



Assessment- Your Leadership Reputation

...the average of the team reporting to you!

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Introduction: Our personal reputation and future is determined in some ways by how we select and lead the team reporting to us. According to Gallup research, the immediate manager and leadership at the top of the organization directly affect 70% of the variance of performance of teams that we form and lead.

Leadership has been the focus of many studies, a plethora of articles, many books and speakers espousing the 'magic bullet'...and, as of today it is, at best, a confusing picture.

The best research and discussion of leadership in terms of a practical model comes from Dr. Bob Hogan. Hogan is particularly good at simplifying concepts into language that is more readily understood and usable. Bob has very successfully focused on predicting performance and its link to organization vitality.

According to Hogan, there are two varying views of leadership, which can be separated into these buckets:

The Troubadour Tradition:

...Opinions of self-appointed gurus and former CEOs; thus, the 'magic bullet' or platitude of the day; and

The Academic Tradition:

...Empirical research from Academia; ...and, as a 'recovering academic' I feel that there 'is some good material there'...but...what I have seen is confusing, hard to decipher and, harder to produce results in today's organization.

In terms of leadership issues, the research by Hogan Systems leads to a couple of very important distinctions.

1st: As a leader...our **Identity and reputation**;

- **Identity:** *What we tell ourselves about ourselves; and our*
- **Reputation:** *What others say about us!*

So that gets us to, how, in particular, senior management (pretty important 'others' with views about us) 'sees' you as a leader—as you can see we all have a 'reputation' in organizations!

- If you are a Senior Vice President...this is how you are seen...by the CEO!
- If you are a Front line leader...this is how middle management sees you!
- If you have a Board and you are the CEO...the same principle applies!

Of note: I am not in any way discounting the view of those reporting to the manager, but primarily focusing on the composite views of those senior to the manager of leaders...where discussions occur which directly affect your career, opportunities to take on additional challenges, upward mobility, etc.

2nd: Leadership **defined** and **evaluated**; Hogan's research in this area indicates that leadership is *primarily about the followers* ...and it is anchored with the team that you have at this time.

In this discussion, leadership is:

- **Defined as:** 'the ability to build and maintain a high performing team;' and,
- **Evaluated by:** the performance of the team that he/she has put together, externally compared to the competition vs. an internal calibration point!

Thus, regarding the team that you have reporting to you--the composite is how your reputation is created as a leader---the average of the team that you have in place!

Let's see how this plays out...

*Most organizations have some way of segmenting their talent--if not, you should. So, let's assume that Jane Brody, who came into a key position 18 months ago was 'well **thought of**'--a good placement and was on a fast track.*

In our approach to segmenting talent we characterize individuals into four segments: Briefly, the descending scale of talent:

