaches based on feedback and personal reflection.

## CONCLUSION

Effectively managing stress as an Executive Assistant necessitates a systematic approach that prioritizes tasks, establishes boundaries, and integrates stress-relief techniques into daily routines. By implementing these strategies and recommendations, EAs can adeptly navigate role demands while preserving well-being and productivity in the workplace.

# Reporting and EAs!



On a daily basis, as I manage our CEO's emails, I am inundated with reports from various departments and external stakeholders. To effectively support our CEO's decision-making process, I prioritize thorough comprehension of each report's contents. This involves identifying what aspects are performing well and areas that may require attention.

Moreover, I find it crucial to delve deeper into these reports through analysis. Utilizing tools such as graphs, I distill complex data into actionable insights. This allows me to present our CEO with information that directly contributes to our organizational objectives.

In summary, understanding and analyzing reports not only enhances our ability to support organizational goals but also enables us to provide valuable insights that drive informed decision-making.

- Kiran Kumar

I picked option 2 because it seems like option 3 says the same thing, just using different words. It's essential for me to understand and analyze

everything that comes my way. When you share something with someone, they usually have questions, so it's important not to be caught off guard.

Secondly, when it comes to reports, if you want to grow in your role and move into strategic planning, it's crucial to understand the KPIs being monitored and the data used to monitor them. We need to know what the report means i.e. what business risks or trends, and how is that knowledge being used by Management to make strategies.

Once we dive into the details of the reports, we also understand the root causes, impacts, and more, which helps us understand the business better.

- Purvi Gupta

An executive should understand and analyze office reports for several reasons. Decision making office reports often contain critical information related to organisations performance, finances, projects and other key areas. By analysing these reports EA can provide valuable insights to their executives, helping them make informed decisions.



Identify trends Reports can reveal trends and patterns that may not be immediately apparent. EA can help identify the areas of improvement or potential risks, allowing executives to take proactive measures

Support in strategy EA can contribute to the development of strategic initiatives by identifying opportunities for growth and assist in aligning organisational goals with actionable plans.

This may also help in highlighting challenges or issues that require attention. So busy doing this we can assist in problem solving efforts by identifying root causes, evaluating potential solutions and monitoring progress towards resolution.

- Vinita Chouhan

Executive assistants play a pivotal role in supporting high-level executives by managing information flow, scheduling, and decision-making processes. Understanding and analyzing reports is essential for EAs as it enables them to provide timely and relevant information to executives, aiding in strategic decision-making. By comprehending reports, EAs can identify trends, patterns, and potential issues, allowing them to proactively address challenges and capitalize on opportunities. Moreover, analyzing reports empowers EAs to communicate effectively with stakeholders, providing insights and recommendations based on data-driven analysis. This enhances their credibility and effectiveness in supporting executives in navigating complex business environments. Ultimately, EAs who possess strong analytical skills contribute significantly to the efficiency and success of their executives and the organizations they serve.

- Surbhi Seth

In my opinion an EA should not be just a courier person. The role demands more from this profile. As EA one must go through the document which will help in not just giving the EA an idea about the business but also who are the stake holders for a particular deal, how important a particular meeting request is, etc. All this will only support in making the EA more efficient in his/her day to day activity.

- Gayetri Misra

As an EA it's always preferred that he represents what is so from reports and beyond numbers so , understanding reports as well as business both important

- Maulik Vyas

My response would be:Main aspects of analyzing & inferring data for EA:

I see EA as someone who can be a strong strategic partner to his/her leader. To be successful in this role, one needs to understand the vision of the leader and accordingly create a view for him / her. We can only do that by understanding the asks, reviewing the reports and identifying the trends & patterns and flagging them to the leader. By doing this we can make him more productive and focus on the summary & not the entire report. Individually, we will also develop strong analytical skills which will help us to excel in the role and will also become our USP

- Hima Manchula

As I found it very obvious that in any organization we do have people to take care of their key responsibilities works so being an EA I think it's not our duty to look after and analyse the report else the dept or the person whose work it is will not take keen interest as he might know that you are anyways going to take a look on the same

- Devang Dilip Shahi

My role until now as an ea revolves around assisting the senior with their calendar, time sheet expense and travel. Personal work also comes into picture. I was never asked for my opinion on business analytics and reports.

