

THE  
JOB  
OF THE  
CEO

**Waldemar Schmidt**

*Editora Val de Mar*

## THE JOB OF THE CEO

A Lifelong Career Guide for Future, Present and Retiring CEOs

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# **HOW TO ASSESS WHETHER THE JOB OF THE CEO IS RIGHT FOR YOU**

If you have read and understood Chapters 1, 2 and 3 you should now have a good understanding of the CEO job, the characteristics, skills and career paths of people who become successful CEOs. You have learnt which opportunities and challenges you will face on your way to your dream job.

Whether your dream is to become a CEO or whether you are not certain, if a CEO career is right for you, it is now time to get an understanding of your potential to become a great leader. You should therefore carry out our self-assessment tests, reflect on the results and make a decision about your career. Whatever decision you make, it will have a major impact on the rest of your professional as well as your private life.

The self-assessment tests are entirely empirical. They are developed by the author based on his long career as a global businessman with extensive CEO and chairman experience. The tests are meant to give you guidance. They will not give you black and white answers.

The tests are designed for potential global CEOs. However, as we live in a global world, even a local company will have “foreign” customers, suppliers, staff, shareholders. If you are determined to stay local, the career tests are still relevant. You

**CUSTOMERS:** Whatever your job, you should always serve customers well, listen to them, and stay close to them.

**DEAL-MAKING:** Making deals is not a core management discipline. Deal making seems to be a well-developed commercial instinct, which certain people are born with. Brilliant dealmakers are rarely great leaders who become successful CEOs over long periods. Dealmakers and serial entrepreneurs seem to share some of the same qualities.

**DECISION-MAKING:** As a leader, your job is to make decisions. You often need to decide between two or more proposals that look equally good. You must have the ability to make sound judgements once you have all relevant facts available and you have listened to your team. You will experience that implementation of ‘our decision’ is usually more successful than ‘my decision’.

**DELIVER:** If you are reliable and deliver on your promises, you will have great career prospects. Ensure that your deadlines, budgets, targets and objectives are all ambitious, but realistic to make sure you have a chance to deliver.

**DIVERSITY:** We all have a strange tendency to recruit people similar to ourselves. However, we must remind ourselves that diverse teams produce much better results than teams where all members have the same profile as ourselves.

**DOUBLE SWITCH:** A ‘double switch career move’ is when you switch industry and move up one step on the organizational career ladder, i.e. from Country CEO in the pharmaceutical industry to Group CEO in the IT industry. Both you and your new employer must be conscious of the considerable risk that such a move incurs.

may accordingly be a little soft, when you evaluate the results of some of your tests.

Whatever your dreams are, we suggest that you sit down with a person, who knows you really well, and work through the five tests. This person should be a mentor, a senior colleague or a search consultant with whom you already have established a relationship. Your partner should also have a say. The people who help you with this assessment must be brutally honest, frank and objective—and you must be honest with yourself. If you cheat you only cheat yourself and this is not good for your career and for your family life. Embarking on a CEO career without having what it takes, without support of your partner and without being willing to do what it takes, can only lead to frustration.

We suggest that you visit our website and print this chapter [www.editoravaldemar.com](http://www.editoravaldemar.com) and that you use the printed tests rather than the tests of the book. As already mentioned, the tests are not analytical. They are *empirical judgement tests*.

The combined result of all your assessment tests will probably fall into three categories:

PASSED—Every indication is that you **do** have  
what it takes to become a CEO

MAYBE—The result is not clear

FAILED—It is very clear that you **do not** have  
what it takes to become a CEO

Even if you ‘fail’ in one or more of the self-assessment tests, we recommend that you complete all of them. Completing all tests and evaluating the results together with your mentor will be



If you honestly feel that you are a Type A person, you have passed test 1 and should go to the next tests.

If you are a Type B person, we suggest that you also complete all remaining tests and at the end seriously consider your options. If your prime motive really is money, power and recognition you should revisit the options we mention under MULTI COMPANY CAREER.

SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST **NO.2**

### **ARE YOU WILLING TO DO WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME A GLOBAL CEO?**

The second test is about ‘sacrifices’ that you must be willing to make. Ideally, you should not see them as sacrifices, because you love what you do and you learn so much. See test 2.

If you want to become a global CEO, you must ideally find all 10 items exciting and natural to deserve a YES. Just a few MAYBEs is a concern. If you have just one NO, you should carefully consider whether a career as a global CEO career is right for you and your partner.

