



Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan

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Your Modern Career:

A Corporate Survival Guide for the Greenhorn MBA

by Michael Jon Emery, Jr.
Candidate for MBA
August, 1997

A research paper submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for 1.5 credits,
GRADUATE INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PROJECT Winter Term 1997,
Professor Paula Caproni, Faculty Supervisor.

OB 750 (Independent Study in Organizational Behavior) Proposal

The University of Michigan MBA curriculum was designed to enable students to develop analytical and teamwork skills relevant to business management. Despite the presence of Organizational Behavior in the core curriculum, the program is not equally focused on imparting real organizational savvy. Perhaps the topic is too complex to be covered thoroughly in four semesters, when there are so many basic, mechanical subjects competing for limited program time. Perhaps the subject can only be mastered through many years of practical experience. Yet a firm understanding of organizational behavior is equally if not more important to career success than insight into the more quantitative business disciplines. Organizations have a tendency to chew up and spit out individuals who do not understand and play by the rules of the game.

The objective of my independent study is to distill a set of principles related to organizational behavior that address the concerns of the recent MBA graduate in the corporate environment. This will not be a bag of tricks, nor a superficial or overly cynical analysis. Rather, it will be a survival guide based on the digestion of both academic and popular literature. The set of principles to be covered will enable the greenhorn master's graduate to maximize a number of important variables, including: (1) range of career options within the firm, (2) career trajectory, (3) income, (4) work satisfaction, and (5) interpersonal harmony within the business environment. Topics to be covered will include: (1) a relational approach to the career, (2) power and influence, and (3) organizational politics.

The literature that will be covered will include portions of the following texts:

- 1) The Path (Laurie Beth Jones)
- 2) Teaching the Elephant to Dance (James Belasco)
- 3) The Career is Dead; Long Live the Career (Douglass Hall)
- 4) The Ropes to Know and the Ropes to Skip (R. Richard Ritti)
- 5) What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School (Mark H. McCormack)
- 6) Power and Influence (Chapter 3, book by John P. Kotter)
- 7) Successful Intelligence (Robert Sternberg)
- 8) The Overworked American (Juliet Schor)

Career Literature from some prominent OB journals (Academy of Management Review, Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly) will also be reviewed.

The benchmarks will be a final paper of approximately 20 pages and a final presentation to any interested audience. The paper will be due on May 1 and the presentation will be given sometime the week prior. A rough draft of the paper will be due on Friday, April 4. I will post Professor Caproni of the materials I covered during the week via electronic mail every Friday, beginning Friday, March 25. I will meet with Professor Caproni at least twice, at her convenience, of course.

Independent Study Evaluation for Michael Emery: OBHRM 750

Faculty Advisor: Paula Caproni

Faculty Comments

(Evaluative Comment in which the faculty supervisor should briefly describe the nature of the research project and add an evaluating comment)

Michael Emery began this independent study in order to research applied skills for managing one's managerial and professional career. His paper achieves this goal in that he read a number of books on the "new career" (many of which were scholarly publications or based on scholarly works) and integrated what he learned into a "survival guide" for "greenhorn" MBAs. Overall, he did a fine job and earned 1.5 credits. I wrote specific comments throughout the paper, some of which are my opinions which I hope will be helpful and other comments are supporting/critiquing his research. He would have received a "good" for the paper, but he missed a few deadlines so his grade is a "pass".

General comments:

- He created a useful model of attributes required to manage one's professional career in new organizational and social environment.
- He organized the paper in a thoughtful and useful way.
- More academic journal articles in addition to the books he read would have given more depth to the paper, particularly by challenging some of the taken-for-granted assumptions that tend to be common in the more popular books. Nonetheless, the paper achieves its goal in terms of applicability, particularly for the new MBA. The value of academic articles is that they add an additional level of sophistication, which will be even more critical as an MBA moves up the organizational hierarchy.
- Overall, the paper was well done and the effort Michael put into it met the criteria for a 1.5 credit course.

Paula Caproni, Ph.D.
OBHRM, Lecturer

A Model for Skills and Attributes

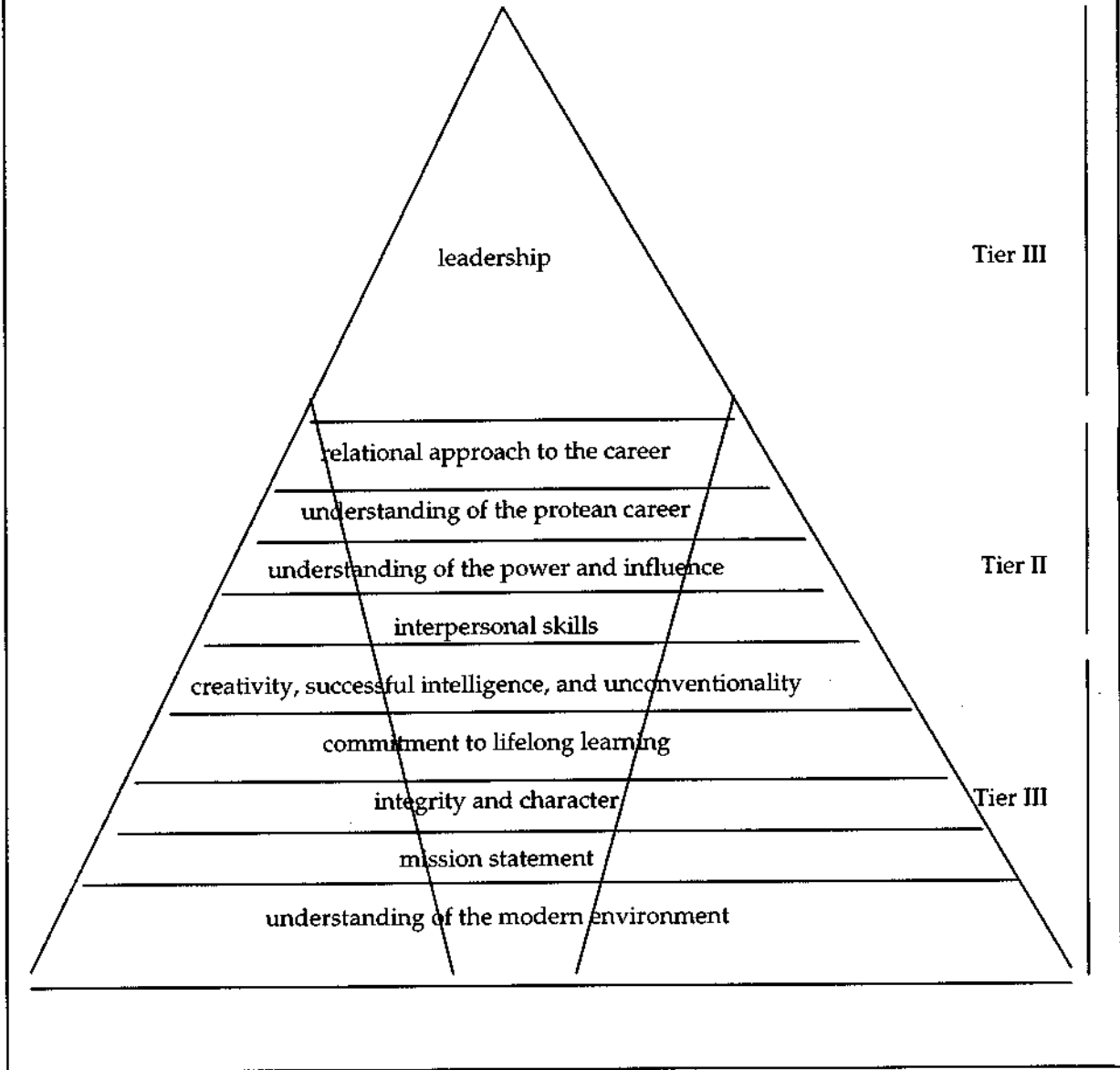
Figure 1 illustrates a model for the skills and attributes related to career success that will be discussed in this paper. The model was organized hierarchically, so as to acknowledge an apparent relative dependency of skills and attributes. (For example, character and integrity appear below interpersonal and influence skills. If interpersonal and influence skills are likely to be effective over the long run, they must have character and integrity as part of their foundation.)