- Arpita Kapadia

I believe it all depends on the person.

I prefer a 9 to 6 jobs as I have responsibilities at home and have issues with late sitting in office which usually happens if you are involved with business stuff.

I prefer to leave early from office and come home and log in as have trouble traveling in crowded trains. I spend about 4.5 hours total travel time to and back from office.

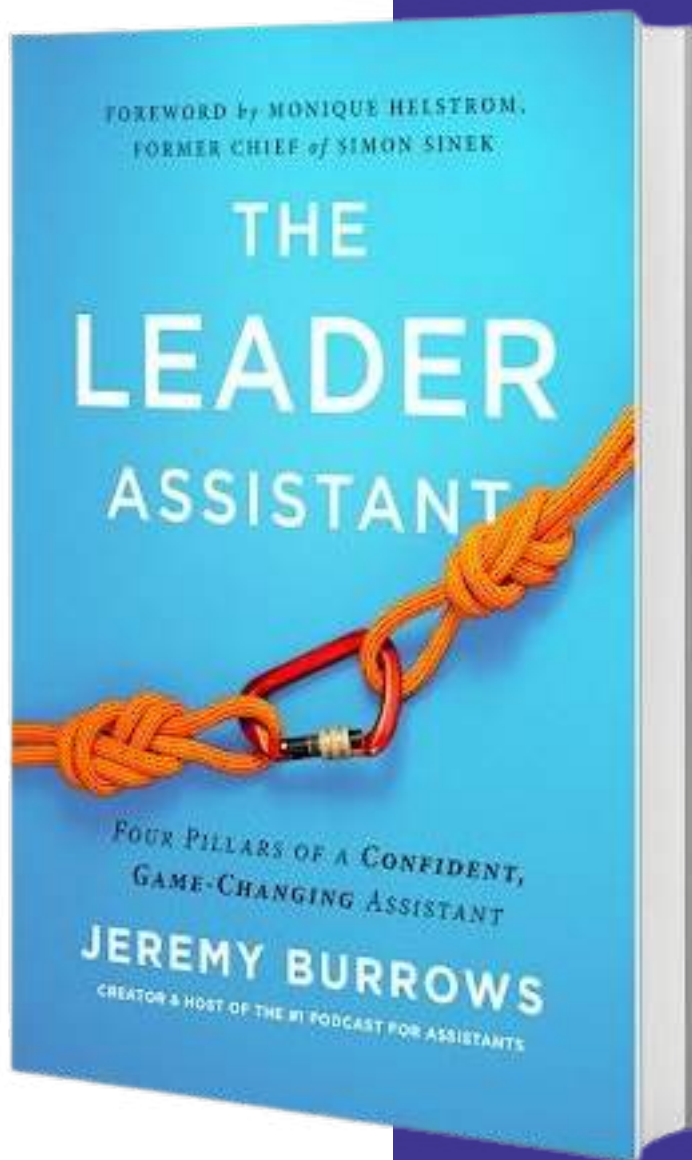
Hence happy with a 9 to 5 or 6 job as want to spend sometime with family.

- Neeta Sequeira

Reason for choosing the point number 4 is that at times reports are technical and not a part of our expertise. Rather than concentrating on something like this I would prefer choose to something to upskill myself with something which will help me with my core Job

- Honey Roy

# BOOK REVIEW



Do you possess the qualities that define a game-changing Executive Assistant (EA)?

Can you envision yourself crafting the ideal weekly calendar to maximize your executive's efficiency? Are you familiar with the signs and stressors that lead to burnout?