If your ambition is to become a local CEO, you may have a NO on items 3 and 6.

| TEST<br>2                                                                                              | AM I WILLING TO MAKE<br>'SACRIFICES' SUCH AS:                                                                       | YES | NO | MAYBE | Comments: |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|-------|-----------|
| 1                                                                                                      | Working 60–70 hours a week                                                                                          |     |    |       |           |
| 2                                                                                                      | Often prioritising work over family life and hobbies                                                                |     |    |       |           |
| 3                                                                                                      | Living abroad for several years (with your family), learning new languages and developing knowledge of new cultures |     |    |       |           |
| 4                                                                                                      | Taking responsibility and work under high levels of stress                                                          |     |    |       |           |
| 5                                                                                                      | Handling very difficult personnel issues                                                                            |     |    |       |           |
| 6                                                                                                      | Trusting people of different cultures                                                                               |     |    |       |           |
| 7                                                                                                      | Sacrificing pay in your early career if necessary                                                                   |     |    |       |           |
| 8                                                                                                      | Taking on very different positions to learn all aspects of business                                                 |     |    |       |           |
| 9                                                                                                      | Making decisions that are not popular with people around you                                                        |     |    |       |           |
| 10                                                                                                     | Not always getting the promotion, pay and titles as quickly as you had hoped for                                    |     |    |       |           |
| <b>Result</b>                                                                                          | How was your score?                                                                                                 |     |    |       |           |
| Result: PASSED <input type="checkbox"/> FAILED <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/> |                                                                                                                     |     |    |       |           |
| Comments from my mentor, my partner and myself:                                                        |                                                                                                                     |     |    |       |           |
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SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST **NO.3**

**DO YOU HAVE THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF A GREAT LEADER?**

The third test is about your characteristics and is a very deep and honest assessment of yourself on each of the 10 characteristics of a great leader:

| TEST 3                                          | DO I HAVE THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF A GREAT LEADER? | POINTS 0-10           | Comments:                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                               | Passion for people                                   |                       |                                                                                                |
| 2                                               | Strong team player                                   |                       |                                                                                                |
| 3                                               | Very high level of emotional intelligence (EQ > IQ)  |                       |                                                                                                |
| 4                                               | Very high level of energy                            |                       |                                                                                                |
| 5                                               | Balanced personality                                 |                       |                                                                                                |
| 6                                               | Sound judgement                                      |                       |                                                                                                |
| 7                                               | Curious and eager to learn                           |                       |                                                                                                |
| 8                                               | Integrity and high ethical standards                 |                       |                                                                                                |
| 9                                               | Great listener                                       |                       |                                                                                                |
| 10                                              | Seems lucky                                          |                       |                                                                                                |
| Result: How was your score?                     |                                                      | 0-5:<br>6-7:<br>8-10: | PASSED <input type="checkbox"/> FAILED <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments from my mentor, my partner and myself: |                                                      |                       |                                                                                                |
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Nobody is perfect, so we do not expect you to score 8', 9' or 10' on all. A few 6' or 7' are acceptable: But scores below 5' mean that the CEO job is not right for you.

SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST **NO.4**

**DO YOU HAVE THE SKILLS OF A GREAT LEADER?**

The fourth test is about your skills and is a very deep and honest assessment of yourself on each of the 10 characteristics of a great leader:

| TEST<br>4                                       | DO I HAVE THE KEY SKILLS OF A GREAT LEADER?                           | POINTS<br>0-10        | Comments :                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                               | Takes initiative and shoulders responsibility                         |                       |                                                                                                |
| 2                                               | Strategic thinker                                                     |                       |                                                                                                |
| 3                                               | Excellent communicator with people at all levels                      |                       |                                                                                                |
| 4                                               | Reliable: Produces results                                            |                       |                                                                                                |
| 5                                               | Interested in all business functions                                  |                       |                                                                                                |
| 6                                               | Has intimate knowledge of the business and understands what drives it |                       |                                                                                                |
| 7                                               | Understands the big picture and the detail equally well               |                       |                                                                                                |
| 8                                               | Does not complicate matters – keeps them simple                       |                       |                                                                                                |
| 9                                               | Removes road blocks                                                   |                       |                                                                                                |
| 10                                              | Makes sound decisions                                                 |                       |                                                                                                |
| Result: How was your score?                     |                                                                       | 0-5:<br>6-7:<br>8-10: | PASSED <input type="checkbox"/> FAILED <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments from my mentor, my partner and myself: |                                                                       |                       |                                                                                                |
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## SUMMARY OF YOUR SELF-ASSESSMENT TESTS:

Once you have completed and evaluated all 5 tests we suggest that you summarize the results to help you decide whether you have what it takes to be a great leader and to become a CEO with a long and successful career:

| TEST NO.:                                       | SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST REGARDING:     | MY RESULTS: |        |       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------|-------|
|                                                 |                                     | PASSED      | FAILED | MAYBE |
| 1                                               | My motive to become a CEO           |             |        |       |
| 2                                               | My willingness to make 'sacrifices' |             |        |       |
| 3                                               | My leadership characteristics       |             |        |       |
| 4                                               | My leadership skills                |             |        |       |
| 5                                               | My EQ and IQ                        |             |        |       |
| The overall result:                             |                                     |             |        |       |
| Comments from my mentor, my partner and myself: |                                     |             |        |       |
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If you are in the maybe area, we suggest that you consider planning a pre-CEO career to find out whether the CEO job could be right for you anyhow.

Whatever your results are, it is now time to reflect and *decide* if THE JOB OF THE CEO is right for you. Go to Chapter 6.