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Review

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Thoughts on *Empowering Yourself: The Organizational Game Revealed* (Harvey Coleman, author, 1996)

By Wendy Nemitz

Empowering Yourself: The Organizational Game Revealed is a challenging book to get. It takes four or more weeks ordered through Amazon.com. It is also a challenging book to read since it forces you to examine which social class you are in now and which class you aspire to.

Unlike Europeans, most Americans are uncomfortable with the idea of social class. We like to pretend that anyone can be president, even if they are born in a log cabin or a behind a bush. This book clearly makes the case that social class matters and how strongly it influences promotions and power in organizations.

Coleman divides the essential elements of success in the business world into three main elements, called the P.I.E. formula. 'P' is for performance, which Coleman suggests is 10% of the success formula. 'I' stands for image, which Coleman states is about 30% of success. 'E' is for exposure, which Coleman says is valued at 60% of his success formula.

Although Coleman does not make this distinction, the three components are somewhat hierarchical. Performance brings you to the threshold; you cannot be successful without strong performance. Your image has to be defined and developed before you work on exposure or the exposure will be negative.

My Augsburg College *Master of Arts in Leadership* class recently read this book. Led by Professor Velma Lashbrook, we divided into groups to discuss each of the three areas. Here are the resulting suggestions to leverage your career and influence.

PERFORMANCE is the foundation of success. While Coleman says it is only 10% of success, without it you can't move up.

1. Your performance is a direct reflection on you. It is your entry ticket into the organization.
2. Don't boast too much about success. Don't complain about the lack of success in others. Bragging and complaining are not the marks of winners.
3. Take credit for your performance even if you are tempted to deflect it or are uncomfortable. Take compliments and praise gracefully.
4. Understand that while performance is crucial, it is just part of the P.I.E. formula. Performance alone will not bring promotions.
5. Be a team player but be willing to be the star player.
6. Ask for help when you need it.
7. Seek to improve the performance of others and of the whole company. Their success will reflect on you.
8. Share information and help others. They will not forget.
9. Technical skills are only part of performance. Both your task and your people skills affect your performance.
10. If you are not thorough or detailed, get someone to help on issues like proofing. Pay attention to the details.
11. Welcome performance reviews as a chance to improve.

12. Set goals.
13. Celebrate your accomplishments.
14. Know your boss's expectations and priorities and perform to them. It is no use to ignore the boss's expectations and achieve your own. Make choices about what you spend your time on. Spend time on work priorities by first understanding what they are.

IMAGE is extremely important, especially if you want to gain exposure. Exposure with a poor image is negative exposure. You can choose how others will view you. You are **ALWAYS** presenting an image.

1. Dress for the position you want, not the position you have. Look for someone in that position as an image mentor. Always dress for the level above you.
2. Learn to speak correctly. Poor grammar or regional accents are not successories.
3. Model yourself after someone you admire rather than the people you spend time with now.
4. Pay attention to your body movements. Women often fidget or play with their pens or jewelry. Men often jiggle their feet or move their hands. Be still.
5. Don't over-laugh, especially when you are nervous or insecure. Keep nervous laughter under control.
6. Act as if you belong, even if you feel you don't. Don't tell everyone in the room how uncomfortable you are. Just pretend.
7. Watch your grooming. While tattoos, piercings, or very long fingernails may look great in your social group, they may not be impressive at work.

8. Keep your clothes in good repair, especially shoes. Mend clothes. Polish shoes.
9. Attitude is important. Have an outreach attitude to make others feel comfortable. Keep the spin positive and stay calm in a crisis. People will remember a calm, can-do attitude.
10. Learn names. People like it when you remember their names.

EXPOSURE is about 60% of success, according to Coleman. Who you know, and more importantly, who knows you, is the critical element of success once performance and image have been established. Exposure is critical to network up and find the right mentors.

1. Play golf.
2. Think long-term relationships. Don't be a splash in the pan. Treat everyone well because everyone deserves respect.
3. Show up at organizational events, even if they cost money. If your company sponsors a charity, get involved.
4. Stay in control, stay professional, and watch how much you drink and what you say at any business or social-business event. A work party is never just a party.
5. Dress to the next level so those who are already there recognize you as one of them.
6. Use your lunches as a way to network. Don't huddle behind your desk with a bag lunch or lunch with the same people everyday.
7. Welcome people when they say, "Do you have a minute?" Invite them to sit down. Make it a point to have a minute for others.
8. Welcome new skills and experiences. Demonstrate a willingness to try new things. Say yes, especially to any priority project of the boss.
9. Involve your family as volunteers, especially if your children are in one of their charming stages.
10. Volunteer to make friends or establish liaisons between warring groups. Be willing to end conflict and make new friends.
11. Go to work one time per week an hour early or late to catch up on small paperwork. If your desk is cluttered with paperwork, you will not volunteer for new projects.
12. Volunteer to become more involved. Be proactive about thinking up new opportunities and ask to try new things. Tell your supervisor you are eager to take advantage of new opportunities.
13. Bring learning back to your company. Share anything you find. Talk about seminars you have attended and volunteer to write articles about books you have read. Position yourself as the learner.
14. Be a lively and credible presenter. Volunteer to present team results. Public speaking is one of the best ways to gain exposure.
15. Keep a positive attitude. Be upbeat; avoid complaints. Become solution-oriented rather than problem-oriented.
16. Keep confidentiality. You will become a trusted advisor. Do not gossip.

17. Greet the bosses and start relationships with them. Sit next to them and treat them as people. Don't be intimidated by people a few levels above you.
18. Ignore people who call you a brown-noser. There are always people who do not care to make changes and do not wish others to change either.
19. Be the favorite. Do what it takes to be the favorite.
20. Buy *Networking with Millionaires*.
21. Get involved in professional organizations and industry groups.
22. Brag appropriately. Give accolades to others.
23. If you are new in a large company, double network. Choose one person to say many good things about and ask them to say good things about you. Both of you will rise.
24. Do favors for everyone at every level. Favors pay off.
25. Make friends everywhere. The receptionist and IT people are keys to your success. Don't ever think because someone does not have a powerful position they don't have power.
26. Build the person to replace you. Mentor others.
27. Get your team promoted. The organization will soon be full of people you trained and who are loyal to you.
28. Focus on quality relationships with high quality people inside and outside of the organization. They will move up as you do.
29. Use your network. Ask for help and accept it.
30. Build from your authentic self. Phonies get discovered. Don't use people.

If you are interested in a seminar on professional development or business growth ideas, call Ingenuity Marketing Group at 651 690 3358. We will be glad to help.

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