



REAPPRAISE YOURSELF

REAPPRAISE YOURSELF. Now is the time to be coldly objective about what you can do and what you can't. Also, now is the time to face up to your liabilities, the sources of your fears, and see if they are not perhaps your best assets.

First, there is the question of age. Somehow the notion has caught hold that an older man out of a job is licked. If he feels licked, he'll look it, and then he is licked.

A pitifully frightened man once came to me. At 51, he had spent virtually his whole working life with a parts manufacturer, finally becoming secretary-treasurer before he was forced out. For some years he had dithered with another officer, and when the rival was promoted to executive vice-president, he obviously was washed up.

When he came to me, he proposed tinting his sideburns so he'd look younger. Hopefully, he kept emphasizing his possession of a string of college degrees, never mentioning how those degrees could go to work for a new company. But mostly the man emphasized his fear of getting a bad reference from the executive v-p.

When I finally got him to reappraise himself coolly, he was able to see how his many years with the company, his degrees, and the soundness of his policies—despite the rivalry of the man who fired him—had helped the company grow four times over during the 10 years it was under his financial leadership. He soon became the financial officer of a major furniture company.

On the matter of reappraising yourself, there is another vital point. Perhaps you didn't like the job you lost in the first place, and the reason you lost it was that it was so dull your initiative shriveled or so tension-ridden that your best energies were wasted. Perhaps getting fired is the cue to take your experience and invade a whole new field.

I am thinking of a purchasing agent who once came to me, shaken because his department had been cut down and he had been pink-slipped. At the same time, he was obviously greatly relieved.

"The job was a dead end, anyhow," he told me. "My immediate superior was the works manager. I could never hope to become works manager, simply because I don't know how to run the works. But what I do know is how to work with engineers who specify what products they want to buy."

This man was a sales manager's dream, a combiner of ambition, enthusiasm and, most important of all, knowledge. As a purchasing agent he had been earning \$9,000 a year. In his first years as a salesman, he moved up modestly to \$9,600, then accomplished that difficult leap into five figures. He had reappraised himself and started a whole new career.

In fact, this man was a perfect illustration of my third point.



RE-ESTABLISH YOUR GOALS

RE-ESTABLISH YOUR GOALS. Ask yourself, "Where do I want to be in five years?"

When you plan a tour with a road map, you can't pick a route until first you have picked a destination. I am constantly amazed at the number of men who reach forks in their life-roads, and make choices without really deciding where they are trying to go.

Every man in a job, as well as out of one, ought to know what kind of job he would like to hold in five years. Some men go further and develop 10-, 15-, even 20-year goals. These are the men who make things happen—they don't wait for lucky breaks—they know exactly where they are headed every step of the way.

Your five-year goal should be a practical but ambitious one. Just having chosen it will give you new impetus in getting there.

Once having set your goal, ask yourself: "What does the job require?" Make a list of the qualifications you would require if you were hiring a man for the job. If you don't know them, find a man holding such a job and ask him.

You may be surprised to learn you are reasonably well-qualified for the job, or perhaps an even better one, right now.

But most likely your list will show that you need some lateral experience before you can reach your five-year goal. By lateral experience, I mean you must move not ahead but sideways to acquire knowledge of a related field.

In a garage, for example, a first-rate ignition man to become service manager must learn a good deal about servicing motors. The same principle applies in any organization right up to the office of president.

An advertising salesman for a top national magazine once came to my office, frustrated. He knew he was not located properly. He kept wanting to advise his customers how to improve their ads, but his job was merely to sell space. Even more frustrating, he sometimes felt that the makers of certain products ought to get out of his magazine, that they would get better results from another.

Once he clarified these frustrations in his mind, he changed fields. He went to work in the advertising department of a housewares company, where he could help plan the use of advertising space. The change meant a cut in earnings from \$9,000 to \$7,800. Now he is advertising director, planning where to advertise as well as how to advertise. He is the right man in the right job, properly trained, and he has more than regained his temporary reduction in pay.

Once you have selected your five-year goal and picked your next step along the way, you are ready for the final phase.



SELL YOURSELF

SELL YOURSELF as you would a product. This means, first of all, planning a campaign.

As though selling a product, you must now draw up a list of prospective customers, a complete list. You needn't know if each of these prospects has an opening. If you sell yourself effectively, he might create one.

In your letter to these prospects, you must keep four things in mind.

- (1) you are offering a service instead of asking for a job;
- (2) you are appealing to your prospect's self-interest, not your own;
- (3) you must be specific about the job you want and your qualifications for it; and
- (4) you should back up every statement of your ability with evidence.

Most job applicants prepare resumés, simple lists of all their past jobs. I urge you not to follow this practice. As a magazine once quipped, "A resumé is a list of your old jobs that pretty well cancels out your chances of getting a new one."

An effective job sales letter tells a prospect about the problems you faced, how you solved them, and what the results were. Thus, you are appealing to the employer's self-interest by demonstrating how you would proceed to solve his problems. You are showing him how your mind works, and what you are selling, after all, is your mind.

A good letter to a good list of prospects often will bring several invitations to interviews, opening several choices of jobs. The more possibilities you open, the better you can road-map the course of your own life.

It may seem strange, but a capable man has a better chance in today's competitive climate than he does when the economic pot is bubbling over. When business is fine, most employers are inclined to leave well enough alone. But when competition gets rough, the employer cannot afford less than the best man he can get. If he suspects that you've got it, he'll be inclined to let you prove it.

It's an old saw, but my experience has taught me it's a sound one: "There's always plenty of room at the top."

But you've got to plan if you want to get there! Few jobs are closed at the first interview, so it is important to follow up with a letter thanking the employer for the interview and reviewing the points that seemed to interest him.

During the interview, one of the most difficult subjects to discuss is how much money you want. If at all possible, this subject should be saved for the last. Naturally, the job seeker fears that if he asks too much he'll talk himself out of a job. But it's just as bad to ask for too little.

The best guide is to look up someone holding a similar job and get his advice.