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# A STRATEGY FOR CLIMBING THE ORGANIZATIONAL LADDER

Jan P. Muczyk, Cleveland State University  
Terry R. Adler, New Mexico State University

## ABSTRACT

*While the leadership literature constitutes an embarrassment of riches, most of it focuses on the interaction of the leader with his/her subordinates, i.e., it is downward looking. However, it is superiors who decide which candidate gets the promotion. Hence, those candidates need to know what their superiors are looking for. Yet, there is a dearth of literature that focuses upward, and that would provide direction to those organizational members seeking advancement through the organizational hierarchy.*

*Superiors are seeking attributes that make for successful managers, and leadership as it is narrowly defined – motivating and directing subordinates – is only one attribute of an effective manager. Thus, the purpose of this effort is to put in perspective all of the qualities that enhance promotability, thereby providing aspirants a viable strategy for climbing the organizational ladder. It also provides organizations the typical elements that organizations employ to construct their own filter for identifying high potential candidates.*

## INTRODUCTION

While there are numerous articles and books on the topic of “leadership,” both academic and practitioner oriented addressing the relationship of the leader vis-à-vis the subordinates (Muczyk & Adler, 2002), there is a relative dearth of literature regarding the relationship of the leader with respect to his/her superiors. Of course, it is the superiors who decide which person is promoted, and there are many organizational members who desire promotions and would appreciate practical advice on the subject of climbing the organizational ladder – a common definition of organizational success. It is true that the interaction of the leader with subordinates is a partial determinant of promotability, but many other factors also come into play.

Organizations do not advance their personnel randomly, and luck cannot be counted on. Practically every organization has an identifiable filter through which persons who wish to attain promotions must pass. While each organization’s filter is different in terms of its specific components and the weights placed on each component, it is still possible to identify and discuss the panoply of the most common factors that are frequently part of the filters that most organizations employ. Superiors when considering promotability of subordinates examine managerial attributes of the candidates, where leadership is just one of ten managerial roles, although arguably the most important one (Mintzberg, 1973). Yet, there is a void in the literature pertaining to how individuals can better prepare themselves for promotion. The principal purpose of this effort is to put all the factors related to promotability into perspective so that individuals

seeking advancement have a viable strategy for climbing the organizational ladder. Individuals seeking promotion need to remember that in well-run organizations the person who is promoted is at best a little better than the candidates who are passed over. Therefore, every edge helps.

The secondary purpose of this effort is to provide organizations with the elements to construct their own filter which at the same time has the potential to capture the value system of the organization in question by placing different weights on the components of the filter or omitting certain components entirely.

### EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

While educational avenues to the top of an organization other than the Master in Business Administration (MBA) are available (e.g., Jack Welch of GE – PhD in Chemical Engineering and Andrew Grove of Intel – PhD in Chemical Engineering, Leonard Bosack of Cisco – M.S. Computer Science, Ed Whitacre of AT&T and GM – B.S. Industrial Engineering, and some notable leaders never completed college, Bill Gates of Microsoft and Michael Dell of Dell), the typical qualifying credential is an MBA from a leading business school. That is not to suggest that all MBAs from elite schools turn out to be a success – to wit, Rick Wagoner of GM – MBA Harvard and his successor, Fritz Henderson – MBA Harvard, led GM into bankruptcy which resulted in the U.S. government bailout.

Entrepreneurs, CEOs of high tech companies, and executives of small enterprises are less likely to possess traditional academic credentials than leaders of large corporations. One thing is for certain, if one desires to climb the managerial ladder in a large organization, whether in the for profit sector, a government organization, a not-for-profit enterprise, or the military, formal education is paramount. Good examples are Robert Gates, former Secretary of Defense – PhD in Russian and Soviet History from Georgetown University and General David Petraeus, former Director of the CIA – PhD in International Relations from Princeton. Over eighty percent of U.S. Air Force majors and above have master degrees for example.

Obviously, when leading specialized organizations the situation is different. Accounting organizations are led by accountants, engineering organizations by engineers, law firms by lawyers, etc. For example, T. Boone Pickens who became a billionaire through oil and natural gas exploration is a geologist. Most Air Force generals are pilots. Generally speaking, however, CEOs come through finance, operations, and marketing (Stuart, 2005). Frequently, high potential employees are rotated through the salient functional disciplines that give them valued experience as well as opportunities to succeed. Both the individual and his/her organization need to ensure that high potential employees continue building their value to the organization through mentoring, career planning, job rotation, training, and education. Progressive organizations place a premium on developing subordinates. Some even consider you indispensable in your present position until one or more of your subordinates can do your job as well or better than you.

