Take Charge of Your Career

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Take Charge of Your Career

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Take Charge of Your Career

I. Introduction

This highly interactive workshop will give you the tools you need to advance your career effectively on your terms. Based on data from years of research, our moderator will explain what really works for career advancement. You’ll identify advancement strategies, practice techniques, and formulate your plan for success. A panel of in-house counsel will share the tactics and techniques they have used to reach their personal and professional goals.
II. Every Successful Team Has a Plan: The Importance of Succession Planning

Every Successful Team Has a Plan: 
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Every Successful Team Has a Plan:  
*The Importance of Succession Planning*

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Every Successful Team Has a Plan:  
*The Importance of Succession Planning*

I. Introduction

According to a recent Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data, Millennials (born 1982–2000) are currently the largest generation of active workers in the American workforce, displacing the Generation X (born 1965–1981) workforce.¹ Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964) ceased being the principal generation of active workers in 2012, after peaking in 1997.² With the younger Boomers approaching 51 years old, and the most mature Boomers being 70, the workforce is seeing a marked rise in Boomer retirements. In the arena of automotive product liability litigation, this means a number of the current first chair trial lawyers may be retiring or contemplating retirement in the not too distant future. Given what is at stake in the cases that go to trial, it is critical that law firms and clients openly and often discuss succession planning to help maintain the continuity of the attorney-client relationship and avoid time consuming and costly disruptions in legal services.

In an article entitled “Succession Planning: What prevents a Business form Hitting One Out of the Park,” Leigh S. Harter impressed upon small business owners the necessity of succession planning. His advice applies equally to both law firms and the clients they serve:

“A well-run baseball team can provide a miniature laboratory and a valuable parable for all [lawyers] with blinders on. They either do not take the time or do not have the patience or foresight to [outline] a succession plan. Every successful team must have a succession plan. By the essential nature of athletics, the younger players require proper training to be ready to play as older players exit the game. Unless they are real all-stars, elder players will see their playing time reduced to allow the rising stars to shine. Of course, no [firm] can have players perfectly trained in “the minors” waiting to take over should the opportunity arise. [The practice of law] is a different proposition and requires a different type of planning than a team sport. However, the analogy does apply to the extent that [lawyers] must acknowledge the need for long-term planning. They cannot and should not expect to be able to [try cases] beyond a certain time in their lives. Whether or not they are willing to accept a reduced level of capacity and responsibility, at some point it will become a fact that they cannot [practice law] forever.”³

Emphasis added.

Developing a succession plan for handling product liability litigation involves anticipating future leadership and/or skills gaps; as well as identification and development of younger lawyers for key roles in providing clients with legal advice and defense. Executing successful succession plans requires full participation by both clients and the lawyers who provide legal services to them. In this paper and during the live presentation, I will address questions that may arise regarding succession planning from my perspective as a former associate, who was fortunate enough to have solid mentors, and as in-house counsel, who is evaluating the retention of counsel based on their bench strength (*i.e.*, whether they seemingly have a succession plan in place).

II. When Should a Law Firm Begin to Think about Succession Planning?

Immediately. There are no guarantees that the senior lawyers in your firm today will be there tomorrow. Firms need to look at the services they are currently providing to their clients and assess what skills gaps
would be presented if any of those lawyers, particularly the first chair trial lawyers for high exposure cases, decide to retire, cut back or simply move on. Once skills gaps are identified, the work begins in terms of developing other lawyers in the firm to fill that void if or when the need arises.

III. Who Is Ultimately Responsible For Succession Planning?

Everyone. Succession planning is a critical investment that organizations (companies and law firms) must make in order to help secure their futures.

A. In-house Counsel bear the greatest responsibility to protect their companies’ legal rights long-term. Successful succession planning requires routine assessment of a company’s current line-up of their “go-to” counsel, especially the counsel used for the most complex cases. During the assessment, thought must be given to how this line-up will look in 5 to 10 years and whether there are or could be any identifiable skills gaps or insufficient bench strength. If a company is a full participant in the succession planning of its outside counsel roster, it will enjoy a natural progression of the development of outside counsel, avoiding any disruption in legal services, should any of the “go to” lawyers retire, cut back on cases, or be conflicted out of a matter.

PRACTICE TIPS FOR IN-HOUSE COUNSEL: Be vigilant about aiding in the development of promising talent. Take a deep breath and give young lawyers the opportunity to cultivate the skills needed to become a successor:

1. Allow young rising stars to handle a mediation with you solo. This gives the younger lawyers time to develop a relationship with you and to showcase their ability to represent you and your company.

2. Involve younger lawyers in jury work (have them write the opening statements or present one side of the case). Giving them responsibility with the trial strategy enhances their appreciation for what needs to be accomplished during the day-to-day work up of the case in order to achieve the desired end result.

3. Look for opportunities to assign a smaller case to a young lawyer (ensuring the proper oversight as required) rather than his or her senior partner. This helps solidify your relationship with the younger lawyer, gives them “skin in the game,” as they understand this is an opportunity for a long-term business relationship, and really allows you to assess whether or not this lawyer is capable of handling your work now and in the future.

4. Consider pairing a young lawyer in the role of local counsel with an experienced national counsel from another firm (especially if the younger lawyer’s firm is not seeing much trial action). Exposing younger lawyers to varying practice styles of more experienced lawyers helps the less experienced craft their own styles and techniques.

5. Give partners honest feedback on their associates’ development (do you see them as the future lead lawyer for your company? If so, why? If not, why? Are there areas of growth that you would like to see in specific young lawyers?). Show the partner that you are invested in the development of their younger lawyers.

6. Give young lawyers honest feedback on their work product. By advising them on the positives and/or negatives, you are helping to ensure that the output on your cases in the future is being refined and that mistakes are not being repeated.

7. Allow younger lawyers to take a witness at trial. Being on their feet in front of a jury is absolutely the single best way to develop and sharpen trial skills.
8. There will be times when it will be fruitful for the development of a younger lawyer to shadow a more senior attorney (e.g., client meetings, vehicle inspection, deposition, trial, etc.). Some or all of this time may be billed to you. Be prepared to pay for your company's fair share of the succession plan. The law firm business model is only so flexible.

B. **Senior partners** should mentor and help develop younger lawyers. This gives senior partners the ability to push work down, allowing them extra time for the more complex or strategy-oriented type work on a case. If done successfully, when a senior partner is ready to retire or transition into a different practice model, he or she can look to 2-5 other lawyers, who are ready to step in and assume responsibility for a case or a client. This approach helps ensure continuity for their clients and stability and longevity for the law firm. **PRACTICE TIPS FOR SENIOR PARTNERS:**

1. Bring a young lawyer into a case at its inception. Working on a case from start to finish gives them the best opportunity to get a sense of the big picture and to see first-hand how all of the pieces fit together.

2. Do not pigeonhole them. Leaving a young lawyer in the office for months (or even years) with only discreet assignments (depositions summaries, research, motion practice, letter writing, etc.) delays their development and doesn't provide the big picture exposure or practical experience that is necessary to succeed in this arena. Certainly someone needs to be in the office doing that work, but recall from your own experience what a change of scenery can do for your perspective. [Example: Take (don't send) young lawyers to the first vehicle inspection in the case. Help them understand what they are seeing and for what they are looking. Allow them to lead a brief post-mortem with the inspecting expert. Take them to a plaintiff’s deposition but have them review the medicals, police report, and employment records first and prepare the outline for you. During the deposition, check in with the young lawyer to see if they had any questions or follow-ups that you did not ask.]

3. Give them significant responsibility as soon as they are ready, but be sure to provide them with the tools necessary to complete the job. Many of today's top trial lawyers tried their first cases shortly after passing the Bar Exam. Sure times have changed - trials are scarce, more is at stake and cases are more complex – but the reason some lawyers are as good as they are today is because they learned by getting on their feet, gaining invaluable experience in the process.

4. Expose young lawyers to the clients (assuming they are an asset to your firm and to the client). So much of what we do is built on trust and personal relationships. It is important for the younger lawyers to develop a rapport with clients – face to face meetings are the best way to accomplish this goal.

5. Look for learning opportunity depositions for which the young lawyer can take the lead (e.g., with experts that have a script, or where other co-defendants are taking the lead).

6. Create non-billable codes that allow young lawyers to get the “time credit” for training / development activities. In order to ensure the stability and longevity of the firm, you must invest in the rising stars early.