The structure of the model also acknowledges an expected shift in work focus as one gains increasing organizational responsibility. For example, the pure individual contributor would be especially concerned with (and judged largely by) skills or attributes at the base of the pyramid. Such attributes include technical competence, commitment to learning, and creativity. Likewise, the pure leader would be most concerned with (and judged largely by) skills or attributes at the top of the pyramid, such as leadership.

Of course, most jobs fall somewhere in between the two extremes, as we will see later in the discussion. Leadership, as an attribute, traverses every major and minor tier in the hierarchy. At the base of the pyramid it occupies a small fraction of the sphere of concern, while at the top of the pyramid it occupies the entire sphere of concern.

The skills and attributes represented by layers of the pyramid are grouped into three major tiers (I - III), according to their sociological and organizational content. **Tier I** focuses on the self, or on intrapersonal development (although these skills and attributes are enhanced by interpersonal development). Tier II focuses on interpersonal development (such as interpersonal skills, an understanding of power and influence, and the degree to which one uses other people as resources). **Tier III** focuses principally on leadership, and could include attributes such as an understanding of organizational behavior, and the degree to which one can mobilize groups of people as resources.

Figure 1: Model for Skills and Attributes



Understand the Modern Environment

If business managers (including Michigan MBAs) are to be effective, they need to appreciate the characteristics of the modern environment. The modern career cannot be separated from its context.

The world of work has changed dramatically in the past 140 years and society has become increasingly dependent on organizations of every variety.² The organizational component of work has increased dramatically, resulting in a high degree of employee interdependence. In other words, the requisite employee interactivity, consultation, coordination, and teamwork has escalated substantially. Concurrently, diversity in the work force has exploded, resulting in an apparent antagonism between interdependence and diversity. The successful management of interdependence and diversity are critical to the career success of the MBA, and to the success of his or her organizations. These concepts are outlined in "Power and Influence" by John P. Kotter, Chair of the Department of Organizational Behavior at Harvard Business School. Some of these concepts will be discussed here, vis-a-vis the concerns of the recent MBA.

The history of work can be delineated into three phases in time.³ In phase I (prior to 1840), work was essentially a struggle against nature. Man worked principally with things and to a much lesser extent with people. The majority of workers were farmers, although some were artisans. People during this period tended not to be a very diverse lot, and were similar by educational, religious, ethnic, and national backgrounds. Markets were limited principally by geography and communication. Products were simple, businesses were small, and the total output was relatively modest.⁴

During phase II (between 1840 and about 1970), dramatic changes occurred in the nature of work. Communication and transportation technologies created a global market. Medical, agricultural, and other technological advances have increased the population dramatically.⁵ Factories became considerably larger and the increase in affluence resulted in a growth in service organizations.

Phase III officially began in 1973 with the Arab oil embargo, or first major oil shock. This event marks the modern era, in which social and organizational complexities appear our greatest assets and greatest liabilities. Executives are working with thousands of interdependent relationships. Businesses are

² Kotter, John P. Power and Influence. New York: The Free Press (Macmillan, Inc.), 1985, p. 3.

³ Kotter, p. 22.

⁴ Kotter, p. 23.

⁵ Kotter, p. 23.

engaged in multiple markets across multiple countries. Business is truly international. An aging work force is becoming increasingly heterogeneous and increasingly educated.⁶

Moreover, we appear to have entered an era of limits. Government regulation of industry is substantial. Environmental concerns have increased dramatically, and trends such as product stewardship are emerging. Non-renewable natural resources are declining, and we are approaching an era of world overpopulation.

A general rise in accountability, in combination with growth of third market parties, international competition, and increasingly sophisticated technologies, has turned individual contributor and management jobs into leadership jobs. Yet the formal organizational authority previously associated with management responsibility has eroded. Organizations have downsized and have become structurally flatter. Hence, there is a now gap between formal managerial power and the power required to get jobs done. Leadership is a key element required to close the gap.

Formulate a Mission Statement for Your Career and Life

In The Path, author Laurie Beth Jones recapitulates a story her grandfather shared concerning his experience in World War II. Apparently, if an identified soldier appeared suddenly in the dark and could not state his mission, he was automatically shot without question.⁷

For a number of compelling reasons, everyone should establish a career and life mission statement, including the greenhorn MBA. Although Jones finds it unlikely that a soldier is holding any of us at gun point, she believes that "time is holding a gun to our heads - pulling back the trigger and reminding us that our days on earth are numbered."⁸ According to the author, the greatest fear of people is having lived a meaningless life.⁹ Hence, we must understand the urgency and importance of our "mission" if we are to fulfill it.¹⁰ The clarity that results from establishing a mission statement becomes a source of power and excitement, regardless of the religious beliefs of the MBA graduate.

⁶ Kotter, p. 24.

⁷ Jones, Laurie Beth. The Path. New York: Hyperion, 1996, p. ix.

⁸ Jones, p. 4.

⁹ Jones, p. x.

¹⁰ Jones, p. 4.

In an age of relative job insecurity, the mission statement transcends any particular job.¹¹ Thus, a job becomes only a means toward a mission, and not an end in itself. From this perspective, the loss of a job becomes less frightening, enabling one to live in greater peace and security.

But what comprises a mission statement? According to the author, an effective mission statement should have the following three characteristics:

Characteristics of a Mission Statement:

1. It should be no more than a single sentence long.
2. It should be easily understood by a 12 year old.
3. It should be able to be recited by memory at gun point.¹²

If one's mission statement is accurate, one's entire professional and other life activities should flow from it. Jones, who is obviously Christian, cites the mission statement of Jesus Christ, an individual who has undoubtedly impacted Western Civilization:

"I came that they might have life, and have it more abundantly."