Are managers born or made? The answer is both. Some attributes such as intelligence, absence of dysfunctional neuroses, an agreeable personality, and the occasional charisma are genetically determined. The rest are developed through education, training, role modeling and experience (See Table 1). We need to keep in mind Muczyk & Adler's (2002, p. 5) observation

that: “Many outstanding leaders get along quite well without charisma by focusing on the fundamentals of management.”

<u>Primary Determinants of Promotability</u>	<u>Secondary Determinants of Promotability</u>
Integrity	Honor the social compact
Self-confidence	Focus on what is important
Run to problems	Keep all concerned informed
Share the credit	Remember recognition
See for yourself	Efficacy of role modeling
Remember where the devil lives	Saliency of a sponsor
Telling truth to power	No one likes a braggart
Avoid one mistake syndrome	Adopt a contingency approach
Keep the ego grounded in reality	Special cases

## SALIENT CHARACTER ISSUES

### Integrity as the sine qua non of organizational success

In organizations it is imperative that people trust you – so much so that even one lie can jeopardize a person’s career. Ditto for a serious ethical lapse. While ambition is not held against a person, it needs to be fettered by a properly working moral compass. Create rules that are legal as well as ethical, and enforce those rules diligently. This is the best way to inculcate an ethical culture. Ignoring these rules or making exceptions creates a slippery slope to serious consequences. Typically, the more ingrained is an ethical culture, the less time, effort, and money need to be devoted to the organization’s formal control system. A good example is offered by the Siam Cement Group where long-term, socially responsible principles are incorporated in all aspects of the corporation’s decision-making processes (Kantabutra & Avery, 2011).

Although easier said than done, practice a variant of the golden rule, i.e., treat everyone with courtesy, dignity, and respect. Also, avoid pretensions. Learn people’s names as this practice leads them to conclude that you care about them as individuals. As John McCain discusses, integrity and honesty are character traits that make a person remarkable (McCain & Salter, 1999).

Recognize publicly but criticize privately, and avoid making criticism personal. That is, focus on the inappropriate act, not the person. This method of administering criticism creates less resentment and fewer enemies than alternative methods. While it would be nice, being loved is not important, but being respected is critical to effective leadership (Crocker III, 1999). George Washington’s adherence to this dictum served him well as a planter, politician, and military leader (Chernow, 2010).

### Personality matters

General George Marshal, while Army chief of staff, beginning with 1939, transformed the U.S. Army by relieving wholesale the peacetime officer corps (Ricks, 2012, p. 33). While

Marshall valued a number of attributes, close to the top was a willingness to cooperate. Simply failing to show a spirit of cooperation was reason enough to remove a senior officer (Ricks, 2012, p. 37). Cooperation proved invaluable during WWII, which an “allied” effort required; but inter-service cooperation was equally essential. In other words, victory is a function of teamwork so far as Generals Marshall and Eisenhower were concerned, thus, their preference for subordinates with a cooperative propensity and personality. One can easily make the case that organizational success is dependent on cooperation as well. However, no single personality profile is appropriate for all positions; therefore it is crucial to match the right personality with the situation. The selection of General George Patton, known for his aggressive personality rather than cooperative disposition, to lead the third army is a case in point.

Former GE CEO, Jack Welch, considered self-confidence on the part of subordinates one of the most important assets an organization can possess and lack of it a damaging liability. Furthermore, while he was CEO building self-confidence was a key component of leadership training at all levels of the organization. It was highly unlikely for a GE employee to be a candidate for promotion if he/she did not evince self-confidence. In light of all of Jack Welch’s protégés who became CEOs of major U.S. companies, one is compelled to place considerable credence in the efficacy of self-confidence (Ireland et al., 1992).

Clearly, the best strategy for imbuing employees with self-confidence is to create opportunities for them to build a track record of success. On the other hand, nothing destroys self-confidence as a history of failure. Setting challenging but attainable goals, enhances the likelihood of success, while unattainable goals increase the probability of failure.