7. Encourage young lawyers to become a subject matter expert (case law, specific testifying experts, changes in the law, emerging technologies, etc.). This provides young lawyers the opportunity to engage in “reverse mentoring” at the firm and make client or CLE presentations.
8. If your office isn’t seeing any product liability trial action, send young lawyers to cover someone else’s trial. Have them prepare daily trial reports. If going to the trial is not feasible, allow them to read trial transcripts and present the trial highlight to your practice group.

9. Provide constructive feedback timely and often. [Example: When the young lawyer takes a deposition, you must read that deposition (even if you have to force yourself) and use it as a growth opportunity. Go over the transcript with him or her. What did they do right? What could they have done better? What should they never do again?]

C. **Young lawyers** must position themselves to be the future “go to” lawyer for their current and future clients. Succession planning for young lawyers is different from that of senior partner. Young lawyers must have the desire and show the initiative for being a future rainmaker and top tier trial lawyer. **PRACTICE TIPS FOR YOUNG LAWYERS:** If you want to be in the position that your senior partner is in today (or better), then you have to start putting in the work required now to get there:

1. Find a mentor (even if he/she is not looking for a mentee). In an article titled “Twenty Lessons for Lawyers Starting Their Careers,” Dennis Kennedy hit the nail on the head in stating, “Finding a mentor is a mysterious process that takes time and often evolves organically.” Read his article, and then begin the process of gaining a mentor. The very act of seeking a mentor stays to the partners and senior associates in your firm that you are worth the effort of mentoring.

2. Take the time to plot your succession plan. By what point should you move up to the next level (i.e., taking more significant depositions, managing the day-to-day of a case, having a speaking role at trial, etc.)? Recognize what the levels are and chart your course. Don’t wait for someone to do it for you – this is your career and these are your opportunities.

3. Avoid being put in a box where all you do is one thing. Have a specialty, but it can’t be EVERYTHING you do. There is a danger to putting all of your eggs in one basket. While many young lawyers have little to no control over the assignments he or she gets, you can show initiative by requesting specific assignments; arming yourself with the knowledge necessary for taking on a different role; and being prepared to establish why you think you are ready or would be successful at the next steps.

4. While you may not have a choice as to the persons to whom you are assigned to do work, to the extent you can avail yourself to other supervising attorneys keep the following in mind: To what horse did you hitch your wagon? Are you avoiding working for/with the rainmakers and instead working only with the “fun” partners with easy billables? Who has the business? Who has trial opportunities? Who garners the most respect from the clients? Who can help you develop into the lawyer that you want to be? Who has a book of business but no successor in line to take it over when they retire? Why aren’t you working for that person?

5. Don’t be shy about doing work for “free” if it will further your development. By way of example, go observe a deposition with a partner or a portion of a trial even if you cannot bill for it. Take the time to read a book on accident reconstruction or fire scene analysis. Arm yourself with the tools necessary to make valuable contributions to a case.

6. Find a niche / specialty that increases your value (new expert, new case law, emerging vehicle technologies, new regulatory requirements, the things no one else wants to do, the jurisdictions that no one else wants to go to). But see (3) above.
7. Become the subject matter expert on your client’s policies & procedures. Senior partners are often too busy to stay on top of client policies & procedures and other case management requirements. Make it your mission to know exactly what the client requires and make sure all deadlines are met. Exercising this knowledge makes you look good, and makes your senior partner look good.

8. Put yourself out there. Attend CLEs that advance your career goals. Wear your name tag; you never know what potential clients are there looking for lawyers in a particular jurisdiction. Be on your best behavior during social hour, as you never know what contacts made during a cocktail party can turn into a long-standing business relationship.

9. Recognize when you can help the firm acquire a new client. There may be opportunities for you to be a rainmaker, but know when to get the net to help you reel in a fish.

10. No client should be considered too small or not worth your time. The key is the experience (handling cases, handling clients, managing expectations, reviewing bills, small trial experience, etc.).

11. Show initiative by staying on top of a file, prepare motions and reports significantly in advance of a deadline to give your supervising attorney time to review and help you fine-tune it.

12. Establish a reputation for being a hard worker, who is interested in helping the firm maintain and strengthen its relationships with long-term and future clients.

13. Be patient and know that your day is coming. Clients need to have a comfort level with you and your abilities before they entrust their work to you. Treat every opportunity as an audition of sorts. Over time, you may see the client’s confidence in you grow and the sophistication of your assignments increase. Keep in mind, that no job asked of you is too small. When you are called up, be prepared.

IV. Mentoring

A. Can Boomer and GenX Partners Mentor Millennial Lawyers? Yes, but first, they need to understand the Millennials (and vice versa). As with any generation, a one size fits all approach to classifying Millennial traits is unfair and overly simplistic. Each Millennial is a product of his or her own unique environment, experiences and circumstances. Much, however, has been written generally about the Millennial generation which may help Boomers and GenXers better understand this new generation lawyer. Millennials were born in the early 80s right up until 2002. They have broadly been characterized as:

- Digital junkies, skilled in technology, who have had access to mobile phones, laptops, and tablets since they could sit upright.
- People who excel at multitasking – they have juggled school, sports, computer games and other social interests, all while sending texts. They have high levels of energy.
- Lacking patience and requiring instant gratification - everything they need or want to know is merely seconds away via the Internet. They look for immediate results in their work, and desire quick advancements.4
- Focused on entitlements and rewards.5
- Self-confident.
• More comfortable communicating by email, Instant Messaging (IM), blogs and text messages, as opposed to talking on the telephone or meeting face to face.

• A generation constantly surrounded by choice.

• Assigning great importance to work life balance.

• “Smart, creative, productive and achievement-oriented.”

• Known to “seek personal growth, meaningful careers, and mentors or supervisors to encourage and facilitate their professional development.”

• Having high expectations for themselves.

• Team oriented, rather than focused on achieving results solely on their own.

Generally speaking, Millennials are smart, can and desire to be mentored, and enjoy working as a team. The next step is to learn how to mentor in a way that is meaningful for your mentee as well as yourself.

B. How to Mentor Millennials? A simple internet search yields numerous articles on the art of mentoring the Millennial employee. Recurring themes appear through most such articles - offer help, encourage them to think innovatively, and create a team-oriented culture. The theme, however, that appeared most frequently was that Millennials have a desire for immediate feedback. The traditional performance review process may be too infrequent and lacks the required specificity for them. Not only are the timing and frequency important, but so too is the way in which feedback is framed and delivered. In order for the feedback to be productive, it must be given in such a way that Millennials are receptive. In “Don’t be so touchy! – The secret to giving feedback to Millennials,” Joanne Sujanski’s writes, “Whether positive or negative, feedback needs to be structured in a way that leaves no room for misunderstanding. Feedback needs to be clear and specific to be effective.” Boomers and Gen X Partners are encouraged to take the time to explain the context of assignments and how each person’s piece of the work is important to the client and to the ultimate goal. There is no harm in taking the time to emphasize how even seemingly mundane tasks are meaningful to achieving the desired result. By spending the necessary time with your young lawyers, you should discovery that the people who want to be experienced trial lawyers will do the work. They are smart and intuitive, and will rise to the occasion. These rising stars should be identifiable fairly quickly. Once identified, these are the lawyers that should be exposed to the clients and entrusted with significant responsibility at the earliest opportunities. Bring them up and promote them over a series of years then the clients already know them if and when you are ready to move on. It is a natural progression that works best if you play a role in the development.

C. Why should I invest in someone, who is likely to leave? A number of Boomer partners voice frustration over the fact that many of the lawyers they invest mentoring time in ultimately leave the firm. This has left some reluctant to invest time in the training and development of any new lawyers. Simply put, it is not realistic to expect each of the young lawyers in a firm, or those that will be hired in the coming years, to be with the same firm 15 years from now, or maybe even 5 for that matter. Automotive products liability litigation can be a time intensive, thankless, stressful grid with a steep learning curve. It takes a few years for people to realize that “this isn’t for me.” If and when they leave, there needs to be an attitude shift away from the “I got burned, what a waste of my time” thoughts to the fact that you (hopefully) had a smart person contributing to your output for several years.
If you are having open and honest conversations with your younger lawyers, you won't be caught off guard when they come to the realization that they don't want your job. While you cannot make them stay, or have them tell you exactly how long they intend to stay, you can create an environment that helps them want to stay or to be productive member of the team while they are there. As Emily He, a CMO of talent management solution Saba noted, “Companies need to change the focus of [new young hires] from 'How long can I keep you?' to 'How much can we accomplish together?’, and then power that relationship with the [tools that give] them a reason to bring their best game to your business.”

