

Rose Consulting Group, Inc.

Client Newsletter

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Leaders and all-around good employees have some similar traits: but at the Vice President and higher levels there is a quantum leap.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN AN EXECUTIVE-LEVEL HIRE?

Although the organization chart looks like a ladder with evenly spaced rungs – it isn't

The difference between an accountant and an accounting supervisor is certainly a real difference. Each step of the ladder involves not only more complex work but usually somewhat different skill sets. But, the jump from: Director of Marketing to Vice President of Marketing; from Controller to CFO – those are very large jumps indeed.

THE NEEDS OF EVERY DEPARTMENT, POSITION AND COMPANY ARE DIFFERENT – IN THIS PAPER WE CONCENTRATE ON THE SIMILARITIES.

With every new bestseller you might imagine that the basic paradigm of business has shifted. In many ways that is true. But remember, if you were trained only in Newtonian Physics and knew nothing about Relativity or Quantum Theory you could still work for NASA and do a good job. Some things stay the same.

TRAITS AND EXPERIENCE THAT HAVE STOOD THE TEST OF AT LEAST 30 YEARS

And since we have only been on the job for 11,000 days now we cannot speak to times before. We might note in passing that some years before RCG started, one famous general used an assessment process to find people who were confident and alert, two traits we will mention. He took a pool of 32,000 and narrowed it down to 300 crack soldiers with his assessment process. If you don't know who we're talking about you can read that part at the end.

Robyn W. Porterfield and Robert G. Rose

SUCCESSFUL EXECUTIVES FOR MANY YEARS HAVE HAD THE FOLLOWING THINGS IN COMMON:

When you visit our website, you will see that we do a great deal of pre-hire assessment. Here are some things we listen for.

1. *THEY GIVE CREDIT TO THEIR TEAM*

If we hear a lot of 'I did' and not very much 'we did' and even 'my wonderful team did' – we know one of three things about these folks. They either 1) did it all by themselves 2) think they did it all by themselves or 3) know they had help but don't acknowledge it. Number 1 is not possible number 2 means you have serious perception problems and number 3 speaks poorly of your character.

2. *THEY ARE CONFIDENT AND POSITIVE*

Yes the 'Type A' touted in the 70's was bitter, driven and cynical. Like a lot of research in the 70's it has been swept under the rug because it was misinformed.

We work with top level leaders every day and by and large these men and women are almost foolishly optimistic. They think they can do it. They think they can find the people who can do it. They do a lot of disaster planning and very little worrying. And those are two different things.

3. *THEY SEEM LUCKY*

Oh they have their share of tragedies but for some reason things happen when they are in the right place at the right time. We think there is something going on beside luck but it sure looks like 'luck' in the interview.

4. *THEY PASS THE 'SMELL TEST'*

Years ago a mentor of ours used to talk about 'looks good but smells bad' and everyone who has hired at the top level can relate to that.

You look at the resume and see nothing but success...but you feel... somehow leery. Something just doesn't sit well with you. How many times were you wrong?

5. *THEY ARE OPEN-MINDED*

Who is more likely to be interested in a new type of sales projection – the 28 year old with five years of sales experience or the 49 year old CEO who spent 15 years in sales and sales management? Don't be too quick to answer because our experience says the CEO is very unlikely to say 'I know all that already.'

6. *THEY 'FAIL GOOD'*

Without exception when asked 'what has been your greatest failure?' the top performers can answer without hesitation and with something substantive. They can also easily tell us what lesson they learned from the failure, and typically without our having to ask.

If people tell us they never failed it means one of three things: 1) They never failed; 2) they failed but don't recognize their part in it or 3) they cannot admit they failed.

As in a previous example you simply cannot handle the complexity of a senior executive's job and never fail, and never fail in a big way.

So if you think you never failed it means 1) you were never at a high enough level despite what your title

indicated 2) you failed but blamed it on others or 3) your ego is not strong enough to let you admit the failure.

People who don't think they have ever failed never quite get it because as soon as we assume we are perfect we quit learning. And failing is a great way to learn. Think back on your greatest failure....you'll never make that mistake again!

7. *THEY CAN SEE THEIR OWN WEAKNESSES, AND HIRE TO FILL THOSE WEAKNESSES*

Regardless of age, most executives are aware of at least some of their strengths and weaknesses. Good leaders, the kind of executive level people you want to hire, are not only aware of them, but are aware that they should hire folks around them who augment their strengths. They do not view a subordinate who is a "star" as a threat, they view them as reflection of their hiring prowess, and they should.

IT'S NOT EASY TO FIND TOP EXECUTIVES – BUT AT THE TOP THEY ARE ESSENTIAL TO YOUR SUCCESS

And by the way, the General was Gideon and you can read about his rather interesting selection methods in The Old Testament Book of Judges Chapter Seven.

RCG has helped in the selection of thousands of employees primarily at the executive level. Visit our website at:

www.roseconsultinggroup.com for more information.

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