

Ten

WHAT THE
WORLD'S BEST
COMPANIES
LOOK FOR IN
THEIR M.V.P.s

SECRETS

OF

THE STRATEGIES, SKILLS, AND
KNOWLEDGE LEADERS AT EVERY
LEVEL NEED TO SUCCEED

SUCCESSFUL

LEADERS

Dr. Donna Brooks • Dr. Lynn Brook

BESTSELLING AUTHORS OF *SEVEN SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL WOMEN*



Just at the time when the need is exploding, top organizations are finding that many otherwise-qualified employees are not fully prepared for real-world leadership challenges that are a part of everyday modern business.

Ten Secrets of Successful Leaders has the guidance and information that can help you fill that need, and be the leader you want to be. Donna Brooks and Lynn Brooks, the authors of the successful *Seven Secrets of Successful Women* reveal the leadership skills, competencies, and knowledge that companies are looking for.

Based on their wide-ranging survey of Fortune 500 CEOs, senior executives, hiring managers, and team leaders, Donna and Lynn Brooks provide you with exclusive access to their well-defined leadership development strategies, best practices, and innovative ideas. You'll also find a step-by-step road map to gaining winning skills companies need today. You'll learn how to:

- **Lead with passion, energy, and emotional intelligence**
- **Persuade, influence, and communicate your vision**
- **Create a culture of integrity and values**
- **Develop knowledge and mentoring networks**

Ten Secrets of Successful Leaders



Ten Secrets of Successful Leaders

*The Strategies, Skills, and
Knowledge Leaders at Every
Level Need to Succeed*



Dr. Donna Brooks and Dr. Lynn Brooks

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Participants

We would like to extend our appreciation to the following leaders and organizations who shared their views, insights, and passion:

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We also would like to express our great appreciation to those participants who have chosen to remain anonymous.

Introduction

The New Epic Leader



As corporations face the challenges of global competition, their leadership capabilities have become paramount for success. With leadership high on the list of CEO priorities and corporations short on leaders, the selection, development, and deployment of business leaders have become top priorities.¹

WHO WILL BE INTERESTED IN THIS INFORMATION?

First, anyone interested in leadership—from those aspiring to their first leadership position to senior managers seeking to move to the next level—undoubtedly will find the insights and information from CEOs and other top leaders invaluable. They will learn how experienced leaders build and lead successful, results-oriented teams; are effective in an increasingly complex, uncertain environment of rapid change and a range of threats; and passionately communicate their vision. We asked these leaders several questions, including “What advice would you give to the next generation of leaders?” and “What is your ‘wish list’ of skills, knowledge, and behaviors for leaders of the future?” Some of their answers may surprise you.

In addition, hiring managers and leaders at all levels will be anxious to hear some of the outstanding insights on the skills, knowledge, and behaviors essential to leaders of the future. Furthermore, we will detail how managers can prepare the next generation of leaders to take their place in the organization while positioning themselves for their own next challenge. We will discuss the major challenges facing organizations today, as well as the advice, solutions, and strategies they have put in place to address these challenges.

Finally, leadership development specialists and experts undoubtedly will appreciate the insights, strategies, and best practices of their peers across industries. They will learn what some of the best companies are doing about globalization, diversity, tying goals to business strategy, measuring the effectiveness of their initiatives, and other critical issues.

These and many other topics surely will be of interest to anyone interested in the challenges of and strategies for effective leadership.

WHAT CAN LEADERS OF THE FUTURE EXPECT?

In our research on leadership, as well as in our discussions with thought leaders worldwide, we have consistently seen evidence of a critical shortage of leaders—and potential leaders—especially on a global level. Many of our clients have commented on their organizations' plight—too many key positions and not enough qualified people to fill them. It harkens somewhat back to the technology-driven glory days of the 1990s—organizations around the world were desperate for the smart, young, talented, and often cocky “techies” who had the skills (and knew it). They held the key to individual and organizational success at that time. Luring these technology demigods with perks and payouts, organizations thought they had exactly what they needed to secure their strategic competitive advantage. Well, we all know what happened to most of them! As a result of the economic downturn at the turn of the century and worldwide uncertainty on many levels, there is now an increased realization that a new set of leadership skills, knowledge, and behaviors is necessary for leadership across organizations. We have seen an evolution both in the research and in our own experiences of another trend—or rather need—emerging for the next generation of leaders.

A recent Conference Board CEO study entitled, “Developing Leaders for 2010,”² underscores some of the specific challenges and issues that both nonprofit and for-profit organizations worldwide will confront: globalization, hypercompetition, enormous scientific and social change, rapid advances in technology, and growing diversity among the workforce, customers, and other stakeholders.

In response to the challenges they have identified, the Conference Board also has compiled a preliminary list of specific skills, knowledge, and capabilities that the next generation of leaders will require to succeed in this increasingly complex environment: strategic thinking, particularly with regard to global competition and the application of technology; analytical capability to sort through large amounts of information to focus on the most relevant aspects; the capacity to influence and persuade highly div

groups of employees, customers, strategic partners, investors, and other stakeholders; the ability to lead in an environment that spans global cultures; and a high level of personal adaptability to learn from experience and adjust course accordingly.

However, just at the time when the need is exploding, the demand for these leaders is far outstripping supply. When talking about the imminent war for talent, one of our interview participants added, “Well, the war has started.” Another CEO added, “We have about three years’ worth of projects on the table with no one to lead them.” So what’s the problem—why do they have such a talent crisis?

