

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING THE SUCCESS OF NEW MANAGERS

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Abstract: The rapid and frequent fluctuation of managers within an organization is likely to have a negative impact on the overall performance of the organization itself. Therefore, the assessment of the success of the potential manager within the organization is highly important with regards to saving the time and money of the organization, in terms of investing in the induction, training and development of the manager. In addition, the presumption that the level of success of the potential manager can be assessed and improved in the case of compatible manager is important; whereas the adherence and observance of the potential manager of the culture, standards, objectives, mission and vision of the respective organization can be influenced, maintained and further enhanced.

The authors conducted a research with experienced and proven managers worldwide, thus setting the standards and profile considered as criteria for assessing the success of potential managers. Namely, the results provided by the experienced managers are analyzed and summarized, and conclusions have been made considered as benchmarks for further analyses and comparison to the results that can be obtained from potential managers.

Keywords: Manager, Success Criteria, Teamwork

Introduction

Not all organizations use instruments or tools that can enable assessment of the potentials and capabilities of prospective managers with greater certainty and objectivity. In many cases, such assessments are mainly intuitive and up to the judgment, opinion and experience of the already proven decision makers to identify and promote the new management. However, the success and capabilities of the already proven successful managers as decision makers is not always in correlation with the success of their selection of the new management potential[1-3].

Organizations usually can't do much when it comes to influencing and increasing a manager's ability or willingness to learn. Most employee performance problems can be traced back to the hiring process, whereas a lot of managers (decision makers) don't give the interviewing process the time and attention it deserves and select candidates based on how well they interview and how articulate they are, how well prepared they tend to be for the interview, or if the candidate has the right chemistry with the interviewer. [3-6] In other words often appearances and personal biases are a major deciding factor. In addition, in many cases, regardless of a candidate's record of success, the selection is rather made based on his/her years of experience[3],[6-9].

The successful identification of new managers will no doubt decrease the risk of not achieving the targeted organization results, aiming to avoid frequent managerial fluctuation, and disruption of the natural work flow in the organization, as well as the motivation, direction, clarity and enthusiasm of the teams [3-9]. The smooth and successful selection of new managers shall impact the investment of the company in terms of training and grooming new managers with the company culture, the company mission, vision, goals and standards. This research aims to add value in this area by summarizing the characteristics that are

common for proven and successful managers and to create a profile as benchmark for further comparisons and research. Furthermore, the aim of this research is to enhance or provide alternatives to the existing tools utilized by the organization, in order to aid the decision makers and organizations with the strategy to identify compatible management potential, promote and invest in it accordingly.

Research

There is a tight connection between an excellent manager and success of the relevant company. The success of any company, regardless of its size or type is measurable by several indicators[10-14]. However, this research is focused on potential success of top managers. Although it is an extremely important factor that has been studied to date [15-17], this study uses new approach and covers segments of top managers' performance both at work and out of work. The research targets proven top managers and analyses how they experience their success, as well as other key factors, and sets valid criteria for assessing the potential new managers.

This research is based on the candid responses of identified successful managers to a standardized questionnaire developed specially for this purpose and was implemented anonymously to facilitate sincere feedback. It targeted managers who are recognized as successful as per their record of success based on a number of factors, such as the success of the companies they work for, years of managerial experience, hierarchy and level in the respective company, teams they lead, etc. This research includes managers of different gender, company size and different types of organizations. It was taken internationally (Fig.1) as it includes participants from different countries which for the purpose of the analyses are classified as Republic of Macedonia (being the origin of interest for the authors), European and non-European countries (United States of America and the Middle East).



Figure 1. Countries where the research was conducted

Some of the participating managers' companies:

- AC Milan, Italy
- Yes Master, United Kingdom
- HS–National Health Service, United Kingdom
- BTA, Turkey
- Publicis, Republic of Macedonia
- Komercijalna banka, Republic of Macedonia

- SOS Detsko selo, Republic of Macedonia
- KNAUF, Republic of Macedonia
- Tetraktis, Republic of Macedonia
- Eurolink, Republic of Macedonia
- BTA, Turkey
- BONUM M, Republic of Macedonia
- SEAVUS, Republic of Macedonia & Sweden
- Futura Futbol Club, United States of America
- Coventry Health Care, United States of America
- Global Connection International, United States of America
- Wrigley, United Arab Emirates

The research focuses on a combination of factors structured as four sections and consists of 84 questions:

- Introductory section – factual details about the manager
- Section 1 - background and relations, focusing on education, family and interpersonal relations, as well as interests and hobbies. Consequently, the first section is organized in several sub-sections:
 - A. Area of education
 - B. Area of family dynamics and relations
 - C. Area of interpersonal relations
 - D. Area of interest and hobby
- Section 2 - type of organization where the manager is successful in terms of work related pattern, as well as various factors that the manager considers affected his/her professional success in an organization

Results

The results are drawn from the responses provided by the participating managers. Some of the questions in the questionnaire are related in order to confirm the validity of the answers; therefore, in such cases, due to the nature of the questions and provided answers, the results are combined. Also, the results with insignificant frequency are not shown. The results and related graphs represent the two most dominating and vivid responses. In cases where there is no dominating response, the responses are presented as such. Based on the responses provided by the targeted managers, the following results are summarized as follows:

- This research is administered internationally where managers from companies in Macedonia, European and non-European countries were invited to participate; the majority as presented below. Consequently, the participating managers hold managerial positions in these regions and are mainly European.