If you train them correctly and they leave, ideally their time spent with you benefited the client, you and the firm. If you train them and they stay, the client gets an additional resource within your firm contributing to the defense of their matters, you get the backup support you need, and the firm gets the revenue. If you don't train them and they leave – is there an opportunity lost? What if you do not invest in their development and they stay, have you wasted a headcount, are you paying for dead weight, does this untrained or underdeveloped lawyer impact the reputation of the firm's talent?

D. **For the Partners who ask, “Mentoring…what's in it for me?”** You have a stake in the legacy you leave behind. How do you want to be remembered by your colleagues and your clients? The way in which you leave a firm also has a direct impact on whether the firm goes on. By bringing people up behind you and developing the future leaders of your firm, you help ensure the firm retains its stability. Hopefully, you feel an obligation to make sure your transition does not negatively affect the firm or the clients, even if doing so does not benefit you financially in retirement.

**V. Conclusion**

As Elissa Collier of Career Faqs aptly noted, “[N]ot all Baby Boomers are ready to start pottering around the garden all day and becoming champion lawn bowls players. Many are expected to continue to work well into their sixties …” However, with the rise in Boomer retirements or near retirements, it is critical that law firms and their clients critically assess the succession plans for pending and future litigation needs.

A large component of succession planning involves the development of younger lawyers. Young lawyers must show initiative, demonstrate a desire to learn, develop their skills and advance their legal careers. Partners must devote time to the training and mentoring of the lawyers who are coming up behind them. In-house counsel need to accept their share of the development and training costs. As business partners, the development costs must be shared by both the firms and the clients. The framework of firm management not letting lawyers write-off development time or clients not willing to pay for it is unworkable. In short, succession planning is not just a client or law firm issue. As business partners, succession planning is a client and firm issue that each of us should invest in and continually address.

The absence of a succession plan can have negative effects on a law firm’s ability to retain existing clients or acquire new ones. Additionally, the lack of planning can severely handicap a client’s legal needs or in some cases their day-to-day operations. It is inevitable that senior lawyers will at some point retire. When this happens, will you (firms, young lawyer and in-house counsel) be prepared?
Endnotes


2 Id.


6 Id.

7 Id.


III. The Myth of The Ideal Worker: Does Doing All the Right Things Really Get Women Ahead?

THE MYTH OF THE IDEAL WORKER:
DOES DOING ALL THE RIGHT THINGS REALLY GET WOMEN AHEAD?

Nancy M. Carter
Christine Silva

THE PROMISE OF FUTURE LEADERSHIP: HIGHLY TALENTED EMPLOYEES IN THE PIPELINE
About Catalyst

Founded in 1962, Catalyst is the leading nonprofit membership organization expanding opportunities for women and business. With offices in the United States, Canada, and Europe, and more than 400 preeminent corporations as members, Catalyst is the trusted resource for research, information, and advice about women at work. Catalyst annually honors exemplary organizational initiatives that promote women’s advancement with the Catalyst Award.
THE MYTH OF THE IDEAL WORKER:
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Career self-help books, corporate pundits, and mentors alike contribute to the conventional wisdom imparted to high potentials in the pipeline: career advancement depends on individuals’ actions—and more precisely—on doing “all the right things” to get ahead. Prescriptions about what it takes to get ahead have been so ubiquitous they have coalesced into a detailed description of an “Ideal Worker,” someone who:

- Actively seeks high-profile assignments,
- Rubs shoulders with influential leaders,
- Communicates openly and directly about their career aspirations,
- Seeks visibility for their accomplishments,
- Lets their supervisor know of their skills and willingness to contribute,
- Continually seeks out new opportunities,
- Learns the political landscape or unwritten rules of the company, and
- Isn’t afraid to ask for help.

Mastery of these skills seemingly paves the way to the top. But do these tactics really get high potentials to the top? And do the same strategies work for both women and men?

DESPITE DECADES OF GENDER DIVERSITY EFFORTS, MYTHS PERSIST

In past Catalyst reports, we tackled a number of persistent myths regarding why women’s careers continue to lag men’s. The report Pipeline’s Broken Promise dispelled the myths that women lag men in level or salary because of lower aspirations or because they are taking time out to have children. And Mentoring: Necessary But Insufficient for Advancement revealed that while women have largely heeded the advice that mentors are important, men’s mentors were more senior than women’s. Having mentors more highly placed puts men in a better position to get sponsorship—the behind-the-scenes support of highly placed influential others—that is critical to advancement.

In this report we continue to address the gender gap myths by using facts to dispel or confirm the conventional wisdom regarding the careers of these high potentials—the next generation of leaders.
We studied 3,345 high potentials in this report, each of whom stayed on a “traditional” career path following graduation from a full-time MBA program. They were working:

- Consistently full-time in companies and firms;
- Without periods of self-employment or part-time work; and
- Without education-, travel-, or family- or personal-related breaks in employment.

Constraining the sample in this way provided a comparative set of women and men who have made similar commitments to their careers.

Throughout this report we explore the impact of various strategies on the careers of these high potentials with respect to career advancement, compensation growth, and satisfaction with career progress. Specifically, we consider:

- Specific tactics used to advance, clustered into nine distinct career advancement strategies. We noted which were most effective for women and men;
- Patterns of career advancement strategies people use, grouping high potentials into four distinct strategy profiles. We measured the impact of profile choice on career advancement; and
- Whether changing jobs may be a successful strategy in helping people get ahead.

At the end of each section we pose a series of questions for you to ponder. By considering why disparities in career advancement may exist and persist, we hope to inspire you to identify opportunities for effecting change in your career and organization.

For more information, see *The Promise of Future Leadership: A Research Program on Highly Talented Employees in the Pipeline Methodology.*
TACTICS GROUPED INTO CAREER ADVANCEMENT STRATEGIES

To determine what individuals do to advance in their careers, we surveyed high potentials about tactics they used. The tactics clustered into nine career advancement strategies listed here in order of prevalence of their use. Some career advancement strategies focused on advancing within their current organization; others focused on seeking opportunities elsewhere.

1. Get Trained Through Experience:
   - Ask for a variety of work assignments to increase my knowledge and skills.

2. Gain Access to Power:
   - Identify the most influential people in the firm.
   - Seek introductions to people in the firm who can influence my career.
   - Build a network of contacts with important people in the firm.
   - Learn how things “really work” inside the firm.
   - Push to be involved with high-profile projects.

3. Make Achievements Visible:
   - Ensure my manager is aware of my accomplishments.
   - Seek credit for work done.
   - Request additional performance feedback.
   - Ask to be considered for a promotion when I feel it’s deserved.

4. Blur Work-Life Boundaries:
   - Communicate my willingness to work long hours and/or weekends.

5. Get Formal Training:
   - Proactively develop new skills through training such as courses and workshops.

6. Plan Career:
   - Develop a career plan for the next several years.

7. Seek Advice When Needed:
   - Seek career advice from coworkers, family, or others about how to improve future work prospects.

8. Scan for Opportunity Outside the Company:
   - Monitor job advertisements to see what is available outside the firm.
   - Maintain an active outside network.
   - Stay in touch with executive search firm professionals.
   - Remain informed about my market value.

9. Scan for Opportunity Inside the Company:
   - Review job postings at my firm to see what career opportunities are available.
CAREER ADVANCEMENT STRATEGIES GROUP INTO DISTINCT STRATEGY PROFILES

Rarely does an individual rely on just one career advancement strategy. Instead, we would expect high potentials to employ a bundle of approaches as part of their overall career advancement strategy. To test this, we used a cluster analysis that allowed us to group the nine career advancement strategies into four distinct career advancement strategy profiles: Climbers, Hedgers, Scanners, and Coasters.4

CLIMBERS Seek to Advance in Their Current Company
Almost one-third of high potentials were “Climbers” (32% of men and 31% of women). Climbers actively used tactics strategically to help them advance within their current organizations, such as asking for a variety of work assignments, ensuring their supervisors know they are willing to work long hours, actively networking with others, and seeking out opportunities for greater visibility.5

HEDGERS Use Both Internal and External Career Advancement Strategies
One-quarter of women (26%) and men (25%) fell into the “Hedgers” category. Relative to their peers, Hedgers by and large scored highly on all career advancement tactics, focusing their energy on potential opportunities both within and outside their current organization.6 They hedged their bets to ensure advancement, prepared to advance their careers whether remaining with their current employer or at a new organization.
While conventional wisdom encourages women and men to be proactive to advance up the corporate ladder, we found that only men advanced further and faster when they did “all the right things.” For women, adopting the prescribed proactive strategies didn’t have the same payoff, although it was slightly better than not doing much at all.
Doing “All the Right Things” Helped Men—But Not Women—Advance Further and Faster

- Men in the most proactive group—Hedgers—received the greatest advancement payoff.
  - Twice as many men Hedgers (21%) as women Hedgers (11%) had advanced to senior executive/CEO level by 2008.13
  - Additionally, compared to other men, male Hedgers had advanced furthest, getting more of a payoff for employing both internally and externally focused advancement strategies, followed by men Climbers, Coasters, and Scanners.14
- For women it was a different story.
  - Not only did they lag men Hedgers in advancement, there was no difference between women Hedgers, Climbers, or Scanners. While women in the Hedgers group did advance further than Coasters—women doing comparatively less to get ahead—being proactive didn’t provide as great an advantage for women Hedgers as it did for men Hedgers.15

Additionally, Men Advanced Further Than Women Across All Other Strategy Profiles

In addition to the discrepancy in payoffs between men and women Hedgers, women lagged men in each of the other three profiles as well. Essentially, when women used the same career advancement strategies as men, they advanced less.16 Regardless of the approach these high potentials took to advance their careers, men reached higher levels than women.

