

Managing Your Potential, As A So-Called "Middle Manager"

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The first element to recognize in seeking your desired happiness/satisfaction ratio is to stop using the success of others as your guideposts.

You may have moved product into the marketplace well above plan; you may have scored heavily by identifying unmet needs and bringing new innovative products to commercialization at record rates; and you may have even been awarded exceptional performance bonuses BUT you are discouraged with not only your job and career advancement, but your happiness and satisfaction. If this is YOU, we see several straight forward considerations for you.

The first element to recognize in seeking your desired job "happiness/satisfaction" ratio is to stop using the successes of others as YOUR guideposts. Much like fingerprints, they have their own set of individual "success needs." Like fingerprints, each of us has our own set of built-in "success" quotients and our individual objective is to uncover those uniqueness's.

As you might expect one to say but I will say it anyway . . . managing your career is your responsibility and no one else. With this totally in mind, the following steps, taken very objectively, will help:

"Know thyself": Record the three to four greatest . . . strengths, adequacies and weaknesses YOU honestly feel are accurate descriptions of YOU. Then identify a couple of people you feel know you well and will be harshly critical and share your self-appraisal with them. Be receptive to this input.

Then write down what you truly enjoy doing. Fit that honest "enjoy doing" picture into another picture . . . that is, what does my dream job look like? Once you have selected your model job, you will have to begin from scratch. We are not saying this is easy, because it's not easy but once you've made the ideal "picture" of your success pattern you will have emotional strengths built-in, that will assist you in making lob cross-over decisions.

Stand-out at important activities: First, identify the 4-5 critical activities vital for success in your preferred or current position. Then develop a plan for excelling in these activities.

Display Temperament and Control: Temperament (character) and Control differentiates between good and great performance.

There are several methods to be used to exhibit control:

- Placing interests where they belong: Place your interests subordinate to both your company and your colleagues . . . exhibit by doing things for others demonstrating your willingness to sacrifice for the company.
- Assume an owners frame of mind: Always asking yourself, if I were the ultimate decision-maker, how would I act and what would my expectations be?

Willing to make tough recommendations: Always make recommendations that will benefit the company's overall performance. Sometimes, these recommendations may be to your disadvantage but you must take the long view in these cases.

LEADERSHIP: Speak up despite taking an unpopular view. Your Management very much wants unorthodox opinions so they can make better choices. If you constantly play it safe instead of asserting your sincere opinions, you may hit a plateau in your career. **CW**

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