

## ***The Facts are in: Success Depends on Effective Communication***

Over 5000 executives found that communication has had and continues to play the highest overall significant role in management advancement.<sup>1</sup>

A study by Roffey Park finds that 84.6% of the 372 managers surveyed believe skilled communicators make good leaders, making this the most favored quality.<sup>2</sup>

A survey of Fortune 500 vice presidents shows that 97.7% of them “believed that communication skills had affected their advancement to a top executive position.”<sup>3</sup>

“The demands of the CIO position require much more than technical knowledge. Those who have poor communication skills—and refuse to improve them—probably won't be CIOs for long.”<sup>4</sup>

“In writings on leadership and in business people's accounts of their own leadership crises, the ability to communicate effectively emerges repeatedly as the most important skill to cultivate.”<sup>5</sup>

“Top executives must have highly developed personal skills. An analytical mind able to quickly assess large amounts of information and data is very important, as is the ability to consider and evaluate the interrelationships of numerous factors. Top executives also must be able to communicate clearly and persuasively.”<sup>6</sup>

An annual survey by the National Association of College Employers (NACE) asked companies to rate the importance of personal qualities and characteristics in new hires. Of the 480 respondents polled, the most highly desired trait in new recruits were communication skills.<sup>7</sup>

CEO's from 5000 US companies from a wide range of industries and sizes were asked “What are the three most important things you have learned in order to perform your role as an executive?” They ranked communication as number one.<sup>8</sup>

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business conducted a survey of MBA graduates. MBA graduates thought the ability to communicate effectively with another person is the single most useful skill in their career.<sup>9</sup>

“In writings on leadership and in business people's accounts of their own leadership crises, the ability to communicate effectively emerges repeatedly as the most important skill to cultivate”<sup>10</sup>

In a study, advertising executives were asked what they considered the single most important business asset for a creative professional to possess besides talent. The majority of respondents, 55 percent to be exact, said strong presentation skills. Specific industry experience ranked a distant second with 23 percent; only 3 percent cited management experience. The survey was conducted by an independent research firm and included responses from 200 advertising executives among the top 1,000 U.S. advertising agencies.<sup>11</sup>

Presentation savvy is the most critical communication skill needed to move up in today's business environment, according to a national survey of 725 upper and middle managers. When asked to rate the importance of several verbal skills in terms of upward mobility, the ability to communicate ideas and plans effectively in front of an audience was ranked No. 1 -- far surpassing negotiation, selling and persuasive talents..<sup>12</sup>

"The ability to communicate effectively is the most important skill you can have," says Dawn Rosenberg McKay, career planning guide at About.com, Inc. "[It doesn't matter] whether you're giving speeches, pitching ideas to your boss, or simply sending off an E-mail...." The bottom line is this: You may have ideas that are worth a fortune, but if you can't communicate clearly, no one will get the message.<sup>13</sup>

In a study of over 800 CEO's and executives, Professor Marshall Sashkin of The George Washington University found that "Transformational leaders use effective communication skills, including active listening and appropriate use of feedback, to get complicated ideas across clearly."<sup>14</sup>

"Communication skills are unbelievably important and public speaking is an absolute necessity. Some of the most intelligent people I have met cannot effectively communicate even basic information to those around them. Truly outstanding executives are very comfortable communicators." Larry S. Sanders, chairman of the American College of Healthcare Executives.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bond, F., Hildebrandt, H. and Miller, E. (1984). The newly promoted executive: A study in corporate leadership. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Graduate School of Business.

<sup>2</sup> (2003, April 29) .Good communication vital in a good leader. *Personnel Today*, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Bennett, J. and Olney, R. (1986, Spring). "Executive priorities for effective communication in an information society. *Journal of Business Communication*, pp. 13-22.

<sup>4</sup> Hoenig, C. (2003, July 15). You know where you want to go. *CIO Magazine*, [Electronic version]. Retrieved August 8, 2003 from <http://www.cio.com/archive/071503/lead.html>

<sup>5</sup> Barrier, B. (January, 1999) Leadership skills people respect. *Nation's Business*, p.28

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<sup>6</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2002-03 Edition, Top Executives, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos012.htm>

<sup>7</sup> Gordon, S. (2001, October 29). Career success requires a personal touch. Retrieved from <http://www.theworkcircuit.com/sr/ss/OEG20011019S0111>

<sup>8</sup> Margerison, C. and Kakabadse, A. (1984). How American executives succeed. New York: American Management Association.

<sup>9</sup> (July 27, 2002). Do you really need that MBA? *The Economist*, p. 60

<sup>10</sup> Barrier, M. (1999, January). Leadership skills people respect. *Nation's Business*, p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Porter, D. (2001, February). *Presentations*, p.13.

<sup>12</sup> [Supervision](#); (1991, October). Vol. 52 Issue 10, p24.

<sup>13</sup> Smith, G. (2001, February/March). Do you have what it takes to succeed?. *Career World*, Vol. 29, Iss. 5, p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Sashkin, M. and Sashkin, M. G. (November, 2003). Leading the Way. *Security Management* p24.

<sup>15</sup> In Lanser, E. (2003, March / April). Interview with ACHE's incoming Chairman. *Healthcare Executive*, p 8.