In "*The Leader Assistant : Four Pillars of a Confident, Game-Changing Assistant*," Jeremy Burrows, a seasoned Executive Assistant, international speaker, and trainer, explores the essential characteristics of high-performing EAs and guides readers on their journey to becoming a "Leader Assistant."

Burrows effectively sets the stage by identifying the fundamental qualities necessary for success in this role, outlining **16 key characteristics** that serve as the foundation. Mastering these essential traits allows readers to embrace the game-changing aspects that elevate them to the next level.

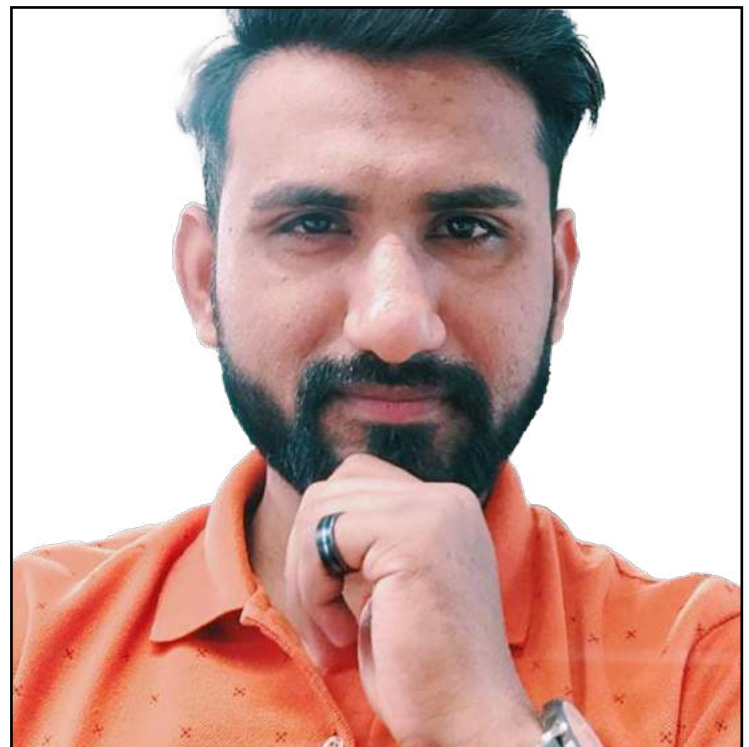
Throughout the book, Burrows generously provides practical tools and resources to enhance effectiveness, offering free templates, impactful formats, and valuable suggestions that can significantly boost overall efficiency. A particularly insightful section focuses on tracking your executive's calendar, empowering you to create an ideal weekly schedule that positions you as a strategic partner.

Burrows goes beyond the core responsibilities, covering crucial topics such as networking, building strong relationships with executives and colleagues, honing negotiation skills, and

pursuing professional development. These well-rounded skills are essential for any EA striving for excellence.

"The Leader Assistant" serves as an **ideal guide** for individuals with 1-5 years of experience and those considering a career as an Assistant. It provides a comprehensive roadmap that undoubtedly enhances knowledge and understanding of this dynamic role.

