



2004 Public Health Institute University of Minnesota

The Power of One: ANALYSIS FOR ACTION

This questionnaire serves two functions. First, it helps you analyze the current aspects of your job that contribute to your effectiveness and to your prospects for developing a reputation for effectiveness. Second, it urges you to think of future actions that can develop those specific parts of your job known to contribute to job efficacy and organizational power. There are two parts to most of the questions. Part A asks about the way things are now. Part B asks you to create action alternatives to improve the situation. Your responses to Part B questions are an opportunity to brainstorm action possibilities for yourself. Even if you do not see a way to follow through on an alternative at present, list it.

The task is to develop a range of alternatives for yourself, with a minimum amount of censorship. Later on, you will be able to select from among those alternatives those that seem the best ones to pursue. But at first it is important to be as creative and expansive as possible.

Not all of the questions will have equal meaning to you. Some will be far more useful than others. However, it is important to think about each question. If a question seems important but you don't know the answer to it, write down how you could gain that information. Searching for information is important and should be considered as part of your action plan.

VISIBILITY: The extent to which your work is known in the organization

- 1A. With whom in the organization have I shared my ambitions, my career goals?
- 1B. Who else could/would help me if they knew my ambitions?

- 2A. How is what I do in my job communicated to the larger organization (both informally and formally – e.g. meetings, conversations, reports)?
- 2B. How can I improve on this communication? What other forms are available to me?

- 3A. Who are the influential people within my department who know about my work?
- 3B. What additional information about my work would be useful to share with them?

- 4A. Which of my job activities bring me in contact with people beyond my department or organization?
- 4B. How can these activities be expanded?

- 5A. Who are the influential people outside my department who know about my work?
- 5B. How could they learn more?

- 6A. How often do I participate in committees, task forces, or other work groups that include people from across the organization?
- 6B. What other activities of this type can I become involved with?

- 7A. What groups and professional associations outside of my employer do I belong to?
- 7B. How could increased participation in such groups benefit me?

AUTONOMY: The amount of discretion in your job

- 1A. At present, what types of decisions do I make where I can act on my own authority (e.g, budget expenditures, hiring, staffing, etc.)
- 1B. In what other areas could I expand my discretionary authority?
- 1C. How could I get such authority?

- 2A. What parts of my job allow me the opportunity to decide how I will do something, to act on my own initiative?
- 2B. How could I make these areas a more central part of my job activities?

- 3A. Are there any new projects or activities in the organization or within my job that would give me the opportunity to create and develop something?
- 3B. How could I get involved with these projects or activities?

RELEVANCE: Your job's involvement with pressing organizational issues

- 1A. What are two to four crucial issues that my organization faces within the next three years?

- 2A. Which aspects of my job play a role in addressing these issues?
- 2B. How can I further develop my job to become more involved with these issues?

- 3A. What skills do I have that are of most value to the organization?
- 3B. How can I use these, or trade on them, to improve my job situation?

- 4A. What other skills could I develop or improve on to make me more of an asset to the organization?
- 4B. How can I go about this?

RELATIONSHIPS: Supports and alliances on the job

- 1A. How often am I in contact with my peers?
- 1B. How could I better utilize these interactions to help my job performance?

- 2A. If you have subordinates....Among my subordinates, who are the most promising?
- 2B. What things could I do to help these people develop and advance in their careers?

- 3A. At present, what responsibilities do I share with subordinates?
- 3B. What other responsibilities could I share with them that would develop their talents and provide them exposure?

- 4A. Which senior person could best help me do my job more effectively?
- 4B. What can I do to develop this relationship?
- 4C. How can I be of use to this person in his/her job?

- 5A. Who is the most senior person with influence who has shown an interest in my career?
- 5B. In what ways can I make my skills and ambitions better known to this person?
- 5C. How can I be of help to this person in his/her job?

- 6A. What contacts, both in and outside of the organization, do I have that are of the most value to the organization?
- 6B. How can I work these (trade on them) to improve my job situation?
- 6C. What contacts could I develop that would make me more of an asset to the organization?

- 7A. What executive search firms/individuals have I developed relationships with?
- 7B. What can I do to cultivate relationships with executive search firms and make my skill set more visible?

DISTINCTIVENESS: What have you done to distinguish yourself?

- 1A. How have I distinguished myself in terms of education or expertise or skill set?
- 1B. What could I do to distinguish myself in terms of education or expertise of skill set?
- 1C. How can I get into a job that values, optimally utilizes and further develops my education, expertise or skill set?

- 2A. How have I distinguished myself in terms of leadership (community involvement)?
- 2B. What could I do to distinguish myself in terms of leadership?

- 3A. What have I done to demonstrate commitment to the field (teaching, publishing, mentoring, involvement in professional associations)?
- 3B. What could I do to distinguish myself in terms of commitment to the field?

Write your answers to these questions down. Reflect on them. Then from among the many actions you have brainstormed, prioritize them in terms of payoff. Develop an annual action plan for your career that works to strengthen your visibility, autonomy, relevance, relationships and distinctiveness. Good luck.