

# 13 Habits of Highly Successful and Effective CEOs

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*Time is our most precious resource. Every CEO will need to commit to effective time mastery behaviours in order to “win the war for talent” and accelerate business results.*

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## Develop a 3-year Career BHAG

Explore all options. Combine passion with competence and need to achieve extraordinary results. Develop a plan to achieve your career BHAG. Think and act world-class to achieve your full-potential.

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## Let go of the decision

List your top 30 work-related activities. For each activity, assess your ability to do each one based on the descriptions below:

1. **Masterful:** extraordinary ability; passion; gives you energy
2. **Excellent:** superior ability; no real sense of passion
3. **Competent:** adequate ability; boredom; little improvement in performance over time
4. **Incompetent:** inadequate ability; failure; stressful

Spend most of your time on masterful and excellent activities and delegate the competent and incompetent activities to accelerate results. Caution: Delegation without coaching and mentoring does NOT work!

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## Spend your time wisely

What are the three most important activities on which you need to focus to deliver extraordinary results? Plan your time every day, week, month, quarter and year and you'll be on the path to achieving your full potential and producing extraordinary results in all aspects of your life. Do you have a 90-day action plan?

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## Identify your top 20 list of 360 degree stakeholders

Business is about people. Do everything you can to build relationships with your stakeholders and help them be successful. Know why people would want to build a relationship with you. Practice the following simple, yet powerful, relationship-building strategies: Keep commitments; start on time and end on time; finish what you start; say please and thank you.

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## Take 100% responsibility and accountability for your own ability to influence

Focus on outcomes. Clarify expectations with 360 degree stakeholders (board/boss, peers, direct reports, customers). Claim the D. Dial-up assertiveness. Minimize frustration.

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## Take control of your life balance

You are 100% responsible for achieving your full potential in all aspects of your life. Assess how satisfied you are with the following: career, health, financial situation, spouse/partner, friends/family, personal growth, home/physical environment, social responsibility and fun. Set goals and enjoy the bumpy journey of life. Be assertive with your 360 degree stakeholders to manage expectations and ask for what you want. Stop judging others. Life balance is personal.

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## Build your Skills, Behaviours and Experience (SBE) toolkit

The higher you go, the more critical leadership success behaviours are to your success. Read the HBR article, "[Coaching the Alpha Male](#)" to learn more about the following success and (derailment) behaviours:

- Self confident and opinionated (intimidating)
- Highly intelligent (demeaning)
- Action oriented (impatient)
- High-performance expectations of oneself and others (always dissatisfied)
- Direct communication style (CYA culture)
- Highly disciplined (burnout)
- Unemotional (not inspiring)

Leadership coaching, 360 feedback, job shadowing and mentoring are very effective approaches to learning success behaviours.

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## Reach out to internal and external mentors and coaches

Surround yourself with people who inspire you to learn, grow and achieve your full potential. Be courageous and ask for help.

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- 9** **Take risks and don't be afraid to fail**  
Learn from your mistakes and move on. Ask for forgiveness, not permission. Failure and rejection build character so don't be attached to the outcome. Read Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway by Susan Jeffers.
- 10** **Set ideal outcomes, always do your best and celebrate your success**  
Increase your ability to identify compelling ideal outcomes and get out of your comfort zone. Understand your starting point and work towards achieving your ideal outcomes. Look back to celebrate the progress you have made from your starting point. Avoid beating yourself up if you don't achieve your ideal outcomes. You are good enough now and you are on a life-long journey of progress toward ideal outcomes. Strive for success, not perfection. Take five minutes every day to celebrate success and to identify your three most important accomplishments.
- 11** **Coach, mentor and empower others to be accountable for results**  
Use influence, NOT position power. Listen first and listen 80/20. Dial-up empathy and use your SBEs to help others be successful. Ask questions to help people identify issues and options and make effective decisions. Stop telling people what to do and how to do it.
- 12** **Believe in yourself and build self-confidence**  
Get smarter every day by building on strengths ([www.strengthsquest.com](http://www.strengthsquest.com)) and using the "feedback is a gift" principle. Don't take anything personally. Invest your time, money and resources to improve your SBEs. Read like crazy.
- 13** **Be happy now**  
Life is short. You are only one thought away from being happy with your life. Read: You Can Be Happy No Matter What: Five Principles for Keeping Life in Perspective by Dr. Richard Carlson.