- Across all strategy types, men were more likely than women to have reached the senior executive/CEO ranks.17
- This isn’t due to women and men working in organizations of different sizes. Across organizations of all sizes, men had achieved a higher level than women.18

Men’s Compensation Also Grew Faster Than Women’s, Regardless of Strategies Used

Across all strategy profiles, men had greater compensation growth than women.19 That is, even when women used the same career advancement strategies as their male counterparts, their compensation didn’t grow as quickly.

- In Pipeline’s Broken Promise,20 we reported that the gap between women’s and men’s salaries in their first post-MBA job was $4,600. By the time of the 2008 survey, the gender pay gap had increased to $31,258.21
- Strategy profiles largely did not impact compensation.22 Regardless of which bundle of strategies they used, women’s compensation lagged men’s.

Does Doing All The Right Things Really Get Women Ahead? | 6
MYTH-BUSTING: Women Are Not Seeking Slower Tracks

We found that women were less satisfied with their careers than men, which suggests that they aren’t intentionally seeking slower career tracks. If they were, we’d expect them to be as satisfied as men with their advancement and compensation growth.

Even among the most (Hedgers) and least (Coasters) proactive, men were more satisfied with their advancement than were women.23

- Among Hedgers, 82% of men were somewhat or very satisfied with their rate of promotions compared to 71% of women.24

Women were also less satisfied than men with their salary and rate of compensation growth.25 This holds when comparing women and men Hedgers, Scanners, and Coasters.26 This suggests that women likely were not seeking out lower-paying career tracks and, therefore, accepting of and satisfied with their lower compensation. Rather, they likely were less satisfied with their salary and compensation growth when they compared themselves to others in their field and at their level.27

- Across all strategy groups, 77% of men were somewhat or very satisfied with their progress at increasing their salary compared to only 66% of women.28

CONSIDER THIS

Reflect on these questions and consider why disparities in career advancement may exist and persist and how you can effect change.

What assumptions do organizations and individuals hold about skills and behaviors that are necessary for successful advancement?

- Should we expect that what has worked to advance leaders in the past will (or should) work for the next generation of leaders?
- Will future leaders need to demonstrate different skills, indicating their readiness to lead in increasingly complex environments?

How are women and men being coached to get ahead?

- Are women being told to do the things that have worked for others in the past?
- Are assumptions made that what has worked for men will work for women?

What explains why women are less satisfied with their advancement and compensation progress when comparing themselves to others in their field and at their level?

- Do women know what their male counterparts are earning? If so, how? And what are the implications of this?
THE BEST WAY TO ADVANCE IS NOT ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL

We have seen that following the pundits’ advice and adopting a set of proactive strategies helps high potentials—and, in particular, high-potential men—advance further faster. But are there particular actions that pay off more than others, regardless of which strategy profile group one is in? And is the payoff for emphasizing that particular approach the same for high-potential women and men?

**Women Benefitted Most by Making Their Achievements Known**

When women were most proactive in making their achievements visible they advanced further, were more satisfied with their careers, and had greater compensation growth than women who were less focused on calling attention to their successes. Of all the strategies used by women, making their achievements known—by ensuring their manager was aware of their accomplishments, seeking feedback and credit as appropriate, and asking for a promotion when they felt it was deserved—was the only one associated with compensation growth.

Making achievements known may help women secure sponsorship from senior leaders, a strategy previous reports in this series have linked to greater advancement. As sponsors may need to put their reputation on the line to advocate on behalf of someone they see as high potential, clearly communicating prior achievements and aspirations can help potential sponsors understand how and why they should sponsor someone.
Men Benefitted Most by Scanning for External Opportunities and Blurring Work-Life Boundaries

In contrast, neither men’s movement up the corporate ladder nor compensation growth were impacted by the extent to which they made their achievements known.35 Instead, men had greater compensation increases when they conducted external scans to stay on top of their market value and indicated their willingness to work long hours, blurring the boundary between work and life.36

Both Women and Men Benefitted by Gaining Access to Powerful Others

Gaining access to power predicted both women’s and men’s advancement.37 Proactively networking with influential people and involvement in high-profile projects helped both women and men climb the corporate ladder to achieve greater advancement.

Thus, the strategies shown to be most impactful for women in furthering their careers and increasing their salary growth and satisfaction were making achievements known and gaining access to powerful others.

CONSIDER THIS

To what extent in your workplace are people advanced and compensated based on skills and performance?

• To what extent are decisions influenced by their strategic career advancement tactics?

How might strategies used by women and men be evaluated or interpreted differently?

• When women and men behave in the same manner, are reactions and evaluations by others sometimes different?

• If so, what does that mean for identifying and developing talent and individuals’ career advancement?

How are individual contributions communicated and recognized for people who work in teams?

• How can assumptions about individual contributions be avoided?
MYTH-BUSTING:
Men Are Paid for Potential While Women are Paid for (Proven) Performance

More than half of high potentials (Hedgers and Scanners) were actively scanning for opportunities at other companies and firms (an externally focused strategy). Even among the Climbers and Coasters, scanning for opportunities outside their current organization was occurring at least to a small extent. In pursuit of advancement, high potentials left organizations, seeking to achieve their career goals elsewhere. But it was men who went to a new employer who had the greatest compensation growth. Women earned more when they stayed where they had already proven their worth.

Changing Jobs Accelerated Compensation Growth for Men But Slowed It for Women

We looked at the compensation growth of high potentials who had stayed with the same employer post-MBA (Stayers), had left to go to a second employer (Leavers), or who had job hopped two or more times following completion of their MBA (Job Hoppers).

- Men Leavers’ compensation grew more than men Stayers who remained with their first post-MBA employer.
- On average, men who were at their second post-MBA employer earned $13,743 more by 2008 than those who stayed with their first post-MBA employer.

For women, however, leaving offered no such advantage. In fact, job hopping seems to have had a detrimental effect on women’s compensation growth.

- There was no difference in compensation growth between women Leavers and Stayers.
- But among women Job Hoppers, compensation growth was $53,472 less than women Stayers who were still with their first employer.

Why is it that men have an advantage with respect to salary growth when they pick up and start somewhere new while women’s compensation grows faster when they remain where they have already proven their worth? Are men able to translate their human capital into greater pay for the potential they bring to the table, for their possible future achievements, whereas women must first demonstrate their abilities, achieving greater compensation growth only when their abilities are proven?
It has long been argued that “women don’t ask.” These supposed gender differences in negotiating and assertiveness are often offered as explanations for the gender pay gap. We found little evidence to support this claim when considering career advancement strategies that rely on asking for opportunities. Women were more likely than men to ask for a variety of skill-building experiences, to proactively seek training opportunities, and to make achievements visible, including asking for feedback and promotions.

When asked in a 2010 follow-up survey whether they had specifically negotiated for a higher level position or greater compensation during the hiring process for their current job, we found no significant difference between the approaches of women and men overall.

- 47% of women and 52% of men reported they had countered during the hiring process by asking for a higher salary.
- 14% of women and 15% of men had countered by asking for a position at a higher job level.

There were differences, though, in men and women negotiating, depending on how many post-MBA jobs they had had.

- Among those who were still at their first post-MBA job in 2010, few had countered the initial offer by asking for a position at a higher level–either men or women (10% respectively).
- However, men were significantly more likely than women to have had countered their first post-MBA offer by asking for a higher salary (50% of men, 31% of women).

Women apparently learn from their first job experience.