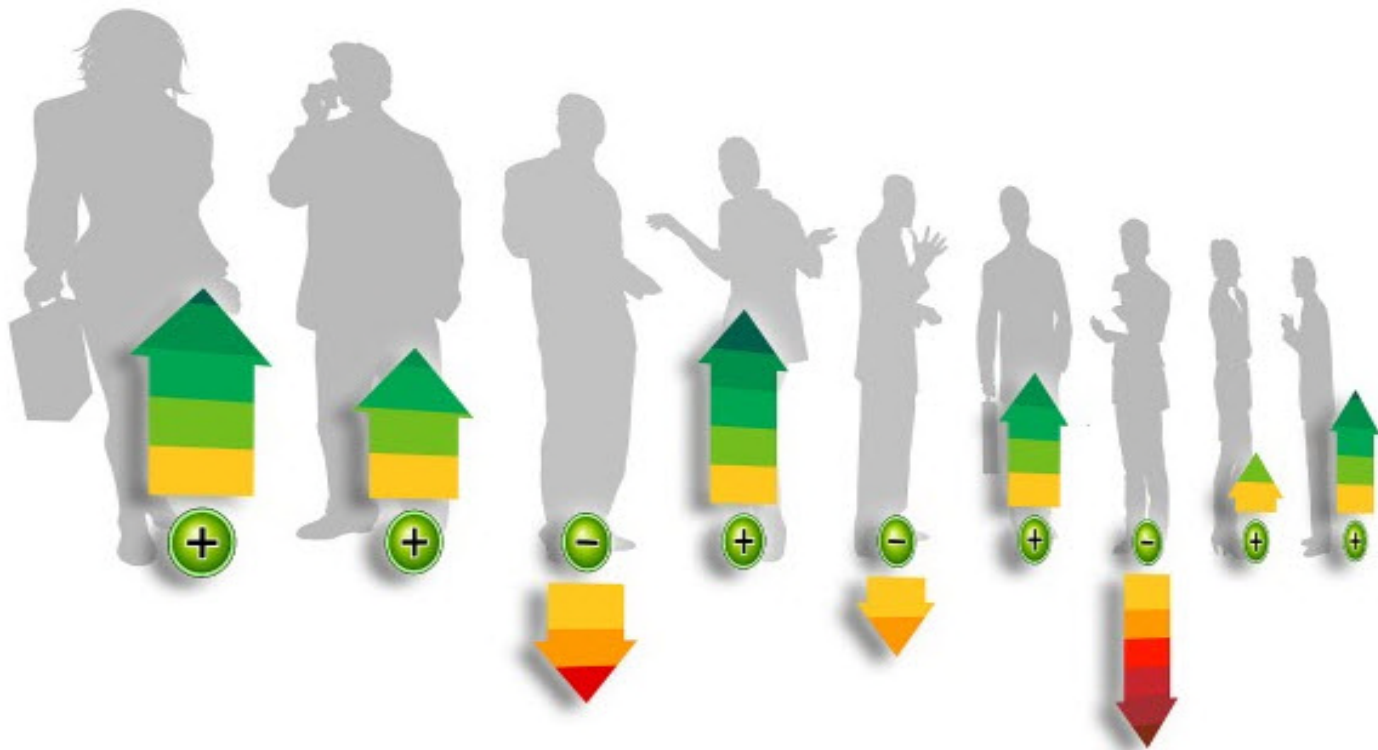
- **A Players: Game-Changers**...those individuals who drive change...no matter where. They always put together excellent teams and have a track record of this-- they are the difference makers, consistently choosing 'A' players and are rather intolerant of poor performance;
- **B Players: Technical Leaders**...these individuals are the '**load bearing walls**' of **the organization**; they will readily lead change, are respected across the organization and are good at developing talent; **in forming a team, they may err with too much weight on the technical skills** rather than leadership skills yet they are solid, and respected;

...at this point a substantial fall-off in quality of talent-

- **C Players: Spectators/Managers in Name Only (MINO's)**...these individuals still operate as individual contributors...they create **Pyramids of Mediocrity**, will sit on talent and are one of the main reasons that you are not able to retain talented young leaders—they tend to exit the organization,

- **D-Players: Bystanders...** Ongoing performance within each position is reduced due to decreased expectation and oversight; they recruit less capable individuals, create the most noise with customers and indirectly destroy value by reducing the contribution of others. Their **teams are typically poorly constituted**; poor performance is tolerated...they are seen by all as an impediment to progress.

Today, Jane has nine direct reports...and here is a picture of her team-



The arrows pointing up would indicate those that are *lifting the performance of the unit*...those pointing down would indicate those *creating drag on performance of the unit*.

So...if we assess Jane's team that she has...and by extension, the reputation Jane has with senior management:

Category...from the ratings in talent audit	Rating' ...refer back to the segmentation of talent above
1 st : Game-Changer	A
2nd:Solid Citizen/Technical Leader	B
3rd: Spectators/MINO	C
4th:Game-Changer	A
5th: Spectators? MINO	C
6th:Solid Citizen/Technical Leader	B
7th: Bystander	D
8th: Solid Citizen/Technical Leader	B
9th: Solid Citizen/Technical Leader	A
	Jane Brody's Total-- Leadership Reputation Index= B

This example, Jane’s reputation—how she is ‘thought in’ and ‘thought of’ by senior executives is, her **Leadership Reputation Index** ...she is seen as an “**average executive**” “with shortcomings in staffing, building a solid team and a willingness to step up to poor performance. If Jane aspires to be a CEO or COO of an organization those factors would seriously damage her case.

Look at the team you have and ask yourself...***how am I seen at this time by the leadership above me?***

If you want to discuss this idea or to improve your Leadership Reputation ...contact us:

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