**Can This Job Be Saved?**

You’ve started a new job or the situation has changed in your old job. What are your odds of success – and what, if anything, can you do to improve the odds?

Maybe your great job as Deputy to the President has just been up-ended by his departure in a management shake-up... or the new job seemed like a perfect fit in the interview process, but the reality is much different.

Assuming your organization is generally secure and solvent, success comes down to four things that you can influence to varying degrees:

*Fit* – Be indispensable to someone(s) who matters

*Performance* – Excel and deliver in matters large and small

*Relationships* – Help others above, beside, and below you

*Followers* – Lead your team and have their back.

**The first factor, *fit,*** is the most variable and the one over which we have the least control. And, fit can be hard to “smoke out” until you’re actually in the position.

I’ve been in situations and seen talented colleagues in situations in which their excellent skills are not employed or appreciated. It’s awful to see and hard to fix.

Sometimes, an organization doesn’t have the resources or ability to take advantage of our talents. More often than not, it is a problem of chemistry – a lack of respect and value in the eyes of the boss or customer.

First, determine whether your boss or key customer “matters” – that is, does he or she have influence, seniority, purchasing power?

*If no*, try to move within the organization or find other customers who do matter.

*If yes*, find ways to make your skills and support indispensable. If you’re able to make an important leader or key customer see you as instrumental to his or her success, your own odds for success are excellent.

If the boss/customer has influence and significance, but doesn’t value your ability to help him or her succeed – *or* if you don’t respect the boss/customer so much that you’ll do anything ethically possible to help him or her be even more successful ­­-- then it’s time to face the fact that this job can’t be saved.

***Performance*** *–* Unlike fit, performance is largely within our control. If we’re in a situationthat plays to our strengths and we’re supporting someone who matters and values us, it’s rewarding to work hard.

Do everything in your power to make the most of the situation – do superb work on the big stuff and pay attention to detail. Look for opportunities to learn and grow. Take responsible risks. Respect the lessons of the past and embrace change for the better. **Continually look for opportunities to help your boss or customer shine**.

***Relationships*** *–* Think: Who can I help? What can I learn? No job is an island. The larger the organization, the more and more complex the interrelationships between your position and those in other departments. The quality of their work, and their willingness to work with you, directly affects your performance.

Go first – be dependable, helpful, and respectful to everyone you encounter. Give help and ask for help. Colleagues are flattered if we notice something they do particularly well and they are happy to share lessons if we ask.

***Followers*** *–* Above entry level, most of us have people below us on the corporate ladder. Help them to be their best by being a boss who matters in the organization and who respects them. Say thank you. When things get tough, have their backs.

**Remember**: The most important factor in job success is a good fit which happens when we have two-way respect -- from and for -- an influential boss or customer.

If we’re fortunate enough to be in that situation, or can change things to get into that situation, excelling at the other factors – performance, relationships, and followers – is largely within our control.

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