

HIGH POTENTIAL TALENT

Three Kinds of People in Organisations

- High Potentials
- High Professionals
- Others

Can we get the call right?

If we developed and promoted people high on learning agility

- ◆ **Net organization performance
would be stronger**
- ◆ **Those promoted could handle
more significant challenges**

Effective and Successful People are Better Learners

Types of Learners: Academic vs. Street

Learning I - Traditional Learners

Intelligence, IQ
Grades/GPA/position in class
Scores on tests/SATs/GREs
Functional/technical skills
Verbal skills
Data crunching/analytical skills
Straightforward problem solving

Learning II - Active Learners

Street Smarts
Initiative
Curiosity - why and how?
People smart
Intellectual agility
Conceptual complexity
Rules / principles
Broad range

What is Learning Agility?

- **Learning new skills under first time conditions for the person**
- **Synonymous with potential**
- **Different from intelligence**

Facts About Learning to Learn

1. Learning new job and technical knowledge is different from learning new personal behavior or ways of viewing events and problems. Learning new behaviors and adopting different attitudes generally is harder for people to do.

2. Learning from life and work experience is different from how intelligent an individual is. You can't predict one from the other; you can be high on one and relatively low on the other.

Facts About Learning to Learn

3. Learning from experience (EQ) is more related to long term success in life and work than just raw intelligence (IQ).

4. More successful executives, down to more successful individual contributors tend to be better learners.

5. Passive learners tend to perform well in areas they know – their personal comfort zone.

Facts About Learning to Learn

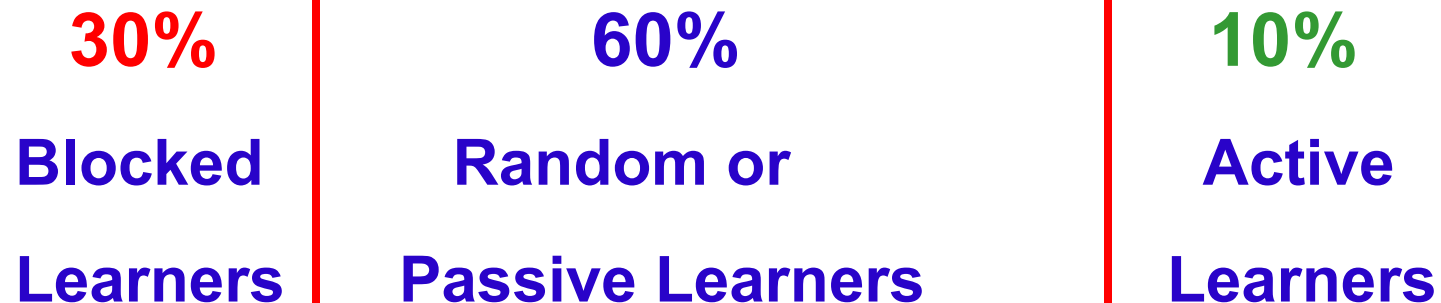
6. Better learners actively wrest more meaning from their experiences.

7. Better learners perform better under first time conditions (for them).

8. Better learners are strongly related to ratings of potential, consistent strong performance and staying out of trouble.

What we know about learners . . .

Population of Learners



Hard vs. Soft?

Research indicates that learning how to deal effectively with first-time or changing situations is more predictive of long-term potential or performance than is raw intelligence.

How Did We Find This Out?

- **CCL studies of executive learning, growth and change**
- **Sternberg and Wagner studies**
- **Goleman studies**
- **AT&T**
- **Ongoing Lominger studies**

Key CCL Finding

- **Low performing executives had no pattern of learning from jobs**
- **Why?**
 - Victim of past successful habits
 - Not willing to be a bit dumb
 - Can't give up control and certainty
 - Confuse leading with being a tech wizard

Key CCL Finding

- **High performing executives:**
 - Got more feedback
 - Had more variety in their experiences
 - Learned to do something new or different
 - Learned predictable skills
 - Grew and changed

Determining Potential

- **In any succession planning system, you need to look at both present and past performance, as well as an individual's ability to learn in first time situations to**
 - Determine who will be considered a high potential
 - Confirm or validate high potential candidates
 - Determine developmental needs of high potential candidates

**High Potentials are
basically ambitious
people who have
Learning Agility**

**Learning Agility is the
Ability and Willingness
and Opportunity to learn
from experiences –
successes, failures and
exposures**

Source: The Leadership Machine

The Case For Succession

**Do we have the
talent to execute
our
strategy?**

The Performance Potential Matrix

New
Chapter 20

Long Term Potential (LA)

Long
Term
Performance
Across
Challenges

High

Low

4	7	9
2	5	8
1	3	6

Low

High

Source: *The Leadership Machine*

Running the Leadership Machine

- **Begin with the end in mind**
- **Annual succession process**
- **Differentiate performance and potential**
- **Keep a record**
- **Talent pools and replacement planning**
- **Talent retention plan**
- **Talent meetings**
- **Development planning**
- **Assignment management via centralised job clearinghouse**
- **Air cover and safety nets**
- **Clear the path**

Source: *The Leadership Machine*, 2002

Keys to a Successful Succession Plan

- ✓ **Commitment from top management**
- ✓ **A vision**
- ✓ **An accurate understanding of existing workforce**
- ✓ **Objectivity**
- ✓ **An open mind**
- ✓ **A solid plan and a strong organisation**
- ✓ **Teeth**
- ✓ **A well-coordinated training and development plan**
- ✓ **On-going attention**

Source: *HR Magazine* July 2000

Succession Best Practices

- **Focus on Development**
- **Identify Linchpin Positions**
- **Make it Transparent**
- **Measure Progress Regularly**
- **Keep it Flexible**

*Source: Developing Your Leadership Pipeline, Conger & Fulmer
Harvard Business Review*

Mistakes Companies Make

- Underestimating the talent within
- Narrow-minded thinking
- Focusing exclusively on the “hard skills”
- Not offering appropriate training and developmental opportunities
- Expecting employees to self-identify
- Not holding managers accountable for succession planning
- Considering only upward succession
- Developing a one size fits all program

Source: HR Magazine, July 2000