- The successful managers that participated in this research are mainly in their 30 or 40, and have mostly held a managerial position in one country, mainly in organizations that focus on services, such as construction, or finance/banking.

- The participating managers have at least five years of managerial experience in total, to date, mainly continuously in the same company, mostly in medium to large companies, and at senior managerial level at minimum.

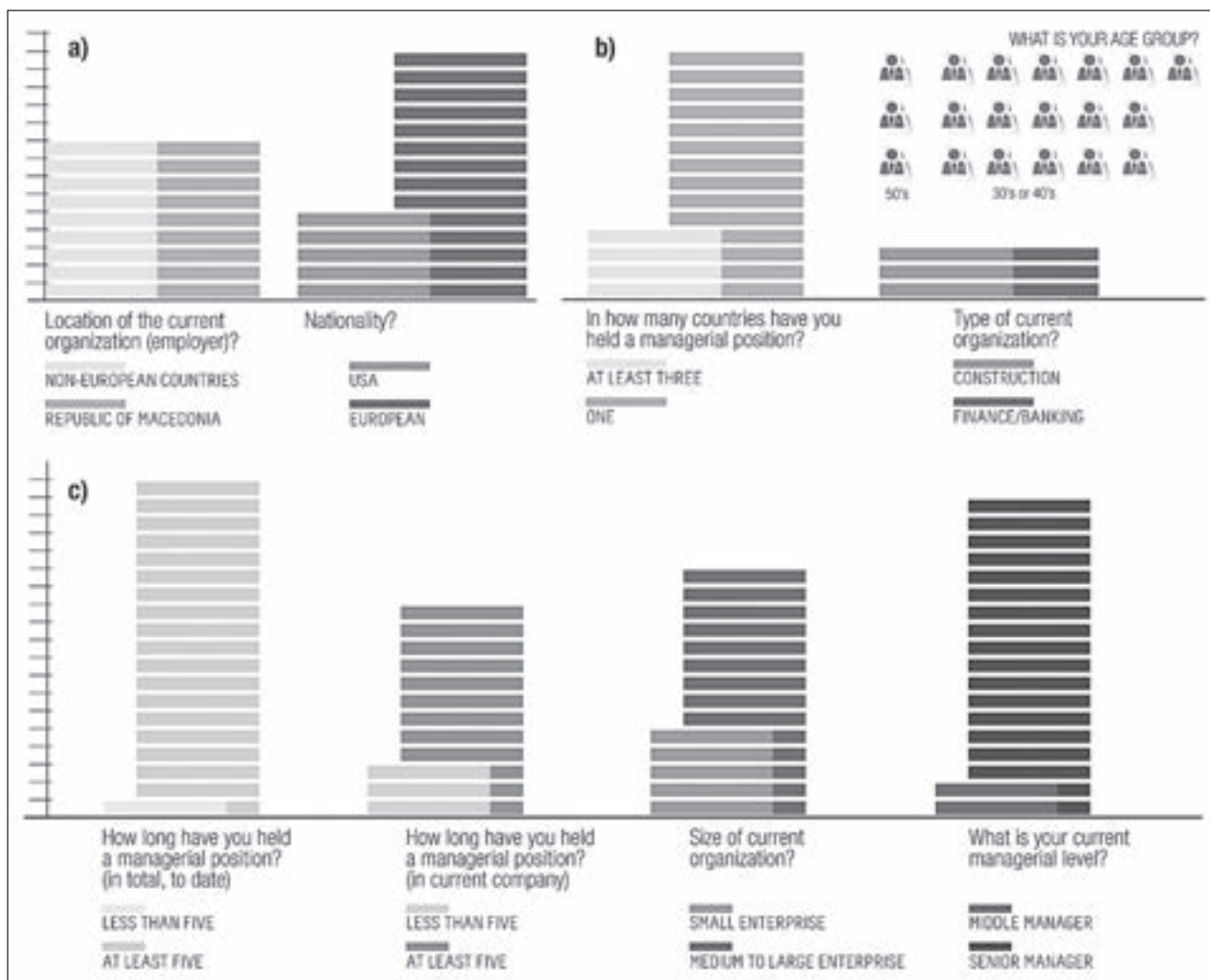


Figure 2. a) Location and nationality of the employer; b) Age, number of countries where managerial position was held, and type of current organization; c) Duration of holding managerial position to date and in current company, size of current company and current managerial level

- The successful manager who completed this questionnaire is mainly of male gender, educated in the area of social sciences, with undergraduate degree or at graduate level, with already completed significant additional professional training. Some managers indicated that they haven't and some that have published professional papers.