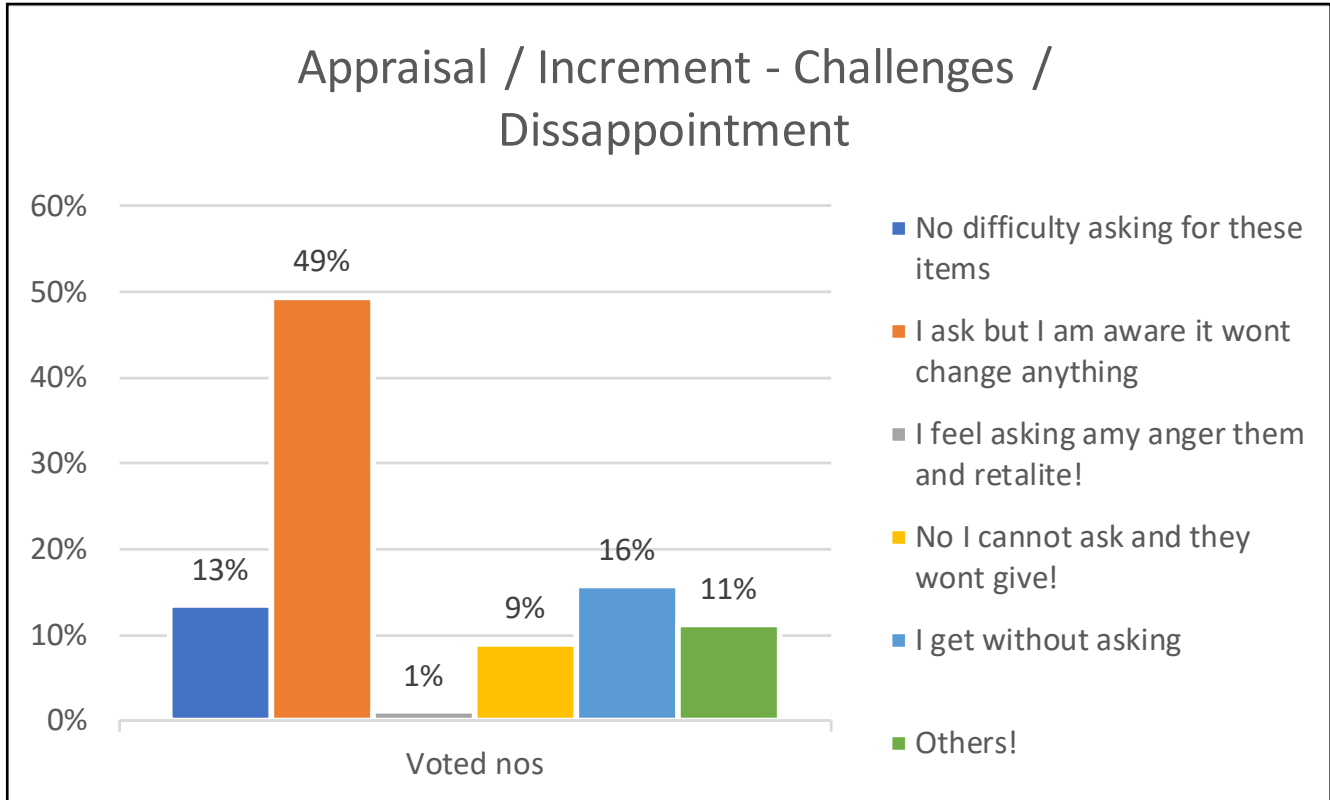
Overall, this book is a **valuable resource** for anyone aspiring to become a confident and game-changing Executive Assistant.



~ Sameer Khan

EA - Sekhmet Pharma

# Your appraisal asks for salary revision / increment and Promotion and challenges / disappointment you face!



Yes, I chose option 1 because I did not face any hesitation or difficulty to counter my appraisal percentage. And get it done revised also.

Whenever I feel disappointed from any behaviour or problem or situation come at front foot and discussed gently and get clarity

- Nayankumar Brahmbhatt

I report directly to the CEO. Besides the normal EA functions I also oversee Project Management, Compliance and Operations.

A daily task update sheet is maintained by me listing out my daily work and my CEO has access to this sheet, thus he is always updated on what is on my plate and what results I bring. As I am appraised by my CEO, I do not need to spell out what work I did the whole year and I seek feedback from him on my performance. I am comfortable talking to him about my expectations and discuss challenges I face.

- Vandana Muley

I never hesitate to ask my increments. Because no-one hesitates to pour work with extra loads. I will always speak for myself. No matter the situation.