According to Jones, all actions of Jesus Christ flowed from this simple mission statement.

But mission statements need not be earth-shattering or grandiose. In fact, Jones proposes 11 False assumption about missions, 10 of which are listed here:

Top 10 False Assumptions About Mission Statements:

1. My job is my mission.
2. My role is my mission.
3. My "to do" list is my mission.
4. I am not currently living my mission.
5. I am not important enough to have a mission.
6. My mission has to be a grand one or help a lot of people.
7. A mission must be full of suffering.
8. My mission must be the same as those of my peers.
9. Geography is destiny.
10. What I am doing is as close as I can get to my real mission

¹¹ Jones, p. xvii.

¹² Jones, p. 3.

Despite the power and the simplicity of the mission statement, it is apparent that many people are not following their truest mission. According to Jones, this is evident in the fact that people everywhere are unhappy and complaining. Jones compares the human situation to that of another species: "Bees hum while they work - they don't whine." The conclusion: the complainers of the world may be following their economically or culturally ordained mission, but not their truest mission.¹³

So how does one formulate a mission statement? The first step (1) is to recognize that while we are the product of DNA (genetic material; deoxyribonucleic acids), we are also the product of PPI, or past personality influences. Carl Jung said that "Nothing affects the environment of a child so much as the un-lived life of a parent." Family and friends can influence our career decisions, to the extent that we seek their approval, or enable them to satisfy their needs vicariously. The second step (2) is to identify one's USP, or unique selling point, as well as one's gifts. The USP is the element or combination of elements that makes one truly unique. Or, it may be that which one does better than anyone else. Gifts are not always easily recognizable because they are so familiar to the gifted one, and we all gifted; hence, an awareness of them may require consultation with others. The third step (3) is to identify one's passion, so as to select life activities that align with one's Deepest Desire. The fourth (4) and final step is to create simple sentences that describe the following: (a) what we like to do (an action verb), (b) with what (a direct object), (c) and to whom (an indirect object). For example, an aspiring physician could formulate the following mission statement: *Deliver medical care to young, economically disadvantaged women.*

To be truly effective, a mission statement should be supplemented by a *vision statement*. The vision statement is much more detailed than is the mission statement, and is also written in the present tense. It contains life details that are the product of a fulfilled mission statement¹⁴. For example, the following vision statement could accompany the previous mission statement: *I practice gynecology in the Greater New York area, and have an established and rapidly growing patient base. I speak Spanish fluently, and relate especially well to Hispanic women. Continuing education is an important dimension of my life, as I attend medical conferences at Columbia University and elsewhere at least six times per year. I have a partner, an adopted son, and a quaint, white colonial home in Nyack.*

Between the mission statement and the vision statement lies the *creative tension zone*¹⁵. We spend most of our lives in this region. Those who can cope with the

¹³ Jones, p. 26.

¹⁴ Jones, p. 71.

¹⁵ Jones, p. 100.

uncertainty and chaos of the creative tension zone are likely to fulfill their career and life mission.

Establish a Firm Foundation for Your Career

An abundance of contemporary career literature focuses on personality and skill-based success, in life and in business (e.g., How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie). Research supports the truism that skills are a critical dimension of career and life success.

However, according to Stephen Covey, skills will not be effective in the long run if they are not supported by character.¹⁶ Character consists largely of integrity, humility, fidelity, and temperance. Other dimensions of character include courage, justice, patience, industry, simplicity, modesty, and the Golden Rule.¹⁷

According to Covey's extension of the character ethic, there are certain principles that govern human effectiveness. These are laws that are as unchanging as the physical laws of energy and matter.¹⁸ Principles described by Covey include fairness, honesty, human dignity, service, potential and growth, and quality, or excellence. Other principles of particular note are patience, nurture, and encouragement.¹⁹ These principles are considered guidelines for human effectiveness that are proven to have enduring, permanent value. These and other human principles are necessarily fundamental.²⁰

Commit Yourself to Lifelong Learning

A second and major recurrent theme in the career literature is the need for lifelong learning. Kotter's research has shown that a lifelong commitment to growth and learning is important for professional success.

Kotter compares learning to investment to illustrate the compounding effect that learning can have on a career.²¹ Different rates of investment in learning can have a dramatic effect on the responsibility that one can assume in the future. For example, let's say that Fred and George both have 100 units of relevant talent at age 25. If Fred grows at 15% per year while George grows at 3%, and the

¹⁶ Covey, Stephen R. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990, p. 21.

¹⁷ Covey, p. 18-19.

¹⁸ Covey, p. 22.

¹⁹ Covey, p. 34.

²⁰ Covey, p. 35.

²¹ Kotter, John P. The New Rules. New York: The Free Press, 1995, p. 173.

changing environment renders 3% of their competitive capacities obsolete each year, then at age 50 Fred has 1,821 units of professional capability and George has only 100. The result implies that Fred can handle a job that is 18 times more complex than that of George.

What factors could account for such a radical difference in level of job responsibility? Globalization of markets, increased accountability to shareholders, government regulation, environmental constraints, need for rapid innovation, and extreme diversity and interdependence of the work force.

Develop Successful Intelligence

My understanding of MBA admissions is that applicants to elite programs have been selected largely on the basis of academic success, and partly on the basis of standardized test taking ability. GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) scores and undergraduate GPAs (grade point averages) have been factors critical to admission. These elements of qualification may represent, informally, more than 50% of the weighted criteria, regardless of whether this policy is articulated formally by admissions officers.

While completing MBA curricula, students have traditionally competed for grades, and grades have traditionally been a factor for selection by postgraduate employers. To some degree, students in prestige MBA programs have been primed and prodded by faculty, and told that they will become future candidates for positions in senior corporate management. Many employers have confirmed this message, offering positions in management development or management consulting that can provide access to the upper echelons of corporate America.

Despite the importance of tests in this selection process, most tests (and especially standardized tests such as the GMAT) measure a relatively small portion of the full spectrum of intelligence. According to Robert Sternberg, author of Successful Intelligence, this narrow band is a portion of analytical intelligence that is inert when isolated. What really matters is *successful intelligence*, and the following portion of the text capture its essence: "Successful intelligence involves analytical, creative, and practical aspects. The analytical aspect is used to solve problems, the creative aspect to decide what problems to solve, and the practical aspect to make solutions effective. These 3 aspects are relatively independent of one another."²² Not only does successful intelligence involve these 3 aspects, but it depends on their relative balance. Successfully intelligent people know when and how to use all three elements, and also reflect

Sternberg, Robert J. Successful Intelligence. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996, p. 47.

on when and how to use the 3 abilities effectively²³. Additionally, successful individuals share the following three characteristics:

3 Characteristics of Successful Individuals:

1. They know their strengths;
2. they know their weaknesses;
3. they capitalize on their strengths; they compensate for or correct their weaknesses.²⁴

Sternberg's research also provides a caveat to individuals identified as strong test takers, such as graduates of prestige business schools: "People with extremely high IQs often don't achieve great success because they try to overcapitalize on their analytical intelligence." By the same token, students who have performed well academically should recognize that "creative and practical skills [which are important to career success] have not been actively encouraged or selected for."²⁵ This concept highlights the need for the MBA to learn by work experience in these areas.