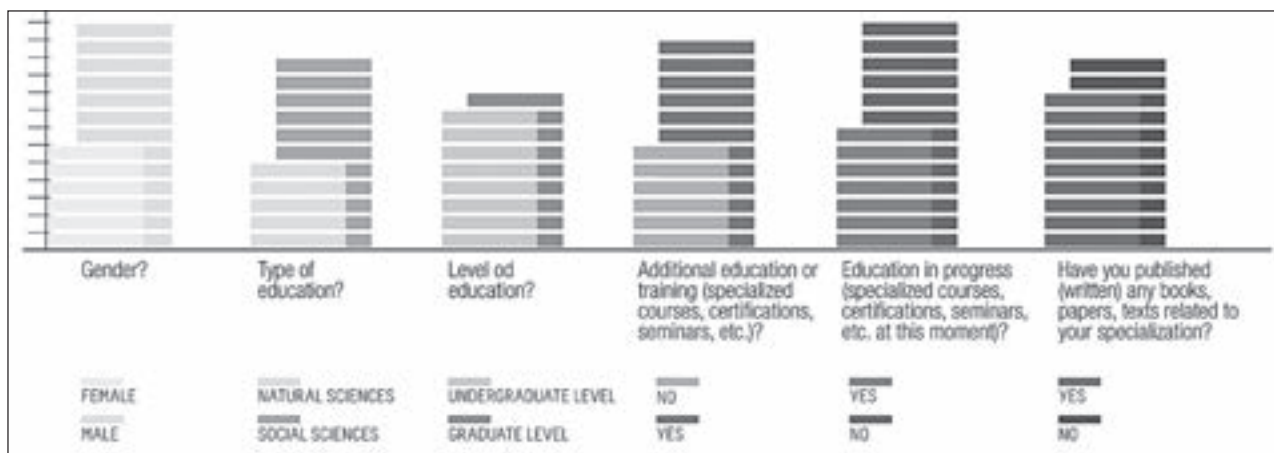


Figure 3. Gender, type and level of education, additional education/training, education in progress and published/written work

- The successful manager in most cases is first born in a family with mainly one sibling in a family of four, and in general describes the relationship with immediate family as normal to strong.
- In most cases the successful manager considers that he/she has learned the most regarding relations with people from his/her father, who was considered as most powerful figure in a family with mixed (democratic & autocratic) or democratic relations.
- The successful manager taking part in this research has no immediate family in the same profession (the few who responded they do, share the same profession as one of their parents).

Some managers indicated that there is an eminent story/anecdote often told by the parents of the successful manager, and the manager can recall it. Some managers indicated that there is no such anecdote told in the family.

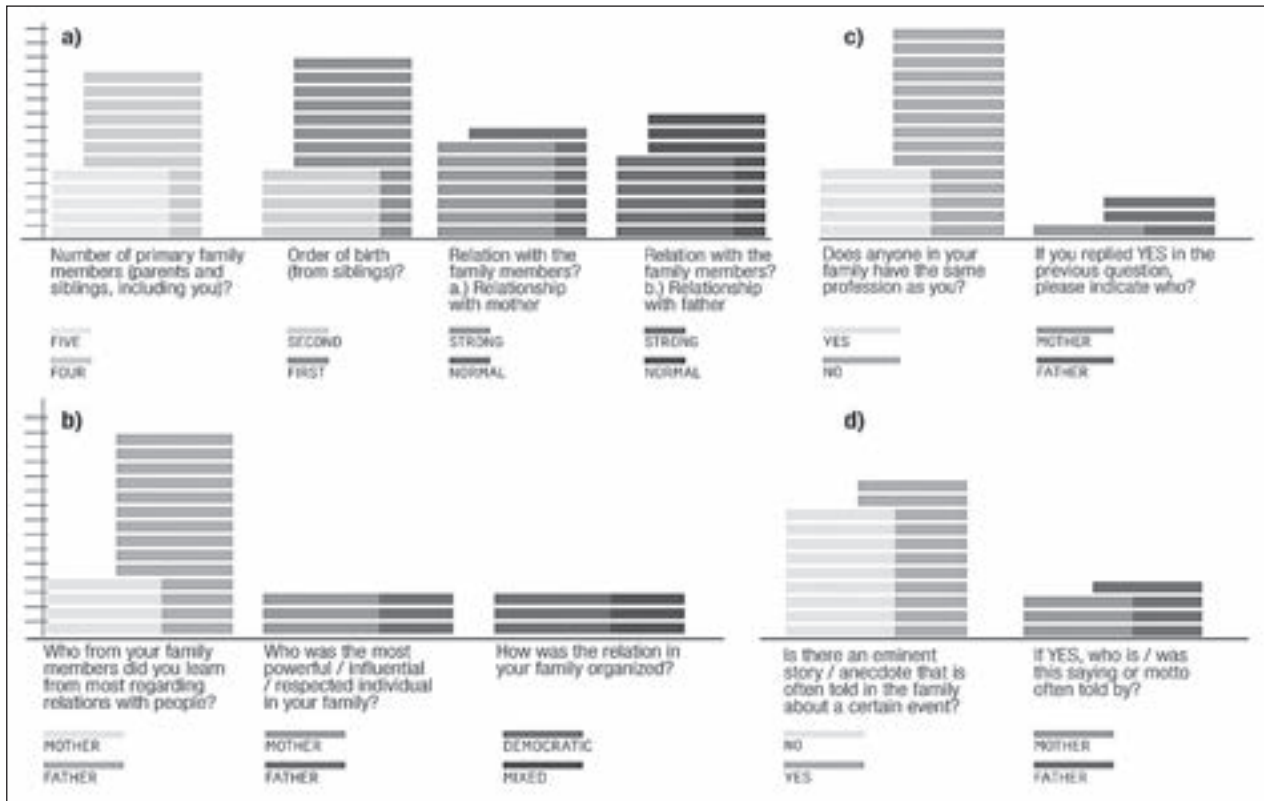


Figure 4. a) Number of primary family members, order of birth, relationship with parents; b) Family member who you learned from on people relations, most powerful/influential/respected family member, type of family relations; c) Family member with same profession; d) Family event/anecdote/story and family member often telling it

- Some managers indicated that their family went through a period of economic crises. In general managers describe the overall financial family situation as normal or average. Successful managers don't have immediate family as current associate or partner in their business (in case of private business, the very small percentage who responded that they do, indicate a sibling).

