



# Schachter Monthly

By Ephraim Schachter • Jun 06, 2023

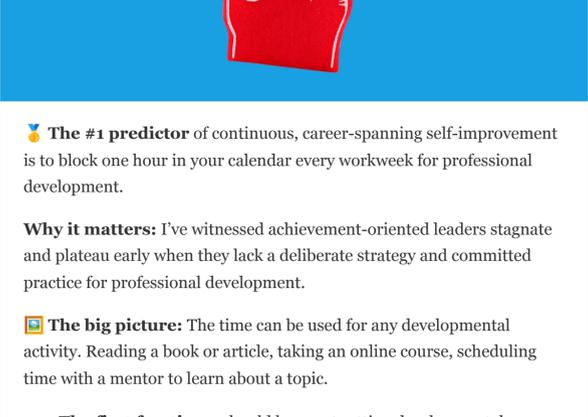
Smart Brevity® count: 4.5 mins...1195 words

**Happy June** to my senior leaders across industries!

🏆 **Let's lead well!** Keep reading for straightforward insights and actionable tools & tips.

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## 1 big predictor: The secret to continuous self-improvement



📌 **The #1 predictor** of continuous, career-spanning self-improvement is to block one hour in your calendar every workweek for professional development.

**Why it matters:** I've witnessed achievement-oriented leaders stagnate and plateau early when they lack a deliberate strategy and committed practice for professional development.

🖼️ **The big picture:** The time can be used for any developmental activity. Reading a book or article, taking an online course, scheduling time with a mentor to learn about a topic.

- **The first few times** should be spent setting developmental goals and planning the activities ahead.

**Self-assess** key development targets to ensure that the progress you make is career-relevant and goal-oriented. Consider the three arcs we tackle in our curriculum for C-Suite readiness (see link below):

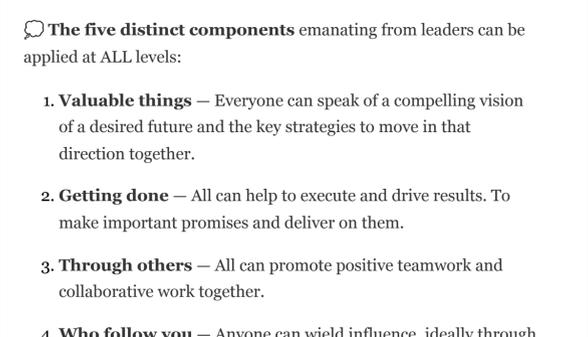
1. **Wielding Influence** — How to build rapport, add value and master C-Suite language
2. **Building Profile** — How to elevate your bearing, navigate your organization and leverage your external brand
3. **Readying Promotability** — How to “own” your business, build your bench and activate your boss to be your champion

🔄 **The bottom line:** It's a virtuous cycle where each step builds upon and reinforces the last.

- You'll get and build focus;
- Your focus will build momentum; and
- Your progress will energize and sustain you.

👉 **Go deeper:** Download our [eBook](#), From “Talented Leader to High-Performing Executive; *The 3 Arcs for C-Suite Success.*”

## 2. A leadership mindset at all levels



🔥 **What's new:** The Academy to Innovate HR (AIHR) recently published its *18 Key Leadership Competencies for 2023 Success*. In it they [quote me](#) for my proposition that organizations should instill a leadership mindset at all levels.

- **Why it matters:** It's how you anchor the organization in a set of positive values that are consistently applied in practice.

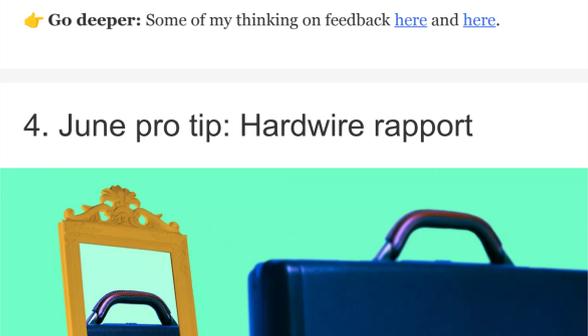
**My definition:** “*Leadership is getting valuable things done through others who benefit from following you.*”

🗨️ **The five distinct components** emanating from leaders can be applied at ALL levels:

1. **Valuable things** — Everyone can speak of a compelling vision of a desired future and the key strategies to move in that direction together.
2. **Getting done** — All can help to execute and drive results. To make important promises and deliver on them.
3. **Through others** — All can promote positive teamwork and collaborative work together.
4. **Who follow you** — Anyone can wield influence, ideally through example of character and moral authority. All can project confidence in the mission and faith in the future.
5. **Who benefit from following you** — Everyone should act to bring about collective wins, sharing credit along with the victories and support through losses.

