

Are You A 'Promotable' Or A 'Pass-Over'?

Winners' Circle Or Whiners' Circle?

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As A Preface: Silber Success Score Sheet—How well do the following criteria fit me?

- Open to challenge & question initial assumptions
- Humility and humor in human relationships
- Ask expert questions rather than being “ the” expert

- Demonstrated active listening versus out-talking to ‘overcome’
- Extend your ‘learning reach’, yet stay close to people
- Enthusiasm, Excitement, Passion for achieving real results

- Deliver on promises = demonstrate that you deserve by follow through..
- Look for and create fresh opportunities: change as a friend...not a foe
- Make and take tough decision calls: face both dreads & dreams

- Facilitate others’ being special: control thy Ego needs
- “Give-oriented” versus “get-oriented”: give more than expected
- Life’s values guide and decide: project ethics without rigidity
- Sense timing & appropriateness (politic for suggestions & ideas)

Success Sensors.....Politic & Political Sense

When in a highly dangerous organization political jungle, are you effective politically? When you are in an open, trusting, self-disclosing and non-political organizational culture, do you trade-off being politic for being political? Being ‘politic’ is being aware of what is reality in others’ values, what is acceptable (what will fly) at a point in time and with certain key persons, what is financially possible, etc. Being politic = THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE.....THE RIGHT TIMING WITH THE ‘RIGHT’ PEOPLE.

Peers and bosses steer clear of visible ‘office politicians’ by cutting off vital communications, transmitting ‘organization secrets’ and avoid becoming caught in potentially dangerous interpersonal relationships.

This is called ORGANIZATIONAL CUE SENSE. Do you pick up on & SENSE the informal political signals...the cues both verbal and non-verbal of what is organization-specific non-acceptable?

Success Sensors..... Negotiation Sense



Some organizations, and surely some persons in decision-making positions, are committed to low or no risk taking. Rules, past practices, a simplified formal world of compliance and conformity to procedures become the safe way to make decisions. The challenge of change produces insecurity which, in turn, produces defensive positions. The possible and probable success which might have resulted from taking a new stance is lost.

Success may well be the product of identifying the gray areas in debates and confrontations. Successful proactive action start and sustain when gray areas of opportunities are identified. Turf and territory protection are replaced by negotiated inter-disciplinary mutual benefits.....stepping back and re-focusing on the broad impacts of a decision. Turf protectionism suffer from “ domain poisoning “!
Success many times can be seized by re-focusing on the VISION and the broad MISSION.

This SENSOR is the negotiating sensitivity/art of ORGANIZATION SYSTEM SENSE....the confrontational skill of turning the debate from tunnel vision, narrow territory protectionism, to enlarged and total organizational enhancement. It may be helpful to remember, “ What you ‘seize’ is what you get”! How wide or how narrow will the organization ‘seize’ itself? Will success be empowered by thinking about the total organization.....as a system? The bedfellow of thinking with system sense is “thinking outside the box” for the total welfare of the organization box.

Success Sensors.....Boss Sense

A “S.S.O.B.” = a double S.O.B. or boss spelled backwards can become a reality in many employees’ organizational life. Some managers confuse being tough on performance, with being tough and insensitive on subordinates. That is, some supervisors see their ability to control/ command as being a source of constant demand. Fear and “psychological space” between thee and me are earmarks of errant managerial behaviors.

There are manipulative managers who have an inordinate personality need for acceptance, to be loved by everyone and run a discriminating popularity contest between and among their staff. The model or paradigm for this love-seeking boss is , ‘If I do things for you, you must do things for me, in return”. Those employees who do NOT do things in return....particularly the expression of attention and affection toward this manager.....often are discriminated against in both assignments and promotions. The discrimination is “teacher-manager pets” or favoritism.

BOSS SENSE calls for your interpersonal and psychological awareness of the needs, greed’s and even the fears of your executive. How much emotional space is expected by your boss? How close and how often does the manager want/need you to be with him/her? What form or style of communication is expected....written , oral, or both media in your relationship?



BOSS SENSE is the basis for building a credit bank between thee and me. Emotional “deposits” in this credit bank are founded on your analysis and understanding of the relationship expectations of your boss. Negative “withdrawals” and “overdrawn penalties” are assessed when you have failed to pick up the boss-cues. Sometimes the boss-credit bank closes on those employees who build up major deficits in their account!

The winners circle is selectively filled with those persons who have BOSS SENSE or sensitivity. Promotions are NOT 100% based on productivity and duty/diligence. Discrimination and differentiation at the time of promotion selection is based, informally behind closed doors, on the credits and built up deposits in the boss bank!

Success Sensors.....Ego Control Sense

Organizational research reflects that promotable persons and successful executives have a healthy ego = self esteem or self regard image. Pitfalls and career pratfalls are often related to managerial egotism and self-focus.....an Ego out of control. “Me-ism” is super dominant over and ahead of “We-isms”!

EGO SENSE is the healthy alertness to call upon the expertise of others. Humility to acknowledge that one does not know is ego control. Modesty is the honesty to acknowledge that your own knowledge/skill base has an adequate basis for making the decision, but that knowledge base also may be insufficient. EGO SENSE is the open acceptance that others’ inputs and advice are appreciated, not avoided nor feared.

Living in an organizational culture is based on reciprocity across ‘knowledge banks’. The problem solving search for the best solution that makes the problem go away calls for the EGO SENSE of making use of information/judgments from many sources in the organization talent bank.