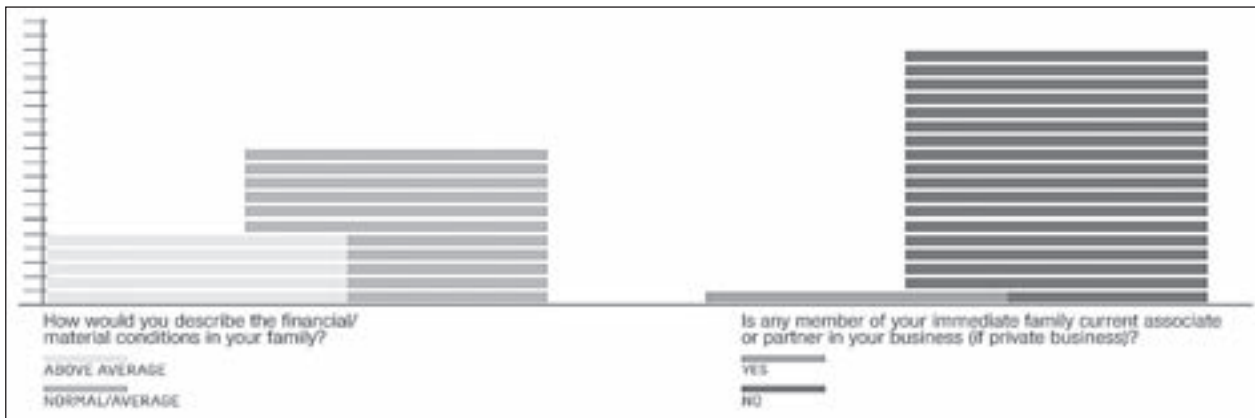


Figure 5. Family financial/material situation and partnering family member in a business

- From the childhood years to date, the successful manager had and has many friendships mainly up to ten, where as currently some managers indicated even more than ten. In friendship our targeted manager values mainly honesty, and socializes seeking mainly fun and enjoyable time and to a lesser degree relaxation. The successful manager considers that people like to socialize with him mainly because of his/her fun and friendly nature and sense of humor. When socializing, the different successful managers dislike different negative characteristics, mainly, dishonest attitude and lies and interest driven friendship.

- The successful manager considers that he/she doesn't spend enough time on socializing (less than 4 hours per week), however when he/she does, he/she is an active participant.

- In most cases the successful manager socializes with friends mainly of same age as the manager (mostly in their 30's or 40's), same and to a lesser degree of mixed gender, and of different (mixed educational, social or marital) status.

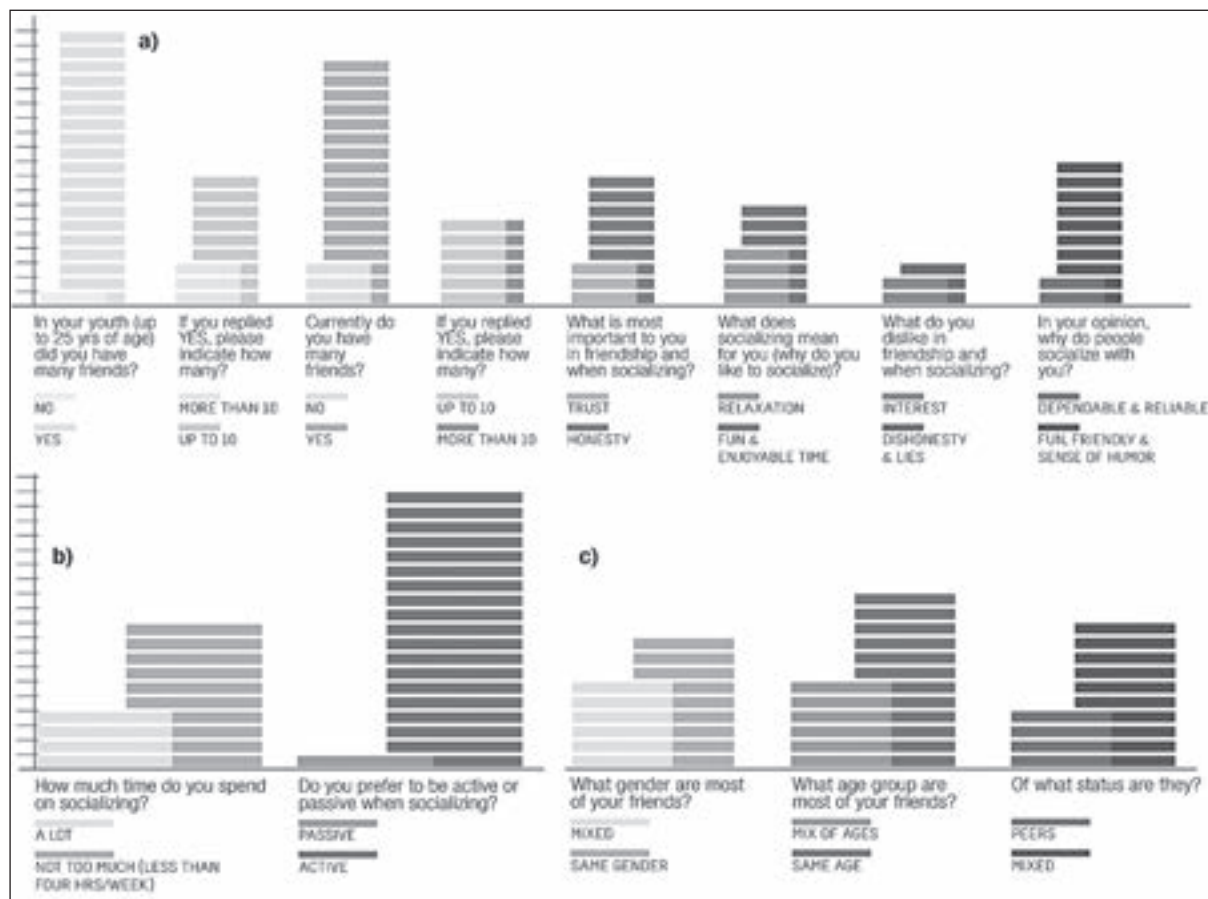


Figure 6. a) Friends in youth and currently, importance in friendship, reason for socializing, and dislikes in friendship/socializing; b) Time spent on socializing and active/passive role preference; c) Gender, age group and status of friends