### **View your job description in an expansive manner and run to problems**

Henry Paulson, former CEO of Goldman Sachs and former Treasury Secretary, observed that a subordinate who views his/her job description in an expansive manner and who runs to problems or challenges rather than away from them will likely promote himself/herself before Mr. Paulson gets around to doing so. This is a strong endorsement indeed on behalf of individual initiative. Moreover, Mr. Paulson is not the only one who subscribes to this view. For example, the Norwegian Navy explicitly trains its cadets to attack problems in the hope of developing the characteristic of “hardiness” (Eid, Johnsen, Bartone & Nissestad, 2008). Hardiness in this sense is the ability to withstand stressful situations in transforming organizations by being proactive. Sometimes being proactive disrupts an organization, and is a fundamental quality of leadership. Lutz (2003, p. 98) describes how disruptive people are an asset since they change the way organizations operate. He also describes how people who run to problems saved Chrysler from disaster.

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### **Share the credit**

Make certain you take the blame when things go wrong and be generous with the credit when things go right. After all, you can delegate authority but not responsibility. Follow this rule even though it may cost you an occasional unwarranted scolding.

Leaders such as Harry Truman were amazed by what can be done when following Ralph Waldo Emerson's sage counsel: You can accomplish anything in life providing you do not mind who gets the credit (Muczyk & Adler, 2002). Maxwell (1999) asserts that when you put people first it does not matter who gets the credit. His indispensable quality "Number 9" suggests that one's candle loses nothing when it lights another. Sharing credit reflects a humble perspective that is valued in future leaders. Douglas MacArthur never understood this principle while Dwight Eisenhower certainly did. That is why the senior commanders under MacArthur today are relative unknowns, while those who served under Eisenhower are household names (Ricks, 2012, p. 100).

### **See for yourself**

Do not automatically trust reports since for obvious reasons bad news has trouble percolating to the top, and good news is at times exaggerated. Moreover, by being an active player in the organization's control system you send the message that attempts at deception are futile. Learn to become an effective listener. After all, effective listening is a precondition to problem identification and solution, as well as the trust quotient of the listener. Superiors when evaluating candidates for promotion are looking for such qualities as passion for one's job, which motivates subordinates to do what you want done because they wish to do it – Dwight Eisenhower's definition of effective leadership (Muczyk & Adler, 2002). More recently, passion for one's job has been described as being a "fish monger" (Lundin, Paul & Christensen, 2000) because it facilitates getting involved in work even though it is messy so long as it produces desired results.

Other desirable attributes are: Avoidance of procrastination, especially when it comes to difficult decisions and matters that fall into the drudgery category; leading by example; and perseverance – one of the most powerful forces in organizational life (Collins, 2001). Genghis Khan paid tribute to perseverance when he said: "The merit of an action lies in finishing it to the end." Sir Francis Drake was of a similar mind when he opined: "there must be a beginning of any great matter, but the continuing until it be thoroughly finished yields the true glory."

### **Remember where the devil lives**

Napoleon Bonaparte observed that: "The art of war is simple; everything is a matter of execution" (Muczyk & Adler, 2002, p. 2). The art of management is no different. Everything is a matter of execution, and execution is about details (Heller & Darling, 2011). And as we already know, the devil is in the details. Do not just concern yourself with the big picture leaving details to others. Make certain you attend to details as well. Kim & Mauborgne (2005) describe how attending to details is an essential step in overcoming organizational hurdles. Future leaders can

create fundamental change if they are willing and able to get into the minutia to implement what they call “Blue Ocean Strategy,” or the ability to bring new value to an organization.

Loyalty may not be as important as it once was because lifetime employment is no longer as common as it once was, but it should not be underestimated. If you are not perceived as a valued employee, your organization won't mind if you leave. If you are viewed as a valued member of the organization, loyalty enhances your value. If you do move on, make sure your move is considered a promotion. In that case, your move will not be held against you, since assumption is that everyone is entitled to improve himself/herself. Never burn bridges behind you because references are critical to your success.

### **Telling truth to power**

High ranking military officers encounter this challenge when testifying before congress or briefing the president, but they are not the only ones. You owe your boss the best advice you are capable of providing. At times that advice may be contrary to your supervisor's conclusion or what he/she wishes to hear. If it is a delicate matter, provide your advice privately. Otherwise, provide it respectfully, and once a decision is reached support it enthusiastically, even if it is contrary to your advice. If you cannot do that, then you should resign. At all cost avoid opposing the decision behind the scenes or criticize your boss for making it. Also, discourage your subordinates from making disparaging remarks about your superiors. That kind of “loyalty” you can do without.

