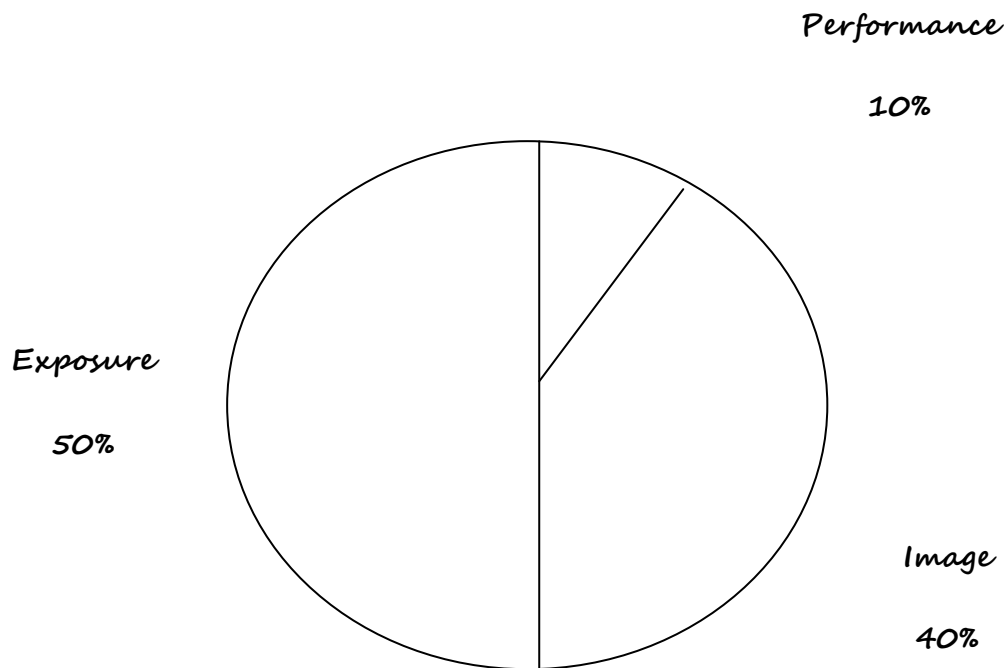


Performance is never enough. What else impacts on career outcomes?

This is a great exercise for everyone to consider...

When IBM conducted research on their managerial population in order to better understand what separated those who succeeded within the organisation from those whose careers did not fulfill their early potential, they identified three elements:



At first glance these figures seem shocking. The discovery that performance alone predicts only 10% of career outcomes should not be taken at face value. It does not mean that performance can be ignored, but rather that performance in demanding organisations becomes a given, and that the other two elements come to play an increasingly important part in career decisions.

Image

This is not how you dress but how others think of you. Do they see you as:

- A risk taker
- Safe pair of hands
- Creative
- Good on implementation
- Strategic
- Determined
- Emotionally tough
- Volatile when the going gets tough

- Good at turning round failing teams
- Good at delivery less, good on leading others

Image in this sense is not illusory or shallow, it is the perception people hold of you based on how they have seen you operate.

Image is also created by how you see yourself and how you communicate that to others. In your daily interactions you are signalling to people:

- The confidence you have in your abilities
- The degree of your ambition
- Your comfort (or not) with ambiguity
- Your beliefs about how to manage and lead people

Very able individuals often fail to get the career rewards which their abilities deserve because they either are unaware of, or ignore the data they have available on their image. By increasing awareness of our image, we can either look to challenge it, if the perception is faulty, or leverage it by looking for roles that work with that image.

Exposure

Exposure is a combination of who knows about you and what you are associated with. It is not about having an enormous network of occasional contacts. It is about being known by people who have influence on career outcomes and who have a clear sense of your strengths (and limitations).

Exposure is about those pieces of work that you are associated with: their centrality to the business; their perceived success and the profile which they bring. It's been described as:

- Doing good work for people they respected, who then spoke well of them to others so that new challenges were offered.
- Having a network of colleagues with whom they had meaningful relationships. People who knew them and their work, and who they would feel comfortable asking for help, and who in turn they would offer help to. Sometimes those people brought opportunities to them that they were unaware of, or would not have considered themselves qualified for. People in their network acted as champions for them, encouraging them to do more based on what they knew to be true about their abilities.

This model of networking is a very different one to that which sees it as a necessary career activity, only to be engaged in when in need of help. It is the reason why many individuals feel a discomfort with the concept of networking.