Sternberg, like most researchers in the field of intelligence, believes that intelligence is malleable. Assuming this is correct, then continuing education and learning environment are critical to the success of the MBA graduate. In essence, by learning, we increase our ability to learn. Likewise, early employment opportunities are likely to have a dramatic effect career trajectory of the MBA graduate. Sternberg's comment on environment seems particularly relevant:

"Successfully intelligent people realize that the environment in which they find themselves may or may not enable them to make the most of their talents. They actively seek an environment where they can not only do competent work but make a difference. They create their opportunities rather than let their opportunities be limited by the circumstances in which they happen to find themselves."²⁶

If the informed MBA wishes to apply Sternberg's principles to the career, he or she needs to understand the 3 elements of successful intelligence in depth. These elements are presented below:

²³ Sternberg, p. 128.

²⁴ Sternberg, p. 12.

²⁵ Sternberg, p. 136.

²⁶ Sternberg, p. 24.

*Key 1: Finding Good Solutions with Analytical Intelligence*²⁷. In many situations problems are essentially delivered on a silver platter. This is less true in MBA programs, where case materials are used and a holistic approach to problem solving is taken. However, problems solving in the context of the work environment probably requires an even greater degree of skill and sophistication than is required in academics. The following are 6 critical dimensions to problem solving:

6 Dimensions to Problem Solving:

1. problem recognition
2. problem definition
3. formulating a strategy for problem solving
4. representing information
5. allocating resources
6. monitoring and evaluation

Key 2: Finding Good Problems with Creative Intelligence. Creativity is a critical dimension of successful intelligence. Imagine a group of non creative scientists or engineers with phenomenal analytical ability. They could spend years on a problem, working with painstaking accuracy and in great detail, navigating themselves in precisely the wrong direction. Even worse, imagine that the problem that they have been trying to solve has no relevance to the marketing objectives of the firm. Although intuitive creativity may vary substantially, the development of creative intelligence is an active process that is also influenced by environment. Sternberg has identified 12 actions and characteristics of creatively intelligent people:

Creatively Intelligent People...

1. actively seek out, and later become, role models.
2. question assumptions, and encourage others to do the same.
3. allow themselves and others to make mistakes.
4. take sensible risks and encourage others to do the same.
5. seek out for themselves and others tasks that allow for creativity.
6. actively define and redefine problems, and help others to do the same.
7. seek rewards for, and themselves reward, creativity.
8. allow themselves and others the time to think creatively.
9. tolerate ambiguity and encourage tolerance of ambiguity in others.
10. understand the obstacles creative people must face and overcome.
11. are willing to grow.

²⁷ Sternberg, p. 124.

12. recognize the importance of person-environment fit.²⁸

Key 3: Making Solutions Work with Practical Intelligence. Once the correct problems have been identified and solutions have been developed, they need to be put to work with practical intelligence. In a sense, practical intelligence is the interface between the theory and the real environment. According to Sternberg, the Hallmark of the practically intelligence person is the "facile acquisition and use of tacit knowledge."²⁹

Tacit knowledge is that type of knowledge that comes from experience and that results in learning. Its use enables individuals to adapt to their environments - to "learn how the system works and make it work for them."³⁰ Tacit knowledge varies by environment, and, to some degree, allows people to shape their environment. It also enables people to know when to adapt and when to find a new environment. For example, tacit knowledge derived from the college experience would include the learning that occurs outside of formal academic courses.

Not surprisingly, tacit knowledge is a good predictor of managerial performance.³¹ For a number of important measures of success, Sternberg has found a stronger correlation with tacit knowledge than with formal academic knowledge. Such variables include salary, years of managerial experience, ranking of company within the Fortune 500, level of seniority within the company, and personal job satisfaction.³²

Such that his readers may apply the principles of successful intelligence to their careers and their lives, Sternberg has assembled a list of 20 habits of successfully intelligent people. These people do the following:

Successfully Intelligent People...

1. motivate themselves
2. learn how to control their impulses
3. know when to persevere
4. know how to make the most of their abilities
5. translate thoughts into action
6. have a product orientation

²⁸ Sternberg, p. 200-218.

²⁹ Sternberg, p. 236.

³⁰ Sternberg, p. 245.

³¹ Sternberg, p. 240.

³² Sternberg, p. 239.

7. complete tasks and follow through
8. are initiators
9. are not afraid to risk failure
10. don't procrastinate
11. accept fair blame
12. reject self pity
13. are independent
14. seek to surmount personal difficulties
15. focus and concentrate
16. spread themselves neither too thick nor too thin
17. have the ability to delay gratification
18. have the ability to see the forest and the trees
19. have a reasonable level of self confidence and a belief in their ability to accomplish their goals
20. balance analytical, creative, and practical thinking.³³

Pursue an Unconventional Career Path

Kotter performed an extensive, 20 year research project on 200 business executives and arrived at some curious conclusions that are quite relevant to the greenhorn MBA. The population sample consisted of 115 Harvard MB As from the class of 1974 and 85 other executives, most of whom do not have MBA degrees.

According to Kotter, "Conventional [career] strategies aren't paying off, yet they are supported by most major institutions: big business, big labor, government, and education."³⁴ Those who have followed traditional paths "earn less money, have less real power or authority, and often report facing more problems or receiving less personal satisfaction with their work."

So where are the greatest opportunities? Working *with, not for*, big business.³⁵ These opportunities tend to be with smaller firms³⁶, in such general areas as entrepreneurship, financial deal making, and consulting. Such positions tend to offer "more feedback, more autonomy, more ability to see work through from

³³ Sternberg, p. 251-268.

³⁴ Kotter, John P. The New Rules. New York: The Free Press, 1995, p. 4.

³⁵ Kotter, p. 97.

³⁶ Kotter, p. 71.

start to finish, and more chance to use their own judgment."³⁷ MBAs working in smaller firms feel they have more real power and are closer to the market.³⁸

Perhaps the greatest satisfaction (and the greatest risk) lies in entrepreneurship. Among Harvard Business School graduates there is a dramatic trend toward entrepreneurship. Approximately 40% of the class of 1992 are entrepreneurs.³⁹

But when is the right time to start a business? According to Kotter, somewhere between the 5th and 10th reunion.⁴⁰ Prior, the MBA lacks sufficient real world experience. After, the MBA becomes too locked into the lifestyle of a more conventional career.⁴¹

Acquire Sophisticated Interpersonal Skills

Many of the most critical skills in business fall into the category of street smarts, and are not taught formally in business curricula. This section will give recognition to some of those skills, highlighting some of the finer points of Mark McCormack's 1995 presentation at the University of Michigan Business School, and his book "What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School."⁴²

Mr. McCormack is a legitimate source of interpersonal and negotiating skills. A graduate of Yale Law School, he is the founder of The International Management Group (IMG). Mr. McCormack's organization is a prominent sports management group that has represented professional athletes and other celebrities, including Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, and Bjorn Borg. McCormack has successfully negotiated contracts and dealt with numerous CEOs, including some prominent egomaniacs.⁴³

According to McCormack, successful managers tend to listen and observe very aggressively.⁴⁴ This implies that the manager who is preoccupied with his own image and prefers to hear himself speak will not be sufficiently aware of his environment. Wise managers tune in very clearly to body language, particularly the constellation of messages transmitted by the eyes⁴⁵ (in retrospect, the MBA

³⁷ Kotter, p. 72.