Do not be a sycophant by agreeing with everything your superiors propose or say. That is no way to gain respect. In all likelihood, such obeisance will result in ridicule and resentment. When you do disagree with your superiors or tell them what they do not wish to hear, make sure you can support your position convincingly. Asking questions and actively participating with your superiors disbands a “we-they” attitude that can easily be formed. That is the strategy for gaining trust and respect going forward.

### **Avoid the one mistake syndrome**

For starters, perfection is not part of the human condition. Neither is it perfectible. Therefore, mistakes will be made, and most of the time they are unintentional. In those instances, effective managers resort to training not punishment. Once the person making a mistake or exercising a poor judgment knows better, the matter should be forgotten. Of course, if the mistake is egregious or the person is mistake prone, more than training is in order. Organizations that abort a career as the result of one mistake produce timid employees who are risk averse and continuously practice “c.y.a.” Even General Marshall gave second chances to many of the officers whom he earlier relieved for cause, and they did not disappoint.

John McCain in “Faith of My Fathers” describes three imperfect men who faced adversity and emerged successfully and with respect of their followers (McCain & Salter, 1999). Had they focused on their mistakes in their very stressful leadership positions, no one would have survived. This determinant of promotability is tantamount to an approval to experiment within boundaries, to develop leadership style and the ability to be hardy as discussed earlier.

## ANCILLARY DETERMINANTS OF PROMOTABILITY

The ancillary determinants are also important. These provide support for the primary factors in increasing one's chances for promotion. As the title of this section implies, accomplishing them well should also assist in attracting your superior's attention. Once attained, the primary determinants seal the promotion with the help of the ancillary ones.

Learning to highlight your abilities and accomplishments is necessary to attract attention to yourself in subtle, unobtrusive ways. In addition to the aforementioned character issues, make sure nobody outworks you. This includes doing appropriate research and careful risk/reward analysis. Obviously, there is a high price to be paid for this, such as not spending enough time with the family with all the attendant consequences. Effective time management might turn out to be your salvation.

Likewise, know your business better than anyone else. That way your subordinates as well as peers will rely on you and your superiors will view you as an invaluable resource. Surround yourself with the best people you can afford, and ignore age. They make you look good and should not be viewed as a threat.

### **Keep all concerned informed**

It is vital to keep people with a need to know informed regarding what is going on in the organization and the environment. Employees make better decisions when they possess the necessary information. Goleman et al. (2002) call the tendency of withholding relevant information from decision makers the "CEO Disease." Of course, this is a two-way street. Subordinates have an equal obligation to keep their superiors informed. Encourage subordinates to present ideas and then evaluate them. The best solution is typically obvious after the fact, and is usually the product of common sense. Learn ahead of time about opportunities and take advantage of them. This may require volunteering to do things others wish to avoid, such as uprooting your family and moving to another location. Develop your subordinates through delegation. Perforce, the higher you climb the more you need to delegate.

### **Social compact**

Exchange theory (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964) implies that a person feels a moral obligation to repay any benefit that he or she is provided by another commitment. Social exchanges occur frequently between employees and their leaders in the form of a social compact. In these compacts the employees will make, including performing at a high level, if in return they receive their share of the rewards that the employer has to offer as well as considerate treatment from their superiors. More often than not, it is the lack of human relations skills rather than technical ones that constitutes a career killer.

A strong nexus between performance and rewards is crucial in instrumental cultures such as in the U.S.A. (Muczyk, 1988). Organizations that make all employees salaried and provide the same benefits to all appear to do between those who divide their employees into salaried and hourly

and treat the two groups differently. In other words, make sure as many people as possible have a stake in the game (Pickens, 2010). Whenever practicable, make the organization a family affair. Perhaps this is what is meant by the concept of “servant leader.”

### **Focus on what is important**

For starters, effective managers telegraph what is important, measure what is important, and finally reward what is important. Performance should not be a guessing game. Measuring everything and rewarding everything equally is counterproductive because this practice does not provide direction and dilutes limited resources available for rewarding what is important. That is why having reliable and valid performance appraisals is so important, according to former Intel CEO, Andrew Grove (Grove, 1985).

Employing Pareto’s 80-20 rule frequently is useful in separating the important from the routine. Continually ask yourself the question: What can I do to make a difference? You can make a difference by identifying “breakout” activities that lead to the next plateau of success and executing them well. Again, Pareto’s 80-20 rule is helpful. Furthermore, effective managers rely on the most powerful motivators at their disposal. First and foremost happens to be money because of all the values, material and symbolic, that it can buy (Muczyk, 1988).