First, as the McKinsey study, “The War for Talent,” indicates, many current leaders are retiring, and demographically, there are simply not enough members of the upcoming generation to replace them. In fact, between 1998 and 2008, the number of 25- to 44-year-olds (those traditionally in the pool for leadership positions) will decrease by 6 percent.³

In simple terms, this means that there will be a shortage of managerial talent to effectively lead a company or division or to supervise and motivate a new product team. (And we’re not yet even addressing the issues of people who must be able to mobilize and motivate their teams in times of crisis or to respond quickly and effectively to the complex questions that arise minute by minute on the financial trading floor, in the high-tech environment, or on the manufacturing plant assembly line.) In addition, there is not a large enough talent pool with the broad range of skills essential in our rapidly changing environment. There is a human and intellectual capital shortage, a “smart people gap.”

Second, and almost more important, everyone is competing for the same people within this shrinking pool who have these coveted skills, knowledge, and behaviors regardless of organization, industry, or global location. Literally everyone on earth is looking for the exact same people—organizations worldwide will have to compete intensely for this limited supply of talented managers for at least the next two decades. Who are these elusive, sought-after superstars? Surpassing the capabilities of traditional white-collar workers or technology gurus of the past, these are the people whom everyone wants *on* their team, *leading* their team—the so-called gold-collar workers.⁴ They have complex capabilities—they possess far more than outstanding technical skills. They are able to communicate and persuade, as well as to lead teams with passion, energy, and inclusiveness. They also have a keen self-awareness and, often, surprisingly little ego. With a firm, ethical stance and ingrained personal values, they also display an intriguing sense of curiosity and often are extremely well read and well informed. They

have an innate ability to connect seemingly random ideas or even chaos into a cohesive, clear vision that anyone in their constituency can understand and embrace. They possess an enviable ability not only to survive but also to thrive in an environment of ambiguity, complexity, and uncertainty, taking risks and making smart decisions with limited information or guidance.

To those precious few of you young leaders who have many or most of these qualifications—take comfort—everyone wants you! (Although you who are more experienced and who also have these attributes already know this.) However, those of you in the unenviable position of trying to find these people understand the challenge. Highly qualified new talent is somewhat of a rare breed. Even graduates of MBA programs and other prestigious degree holders don't necessarily have all the pieces of this leadership puzzle covered. Granted, they may have outstanding technical skills and some valuable additional traits or skills. But most leaders admit that they are facing a tall order when it comes to finding future leaders with the full menu of attributes they are seeking. Talent has become an essential component of organizational performance and competitive advantage. Firms that understand the value that these exceptionally talented workers bring also understand that they need to do the best job of attracting, developing, and retaining them. Organizations, then, increasingly must ask, "Why would a talented person choose to work here?" High potentials, future leaders, and emerging leaders—whatever you want to call them—are looking for several key things in organizations. While for some of these young people an attractive compensation package is essential, most of them agree that they want to do work that matters. Culture matters to them—the values of the organization and social responsibility. The opportunity to work with outstanding leaders—to be engaged and challenged—also matters. Equally important is the opportunity to be part of a world-class team or a world-class endeavor and to work with leaders in their field. To this list also add flexibility, the ability to advance, recognition, and an opportunity to work together on global projects.

Unfortunately, many organizations are not in touch with the interests and needs of this most sought-after talent. They either misrepresent the actual environment or opportunities available when recruiting these future superstars, or they fail to deliver on the organizational culture or advancement opportunities that these high-level employees expect when they do secure a position. In addition, many companies do not earn high marks on leadership development, perhaps considering existing training programs adequate for reaching their development goals. Or in the case of mentoring opportunities that are assigned pairings of a more senior with a junior individual—if they happen to get along and the relationship works out, gre

If not, so be it. Just because many managers know *what* they have to do to develop leaders doesn't mean that they necessarily know *how* to do it, have the potential to do it, or have the networks to facilitate getting it done.

However, among many of our participating organizations, leadership development encompasses access to senior role models through well-planned mentoring, coaching, and sponsorship opportunities; opportunities for hands-on experience—rotations, stretch assignments, action learning, and real-world projects and assignments; and frequent feedback using such techniques as 360-degree assessments, among others. These represent fundamental changes not only in their leadership development delivery but also in their organizational cultures as well. There is a systematic effort underway to create a learning environment that embraces diverse perspectives and approaches to the leadership development process. It's a sharing of ideas on learning and development that is being driven at the executive level rather than being viewed simply as a human resources (HR) initiative. The result? Leadership development is linked consistently to strategic business issues and organizational goals.

As one of our participants suggested, developing leaders is gradually evolving from an event to an increasingly well-defined process. In other words, there is a difference between leader development and leadership development. For example, organizations are moving increasingly from focusing *only* on mentoring, 360-degree feedback, and so forth (individual interventions) as the solutions to developing greater leadership to developing and enabling an environment in which sharing knowledge, developing relationships, and collaborative problem-solving can be fostered.

It is increasingly vital to invest in human capital—people's experiences and credentials. These are quickly becoming the basis of competitive advantage for any organization. Many organizations are beginning to realize that it is important not simply to tell people what to do but to help them to find their own way, especially when it comes to taking on challenging problems without solutions that are immediately apparent.

Some people say that you can't necessarily teach leadership to people who don't have the natural talent—and maybe this is true. However, anyone can enhance their skills and maximize their potential. People need career experiences that give them a better understanding of themselves—and others to show them the way.

The bottom line: organizations are desperate for well-prepared, skilled leaders. Given this increasingly diverse environment of rapid change, ambiguity, emerging technologies, and globalization, it is more important than ever to provide a roadmap for individuals and organizations to navigate