🌟 **The big picture:** Instilling a leadership mindset throughout an organization at all levels can anchor it in positive values, improve its culture, and drive collective wins.

## 3. Retaining star employees



🌟 **The big picture:** There are predictable reasons why star employees may leave you for what they anticipate will be greener pastures.

- You mistakenly think they want to be left alone, unmanaged;
- You don't know they're unsatisfied since they're easy and don't complain; and/or
- You take them for granted, even redirecting under-performers' work their way.

**Why it matters:** Clients lament they were caught flatfooted when their star defected, not aware they were committing the above errors.

🔍 **Zoom In:** Here's what to do instead:

1. **Know their motivators.** [David McClelland](#) identified three needs which we each have in varying amounts: achievement, power, and affiliation. I'd add a 4th and that's recognition. Know the important ones for *your* star.
2. **Get engaged in their professional development.** Find out their aspirations. What do they want from work? From their career?
3. **Hold them accountable.** Stars love that! They want their results seen.

**Thread the needle with formal and informal action:**

- Schedule quarterly development meetings to identify their objectives, monitor their progress and mentor them.
- Learn how to give high quality, substantive feedback. Surveys consistently show that star performers seek more feedback at work, both positive and negative.

👉 **Go deeper:** Some of my thinking on feedback [here](#) and [here](#).

## 4. June pro tip: Hardwire rapport



**Executives must lead** through others by shaping opinions and mobilizing groups, departments, and divisions. Establishing real rapport one person at a time is the foundational building block.

🌟 **Why it matters:** Many experienced leaders never learned how to do this. They've developed reasonably good social skills for interactions that are pleasant, but they're not effective at sparking rapport.

- Their individual influence is hit or miss.
- Sometimes, work colleagues keep their guard up because they sense that collaborating is a potential threat to their own projects or agendas.

**Opportunity vs. Threat:** Rapport unlocks influence. Influence begins with being seen as an *opportunity*; not as a threat.

👉 **Hardwire rapport** by mirroring the behavior of your colleague. This is long proven to establish rapport, independent of cognition or persuasion.

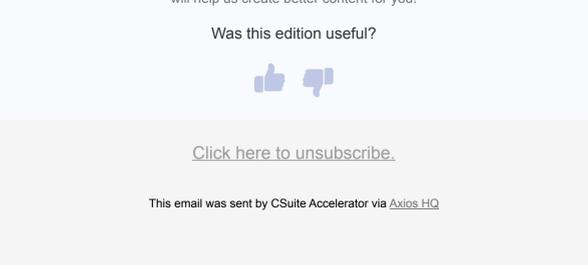
- At an unconscious neurological level both parties experience a relationship that feels like it's in flow and highly trusting. Really!

🔄 **Behaviors to mirror** fall into three buckets. Sync up with these categories:

1. **Their look:** take on your colleague's posture, position and breathing.
2. **Their sound:** calibrate to their volume level, speed of speech and amount.
3. **Their content:** find opportunities to affirm words or phrases they suffuse with meaning, and their degree of directness.

**The bottom line:** Be attentive to them. You'll know if you're in sync.

## 5. Career Corner: A corporate bonus for failed entrepreneurs?



**Talented high-performing clients** of mine consistently attract job opportunities, sometimes entrepreneurial. Many express concern they'll lose the option to ever reclaim their rung on the corporate ladder.

- **By the numbers:** based on [studies](#) with 80 recruiters, 326 failed entrepreneurs and corporate graduates, researchers concluded that failed entrepreneurs can have a corporate career advantage over those graduates who began in a corporation.

👉 **Why it matters:** It's less risky than you think to go out and try that new business venture! If it succeeds, you'll benefit. If it fails, you won't suffer a corporate career penalty.

**Zoom out:** There are compelling arguments why entrepreneurial endeavors provide an edge. Three jump out to me:

1. **Hands-on generalization** forces you to approach problems from multiple angles and contribute holistically to corporate objectives. By contrast, specialized corporate roles are narrow.
2. **Tolerance of ambiguity.** You grapple with constant unknowns and the absence of a clear path forward. Corporate roles are more structured with defined processes and predictable outcomes.
3. **Confident resilience** is gained from weathering setbacks, challenges, and pivots. The cycle time is a multiple of corporate initiatives.

👉 **My POV:** Differing work experiences make you a stronger professional. Not to mention, a more interesting human being!

**The bottom line:** It's a fallacy to believe you can eliminate any risks to your career advancement. They exist and that's okay. Recognize that seizing an entrepreneurial role is objectively less risky than you may have thought.

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💡 **Parting wisdom:** “*Champions keep playing until they get it right.*” Billie Jean King

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