- Among men and women who had moved on from their first job, there were no gender differences in negotiating for increased compensation (63% of women, 54% of men) or for a higher position (19% of women, 17% of men) when beginning their current job.

So though women do ask when they move to a new job, the compensation growth of women Job Hoppers still lagged women Stayers, who had apparently already proven themselves.

Maybe it’s not that women don’t ask, but that men don’t have to? While it’s undoubtedly helpful for women to know that increasing the visibility of their accomplishments can lead to greater advancement and compensation growth, it begs the question: why don’t men have to do the same? Are men being rewarded without even having to ask?

Do women have to raise their hands and seek recognition to an even greater extent than men do to receive the same outcomes?
CONSIDER THIS

Are the skills, knowledge, and experience of potential employees evaluated differently if the candidate is a woman or man?

- Organizations risk undervaluing high-potential women they attract away from other organizations if they undervalue them and place them in positions that are too low, failing to leverage their full set of skills and competencies. What can your organization do to avoid this pitfall?
- In Pipeline’s Broken Promise, Anne M. Mulcahy, Chairman, Xerox Corporation, astutely recommended, "We need to be asking, ‘How many managerial hires have we made externally?’ Do an assessment based upon skills and capabilities and a factual assessment of how they were placed. Take the last 100 resumes hired, take the names off of them, do an assessment of where they should be positioned, and compare that with where they were [placed]." How do you ensure your recruiting processes are free of unintended bias?

How can talent management practices be redesigned to minimize the impact of stereotypes and assumptions on hiring, development, advancement, and compensation decisions?

If women realize that changing jobs may negatively impact their compensation growth, what does that mean for organizations seeking to recruit experienced women, leveraging their skills and experience?

- How should organizations best communicate and follow through on career growth opportunities for female candidates?

How can or should individuals communicate their expectations? How is this information collected so organizations can update their talent profiles to shape succession planning?

- To what extent are people managers trained to collect information in a fair and unbiased way?
- How can people managers feed their insights back into talent management systems?
THE BOTTOM LINE: SIMILAR APPROACHES TO CAREER MANAGEMENT YIELD DIFFERENT OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND MEN

When considered as a whole, the findings are clear: even when women stay on a traditional career path and do “all the right things,” they’re unlikely to advance as far or earn as much as their male counterparts.

For women, making their achievements known and gaining access to powerful others had the greatest impact on career advancement. Only making their achievements known impacted women’s compensation growth, indicating that Climbing, not Hedging by keeping external options open, paid off most for women when it came to compensation.

For men, gaining access to powerful others also contributed to greater advancement. But when it comes to compensation growth, rather than making achievements known, men most effectively increased their salary by conducting external scans and indicating a willingness to work long hours. In addition, we found that changing jobs positively impacts men’s compensation growth, indicating that Hedging is a successful career advancement strategy for men.

Organizations should sit up and take note—about half of high potentials (Hedgers and Scanners) were actively keeping their options open and used externally focused tactics as they actively managed their career advancement.

Of particular concern are the Scanners—one in four who focused their career advancement strategies on finding other organizations that would help them better meet their career goals. In addition, a significant proportion of high potentials were “coasting,” not engaging in many proactive behaviors to advance their careers. While this may reflect either contentment or complacency, it may also be influenced by less positive career experiences to date.

The findings raise a number of questions for both individuals and organizations. Throughout the report, we pinpoint which strategies individuals should employ to get ahead and which issues organizations must address to effectively leverage their current and future talent by ensuring employees are hired or advanced into the right positions to maximize their skill. Individuals who neglect these important career development strategies run the risk of lagging their peers in advancement, compensation growth, and job satisfaction. Likewise, organizations that neglect these critical talent management issues are at risk of lagging their competitors in attracting, developing, and retaining the best candidates to serve as their next generation of leaders.
APPENDIX 1–Career Advancement Dimensions

Questionnaire directions: “The following statements refer to initiatives individuals can take to manage their career. Thinking of your career overall since completing your MBA, to what extent have you actively practiced the following tactics?”

Response categories: 5=To a very great extent; 4=To a great extent; 3=To some extent; 2=To a small extent; 1=Not at all.

Alpha scores represent the reliability coefficient of the items that comprised each factor/barrier. Mean scores presented reflect averages across items in each scale.

*Significantly greater use in managing career advancement, in gender comparison, at p<.05.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
<th>CAREER ADVANCEMENT DIMENSIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GET TRAINED THROUGH EXPERIENCE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask for a variety of work assignments to increase my knowledge and skills.</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAIN ACCESS TO POWER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I build a network of contacts with important people in the firm.</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get myself introduced to people in my firm who can influence my career.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I push to be involved in high profile projects in the firm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I figure out who the most influential people are in my firm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I take time to learn how things really work inside the firm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAKE ACHIEVEMENTS VISIBLE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make sure my boss is aware of my accomplishments.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I make sure I get credit for work I do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 1
CAREER ADVANCEMENT DIMENSIONS (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>alpha</th>
<th>Overall Mean</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I think I deserve it, I ask to be considered for promotion.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask for feedback about my performance when it is not given.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BLUR WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES</strong></td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make sure my supervisor knows I am willing to work long hours and/or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or weekends.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GET FORMAL TRAINING</strong></td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.28*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proactive in getting new job competencies through training and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>development offerings (e.g., courses, workshops).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PLAN CAREER</strong></td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.03*</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have developed a plan for the next several years of my career.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SEEK ADVICE WHEN NEEDED</strong></td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>3.09*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I ask for career advice from coworkers, family, or others about how to</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>improve my future work prospects.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCAN FOR OPPORTUNITY OUTSIDE THE COMPANY</strong></td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.82*</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make sure I remain informed about my market value.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I stay in touch with headhunters (executive search firm professionals).</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I monitor job advertisements to see what is available outside my firm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I maintain an active outside network.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCAN FOR OPPORTUNITY INSIDE THE COMPANY</strong></td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.37*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I monitor job postings at my firm to see what career opportunities</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>are available.</td>
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*Significantly greater use in managing career advancement, in gender comparison, at p<.05.
APPENDIX 2–Career Advancement Strategy Profiles

We assume that an individual career advancement strategy is a multidimensional construct which represents a composite or "bundle" of actions. As such, our interest is in how the nine career advancement strategies coalesce into distinct patterns that represent strategy archetypes. To test our assumption we used a cluster analysis to classify data on the basis of patterns of observed differences and similarities.

Because clustering algorithms are sensitive to the presence of outliers, we standardized the six strategy dimensions by computing Z-scores. We adopted a two-step cluster analysis technique. In this technique a hierarchical agglomerative method is first used to produce centroid estimates and determine the appropriate number of clusters. The second step used Quick Cluster to set an iterative partitioning method and classify cases using the initial cluster centers. Ward's minimum variance method was used to determine cluster linkage.

Mean scores presented in the table below reflect averages across items in each scale, with no control variables included. For each of the nine strategies below, mean scores for each of the four strategy profile groups are statistically significantly different from each other at $p<.05$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2</th>
<th>CAREER ADVANCEMENT STRATEGY PROFILES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HEDGERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get Trained Through Experience</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain Access to Power</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Achievements Visible</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blur Work-Life Boundaries</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get Formal Training</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Career</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek Advice When Needed</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scan for Opportunity Outside the Company</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scan for Opportunity Inside the Company</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Part of a longitudinal study, this report reflects the ongoing teamwork and dedication of many individuals. Catalyst President & CEO Ilene H. Lang provided leadership, insight, and support that were critical to the project’s development. Nancy M. Carter, Ph.D., Senior Vice President, Research, conceptualized the study, and Dr. Carter and Christine Silva, Director, Research, conducted data analysis and authored the report.

We extend our thanks to the academic advisors to the study who continue to provide invaluable guidance: George F. Dreher, Ph.D.; Herminia Ibarra, Ph.D.; and Janet P. Near, Ph.D. We also offer our thanks to the participating business schools for helping recruit their MBA alumni for the study.

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We extend our sincere gratitude to the study participants for their continued time and effort in helping us better understand the career experiences of high potentials.

Finally, we extend thanks to the study’s Mentor Circle Sponsors: Chevron Corporation and Deutsche Bank AG.


4. See Appendix 2 for a description of the analytic approach and results.

5. Post-hoc tests in ANOVA controlled for age (proxy for total career work experience) and time since MBA and significant differences were identified at p<.05. Climbers scored significantly higher than Scanners and Coasters and time since MBA. Climbers scored significantly higher than Scanners and Coasters on getting hired through experience, blurring work-life boundaries, gaining access to power, making achievements visible, planning their career, and getting formal training, at p<.05.

