

## **Career Rx**

By Lisa Chenofsky Singer

*As appeared in [TheAlternativePress.com](http://TheAlternativePress.com) on November 13th, 2009  
([www.TheAlternativePress.com](http://www.TheAlternativePress.com))*

### **Developing and Maintaining a Successful Career**

What is the key to developing and maintaining a successful career? When you are in transition – either between jobs or reinventing yourself - you should review your skills, your style and your ability to influence. As those around begin to share their "how to" techniques for seeking new opportunities, you will only use the techniques that feel comfortable and work with your style.

As you develop further in your career, what you have learned in school and on the job become part of your routine and evolve into your personal style. This style is one that is natural and comfortable for you. Your reputation is generated by how your style is perceived by others and becomes more defined as you continue to mature. Only when your routine breaks down and your style no longer works for you, do you re-examine yourself.

Sometimes, you may get stuck along your career journey, repeating the same pattern over and over. Only after repetitive failures, do you realize that your style is not effective. A classic example is when an individual does not manage their career development, but rather leaves it in the company's care. Learning to continuously manage your own development is crucial for your career success. Career development involves remaining up to date on technologies used, understanding trends in your profession, and maintaining a cultivated network™.

### **Your Skills**

Are you investing in yourself for a long-term goal? Maintaining and developing skills requires you to be aware of current market demands and where trends are headed. This may involve taking courses towards a degree or a certification, identifying mentors that can provide on-the-job training and/or exposure to selective projects. Alternatively, volunteering can help you develop additional skills and exposure to new environments and new contacts. You can learn more about yourself during the learning process regardless of whether you succeed or fail. Taking the lessons learned forward is incredibly valuable. Learning how to solicit constructive feedback is also critical to your development. When you ask for feedback, be prepared to receive it openly and truly listen to what is said. Take time to reflect on the messages and when possible, ask for specific examples so it becomes tangible for you. Those providing feedback may only give it if you show your readiness to receive it.

*"He who influences the thought of his times influences the times that follow."  
~ Elbert Hubbar*

### **Your Style**

Based on your development plan and feedback received, reflect on your past experiences and try to identify behavioral patterns. Consider exploring what if options. What if I did this instead of that? Think about how you were perceived in certain situations and what you could have changed. How could you have recovered in certain situations using alternative options? Your style is based on your core values or principles. When you identify the principals that you stand for, and try to be the person that you want to be, then you are being true to yourself, which is critical to your success.

## **Your Influence**

How do you influence others? Are you an enabler or a helper? An enabler encourages and coaches the receiver to accomplish something for himself. A helper does it for him as he is unable to do it for himself. An example, some believe that a "good" parent gives their child everything they themselves never had. Has providing everything for the child been beneficial or more challenging...for you...for the child? Taking responsibility for your own behavior, and realizing that creating positive change in someone being "helped" will not only have a positive impact on them but on you as well. It is up to you to choose whether to enable or help the situation.

As you reflect on your career, think about how you have behaved. Is it consistent with the kind of person that you want to be treated like? Have you built enough rapport with your audience to truly influence with your style? Have you remained an active observer and listener while you are speaking?

*"You can never really live anyone else's life, not even your child's. The influence you exert is through your own life, and what you've become yourself."*

*~ Eleanor Roosevelt*

*This column provides thought provoking strategies for getting unstuck along your career journey. A certified Executive and Career Coach can be instrumental in guiding you in your efforts to gain a new perspective. I invite you to contact me @ [Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com](mailto:Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com)*

*Lisa Chenofsky Singer is the Managing Director of Chenofsky Singer and Associates LLC [www.ChenofskySinger.com](http://www.ChenofskySinger.com), providing Executive and Career Coaching and Human Resources Consulting.*

*Lisa's extensive human resources and coaching experience with Fortune 500 companies, small enterprises, medium-sized firms, and non-profit organizations gives her the unique ability to bring together wide-ranging perspectives on career transitions, executive and leadership development. She has consulted with a wide variety of sectors — consumer goods, financial services, healthcare, media and entertainment, pharmaceutical and life sciences, publishing, professional services, technology, and non-profit. Lisa has a passion for motivational speaking, conducts career forums, and provides executive and career coaching.*

*Lisa's greatest strength is that she enables individuals and organizations to see themselves in new ways, freeing them to achieve their goals. Lisa can be reached at [Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com](mailto:Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com).*