- The successful manager likes to spend his/her free time mainly on sports and with family, and spends less than 8 hours per week, and to a lesser degree, weekends on such activities. When it comes to rest and relaxation, successful managers mainly enjoy reading as well as movies/theatre. Different managers spend different amount of time on rest and relaxation, indicating 1 to 3 hours daily in general, while the successful manager dedicates 9 - 12 hours a day to work.

- Successful managers have had various hobbies to date, indicating mainly two or more, and consider various activities as hobbies, mainly sport or craft.

- Some managers practice sport, some don't and those who do, practice a variety of sports, such as tennis and soccer. Most managers consider walking and sport recreational.

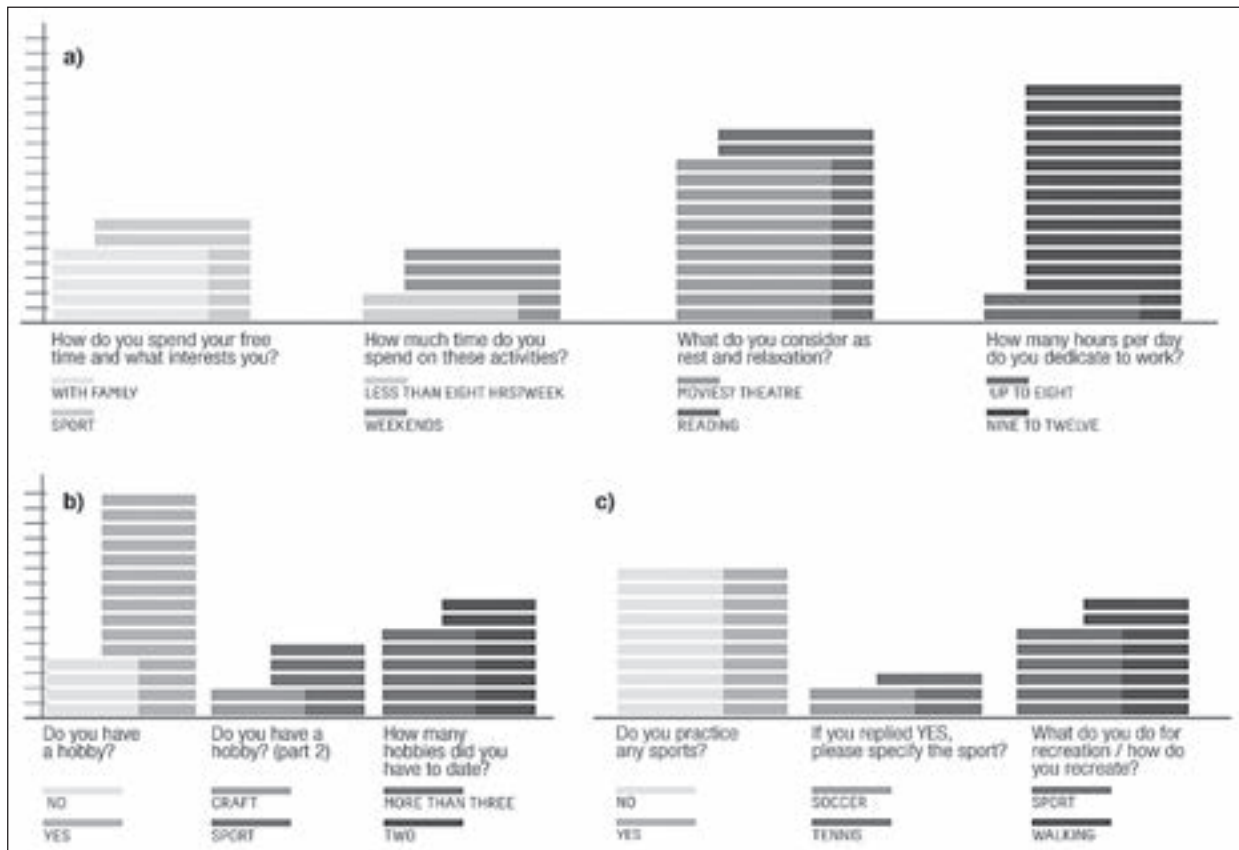


Figure 7. a) Spending free time and frequency, rest and relaxation, and time spent for work; b) Hobbies to date; c) Sport and recreation

- Different managers consider different factors to be their comparative advantage, such as hard work and knowledge.

- Different managers consider various factors to have helped them the most when first assumed a managerial position, mainly determination, as well as time management and organizational skills.