³⁸ Kotter, p. 73.

³⁹ Kotter, John P. The New Rules. New York: The Free Press, 1995, p. 28.

⁴⁰ Kotter, p. 74.

⁴¹ Kotter, p. 74.

⁴² McCormack, Mark. What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School. New York: Bantam Books, 1986.

⁴³ McCormack, p. xii-xiii.

⁴⁴ McCormack, p. 8-9.

⁴⁵ McCormack, p. 9-13.

interview process is an opportunity for seasoned managers to first see *how students are*, and secondarily to see how their minds operate).

Savvy managers have typically acquired a set of skills that lubricate human relations. The witty use humor to diffuse tension, putting their listeners at ease and augmenting receptivity to the message that follows.⁴⁶

While insincere flattery breeds resentment, legitimate flattery is an endearing quality.⁴⁷ Most of use are starved for recognition, and sincere compliments are desired deeply. I have observed that skilled managers give recognition frequently but not systematically, and do so without ingratiating.

McCormack implies that humility is a dimension of personality that needs to be revealed occasionally by the manager.⁴⁸ The phrases "I don't know," "I was wrong," and "I need help" may be the most lacking in corporate America.⁴⁹ I have observed, at Pfizer, Inc., that when a powerful manager reveals his or her vulnerability in conjunction with a salient message, staff take notice.

Need one say that confidentiality should never be violated? Yes, I believe, because it appears that some managers keep relearning that message at considerable cost. If subordinates know that a manager can be trusted with personal and confidential information, then the manager will have access to the information he or she truly needs to be maximally effective. Breach of confidence only breeds resentment and inhibits flow of information in both directions.

Sophisticated managers know how to select the proper location for a business transaction.⁵⁰ If this concept is interpreted quite liberally, it can apply to essentially every business transaction. If a proposition to a potential client is made in a restaurant featuring excellent food, atmosphere, and beverage, then the client is likely to be more receptive than he would be in his or her own office.⁵¹ When is the best time to renew a contract with a particular client? After a dramatic benefit has just been delivered to that client.⁵² How do you make a favorable impression on a Japanese client whose daughter admires Martina

⁴⁶ McCormack, p 46-47.

⁴⁷ McCormack, p 42.

⁴⁸ McCormack, p 69-72.

⁴⁹ McCormack, p 69-72.

⁵⁰ McCormack, p 16-18.

⁵¹ McCormack, p 17.

⁵² McCormack, p 101.

Navratilova? Ask the executive if his daughter will serve as personal translator next time Martina is playing in Japan.⁵³

McCormack makes it clear that sophisticated interpersonal skills can enhance dramatically the effectiveness of a manager. He specifies that interpersonal skills are not the equivalent of charisma, and implies that the skills can be developed with time and effort.

Learn the Dynamics of Power and Influence

Establish an Adequate Power Base

A key objective for the greenhorn MBA is to establish the broad power base within an organization that is essential for managerial success later in the career. According to Kotter, this action begins with the selection of a career that suits one's natural abilities and interests (consulting and investment banking may be very lucrative, but they're not right for everyone). Next, establishing a strong power base involves favoring the substantive measures of success over the superficial measures. Substantive measures include track record, reputation, business knowledge, good relationships, and interpersonal skills, whereas the superficial measures would include raises and promotions.⁵⁴

The recent MBA also needs to keep a watchful eye over the speed at which he gains increasing managerial responsibility. Kotter has written that, if one moves too quickly, he or she may not establish the "unambiguous track record"⁵⁵ required for a senior management position. According to Mr. Gerard Cunningham, a Marketing Analyst and aspiring manager at Merck and Co, Inc., there is an optimal speed at which one should move through an organization: "It's just like driving a race car: the faster you're going, the more likely you are going to crash. You don't want a position before you're good and ready for it."⁵⁶

Yet, if one moves too slowly, he or she may not acquire the range of functional experiences necessary for consideration for senior management. Dr. Ronald Spangler, former Worldwide Director of Scientific and Medical Affairs at SmithKline Beecham PLC, explained, "For consideration for senior [VP level]

⁵³ McCormack, p. 39-40.

⁵⁴ Kotter, John P. Power and Influence. New York: The Free Press (Macmillan, Inc.), p. 45-46.

⁵⁵ Kotter, p. 46.

⁵⁶ Interview with Mr. Gerard Cunningham, Marketing Analyst, US Human Health, Merck and Company Inc. December 17, 1996

marketing responsibility, there is a grid of requisite former positions, and you need a check mark in essentially every box."⁵⁷

Manage Your Boss

One of the recurrent themes in the topic of career success is active management. Everything needs to be managed actively: informational bases, relationships of every variety, and careers themselves. The same is true of bosses.

According to Kotter, there are four key steps to managing one's boss. First, (1) one needs to gather as much information as possible about each boss (in today's environment, there may be many bosses): goals, strengths, weaknesses, preferred working style, and the pressures that are exerted on him or her. An honest self appraisal follows (2), and includes an assessment of one's needs, objectives, strengths, weaknesses, and personal style. A relationship needs to be created (3) that "fits both parties' needs and styles."⁵⁸ Finally (4), one needs to inform the boss regularly, behave dependably and honestly, and utilize the boss's time and resources wisely.⁵⁹

Understand the Modern, "Protean" Career⁶⁰

In the previous era of employment, many Americans spent their entire careers with the same organization. Some had the virtual guarantee of lifetime employment, and many enjoyed linearly increasing income, responsibility, and the associated organizational status. Firm stability enabled workers to forge lifetime, work-related relationships that provided a psychological and economic benefits. However, for many, the career as we knew it is now dead, according to Hall and his colleagues.⁶¹

A new type of career has emerged, which Hall and Mirvis have dubbed the Protean Career.⁶² Proteus was a Greek mythological character who could recast himself into requisite form at will. This conscious metamorphosis is reminiscent of the 1980s Saturday morning cartoon characters, the Wonder Twins. The boy Wonder Twin could transform himself into water or ice of any shape; the girl Wonder Twin could transform herself into any animal.

⁵⁷ Interview with Dr. Ronald Spangler, Managing Director, Lancaster Investment Partners, Wayne, PA, May, 1997.