- Iswarya Srinivasan

Unfortunately the current scenario I am in, the older EAs have already created a benchmark that we are just updating calendars and nothing more than this. It's 2+ yrs now and am trying hard to change their mindset that we much much more than this. But in spite of all the work, when it comes to appraisals we are unpleasantly compared to all EAs in office and then nothing surprises us any more

- Veneeta D'souza

If I were to choose this option, I would do so because I understand that it won't alter the question regarding salary revision/increment, promotion, and the challenges/disappointments I face. However, I believe selecting



this option allows me to express my willingness to engage in a constructive dialogue about these aspects. By acknowledging that my choice won't affect the primary question, I demonstrate my understanding of the appraisal process and my readiness to provide comprehensive feedback on multiple dimensions of my work experience.

- Richa Oberoi

So I work in a law firm and here staff is considered cost centre since we do not bring any revenue. So there is no evaluation process for staff. They give a standard 10% to all no matter how you perform. Even though you ask the Partner says this is firm policy.

- Swinky Pandita

I am thinking over it, it always depends on your boss.. we people directly report to them, so they think we are also taking grants in favour of working with them.. in terms of time or leaves. They are expecting from us as a specialization in every field like professional degree holders. I think we people can help them for particular fields.

- Shilpi Malik

In my organisation. The management has frozen everything for Eas. Salary revision/increment and promotion. Sorry wld not be able to elaborate.

- Malini Kapur

I had been lucky that my Executives acknowledged my efforts and time I have invested in completing my task and also the task which were not related to me.

Hence I was given a decent hike and bonus

- Sujata Deshpande

Well, I have been getting the appraisal every time without asking, and this has been consistent since the time I joined my current organisation back in June 2021.

My boss has mentioned this to me a lot many times that he is really happy with my performance and couldn't think of any reason for not giving me an appraisal. He also mentioned that he has been getting strong positive

feedback about me from our entire team / department and many other people in a few other departments across the company.

- Siddharth Jindal

The reason for opting for I get without asking is

1. My expectations are logical based on what value I have added so I know upto what level I can get (salary hike)
2. My bosses have been kind and professional enough to acknowledge my efforts

- Sagar Laddha

I chose "I get without asking" because I prioritize consistently delivering quality work and fostering strong relationships with my team and supervisors. Rather than waiting to negotiate for salary increments or promotions, I believe in letting my performance speak for itself. Through proactive contributions and open communication, I align my career goals with the organization's objectives, leading to natural opportunities for growth and recognition. This approach promotes a positive work environment where achievements are acknowledged and rewarded based on merit, fostering continuous improvement and career advancement. In my 28 years of work experience, I have consistently received awards and increments without having to ask, which reinforces my belief in this approach.

- Sakshi Kartha

It's simply because my manager understands that some employees go above and beyond to get the work done and that is always considered. So every year I have received the appraisal without asking for it.

- Muskan Chourasia

I have always been proactive and responsible with my work. I also help people even if it is not my work. I know what my boss is expecting me to do. Perhaps because of my proactive, positive attitude, team player.

I have never asked anything. But Gods grace.

- Sindhu Francis

# Delhi- Catchup







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# Delhi- Catchup





# MID-WEEK MANIA

The Rapid Fire! an Intriguing and power packed half hour session we have Every Wednesdays.

Well, what happens? We lock the chat for 30 mins and ask random questions and quickest person to respond to the admin 1 V 1 is the winner. Most of the winners have beaten the speed of lightning bolts by responding in Milli seconds! that's right, if you are replying 2 milliseconds late you are Late! But it's not about coming first always because This is about doing something as a team and vibrant.

## WINNERS!



**Rinku Devi**



**Sandeep Khanna**

## LIGHTNING RESPONDERS



**Surbhi Sethi**



**Premlata Adhikari**



**Tanaya Banerjee**

*Many congrats and hoping more of you participate soon!  
Go Cheers EA FACTION team!*

Want to get

**FEATURED** or

**SHARE YOUR ARTICLES**

and **THOUGHTS?**

**Email** us at

*eafaction@gmail.com*