### **Remember recognition**

Napoleon observed that men will even die for a ribbon. Therefore, managers should not neglect recognition, but they should be mindful that one can go to that well too often without backing up recognition with pay raises and promotions. Unless this is done, recognition can become an irritant. Position power is an inherent reward for those seeking advancement. High potential managers figure out what needs changing and how to bring about change with minimum disruption. This skill set is becoming more important as the rate of change increases in the market place as the result of innovation and globalization (Yukl, Gordon & Taber, 2002). Superiors give candidates for promotion considerable credit for running successful organizations, and fulfilling the social compact is instrumental when it comes to performance.

### **Efficacy of role modeling**

One of the most useful approaches to gaining recognition as an effective manager and thereby becoming a serious candidate for promotion is to emulate the individual (s) who is widely considered the most effective manager. The reason this is an advisable approach is that by acquiring the style and practices of the successful manager, you too will display the proven attributes of success that are valued by your organization. Role modeling has risk associated with it when significant change occurs. For example, generals frequently fight the last war when the current war is quite different because their role models were from the last war. Corporate executives operating in an environment of unrelenting change face the same risk.

One characteristic of effective managers that is worthwhile acquiring in all situations is the ability to maintain one’s composure no matter what the provocation – “sangfroid,” if you will.

The more exposure one has to desired leadership behaviors, the more likely an individual will become familiar with promotional requirements. As T. Boone Pickens (2010) observed: “A management style is an amalgamation of the best of other people you have known and respected – and eventually you develop your own style.”

### **Saliency of a sponsor**

Because well run organizations have many talented people competing for a relatively small number of positions, having a sponsor gives the candidate an important edge. This is true for practically all organizations. The sponsor brings his/her candidate to the attention of decision makers at opportune moments even without the candidate’s knowledge.

Other than marrying the boss’s daughter, of which there is a shortage, there is no special advice for attracting a sponsor. Typically, the sponsor selects the aspirant because he/she is concerned with the future welfare of the organization. One improves his/her chances by pursuing the strategy for negotiating the organizational ladder laid out in this effort. In this context, it is instructive to heed Theodore Roosevelt’s sage advice: “The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men (and women) to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it” (Schultz, 1999).

### **Adopting a contingency approach to leadership**

While it is most comfortable to practice the same leadership style in every circumstance, it is a risky proposition. For recommendations regarding situational or contingency leadership, see Muczyk & Reimann (1987); Muczyk & Steele (1998). Moreover, make certain that important leadership complements are aligned with the prevailing leadership approaches (Muczyk & Reimann, 1989). In like manner, view the organization as a system, and insure that all components are properly synchronized (Muczyk, 2004). Do not be misled by all the insinuations in the literature and all the organizational lore that democratic is the only way to go. Research evidence simply does not support this cultural bias (Muczyk & Reimann, 1987; Muczyk & Steele, 1998). Adaptability in leadership style is key to dealing with environmental complexity (Hotho & Dowling, 2010). Lastly, take cultural factors into consideration when managing abroad (Muczyk & Holt, 2008).

## **SPECIAL CASES OF PROMOTABILITY**

Turnaround and retrenchment, “Rainmaker,” and organizational ranks constitute special cases of promotability. Turnaround and retrenchment missions are concerned with a general shrinking or backward movement of the business, as the term “downsizing” implies. Reversing inertia requires doing things in a different, unfamiliar, and at times unpleasant ways. Because organizations faced with such missions are subjected to undesirable, often painful changes, the decisions that have to be made and goals that have to be set frequently run counter to employee self-interest. Managers are replaced, employees are terminated, and many disruptions are caused in the traditional ways of doing things. In addition, urgency precludes participative methods,

which are inherently time-consuming. To make matters worse, managerial education, until recently, has neglected the whole topic of how to retreat effectively. Finally, turnaround and retrenchment missions fly in the face of the “bigger is better” ethos that is firmly ingrained in the U.S. culture and, in turn, has convinced many managers that being rewarded on the basis of size of their units is the norm. Thus, only the leader can make these difficult and unpopular decisions under extreme time pressures. While more power equalization exists in organizations today than before, most employees still concede to their superior the right to make decisions and set goals, as well as the authority to direct the processes leading to those results.