6. Post-hoc tests in ANOVA controlled for age and time since MBA. Hedgers score significantly higher than all other groups on all strategies at p<.05.

7. Significantly more women than men were Scanners, at p<.05.

8. Post-hoc tests in ANOVA controlled for age and time since MBA. Scanners scored significantly higher than Climbers and Coasters on scanning for opportunities outside the company, scanning for opportunities inside the company, and seeking advice when needed, at p<.05.

9. Hedgers and Scanners both worked, on average, at 1.67 companies between receiving their MBA and the 2008 survey, significantly more than Climbers (1.58), at p<.05.

10. Significantly more men than women were Coasters, at p<.05.

11. Post-hoc tests in ANOVA controlled for age and time since MBA. Coasters scored significantly lower than all other groups on all strategies at p<.05.


13. Gender difference is significant at p<0.05. The proportion comparison is shown for illustrative purposes, other tests of advancement use a scale variable of level from 1 to 3 and variance across salaries.

14. In the ANOVA measuring level attained as of the 2008 survey, controlling for first post-MBA starting level, age, and time since MBA, among men there was no significant difference between Hedgers, Climbers, and Scanners (p>0.1), but Hedgers had advanced further than Coasters (p<0.1).

15. In the ANOVA measuring level attained as of the 2008 survey, controlling for first post-MBA starting level, age, and time since MBA, among women there was no significant difference between Hedgers, Climbers, and Scanners (p>0.1), but Hedgers had advanced further than Coasters (p<0.1).

16. In the ANOVA measuring level attained as of the 2008 survey, controlling for first post-MBA starting level, age, and time since MBA, in pairwise comparisons of men and women, men had advanced further than women, significant at p<0.05 among Scanners and p<0.05 among all other strategy group profiles.

17. Gender difference is significant at p<0.05 across each strategy group.

18. Men reached significantly higher levels at p<0.05 in t-tests conducted across organizations with fewer than 500 employees, 500 to 9,999 employees, 10,000 to 99,999 employees, 100,000 to 999,999 employees, and 1,000,000 or more employees.

19. Analyses used an ANOVA measuring the logarithm of current compensation as of the 2008 survey, controlling for the logarithm of first post-MBA starting salary, first post-MBA starting level, age, and time since MBA. Across all groups, men had greater compensation growth than women at p<0.05.


21. In a regression measuring 2008 compensation, with controls for age, time since MBA, first post-MBA starting level, first post-MBA compensation, current level as of 2008, global region and industry, the gender gap in compensation is significant at p<0.05. This statistically significant figure is shown for illustrative purposes, as tests of compensation growth rely on logarithm-transformed variables to minimize the impact of variance across salaries.

22. The strategies we investigated reflect activities that may help high potentials advance up the corporate ladder, but not necessarily maximize their compensation. Among this sample of high potentials, there isn’t a perfect correlation between advancement and compensation growth—for example, a number of people may be subject-matter experts in individual contributor roles earning more than those in middle-management positions, which is why we consider advancement and salary growth separately. Analyses used an ANOVA measuring the logarithm of current compensation as of the 2008 survey, controlling for the logarithm of first post-MBA starting salary, first post-MBA starting level, current level as of 2008, age, and time since MBA. Climbers had greater salary growth than Scanners, at p<0.05. For all compensation variables in this report, outliers more than four standard deviations above the mean are excluded. Logarithm-transformed compensation variables are used to minimize the impact of variance across salaries.

23. Analyses controlled for age, time since MBA, and level attained by 2008. Differences between women and men Hedgers were significant at p<0.05, between women and men Climbers significant at p<0.1. Gender differences were not significant, p>0.1, for Climbers and Scanners.

24. Gender difference is significant at p<0.05. The proportion comparison is shown for illustrative purposes, other tests of satisfaction involve means tests with multiple items averaged into a satisfaction scale.

25. In an ANOVA measuring satisfaction with compensation growth, controlling for age, time since MBA, and current level as of 2008, women were less satisfied than men at the 2008 survey.
In a regression on 2008 level, with controls for age, time since MBA, and first post-MBA starting level, making achievements visible was significant at p<.05 for women. Scanning for opportunities inside the company (p<1) and getting formal training (p<.05) was associated with lower advancement for women.

In regressions predicting satisfaction with advancement and salary growth, controlling for age, time since MBA, and current level as of 2008, making achievements visible was a significant predictor for women, at p<.05. Scanning for internal and external opportunities and seeking advice were associated with lower satisfaction with advancement for women, at p<.05. Scanning for internal and external opportunities (p<.05) and seeking advice (p<.1) were associated with lower satisfaction with compensation growth for women.

In a regression measuring 2008 compensation, with controls for age, time since MBA, first post-MBA compensation, and current level of 2008, making achievements visible was a significant predictor for women at p<.05. Scanning for opportunities inside the company and seeking advice were associated with negative compensation growth for men, at p<.05.

In a regression on 2008 level, with controls for age, time since MBA, and first post-MBA starting level, access to power was significant at p<.05 for both women and men. Among each group, mean scores on the external scanning tactic were above 2.0, which represents use of the tactic “to a small extent” on the Likert scale from 1 to 5.

Recall that since we are including just the high potentials who have worked full time consistently since getting their MBA, job changes are more likely to have kept them on their intended career track, without moves that may have negatively impacted compensation growth, such as periods of self-employment or part-time work.

In a regression measuring log-transformed 2008 compensation, with controls for age, time since MBA, first post-MBA starting level, log-transformed first post-MBA compensation, and current level as of 2008, among men, Leavers’ compensation grew faster than Stayers’ at p<.05. Among men, there was no significant difference in the compensation growth of Job Hoppers and Stayers.

While the test using logarithm-transformed compensation is significant at p<.05, this test using compensation in dollars does not achieve significance, p=15. This figure is thus shown for illustrative purposes, to allow the reader to interpret the approximate magnitude of the effect uncovered using the log-transformed compensation variable, used to minimize the impact of variance across salaries.

In a regression measuring log-transformed 2008 compensation, with controls for age, time since MBA, first post-MBA starting level, log-transformed first post-MBA compensation, and current level of 2008, there is no significant difference between women who had stayed at the same company or who had moved on to their second post-MBA job, p<.1. Among women, there was no significant difference in the compensation growth of Leavers and Stayers.

This figure is shown for illustrative purposes, other tests of compensation growth use logarithm-transformed variables to minimize the impact of variance across salaries. In both tests with log-transformed 2008 compensation and 2008 compensation in dollars, women Job Hoppers earned less than women Stayers, at p<.05.


Findings from the 2010 follow-up survey draw from the 577 respondents who had continued to work full time from MBA graduation through to the time of the 2010 survey. All respondents worked in a company or firm at the time of the survey, and were not employed in the government, education, or non-profit sectors, and were not self-employed.

Gender difference is not statistically significant, p<1.

Gender difference is not statistically significant, p<1.

Gender differences are not significant in both sets of proportion tests, p<1.
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Does Doing All The Right Things Really Get Women Ahead? | 20
IV. Role Negotiation and the Pursuit of Hot Jobs
About the Catalyst Research Centers

The Catalyst Research Center for Corporate Practice conducts research distinguishing sound talent management strategies from programmatic fads and documents best practices. These findings enable organizations to strategically create and support inclusive cultures for both women and men. The Center’s partnership with its Expert Community, a consortium of business leaders who contribute to and act on the Center’s work, informs organizational policy and practices, leading to actionable solutions and systemic change.

The Catalyst Research Center for Equity in Business Leadership examines and documents workforce demographics and their impact on employees, companies, communities, and society. In particular, the Center identifies how women’s underrepresentation affects corporate governance and executive teams, and it explores how diverse leadership contributes to business success. By verifying gaps in representation and creating results-oriented solutions, the Center’s findings and recommendations help organizations diversify leadership.

The Catalyst Research Center for Career Pathways exposes root causes of gender gaps from the classroom to the boardroom, conducting research that sorts myth from fact, identifies the true problems that hold women and other underrepresented groups back from advancement, and provides a solid basis for more effective talent development. The Center’s findings allow businesses, media, governments, and individuals to gauge women’s progress and develop solutions and action plans to advance women into leadership.

The Catalyst Research Center for Advancing Leader Effectiveness explores a central challenge facing today’s business leaders: how to leverage employee diversity to achieve success through inclusive decision-making and talent management. The Center’s research examines the nature, impact, and practice of inclusive leadership. It helps committed leaders learn how to become individual change agents, shaping the workplace culture by role modeling effective interpersonal interactions and capitalizing on opportunities to build inclusive talent management systems.