⁵⁸ Kotter, p. 43.

⁵⁹ Kotter, p. 43.

⁶⁰ Hall, Douglas, and associates. The Career is Dead. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996, p. 15.

⁶¹ Hall, and Associates, p. 15-45.

⁶² Hall, Douglas, and associates. The Career is Dead. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996, p. 15.

Likewise, the modern worker, including an MBA, has the formidable challenge of adapting to a relatively unstable employment environment. This requires continual learning, the continual upgrading of one's professional skills, and the reconception of the career as a "predictable series of discreet changes"⁶³. These predictable series should be viewed as cycles, which may vary in duration, and necessarily include: (1) skill apprenticeship, (2) mastery, and then reskilling as the two-phase cycle resumes.

Thus, career advancement is better thought of as a series of mostly-horizontal moves instead of a continuous, vertical progression. As a result, the careerist must find intrinsic, psychological reward in his or her work. In the Protean career, the traditional benefits of seniority, such as status, professional mastery, and perks, are elusive.

Additionally, the protean career is boundless; it transcends the corporate entity, formal job descriptions, traditional hierarchical relationships, and venue.

The protean career is also accompanied by a new dimension of psychological challenge. Leadership becomes critical, as does the stamina for continual learning and the acquisition of new skills. The protean worker needs to become comfortable with relative insecurity. Marketability needs to be developed to take the place of job security. As traditional support networks are lost, new ones need to be developed to take their place.

The new reality can be frightening. Those who do not enjoy learning will be disadvantaged. Those who are unwilling to embrace new technologies, such as computer and informational technologies, will be disadvantaged. Those who are introverted and averse to a new level of networking activity will be disadvantaged. However, those who can adapt to the new rules will find intellectual stimulation, psychic gratification, and economic remuneration. Long live the career!

View Your Career From a Relational Perspective

Managing a career in the age of anxiety and corporate anorexia is no easy task. Yet the authors of [The Career is Dead](#) argue that "the primary resources for career development - work challenges and relationships with other people - have

⁶³ Hall, p. 19.

never been so plentiful." Primary resources include teams, projects, and informational networks.⁶⁴

Mentoring is a key element of the relational approach to the career, and should be considered a mutually beneficial activity, or a process of co-learning. Mentees gain information, counsel, and affirmation in the formative stage of their career, whereas the mentors gain new competencies, loyal followership, and recognition from peers and superiors for developing talent for the organization.⁶⁵

The relational approach to the career has a prominent anticompetitive theme. Development is viewed less as process of differentiating oneself from others as it is a process of recognizing forms of connectedness.⁶⁶

However, initiating and maintaining these relationships is challenging in light of contemporary resource constraints. Ironically, the contemporary business environment, characterized by unstable jobs and organizations, renders individuals even more dependent on relational activity for "developing a sense of identity and for developing new skills and competencies."⁶⁷

According to Kathy Kram, the following conditions are necessary for relational career development:

1. interdependence
2. willingness to see relationships as important sites of personal learning and development
3. interpersonal competencies, including self reflection, self disclosure, active listening, empathy, and feedback
4. opportunities to develop multiple alliances at work⁶⁸

Grow in Leadership

The Importance of Leadership

Leadership is particularly hot topic for the 1990s, and is one of the most elusive and covetable qualities in the world of management. Leadership is also a key

⁶⁴ Kram, Kathy E. " A Relational Approach to Career Development," in The Career is Dead. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996, p. 132.

⁶⁵ Kram, p. 134.

⁶⁶ Kram, p. 140.

⁶⁷ Kram, p. 139.

⁶⁸ Kram, p. 135.

factor in determining the career success of the MBA. But why is leadership critical?

Leadership is a key personal attribute required to effect change.⁶⁹ As the rate of change in business has increased dramatically in the past two decades, so has the need for leadership. If businesses are to exploit new opportunities in a timely fashion and respond to competitive forces, they need to adapt quickly. Leadership provides the vision, mobilizes resources, and encourages and motivates employees.

According to Kotter, the goal of leadership is to "make social complexity work for us, not against us," and to "overcome the destructive forces that lead to mediocrity characterized by bureaucratic infighting, parochial politics, and vicious power struggles."⁷⁰

The Origins of Leadership: A Journey Inward; A Journey Outward

Warren Bennis, author of On Becoming a Leader, has a mature perspective on leadership. Virtually a septuagenarian, Bennis has performed research and taught for decades, and has written multiple, well-regarded books on management. Like Alvin Toffler, he is a futurist, and correctly predicted the nature of the contemporary career described in The Career is Dead.

Bennis performed well-balanced research on the origin of leadership, through the interviewing of 50 prominent leaders. This group included men and women from profit and non-profit institutions, who varied in the highest degree of education attained, ethnicity, religion, and relative socio-economic privilege.⁷¹

The overwhelming theme derived from the research is *that leaders cultivate self-expression*. According to Bennis, "No leader sets out to be a leader. People set out to live their lives, expressing themselves fully. When that expression is of value, they become leaders."⁷² This point is strengthened by a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson: "The man is only half himself; the other half is his expression [The woman is only half herself; the other half is her expression]."⁷³

Perhaps the most inspiring theme from the book is that leaders are made and not born.⁷⁴ Thus, we can all become leaders; each of us has the capacity. According

⁶⁹ Kotter, John P. The New Rules. New York: The Free Press, 1995, p. 113.

⁷⁰ Kotter, p. 3.

⁷¹ Bennis, Warren. On Becoming A Leader. New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc 1989

⁷² Bennis, p. 111.

⁷³ Bennis, p. 2.

⁷⁴ Bennis, p. 5.

to Bennis, one can transform himself or herself, at any age and under any circumstances.⁷⁵ We are reminded that Churchill was a jaywalker until he was called upon to serve his country during World War II.

However, there are attributes that are common to the leaders that were interviewed in the study. Bennis found that each of them had a guiding vision, and a passion for the promises of life.⁷⁶ They shared integrity, which was based partially on self-knowledge, candor, and maturity.⁷⁷ They also had the ability to inspire trust, and possessed a certain curiosity and daring.⁷⁸

In Bennis' book these common attributes, to a degree, give way to common themes in the development of leadership. There is the need for education, both formal and informal. Most importantly, there is the need to *unlearn, so that that one can learn*. There is the need for reflection on learning so that the meaning of the lesson is understood. Leaders need to take risks and make mistakes. Additionally, they need to be competent, and need to master the task at hand.⁷⁹

The importance of leadership is made clear: leaders are responsible for the effectiveness of all organizations. There is a pervasive, national concern about the integrity of our American institutions. Bennis explains: "We, as a nation, cannot survive without public virtue, and cannot progress without a common vision."⁸⁰ According to Bennis, we have no choice but to confront the issues of our time: "the changes and upheaval of the past years have left us with no place to hide."⁸¹

Bennis' message is consistent with that of John Wilkerson, Chairman and founder of The Wilkerson Group and partner of Galen Partners. Wilkerson explained: "There are administrators, there are managers, and then there are leaders."⁸² Management is associated with maintaining the status quo, whereas leadership is associated with deep change.