The reader should be mindful that an autocratic leader is not some misanthrope or ogre, but merely a person who is paid to make the important decisions, set salient goals, and direct subordinates along the way. The human condition is such that followers look to the leader in time of danger. Autocratic and directive leaders still need to treat people with courtesy, dignity, and respect. While there exist situations that call for autocratic leadership, no occasion calls for a despot.

### **The “Rainmaker”**

In specialized service organizations, e.g., public accounting firms, law firms, investment banking, etc., where the existence of the organization depends on attracting new clients, the members who do so are referred to as “Rainmakers.” While excellent technicians and accomplished managers are also promoted, they do not have the same chance to rise to senior positions as do the rainmakers. Persons running these organizations will let anyone who is interested know that the most difficult talent to attract are the rainmakers, and keeping them satisfied is a survival imperative.

### **Organizations with ranks or grades and managerial positions**

One way to overcome limits on supervisory/managerial promotions forced by the pyramidal shape of traditional organizations is to create ranks or grades for organizational members. The military and governmental agencies are common examples. A person who advances from the rank of captain to rank of major receives a promotion with respect to pay and status without necessarily supervising anyone. Ditto for a federal government employee promoted from GS-8 to GS-9. As a practical matter, organizations try to avoid situations whereby persons of lower rank or grade supervise individuals of higher rank or grade.

## **CROSS CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS**

A survey of *Fortune 500* executives showed that having competent global leaders was the most important factor in business success, and that 85% of the executives did not think they had an adequate number of competent global leaders (Javidan & House, 2001). Given that the world is rapidly becoming a global economic village, adopting cultural imperatives serves managers working abroad quite well, indeed. Underlying the importance of being able to lead in a global

capacity is the growth of technology that is eliminating boundaries between countries and companies (Friedman, 2005).

Javidan, Dorfman, de Luque, and House (2006) on the basis of evidence collected by Project GLOBE concluded that there are universal attributes that relate to leadership effectiveness and are instrumental to the advancement of candidates. Furthermore, they classified them into three categories (See Table 2). Clearly, candidates should acquire universal facilitators, avoid universal impediments, and utilize the third category where the culture dictates their relevance.

<b>Table 2</b> Universal Attributes that Facilitate Leadership Effectiveness, Impede Effectiveness, and Vary with Culture
<u>Universal facilitators</u>
Being trustworthy, just, and honest (integrity)
Having foresight and planning ahead (charismatic-visionary)
Being positive, dynamic, encouraging, and motivating
Building confidence (charismatic-inspirational)
Being communicative, informed, a coordinator. And a team integrator (team builder)
<u>Universal impediments</u>
Being a loner and asocial
Being non-cooperative and irritable (malevolent)
Being dictatorial (autocratic)
<u>Culturally contingent</u>
Being individualistic
Being status conscious
Being a risk taker (charismatic- self sacrificial)
SOURCE: Adapted from Javidan, Dorfman, de Luque, and House (2006)

Further evidence for considering culture is provided by Implicit Leadership Theories (ILTs) which stipulate that different cultural groups may have different conceptions of what leadership in organizations should entail. Specifically, implicit leadership theories refer to beliefs held about how leaders behave in general and what is expected of them (Lord & Maher, 1991), and culture is supposed to have an important impact on the formation of ILTs (Hunt, Boal, & Sorensen, 1990). For greater specificity, see Koopman et al. (1999).

## CONCLUSION

The academic literature tends to be theory and research centric, but at times pays short shrift to important topics. These gaps, however, can be filled by relying on practice found in successful organizations. We believe that the latter offers much utility as well as considerable wisdom, and rely on it in this effort. In order to provide guidance to individuals seeking advancement and to organizations wishing to construct customized promotional filters utilizing elements that have served successful organizations well, we made an attempt to offer what we believe are useful guidelines regarding climbing the organizational ladder.

Most organizations are looking for managerial qualities that impact organizational efficiency, effectiveness, adaptability, and morale. In addition, persons making promotion decisions look for academic credentials, and relevant experience. Character issues are important as are functional leader behaviors, such as fulfilling the social compact between superiors and their subordinates.

Do not become reliant on just one leadership style, and factor in cultural considerations when managing abroad. Learn to anticipate change and adapt to it in a timely fashion. Developing a global management skill set is important, especially in multinational and transnational organizations. In short, your superiors are observing not only what you have done for others but also what you have done for yourself.

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