

## Getting your career moving along

John Lawson, Lawson Williams Consulting Group

The careers experts at Lawson Williams continue to offer tips, tricks and advice on building your chosen career.

### Managing up!

In today's world of work, many of us have multiple managers, dotted line relationships, project leaders, country managers, functional leaders. Consequently the ability to manage up has become increasingly important.

So what is managing up?

Managing upwards is the practice of optimally communicating information, making appropriate decisions and effectively escalating issues. It is the practice of equipping your manager with the things they need to best manage you – to give you the things you need. In other words managing your manager is primarily about helping them to help you. (Bernardo Garcia, Global Leadership Resources.)

In fact if you change the way you think about your relationship with your boss, it can make interactions with your boss much more effective.

#### What do I do?

1. Know your Manager. Sounds simple right? You need to know how they react to certain situations. What motivates and de-motivates them, What values do they admire in others? What are their priorities? Most failures in influencing upwards arise from misreading what the manager wants from you.
2. Communicate in the right way. What do they want to know when? How do they want to know it? Even if it is not the way you would communicate that's fine. What you have to continuously learn is how to adapt to the others' styles.
3. Present issues and propose solutions. When presenting a problem always provide alternative solutions, their pros and cons and how each solution solves the problem. After presenting all the information, you can then tell your manager how you need assistance or advice to solve the problem.
4. Provide the right level of detail at the right time. Start by providing high level information and provide detail if your manager needs it. Even if you report to a micro-manager that likes all the details, give them the high level perspective first and the effect its having on customers, the business etc. Then move into the details that your manager needs.
5. Listen "between the lines". Sometimes what is not said is more important than what is said.

And for all those aspiring managers out there, remember...

#### Management is a reward for PERFORMANCE

It's not something that I will chose to do in the future - it is a reward for what I do today.

### Your own personal brand

A couple of months on from our last conversation and I admit to spending the entire time procrastinating. This is because I know what comes next. It's time to put all the navel gazing into action.

It's all about Personal Branding. Never ever, underestimate the power of a strong personal brand. Your authenticity, credibility and trustworthiness depends on it. How does your dream job find you? Where do internal and external recruiters find you? Where does your friend or colleague refer the hiring manager of the top performing company in your industry to? The answer is nowhere if you don't put yourself out there for the world to discover.

I'm not saying simply post to Facebook the latest selfies you have taken, or tweet the latest pic of your dinner last night, (Tamarillo Hollandaise immediately comes to mind!) Although we will get to that. I'm saying start with the corner stone of your Personal Branding. Your resumé.

Yes it's resumé time and yes I can hear the heavy sigh from here. It seems very old fashioned with the various social media out there however your resume is still the all-encompassing marketing document it has always been.

Where will you start? Right here! Right now! Visit [www.lawsonwilliams.wordpress.com](http://www.lawsonwilliams.wordpress.com) and lets get started.

*I am Raewyn Brown: You'll find me on LinkedIn and Twitter @raewynbrownNZ. I have over 15 years experience in all aspects of the Recruitment Industry. I am comfortable in my own world, called quirky in others'.*



## Interpersonal Skills - do you have them?

People regularly use the words like “strong interpersonal skills” when describing themselves. Companies often ask for good interpersonal skills when looking for new staff. From our experience few people can give a useful description of what interpersonal skills really are.

CEB (Previously Saville Holdsworth) is a global leader in talent measurement and gives us some useful insights.

Interpersonal ability is made up of three factors.

**1. Interpersonal Sensitivity** – shows concern and respect for others’ feelings, demonstrates an interest in others’ opinions and tolerant of different needs and viewpoints.

What happens when there is too little	What happens when there is too much
Steamrolls over others	Gets too involved in others’ problems
Alienates / gives offense to others	Overly influenced by others’ feelings
Comes over as insensitive	Avoids unilateral decision making
Lacks empathy	Sacrifices task accomplishment for needs of individuals
Fails to pick up on others’ ideas	

**2. Teamwork** – cooperates and works well with others in the pursuit of team goals, shares information, supports others.

What happens when there is too little	What happens when there is too much
Seen as selfish	Overly compliant / too ready to go along with consensus
Restricts team progress	Afraid of competition
Creates disharmony	Unwilling to challenge
Doesn’t help others	Avoids taking unilateral action
Fails to acknowledge others’ contributions	Suffers from “group think”

**3. Building and maintaining relationships** – Able to establish and maintain relationships with people at all levels, puts others at ease, promotes harmony and consensus through diplomatic handling of disagreements and potential conflict.

What happens when there is too little	What happens when there is too much
May find self in conflict with others	Avoids playing devil’s advocate
Makes others feel uncomfortable	Avoids expressing discordant views
Creates disharmony / discord	May be too diplomatic - others may not get the message
Disagreements escalate	Avoids potential conflict at all costs
Has difficulty forming new relationships	Conflict remains unresolved
Can be tactless	

### Recognise yourself?

If so, find room for improvement and by doing so you will become better recognised in your current position and will be more attractive to new employers.



John Lawson is founder of Lawson Williams Consulting Group. He initially studied Biotechnology at Massey and is a professional member of NZIFST. He now enjoys leading a team of recruitment consultants, helping people like you develop satisfying careers.