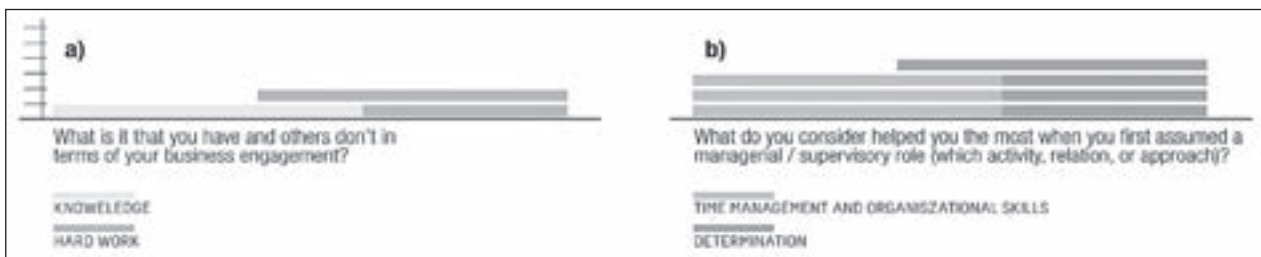


Figure 8. a) Business engagement advantage; b) Factors that helped when assuming managerial position for the first time

- The successful manager self-rates his/her level of ambition as highest on the given scale, considers himself as initiative taking and doesn't need anyone to stimulate his/her initiative (the few who replied "yes" indicated different replies, such as superior/manager or colleague/collaborator). Successful managers have been involved in implementing activities within the organization regardless of (or if) the reward.
- The successful manager is result oriented and considers result and feedback, as well as money, as indicators for success.
- The successful manager has found himself under great pressure and stress which mainly energizes the manager for more intense work and increased personal activity.

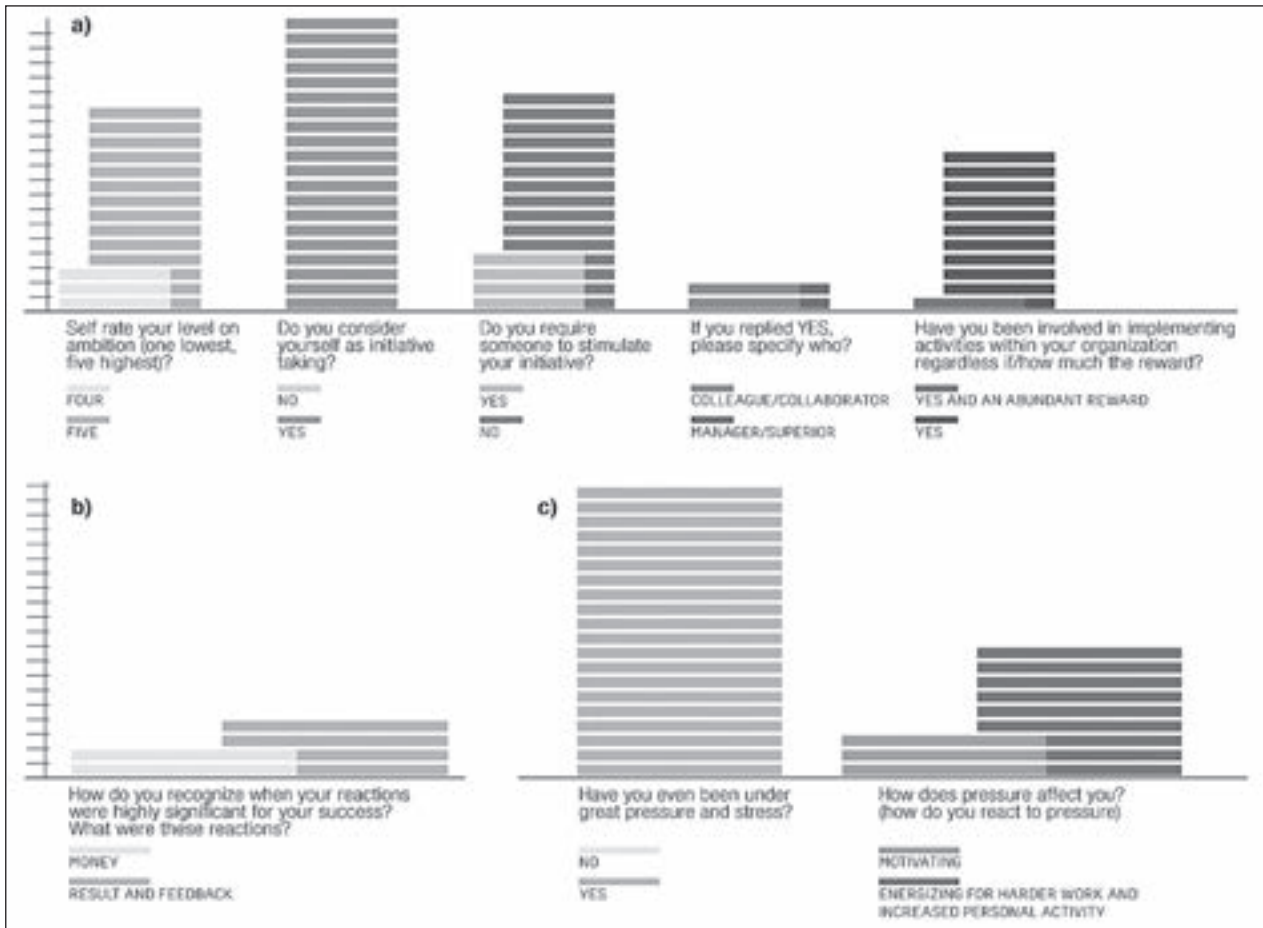


Figure 9. a) Self-rate on ambition, initiative taking and stimulus, involvement regardless of reward; b) Indicators for success; c) Pressure, stress and their effect

- Successful managers tend to keep their managerial style, where democratic seems to be most commonly kept, preferred and applied, replacing the more aggressive, authoritative and autocratic styles, although managers also prefer and apply the autocratic style. The manager defines his/her managerial style mainly based on results, and reactions from the people he/she works with. Nevertheless, managers are flexible and often decide to adapt and combine various managerial styles depending on specific given situations and feedback from people he/she works with.

