



THE STEVENS ADVISOR

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NAVIGATE FORWARD

Professional Legacy Planning

by Teresa Daly and Mary Kloehn, Navigate Forward

The current philosophy of good leadership development has evolved to say that if we help leaders build their skills and then we help them achieve success, we will have completed the cycle. But in today's world, it's no longer enough to focus on helping leaders build skills and achieve success. Building successful leaders is of great benefit until the day comes that they have stayed too long and the organization is bleeding high potential talent because there is a bottleneck at the top.

Why has this become an issue? Much of it is about demographics....people are healthy and living longer....people want to work and are working longer....people are not interested in the traditional retirement life styles of the past....people want significant and meaningful work long past traditional retirement age.

In addition, executives hold a tremendous amount of personal power in their roles...why should they hand that over and walk out the door? And how many of them have really thought about what they would do if they left?

These realities caused us to start asking the question...What if the leadership model included a third phase? A phase that was about helping executives start to think about and plan their transition....their Encore. What legacy would they like to leave? How can they transfer their knowledge? How do they bring honorable closure to one chapter – their successful career, and move on to another chapter of significance and meaning – what will their 'Encore' look like?

What if organizations were to tell potential leaders about this phase from the start?

“Mr. or Ms High Potential, in the first phase of leadership in our organization, we help you build your skills, in the second phase, we help you achieve success, and in the third phase, we help you plan your ‘Encore’ so when you transition, you leave the legacy you want, and you continue to lead with strength and stature as you move to your next chapter.”

Think of the impact this would have on the organization's ability to attract, develop and retain great leadership talent.

It is clear to us that organizations and executives have to think differently about leadership development today. Great leadership is more than achieving success on the corporate ladder. Truly great leaders of today continue to perform beyond the ‘corner office’. They continue to leverage their executive stature by serving on boards, teaching at universities, or writing books. They lead foundations or non-profit organizations. They break new ground in philanthropic endeavors and promote civic agendas.

In the end, today is a new day in leadership development. Organizations whose leadership model is limited to helping build skills and achieve success will ultimately find themselves losing key talent or stagnating under aging leadership. Has your organization thought about how it will help leaders move forward and prepare for their next chapter – for their Encore?

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Navigate Forward is a partner providing executive career planning and transition coaching.

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