

Leadership Career Development and Interpersonal Skills Among Business Executives

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Common Themes

The common yet significant theme among the guest executives is that the speakers are “people persons” who are friendly, warm, caring, and kind to strangers from all walks of life. Such individuals can get along with anyone as these persons enjoy and are particularly good at interacting with others. Mark James, Deanna Martin Mackey, Greg Hunter, Amy Forsythe, and Paul Barton suggest that they are people persons as they state their success links directly to their liking of being around people. Furthermore, they mentioned that people advised them to get involved in activities like initiated programs and recreation that would help the people.

Greg Hunter, the CEO of Hunter Industries, (Hunter Industries, n.d.) enjoys spending time with his family and children when he is not working. In his free time, he also likes to build rotors, a skill which he learned from his grandfather at the age of eight. Greg is a friendly and respectful person who values his employees as well as customers and is proud of his family’s legacy and the company’s achievements. Deanna Martin Mackey also moves the ranks through her “people persons” nature as she is committed to equity for women especially women of color during her career in executive leadership in media. (Public Media Women in Leadership, 2025)

Amy Forsythe, the managing director at Victory Strategies, is a person who is good at communications, storytelling, and multimedia content creation (Victory Strategies, n.d.) which makes her collaborate with people more. Mark James’ executive career transitioned as a “people person” as he passionately uses his business experience to teach and help executives manage their careers in leadership efficiently and effectively. (HIRE Consulting Services, n.d.) James also connects with people through his blog named “The Career Catalyst” where he helps executives and common people improve their interview skills, negotiation skills, and networking messages about their [career objectives](#) to leverage people’s strengths.

Differences

The contradictory messages two of the guest executives provided are about the multifaceted understanding of career development. The founder and director of Hire Consulting Services, Mark James, provides his career transition coaching and consulting services based on excessive networking

for executives so that they can create professional job search strategies and develop their personal brand identity. (HIRE Consulting Services, n.d.) Mark James' clients while using his effective strategies are then able to create effective job search strategies and separate themselves from other job searchers. Mark helps his clients dramatically build their professional background and career objectives so that they can present themselves as a potential solution to the requirements of their target companies. He stays updated on the latest developments and trends in the business world and adapts his coaching and counselling style accordingly so that his clients and candidates can align their personal values with their professional aspirations.

Maggie Pilgrim, however, builds his multifaceted understanding of career development through building and improving soft skills as well as technical acumen. To excel in modern business practices, Maggie, the regional director at Robert Half, presents her experience of adept use of technology to foster a resilient and supportive team culture as compared to the viewpoint of Mark James who builds his idea of career development on networking with people. She acknowledges the contributions of her clients like Mark James does and gives them their due credit for their achievements to build trust and rapport with them. Maggie Pilgrim's journey and her approach to leadership are based on hunger for performance, relationship skills, a growth mindset, and humility in the workforce unlike James' approach to leadership which is based on building networking through people.

Maggie sets high standards for herself and her clients and strives to deliver excellent results for her candidates and clients. Maggie also believes that growing from within the organization is available to anyone and everyone who wants to build a long-lasting career. She has demonstrated this perspective herself by advancing from an entry-level recruiting role to a market manager position at Robert Half based in San Diego. Mark James, contrary to Maggie's approach to executive leadership, brings a positive approach to the career search enabling a visionary, collaborative, empowering, and innovative approach to leadership. He equips his clients and candidates with the tools, skills, and strategies they need to succeed in the competitive job market. Mark also fosters a network of mutual support and learning among his clients to overcome any obstacles they may face in the business market and encourages them to share their learnings, experiences, and feedback with each other.

MVE/MVI

The Most Valuable Insight (MVI) gained from the course is the one gained from Maggie Pilgrim, the executive in chair, who is serving as the regional director at Robert Half. The insight is about how to build a successful career in the field of professional talent solutions. She was the one who started as an entry-level recruiter and worked her way up to become the regional market manager overseeing the administrative, accounting, finance, and customer support practice groups for the San Diego region at Robert Half. Maggie's story shows that with dedication, hard work, and a positive attitude, one can grow and advance within their organization and become a leader in their field. The Most Valuable Executive (MVE) gained in this course is also Maggie Pilgrim because of her approach to leadership which she demonstrates with the importance of having a passion for what an individual

does and helping other individuals achieve their goals.

References

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