Reciprocity is hurt, hindered and even make ‘helpless’ when persons become “know-it-alls” and demand only center stage in relationships. Healthy EGO SENSE is relatively free from being position-wise threatened by others. Threat, turning into defensiveness, is erecting a fence between one’s ego and other persons. DEFENSE is two words.....DE—FENCE or the barrier for ego protection. The antidote to this person-to-person poison is the modesty of one’s judgments. Coupled with Ego safety is the security of self projection, not the constant need for self-protection and interpersonal dominance. Openness & flexibility replaces fear and the debilitating need for control, control, control.

Success Sensors.....Career Sense

What are the core competencies that provide the launch pad for the career missile? Please refer to the opening “summary” of behaviors suggested on Page One. CAREER SENSE knows that career mobility-enhancement is founded on the “P’s” of being a candidate for promotion.



- P~~Performance & Productivity
- P~~Personal Sensitivities—Human Relations
- P~~Political & Politic Skills
- P~~Persuasive & Negotiating Acumen
- P~~Projecting Strengths & Ethic

The listed “P’s” have been moderately addressed in preceding paragraphs. Let us explore the last listed “P” above....projecting strengths. Careers are empowered with and through visibility across organizational lines (laterally and vertically). Key decision makers must know you, know your skills and strengths, recognize your ethical building blocks for your decisions-behaviors. Being a hidden performer usually merits a financial raise, but not a career raise. Visibility is the vitality of career advancement!

CAREER SENSE starts with identifying the T.O.P. = the Table of Power. Organizational people are more than conscious of the T.O.O. = Table of Organization (Organization Chart with all of its hierarchical boxes). Power platforms succeed though the ability to influence, that is, being influential. Who are the influential key players in your organization? What is your relationship with these power brokers....are you interlocked or void of vital visibility?

Today in this downsizing organizational world , CAREER SENSE and occupational survival calls upon the art of developing career mentors. Career mentors both career sponsor-support you and career protect you! These “guides” recognize your strengths, but also educate and alert you to your blind spots...the sand traps on your organizational golf course. These sponsors are invaluable in giving you visibility to higher level executives and across functional organizational lines for cross-positional rotations. Mentors are the “meat” of career building & encouragement.

“Ethos” is the Greek word for an ETHICAL SENSE. When organization members are unethical, dishonest, untrustworthy in their behaviors-decisions, they are avoided. A person’s reputation precedes them...for betterment or for career destruction. The success of relationships and the success of a corporation are built on ethical trust among and between Divisions, between and within Departments, between the customer marketplace and the corporation.

Arguments and heated problem solving debates are critical to progress, but they must be founded on trust...on ethics. Careers are made and careers are turned into wastelands based on the perception, as well as the experience, of ethical conduct between organization members. One might even posit that DIGNITY follows demonstrated ethical position-taking in arguments. What is your “ethical-trust scorecard?”

Success Sensors.....Servant Leadership Sense



The textbooks are repeatedly filled with Theory “X”, Theory “Y”, and Theory “Z” (Situational Leadership). There are organizational and managerial conditions/situations which differentially call for these differential styles of influencing change. The textbooks and the multitude of seminars usually address the many differences between managerial-administrative skills and the art of leader behaviors. Many leadership values-behaviors were partially summarized on Page One...just an introduction to promotion success.

Let us address SERVANT LEADER CUES. The traditional view of the Office of the President is at the top of the organizational pyramid. All subordinate executive and managerial positions have “underlings” working for them. The manager is seen as ABOVE these corporate employees. Many times being ABOVE translates into being SUPERIOR or BETTER THAN or SMARTER than the “worker bees”.

Being a SERVANT LEADER is one of the many ingredients in the cakemix of promotable success. The servant leader works for his/her staff members. The servant leader is a living example of being an associate to the Associates, rather than being above them. The servant leader facilitates-leads-educates. The key word is FOR his staff members.....as opposed to doing things TO his staff members. He/she works FOR them, not the opposite as the organization chart suggests!

Empowering, Enriching, Enhancing, Energizing, Educating ,Encouraging= the key “E’s” of the servant leader’s attitudes produce the productivity of success. Superiors in an organization are keenly aware of styles and methods of getting results.....are those results based on “show and blow” of commanding authority, or , are those results produced through caring facilitation & helpfulness?
The CUES OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP are witnessed by boss, by higher level management, witnessed by staff members....and referred to at the time of the meeting of Promotion Boards.

It is not a simple question nor a simple answer to the question...ARE YOU A PROMOTABLE PERSON OR A PASS-OVER ?

Career death often times come slowly. Career demise often times comes on soft and silent ‘cat’s paws’. Career derailment often times comes without signals, signs or 1st warnings. Persons are NOT hired as “pass-overs”...they BECOME passed-by-persons.

Look around you. Who is being promoted around or over you? Are you like or different from them regarding SUCCESS CUES offered in this article? Do you really belong in your organization? Do you fit in the present organizational culture and climate? Did you resign from a former organization too soon....an organization in which you could have been on a fast career track? Did you ‘better fit’ in that former environment as you were like those individuals who were promoted?

There is no certainty in a job search. There is no full disclosure in the pre-employment psychological insights into what your new boss’s style will be like. There is no



assurance of your best fit with a new boss, a new organizational culture, a new world of interpersonal relations.

However, having past through the entry processes.....listen, ask questions, observe acceptable behaviors and surely gain an understanding of your new boss. Be CUE-WISE. Position survival and not becoming a career 'pass-over' are highly dependent on your success sensors. Be in the winner's circle.

