



Schachter Monthly

By Ephraim Schachter • Jan 10, 2023
Smart Brevity® count: 4 mins... 1058 words

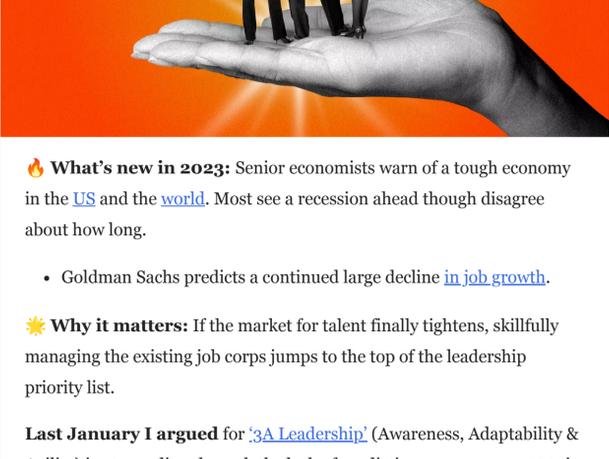
Happy New Year to our senior leaders in Business, HR, Academia and Nonprofits!

🔥 **Welcome to our** “*How to Launch 2023 Like an Exec*” issue! Here are some more straightforward insights and actionable tools & tips.

📧 **Did someone forward** you this email? [Subscribe here](#) to receive it directly.

📊 **SM’s ‘10-second poll’:** Have a quick look 🗳️ at #5. Weigh in and inform future SM content choices. I’ll circle back with interesting trends.

1 big thing: Managing over Leading in 2023



🔥 **What’s new in 2023:** Senior economists warn of a tough economy in the [US](#) and the [world](#). Most see a recession ahead though disagree about how long.

- Goldman Sachs predicts a continued large decline [in job growth](#).

🌟 **Why it matters:** If the market for talent finally tightens, skillfully managing the existing job corps jumps to the top of the leadership priority list.

Last January I argued for ‘[3A Leadership](#)’ (Awareness, Adaptability & Agility) in stewarding through the lack of predictive consensus on 2022’s upcoming stock market, inflation, and recession risk.

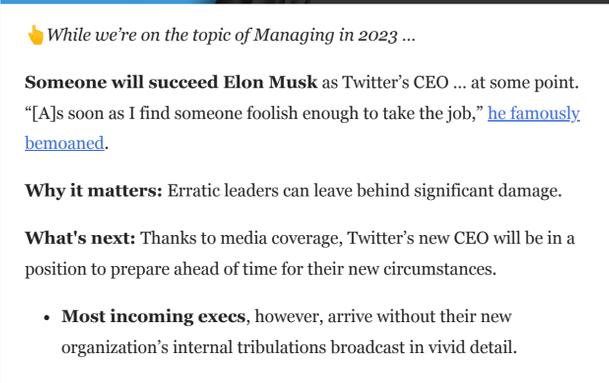
It’s ‘Management’ for 2023: We’ve moved on and priorities have shifted to blocking and tackling. This year, leaders will need to manage professionally.

🎯 **Start here!** Emphasize these four *foundational areas* of activity:

1. **Planning:** Determine the direction of your departments and people by establishing goals and objectives and developing and implementing the strategies necessary to attain them.
2. **Organizing:** Determine the activities & resources needed to carry out those strategies and decide how authority, responsibility & assignments should be distributed.
3. **Directing:** Communicate responsibilities and provide an environment to stimulate employee motivation & commitment.
4. **Controlling:** Guide, monitor and calibrate work activities as needed and consistently deliver employee feedback.

🗳️ **Weigh in!** Take our *10-second poll* re Management Prowess in your organization. See Item #5 below.

2. What to expect when you succeed an erratic boss



👉 *While we’re on the topic of Managing in 2023 ...*

Someone will succeed Elon Musk as Twitter’s CEO ... at some point. “[A]s soon as I find someone foolish enough to take the job,” [he famously bemoaned](#).

Why it matters: Erratic leaders can leave behind significant damage.

What’s next: Thanks to media coverage, Twitter’s new CEO will be in a position to prepare ahead of time for their new circumstances.

- **Most incoming execs**, however, arrive without their new organization’s internal tribulations broadcast in vivid detail.

Still, taking on a turnaround gig is a temptation few confident change agents can resist.

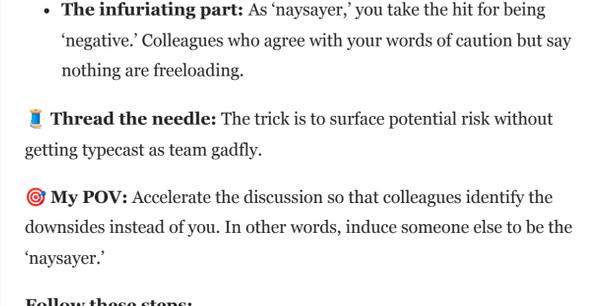
⚠️ **Upfront reconnaissance** is on you. I’ve been retained by a few hotshots after they’d entered overconfidently and proceeded to ‘step in it.’