Like the other authors whose works have been reviewed for this paper, Bennis makes a clear distinction between leaders and managers: "The leader becomes himself, becomes the maker of his [or her] own life."⁸³ Likewise, leaders

⁷⁵ Bennis, p. 8.

⁷⁶ Bennis, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Bennis, p. 15.

⁷⁸ Bennis, p. 39.

⁷⁹ Bennis, p. 9.

⁸⁰ Bennis, p. 15-20.

⁸¹ Bennis, p. 15.

⁸² Interview with John Wilkerson, New York, New York, Dec. 9, 1996.

⁸³ Bennis, p. 51.

appreciate "the importance of enjoying the journey."⁸⁴ This phrase implies that career satisfaction is not a station at which one arrives, but a means of traveling. The leader also exercises self-invention, which is the ability to adapt such that one's natural self can meet a critical, novel objective. Perhaps the greatest difference between leaders and managers is the way they learn: "Managers learn through training; leaders opt for education."⁸⁵ In essence, leaders recognize that our American educational system is really better at training than at educating, which is a critical concept to be discussed.

Over the course of many chapters, Bennis outlines the elements to becoming a leader. These aspects are consolidated, itemized, and discussed in some detail below.

*Element 1: Know Yourself. You Make Your Life by Understanding It.*⁸⁶ The world has shaped us more than we realize. A variety of obstacles exist to self knowledge, including socialization and others' expectations. Bennis states it very succinctly: "We are taught by our parents and teachers and friends how to go along, to measure up to their standards, rather than allowed to be ourselves."⁸⁷ Gould, an equities analyst cited in the book, concurs that one goal of the potential leader is "overcoming the adaptational warp that takes place early in life."⁸⁸

While most of us are made by our elders or our peers, the leader is self-directed.⁸⁹ Hence, the goal of the aspiring leader is to *learn how to unlearn, so that one can begin to learn anew.*⁹⁰ To quote Wallace Stephens, "Leaders have lived in the world, just outside of existing conceptions of it."⁹¹

Reflection is another critical aspect of self-knowledge. The aspiring leader needs to have a Socratic dialogue with himself or herself on a regular basis. This activity can take place in the morning, after the alarm has gone off, when one is lying in bed. In essence, we need to understand the past to move forward and upward. According to Bennis, "Nothing is yours until you understand it, not even yourself."⁹² It is useful to consider four valuable lessons of self knowledge:

4 Lessons of Self-Knowledge:

⁸⁴ Bennis, p. 51.

⁸⁵ Bennis, p. 45.

⁸⁶ Bennis, p. 61.

⁸⁷ Bennis, p. 63.

⁸⁸ Bennis, p. 66.

⁸⁹ Bennis, p. 62.

⁹⁰ Bennis, p. 63.

⁹¹ Bennis, p. 111.

⁹² Bennis, p. 61.

1. You are your own best teacher.
2. Accept responsibility. Blame no one.
3. You can learn anything you want to learn.
4. True understanding comes from reflecting on your experience.

Element 2: Know the World. Bennis highlights the importance of world-understanding as an adjunct to self-understanding: "Clearly, to become a true leader, one must know the world as one knows one's self."⁹³ Certain kinds of experiences are especially significant for world-learning, including: (1) a broad and continuing education, (2) idiosyncratic families, (3) extensive travel, (4) a rich private life, and (5) key associations with mentors and groups.⁹⁴ Travel is particularly useful because it provides immediate change of perspective. (Curiously, Thorsten Veblen is quoted as having said that Jews have developed acute intelligence because "they have been perpetual exiles.")⁹⁵

One dimension of world-understanding is an understanding of one's learning environment. This is critical, because the goal of the aspiring leader should be "innovative learning", as opposed to "maintenance learning" or "shock learning".⁹⁶ Maintenance learning, which most organizations practice, "seeks to preserve the status quo and make good soldiers of us all."⁹⁷ Shock learning is equally troublesome because it tends to be reactive, as opposed to proactive. Innovative learning, the ideal form, is strongly anticipatory, and allows the individual to "shape events rather than being shaped by them."⁹⁸ A critical goal of innovative learning is to be active and imaginative rather than passive and habitual.⁹⁹

Element 3: Tune Into Your Instinct. Leaders have learned to trust their inner voices. They have well developed right and left brain functionality, or the logical and the intuitive dimensions.¹⁰⁰ This condition implies that leaders operate on deductive, as well as inductive reasoning. To a substantial degree, leaders operate on instinct.¹⁰¹ Frequently, the market is moving so quickly that leaders have to make decisions with much less than a well-researched analysis.

⁹³ Bennis, p. 74.

⁹⁴ Bennis, p. 74.

⁹⁵ Bennis, p. 90.

⁹⁶ Bennis, p. 78.

⁹⁷ Bennis, p. 78.

⁹⁸ Bennis, p. 77.

⁹⁹ Bennis, p. 76.

¹⁰⁰ Bennis, p. 102-103.

¹⁰¹ Bennis, p. 105-6.

Element 4: Deploy Yourself and Move Through Chaos. Leaders have fears as do others. The key difference is that leaders don't surrender to them.¹⁰² Leaders learn from their experience rather than being defeated by it.¹⁰³ They deploy themselves, rather than being deployed by others.¹⁰⁴ They reflect, and yet are not paralyzed by reflection.¹⁰⁵ The potential leader is one who can learn from both good and bad bosses.¹⁰⁶ According to Bennis, chaos is in the beginning, not in the end.¹⁰⁷ Chaos is a source of energy and momentum.¹⁰⁸

Element 5: Get Support. Like Covey, Bennis highlights some 4 key ingredients that leaders have for generating and sustaining trust: (1) constancy, (2) congruity, (3) reliability, and (4) integrity.¹⁰⁹ Empathy is key, as leaders have a knack for getting to know people and their concerns.¹¹⁰ "Intellectual honesty" is also very important, and people will respond to it regardless of whether the leader is very articulate.¹¹¹ Likewise, the ability to persuade is very important,¹¹² and this factor resonates with inductive reasoning mentioned earlier. All of these factors enable the leader to martial support, for the benefit of himself or herself, as well as for the organization.

Element 6: Understand the Impact of the Organization on the Potential Leader. Organizations should encourage risk taking, for the fear of making mistakes produces a tension that stifles creativity.¹¹³ Bennis has said that "no great vision has ever emerged from the herd."¹¹⁴

Organizations should also practice the 3 Rs of reflection: (1) retreat, (2) renewal, and (3) return. What matters most is "an organization's commitment to providing its potential leaders with opportunities to learn through experience in an environment that permits growth and change."¹¹⁵

¹⁰² Bennis, p. 113-115.

¹⁰³ Bennis, p. 144.

