

research in brief

Successful Chief Executive

An executive recruitment firm conducted a study of 250 people who had applied for 16 top executive positions between early 1976 through September, 1977.

From the analysis of the survey data, five major factors proved characteristic of all successful presidential candidates.

The first and most striking element common to the successful candidates was a singleness of purpose. The second was a consistent record of high achievement, with the third finding a willingness to devote enormous time and energy to obtain their goals. Getting the job done and a determination to succeed, despite a broad variety of roadblocks, was a common trait.

The fourth element was somewhat unexpected—a strong majority of the successful candidates had happy, stable home lives. The fifth common element was the candidate's emotional commitment. They were where they wished to be. They were people who enjoy challenge, take pleasure in making decisions, relish competition, and refuse to accept failure.

Editor's Note

We in Extension perhaps will find this list of five characteristics helpful in evaluating our own levels of management skills. We can also use them as clues for training and self-development on the way to becoming better managers.

"What Makes a Successful Chief Executive?" Herbert T. Mines.
Supervisory Management, XXIII (May, 1978), 11-16.

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