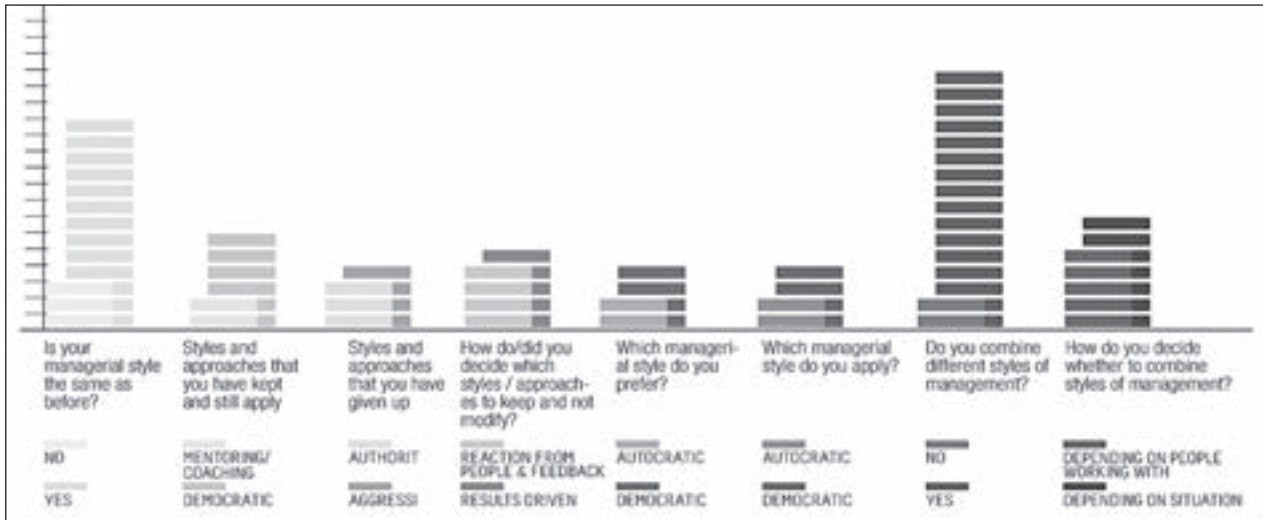


Figure 10. Preferred, applied and combined managerial styles, styles and approaches kept and given up, and how decision was made for that

- Success is experienced as self-realization which brings inner satisfaction and content to the manager, where, to a lesser degree, some successful managers anticipate success and expect it. Hard work and excellent education are the elements that the successful manager considers as most helpful to reach a high managerial position and success.

- Successful managers learn from failure, where different managers consider different factors to have caused the failure, predominantly wrong judgment of people, situations and factors, as well as over-confidence to a lesser degree.

- When preparing for a new business engagement, the successful manager considers knowledge and to a lesser degree good idea and to be key factors and drivers.

- The successful manager promotes teamwork with normal to strong relation with coworkers and, friendly, open and cooperative relation with deputies.

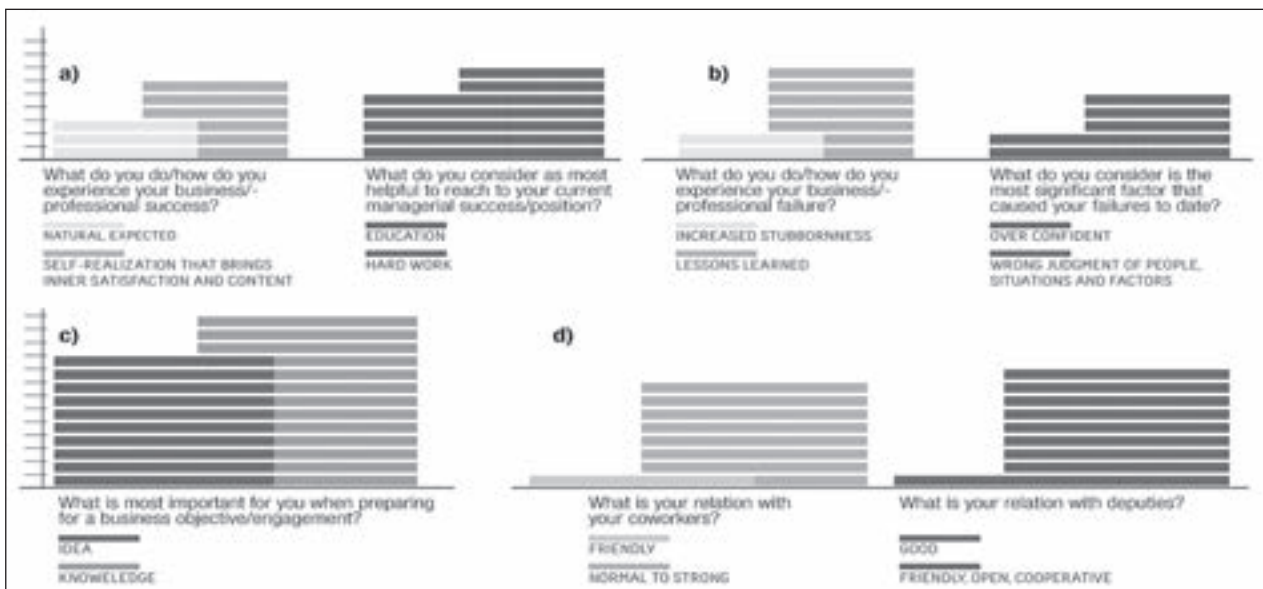


Figure 11. a) Experiencing professional success and its factors; b) Experiencing professional failure and its factors; c) Key factors for new business engagement; d) Relation with coworkers and deputies