🌟 **Expect the following dysfunctions** to prepare your thinking and priorities:

1. **Strategic Processes:** Lack of a clear strategy, stops-and-starts in pursuit of shiny new objects;
2. **Formal Organization:** Inconsistency around systems and methods;
3. **Work Processes:** People wearing many hats, leaving task gaps in some areas and work duplication in others;
4. **Informal Organization:** Workarounds superseding actual processes, in-group and out-of-group class system;
5. **People:** Low morale, trash-talk; and
6. **Output:** Underperformance, attrition.

👉 **Go deeper:** My take on “*What to Do Before Accepting That Change Agent Job*,” [here](#).

3. January pro tip: What to say instead of ‘no’



Many talented professionals who position themselves as the ‘adult in the room’ are surprised to find out that others see them as naysayers. While this recurs frequently with my CFO and GC clients, it’s not limited to those functions.

Why it matters: They get pigeonholed by colleagues and bosses. Their influence and results take a hit as their input is discounted. Some more junior employees find them intimidating and avoid them.

⚠️ **The dilemma:** You’re not pointing out downsides to be contrarian. Rather, you’re doing your best to serve your organization responsibly.

- **The infuriating part:** As ‘naysayer,’ you take the hit for being ‘negative.’ Colleagues who agree with your words of caution but say nothing are freeloading.

🧵 **Thread the needle:** The trick is to surface potential risk without getting typecast as team gadfly.

🎯 **My POV:** Accelerate the discussion so that colleagues identify the downsides instead of you. In other words, induce someone else to be the ‘naysayer.’

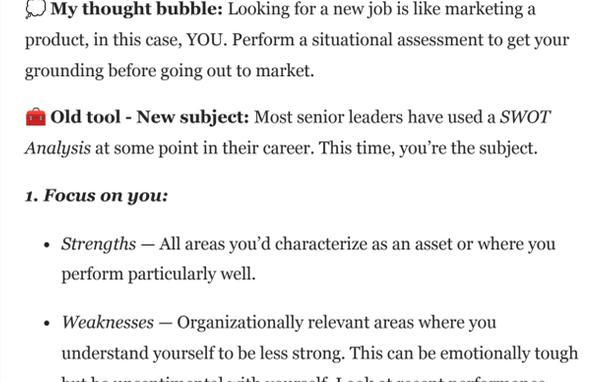
Follow these steps:

1. Agree to the recommendation;
2. Skip to ‘next steps,’ specifying the requisites to fulfill the recommendation; and
3. Stop talking and allow silence.

For example, “Yes, sounds good, let’s create and hire for the new position of Chief Digital Officer. We can negotiate the carve-out of responsibilities with the CMO to draw up the role description. Let’s also clarify the new solid and dotted reporting lines and we can put together the change management plan to introduce the role throughout the enterprise. Let’s talk timeframe.”

- 😊 **The bottom line:** It’s practically a *double dog dare*, right?

4. Career Corner: SWOT yourself to get started



🧠 **What I’m hearing:** Leaders who haven’t looked for a job in a long time often don’t know where to begin.

- **Why it matters:** Without an organizing rubric or starting point, they tread water instead of gaining momentum.

💭 **My thought bubble:** Looking for a new job is like marketing a product, in this case, YOU. Perform a situational assessment to get your grounding before going out to market.

📁 **Old tool - New subject:** Most senior leaders have used a *SWOT Analysis* at some point in their career. This time, you’re the subject.

1. Focus on you:

- *Strengths* — All areas you’d characterize as an asset or where you perform particularly well.
- *Weaknesses* — Organizationally relevant areas where you understand yourself to be less strong. This can be emotionally tough but be unsentimental with yourself. Look at recent performance evals and/or 360’s.

2. Focus on the marketplace:

- *Opportunities* — Trends in the economy, regulatory environment and industries of interest to you where you are positioned to offer utility and benefit.
- *Threats* — Trends in the economy, regulatory environment and industries of interest to you signaling reduced opportunities.

📄 **Next Steps:** Proceed to the Motivated Talent Inventory tool we presented in this past November’s [Schachter Monthly](#). Scroll down to Item #5. Have fun with it!

5. Ten-second poll: Management prowess

Thanks for starting your new year with us. See you in February!

- 📧 Invite friends and colleagues to [sign up](#) for Schachter Monthly.
- 📄 Download back issues [here](#).

💡 **Parting wisdom:** “*If power is to be used for good, more good people need power.*” Jeffrey Pfeffer

[Click here to unsubscribe.](#)

This email was sent by CSuite Accelerator via [Axios HQ](#)