The Catalyst Research Center for Equity in Business Leadership examines and documents workforce demographics and their impact on employees, companies, communities, and society. In particular, the Center identifies how women’s underrepresentation affects corporate governance and executive teams, and it explores how diverse leadership contributes to business success. By verifying gaps in representation and creating results-oriented solutions, the Center’s findings and recommendations help organizations diversify leadership.

About Catalyst

Founded in 1962, Catalyst is the leading nonprofit organization accelerating progress for women through workplace inclusion. With operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, India, Australia, and Japan, and more than 800 supporting organizations, Catalyst is the trusted resource for research, information, and advice about women at work. Catalyst annually honors exemplary organizational initiatives that promote women’s advancement with the Catalyst Award.
Role Negotiation and the Pursuit of Hot Jobs

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Role Negotiation a Positive for Employees and Employers

Pay is probably the first thing that comes to mind when you hear about workplace negotiations and gender equality. In reality, individuals negotiate many aspects of their careers, including bids for more satisfying and challenging roles.1 But does success in role negotiation predict high potentials’ access to the “hot jobs” that are so essential to their advancement?2

We examined just that question in this study and found that women and men high potentials who reported greater success in role negotiation also:

- Reported greater access to two important types of hot jobs: roles with P&L responsibility and projects with C-suite visibility.
- Saw themselves as more innovative in their work.
- Saw themselves as more likely to remain with their current organizations.

Taken together, our findings suggest that role negotiation is a win-win-win strategy—one that benefits individuals in their pursuit of hot jobs, leaders who want to foster innovation in their teams, and organizations that are increasingly worried about retaining top talent.

Negotiating Roles, Gaining Access to Hot Jobs

In a previous study, Catalyst dispelled the myth that high-potential women and men receive the same leadership-development opportunities.4 This basic story has not changed: in this study, women were still less likely than men to have access to two critical hot jobs: roles with P&L responsibility5 and highly visible projects.6

This persistent gender gap in access to hot jobs prompts the question: what can women do to maximize their access to the hot jobs so essential to their career advancement?

In this study:

- Women who reported greater success in role negotiation7—regardless of their job level and experience—were more likely to have P&L responsibility, and the same was true for men.8
- High potentials who reported the greatest success in role negotiation were 42% more likely to have P&L responsibility9 than those who reported the least success in role negotiation.
Role Negotiation and the Pursuit of Hot Jobs

Women who reported greater success in role negotiation also led projects with greater visibility to the C-suite—a finding that also held true for men.10

High potentials who reported the greatest success in role negotiation were 30% more likely to lead projects with “very great” visibility than those who reported the least success:11

That role negotiation predicts access to roles with P&L responsibility and projects with high visibility for both genders is encouraging. It’s particularly so with respect to project visibility, where we found no gap in the visibility of women’s and men’s projects once we factored in role negotiation.12

This finding is important to women for three reasons:

1. Of nine expert-recommended career-advancement strategies, just two worked for women: making their achievements visible and gaining access to powerful others.13

2. Unlike men, women have an uphill battle to get due credit for their achievements.14

3. Also unlike men, women don’t have the same access to mentors in powerful senior-leadership roles.15

To the extent that role negotiation increases women’s odds of leading projects that are highly visible to the C-suite, it could also bolster their efforts to harness these two winning career-advancement strategies.

To examine high potentials’ reported success in role negotiation, we asked them the extent to which they agreed with the following kinds of items on a five-point scale, with one being “strongly disagree” to five being “strongly agree.”

• I have successfully asked for extra responsibilities that take advantage of the skills I bring to the job.

• I have asked my manager for tasks that better fit my personality, skills, and abilities.

• In response to my distinctive contributions, my manager has granted me more flexibility in how I complete my job.

SAMPLE ITEMS FROM THE ROLE NEGOTIATION SCALE16
Role Negotiation as a Win-Win-Win

Role negotiation positively predicted two other important outcomes beyond access to hot jobs.

- Both high-potential women and men who reported greater success in role negotiation reported being more innovative in their roles.17

- High potentials who reported the greatest success in role negotiation were more than twice as likely to report being “most innovative” in their roles than were high potentials who reported the least success in role negotiation18 (see Figure 3). They “more frequently identified opportunities for new products or processes” and “tried out new ideas and approaches to problems.”19

- High potentials who reported greater success in role negotiation also indicated that they were more likely to remain with their current firms over the coming year.20

- Those who reported the greatest success in role negotiation were 143% more likely to indicate the “strongest” intentions to remain with their current organizations than were those who reported the least success in role negotiation21 (see Figure 4).

These findings suggest that role negotiation not only helps high potentials maximize their access to hot jobs, but also inspires them to be more innovative in their work and more intent on remaining with their current organizations.

FIGURE 3
Percentage Who Reported Being “Most” Innovative, by Level of Success in Role Negotiation

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<tr>
<th>Success in Role Negotiation</th>
<th>Least</th>
<th>Greatest</th>
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<td>45%</td>
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<td>22%</td>
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FIGURE 4
Percentage Who Indicated “Strongest” Intentions to Remain With Current Organization, by Level of Success in Role Negotiation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Success in Role Negotiation</th>
<th>Least</th>
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<tr>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
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What Can Leaders and Organizations Do to Support High Potentials’ Role Negotiation?

Leaders Can Empower Team Members to Negotiate Their Roles

The more inclusive high potentials perceived their leaders to be, the more success they reported in negotiating satisfying and challenging roles. In particular, for both high-potential women and men, their perceptions of their managers’ empowering behavior were the key predictor of reported success in role negotiation.

- High potentials who perceived their leaders to be most inclusive were 4.5 times more likely to report the greatest success in role negotiation than were those who perceived their leaders to be least inclusive.

FIGURE 5
Percentage Who Report Greatest Success in Role Negotiation, by Level of Inclusive Leadership

In a previous Catalyst study, perceptions of inclusive leadership behavior positively predicted individuals’ self-reported contributions in the workplace; specifically, employees’ willingness to “go above and beyond” to help their teams (“team citizenship behavior”) and their ability to innovate. A second study dug deeper to examine how a leader’s inclusive behavior might help foster innovation. Those findings suggested that inclusive leadership helps foster innovation by creating a sense of psychological safety that enables team members to take the calculated risks inherent in the innovation process. This study expands our understanding of how inclusive leaders may help foster innovation: by empowering team members to take the risk of negotiating their roles to make them more satisfying and challenging and, in doing so, shape roles that allow them to be more innovative.
Organizations Can Support High Potentials’ Role Negotiation

The more supportive high potentials perceived their organizations to be, the greater success they reported in negotiating more satisfying and challenging roles. Individuals perceived their organizations to be supportive when they felt their contributions were valued, their goals and values were strongly considered, and their requests for special favors were granted.

- High potentials who perceived that their organizations provided a high level of support were nearly four times more likely to report the greatest success in role negotiation than those who perceived that their organizations provided a low level of support.
- Perceived organizational support predicted high potentials’ reported success in role negotiating even after taking into account how inclusive they perceived their managers to be. This finding suggests a “both and,” with high potentials’ ability to negotiate more satisfying and challenging roles dependent upon both their managers’ inclusion and their organizations’ support.

Actions Managers and Employees Can Take

Role negotiation is a strategy that benefits employees in their pursuit of hot jobs, benefits managers who want to foster innovation in their teams, and benefits organizations that are increasingly worried about retaining top talent. At its best, role negotiation is a collaborative process between employees and their managers, which leads to mutually beneficial results. Thus, each has a critical role to play. Managers’ empowerment behavior, in particular, emerged as the key predictor of high potentials’ success in role negotiation in this study.

Managers can empower employees in multiple ways. For example, they can talk with their employees about strategic organizational priorities and:

- Help them think creatively about their roles and how they can best contribute to the organization’s success.
- Make sure they understand that the perfect role might not yet exist but could be negotiated and shaped to fill a strategic need in the organization.

Employees also play an important part. For example, they can identify their interests and priorities before approaching their managers about changes to their role by:

- Reflecting on the type of work they most enjoy.
- Considering which opportunities would be challenging and most supportive of their growth while also advancing key business objectives.
Endnotes


2. “Hot jobs” refers to large and highly visible projects, mission-critical roles that include things like P&L responsibility and direct reports, and, lastly, international assignments. These jobs—which were found to significantly predict high potentials’ career advancement—are described in greater detail in Christine Silva, Nancy M. Carter, and Ann Beninger, Good Intentions, Imperfect Execution: Women Get Fewer of the “Hot Jobs” Needed to Advance (Catalyst, 2012).