¹⁰⁴ Bennis, p. 37.

¹⁰⁵ Bennis, p. 118.

¹⁰⁶ Bennis, p. 148-151.

¹⁰⁷ Bennis, p. 191.

¹⁰⁸ Bennis, p. 191.

¹⁰⁹ Bennis, p. 160.

¹¹⁰ Bennis, p. 169.

¹¹¹ Bennis, p. 169.

¹¹² Bennis, p. 159.

¹¹³ Bennis, p. 97.

¹¹⁴ Bennis, p. 178.

¹¹⁵ Bennis, p. 182.

Element 7: Inherent the Future Through Learning and Leadership. The learners are the ones who will inherit the future.¹¹⁶ Typically, leaders do have a keen interest in learning, for learning is the bridge between where they are and where they want to be.¹¹⁷ The next generation of leaders will have certain things in common:

10 Characteristics of the Next Generation of Leaders:

1. Broad education.
2. Boundless curiosity.
3. Boundless enthusiasm.
4. Belief in people and teamwork.
5. Willingness to take risks.
6. Devotion to long-term rather than short-term profit.
7. Commitment to excellence.
8. Readiness.
9. Virtue.
10. Vision.¹¹⁸

Element 8: Follow Your Desire. According to Bennis, the primary goal of the leader is to express himself or herself, rather than trying to prove one's self.¹¹⁹ When the primary goal of the individual is to prove himself or herself, he or she is likely to run into trouble sooner or later. In other words, leadership emerges when drive gives way to desire. According to this paradigm, becoming a leader is much the same process as becoming an integrated human being.

These concepts are supported by stories or quotes from accomplished individuals. Jamie Raskin, one of the leaders interviewed by Bennis, related the life philosophy of Derek Bell, a Harvard Law Professor. Bell emphasized that it's important not to have any specific ambitions or desires. It's more important to have ambitions in terms of the way you want to live your life, and then the other things will flow out of that.¹²⁰ Wittgenstein, the well known philosopher, would concur: "ambition is the death of thought."¹²¹ Bennis closes his book with the following statement: "It's much easier to express yourself than to deny yourself, and much more rewarding, too."¹²²

¹¹⁶ Bennis, p. 189.

¹¹⁷ Bennis, p. 57.

¹¹⁸ Bennis, p. 201.

¹¹⁹ Bennis, p. 125.

¹²⁰ Bennis, p. 123.

¹²¹ Bennis, p. 85.

¹²² Bennis, p. 202.

Other Leadership Enhancing Attributes

High level leadership skills do not come easily. One of the most common problem is that workers abandon trying to find mutually acceptable solutions, and instead try to win for themselves.¹²³ Another common problem is that people focus on the technical aspects of their work, and don't pay sufficient attention to "network management activity" associated with leadership.¹²⁴ Network management activity is the establishment of an extended support group, both formal and informal, that is required to effect change.

In order to be successful, a manager requires a "keen understanding of the diverse and interdependent milieu surrounding the job".¹²⁵ Critical questions that require answers are:

1. Who are the relevant parties?
2. What are the perspectives of the relevant groups?
3. How are various perspectives in conflict?
4. What are the sources of power each group has to pursue its own interests and to what extent are they prepared to use that power?¹²⁶

Good working relationships need to be maintained on a global basis. Hence, the recent MBA needs to be concerned with his or her relationships with bosses, subordinates, local peers, peers in other parts of the organization, and outside suppliers and customers.¹²⁷ Factors that contribute to good working relationships include the following: (1) respect, (2) admiration, (3) perceived need, (4) obligation, (5) and friendship.¹²⁸

Other skills that enhance leadership are a credible track record (and the reputation that it produces), influence skills, and technical skills. These factors contribute to a *resource network* and *agenda*, which provide a basis for effective managerial action. A resource network should be viewed as itemization of all the resources available to a leader, and their connectedness. An agenda is a logical and detailed plan of action.¹²⁹

Conclusion

¹²³ Kotter, p. 32.

¹²⁴ Kotter, p. 37.

¹²⁵ Kotter, p. 39.

¹²⁶ Kotter, p. 39.

¹²⁷ Kotter, p. 40.

¹²⁸ Kotter, p. 40.

¹²⁹ Kotter, p. 40-41.

In the works reviewed, there are approximately eight recurring themes that are of particular interest to the recent MBA graduate. These prominent themes are those that have appeared in two or more of the works, and resonate with the MBA curriculum of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

The first is the need to establish a firm foundation for one's career, in the form of quality of character and well-developed interpersonal skills. There are principles that govern human effectiveness that are as unchanging as the physical laws of energy and matter. Integrity and interpersonal skill are as important now as they were in Greek and Roman times, and will be equally important in the year AD 3000. They are fundamental to the human constitution. It would be tragic for an executive to reach the pinnacle of his or her career, and to realize that he or she had been hindered for decades by an unexamined flaw in character.

Equally important is the need for continual learning, for the learners will inherit the future. Education tends to be compartmentalized in America, and the learning that is most important the recent MBA is that which is yet to come. This is particularly true because of the malleability of intelligence and the compounding effect in skill development. It is critical for the MBA to learn from past and future experiences. Successful intelligence must be derived from academic success and applied in the market, for academic success is no guarantor of professional achievement. Perhaps the recent graduate should forget the fact that he or she holds an MBA, and expect to earn success from the ground up.

The modern manager needs to be able to reconcile seemingly antagonistic forces. For example, diversity needs to be reconciled with interdependence. Self-expression requires cultivation while healthy relationships are maintained on a global basis, in both the private and professional spheres. There is probably an intangible, artistic component to this process.

Proactivity is central to the modern career and to organizational success. The MBA needs to understand the drivers of the Protean career such that the next generation of career evolution can be anticipated. Proactivity enables one to shape events, rather than merely being shaped by them. It also enables the MBA to choose the right learning environment.

The modern career environment demands a new level of psychological strength. A well-formulated mission statement can provide transcendental career and life direction. In the highly uncertain marketplace, a particular job becomes a means to an end, and not an end in itself. As hitherto comforting boundaries disappear,

the individual supplants the organization as the figural element¹³⁰ in the development of the career.

As the rate of change in the market increases, leadership is required in greater depth and in greater numbers of workers. Leadership skills are required to compensate for the loss of formal power associated with traditional organizational hierarchy. An important form of leadership is a keen understanding of the dynamics of power and influence.

The most satisfying and lucrative career opportunities are quite likely to be the most unconventional. Creativity is required to identify these opportunities, and to visualize forms of connectedness otherwise transparent. To think creatively, we must establish independent thinking and overcome the adaptional warp that takes place early in life.

As the MBA satisfies the objectives mentioned above, he or she needs to create a humane working environment, for the self as well as for others. Moreover, the leader and visionary understands the importance of enjoying the career journey. When our working years have sped, we may find that real success lies not in where we arrive, but where we've been.

¹³⁰ Hall et al.

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