- The interventions that managers consider as their best within their team vary between managers, mainly specified are encouraging teamwork and motivation. The interventions that managers consider as their worst within their team vary between managers, mainly specified are de-motivating the team with open criticism, as well as, overestimating or underestimating people's capacity and situations.

- The same applies for best intervention related to a goal, where the factor that managers consider key is mainly keeping everyone on track, motivated and goal oriented. Related to worst goal oriented intervention, managers have different experience, mainly not acting as a team (where one performs more jobs and lack of coordination is demonstrated).

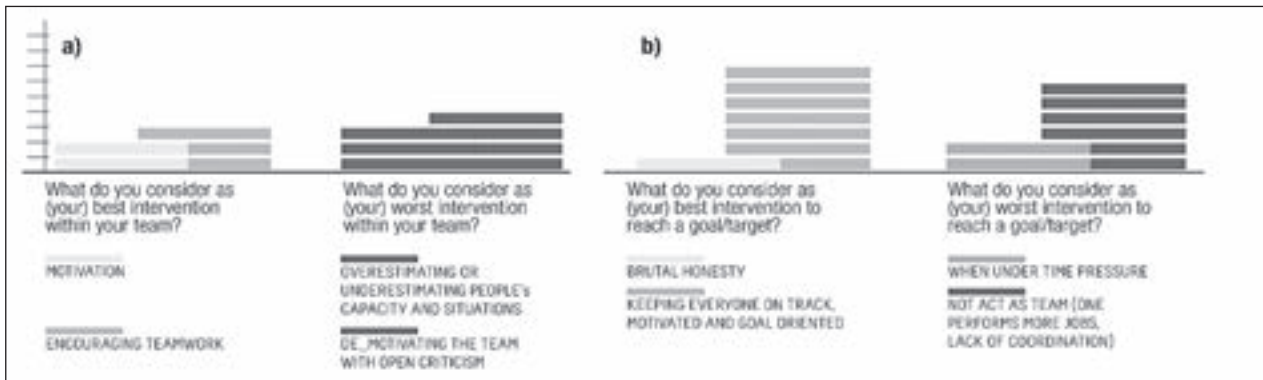


Figure 12. a) Best and worst intervention in a team; b) Best and worst intervention to reach a goal/target

Conclusions | Criteria for being a successful manager

The conclusions do not represent results drawn per question, but represent the conclusions drawn from group of questions of same category, summarizing the dominating responses. The following criteria for being a successful manager are generated for further comparisons, profiling and research:

1. The successful manager is generally in his/her 30's or 40's, educated in the area of social sciences, at undergraduate or at graduate level, with already completed significant additional training, where some managers have, and some have not publicized books or articles related to their profession.
2. The successful manager in most cases comes from a family with mixed or democratic family relations, usually as first born from two children, describes the relationship with both parents and siblings mainly as normal to strong, and in most cases considers that he learned the most regarding relations with people from his/her father (who was also considered as most powerful figure in the family), and has no immediate family associate or partner in the same business/profession.
3. In the family of the successful manager in some cases there is an eminent story / anecdote which is often told by the parents.
4. In some cases the family of the successful manager went through a period of economic crises, but generally describes the current financial situation as normal to average.
5. From the childhood years to date, the successful manager had and has many friendships who are mainly of same age as the manager (currently mostly in their 30' or 40's), same and to a lesser degree of mixed gender, and of different status. The successful manager considers that he/she doesn't spend enough time on socializing (less than 4 hours per week), however when he/she does, is as an active participant, is seeking fun and enjoyable time and to a lesser degree relaxation. In friendship he values mainly honesty, and considers that people like to socialize with him because of the fun and friendly nature, as well as the sense of humor.

6. The successful manager considers various factors, mainly determination to as well as, time management and organizational skills to have helped him/her the most to succeed in the new engagement when first assumed a managerial position.
7. Hard work and excellent education are the elements that the successful manager considers as most helpful to reach a high managerial position and success, which brings him inner satisfaction and content (to a lesser degree some successful managers anticipate success and expect it).
8. The successful manager self-rates his/her level of ambition as highest on the given scale, considers himself as initiative taking and doesn't need anyone to stimulate his/her initiative.
9. The successful manager dedicates 9 - 12 hours a day to work, and different managers spend different amount of time, mainly maximum 1-3 hours daily for rest and relaxation (reading or movies).
10. The successful manager likes to spend his/her free time mainly on sports, as well as family, and has had mainly two or more hobbies to date.
11. The successful manager is flexible and often decides to combine different management styles (democratic and autocratic) depending mostly on the specific given situations and feedback from the people he/she works with.
12. The successful manager has found himself under great pressure and stress at least once which mainly generated energy for more intense work and increased personal activity.
13. The successful manager promotes teamwork with normal to strong and friendly, open and cooperative relation with all team members keeping them on track, goal oriented and motivated.

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