3. The sample includes 61.5% women (N = 568) and 38.5% men (N = 355), with an average age of 43 years. Respondents graduated from 26 of the top business schools (50%) in Asia, Canada, Europe, and the United States or the Smith College Executive Education for Women program (92%). Eighty-three percent of participants were working at for-profit or professional services firms at the time of the survey, and 17% were either self-employed or working in the nonprofit, government, or education sectors. 73% were working in global organizations. Respondents were working across a range of industries at the time of the survey: 18% in finance and insurance, 35% in tech-intensive industries, and 47% in all other fields.

4. Silva, Carter, and Beninger.

5. The Chi-square statistic (29.950) associated with gender to predict P&L responsibility; p>.10—hence, role negotiation is significant; p<.05: women (30%) were less likely than men (49%) to have P&L responsibility. Note, when considering potential explanations for this result and all others outlined in this report, particular attention was paid to whether women working in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) industries or functions had unique experiences. There were no consistent, significant differences across functions or industries.

6. For this analysis, we first created two groups consistent with: Silva, Carter, and Beninger: those who reported leading projects with “very great” C-suite visibility vs. those who reported leading projects with “great” to no C-suite visibility. The Chi-square statistic (52.989) associated with gender is significant; p<.05: women (19%) were less likely than men (44%) to report leading projects with “very great” C-suite visibility.

7. We used Rosen, Slater, Chang, and Johnson’s (2013) six-item scale to measure “Role Negotiation,” which they referred to as task- and development-focused “idiosyncratic deals”—or “I-deals,” for short. We examined whether there were gender gaps in reported success in role negotiation using analysis of variance, controlling for organizational characteristics (firm size, scope, and industry), job characteristics (function and level), and work experience (age and time in role). Taking into account these controls, gender is n.s.; p>.10. Estimated marginal means (EMM) = 3.806 for women (95% CI: 3.717 to 3.894); 3.936 for men (95% CI: 3.816 to 4.057).

8. Logistic regression included role negotiation as the predictor and a binary (“Yes” vs. “No”), single-item measure of P&L responsibility as the outcome. Taking into account all previously noted controls, role negotiation is significant at p<.05: women (245%) increase in role negotiation, there is a 245% increase in P&L responsibility. It’s also important to note that, even after taking into account role negotiation, gender remains significant; p<.01. Men were still 62% more likely than women to have P&L responsibility.

9. This figure of 42% is for illustrative purposes only; it doesn’t take into account earlier-cited control variables such as firm size, job level, etc.

10. Regression included role negotiation as the predictor and a 5-point, single-item measure of project visibility as the outcome. After taking into account all control variables, role negotiation is significant; p<.05. Role negotiation does not interact with gender to predict project visibility; p>.10—hence, the statement that role negotiation also predicted project visibility for men. Regardless of gender, for every unit increase in role negotiation, there is a .190 increase in project visibility. After taking into account role negotiation, gender approaches, but does not reach, statistical significance; p<.10.

11. Again, this figure of 30% is for illustrative purposes only, because it doesn’t take into account previously-noted control variables.

12. As reported earlier, gender is not significant once we take into account role negotiation, p>.10.


16. Rosen, Slater, Chang, and Johnson.

17. Regression included role negotiation as the predictor, a 5-item (composite) measure of self-reported innovation as the outcome, and all previously noted controls. Role negotiation interacted with gender to predict self-reported innovation; p<.05. However, follow-up examinations of the parameter estimates for women and men revealed that role negotiation positively predicted self-reported innovation for both; p<.05. The interaction is likely driven by the fact that the slope for women (R2[linear] = 0.38) is shallower than the slope for men (R2[linear] = 0.38). For women, a unit increase in role negotiation corresponds to a .329 increase in self-reported innovation; for men, a .268 unit increase. Again, though, the parameter estimates for role negotiation were significant for both genders, p<.05.

18. The precise figure is 105%, and is for illustrative purposes only. It doesn’t take into account previously-noted control variables.

19. These two examples are taken from the five-item innovation scale used in this study, which was a modified version of one originally developed and validated by Pamela Tien, Steven M. Farmer, and George B. Graen, “An Examination of Leadership and Employee Creativity: The Relevance of Traits and Relationships,” Journal of Applied Psychology, vol. 52 (1999): p. 591 – 600.
20. Turnover intentions were measured using a 3-item scale validated in a previous Catalyst study by Cynthia G. Emerich, *Mind Your Culture Gap to Keep Your Top Talent* (2015). The scale was previously adapted from Sandy J. Wayne, Lynn M. Shore, and Robert C. Lidar, “Perceived Organizational Support and Leader-Member Exchange: A Social Exchange Perspective,” Academy of Management Journal, vol. 40, no. 1 (1997): p. 82 – 111. Regression included role negotiation as the predictor, the 3-item (compositional) high potentials’ intentions to remain with their current organizations as the outcome, and all previously noted controls. Similar to the findings reported for self-reported innovation, gender and reported success in role negotiation interacted to predict intentions to remain; p<.05. Again, though, follow-up examinations revealed that role negotiation positively predicts intentions to remain for both genders; p<.05. However, the trend line that best captured the relationship between role negotiation and intentions to remain varied by gender: for women, a cubic trend line provided the best fit (R-squared = .213 vs. .183 for linear trend); in contrast, for men, a linear trend line sufficed (R-squared = .244 vs. .247 for cubic trend). Nonetheless, separate parameter estimates were significant for both genders; p<.05. For women, a unit increase in role negotiation corresponded to a .618 increase in intentions to remain with their current organizations. For men, a unit increase in role negotiation corresponded to a .862 increase in intentions to remain.

21. This figure of 123% is for illustrative purposes only; it doesn’t take into account the control variables outlined previously.


23. Regression included role negotiation as the outcome and the 15-item measure of inclusive leader behavior (described above) as the key predictor. After taking into account all previously noted controls and gender, perceptions of inclusive leader behavior are a significant predictor of reported success in role negotiation; p<.05. For every unit increase in inclusive leadership, there is a .672 unit increase in role negotiation.

24. Using the same regression model noted earlier, we included role negotiation as the outcome. After taking into account all previously noted controls, results indicated that the link between inclusive leadership and innovation can be completely explained by success in role negotiation. Put another way, this finding indicates that inclusive leadership predicts innovation because it predicts high potentials’ success in role negotiation. Once we factor in role negotiation, the direct effect of inclusive leadership on innovation is not significant; b = -.0084, p<.10. In contrast, the indirect effect of inclusive leadership (via role negotiation) is significant; b = .1027, p<.01, 95% CI [.0729 -.1805]. This same pattern held true when we included just the empowerment component of inclusive leadership. The direct effect of empowerment on innovation is not significant; b = .0218, p>.10. In contrast, the indirect effect of empowerment (via role negotiation) is significant; b = .1085, p<.01, 95% CI [.0600 -.1706].

25. Regression included role negotiation as the outcome and a unidimensional, 11-item (composite) measure of “Perceived Organizational Support” (POS) as the predictor. This previously validated measure of POS is described in Stephen Armeli, Robert Eisenberger, Peter Fasolo, and Patrick Lynch, “Perceived Organizational Support and Police Performance: The Moderating Influence of Socioemotional Needs,” *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 83, no. 3 (1998): p. 288-297. Results from the regression revealed that POS did not interact with gender to predict success in role negotiation—meaning, POS positively predicted role negotiation for both women and men. Additionally, women and men perceived their organizations to be equally supportive; p>.10. This means that POS positively predicted role negotiations for both women and men.

26. This finding is for illustrative purposes only; it doesn’t take into account previously noted control variables.

Acknowledgments

This report is part of Catalyst’s longitudinal project, *The Promise of Future Leadership: Highly Talented Employees in the Pipeline*, which develops timely reports on the retention and advancement of high potential women and men. This report is the result of the ongoing teamwork and dedication of many individuals.

We wish to extend our thanks to the many Catalyst subject matter experts and team members who contributed to this research and the production of this report. We also extend our gratitude to the study participants, whose workplace experiences informed the research, as well as to the institutions that recruited their alumnae and alumni to serve as study participants, including, most recently, Smith College Executive Education and, throughout the series, *graduate schools of business* in Asia, Canada, Europe, and the United States.

Finally, we wish to thank Catalyst’s Research Partners, whose contribution and support enables us to generate breakthrough knowledge to accelerate progress for women through workplace inclusion.
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<td>Global Chairman</td>
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### Historic List of Board Chairs

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### Honorary Directors

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