

**Key Factors & Developmental Influences Important to Reaching Senior
Management Positions in Australia**

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1. Abstract

In 1982 a study was undertaken by Mukhi (1982a, 1982b) to examine issues surrounding the factors and influences upon senior managers as they develop and learn to take up high level positions in Australian public and private organisations. Outcomes of the study not only provided candid insights into influences on these individuals as they developed as managers but also provided an opportunity for senior managers of the future to learn from those who have gone before them – to gain insights into key factors and developmental issues in reaching high office. Some 13 years later, Karpin reported similar findings.

Since Mukhi's (1982a) study was undertaken there has been a surge of interest in leadership development in Australia – a major influence being Enterprising Nation (Karpin, 1995a) – a report led by Karpin into Australian leadership and strategies to develop Australian leaders of the future. Karpin (1995a) predicted the emergence of a whole new management paradigm – this seen as a necessity in an era of increasing globalization, widespread technological innovation and pressure on business to customize products and services (Karpin, 1995a: 10). With the increasing pace of change a new breed of managers with qualities very different from the past was also predicted (Karpin, 1995b: 11).

This paper investigates the themes addressed by Mukhi (1982a) and asks the question: What are key factors and developmental influences important to reaching senior management positions in Australia today – have things changed since Mukhi's (1982a) research and if so how and why. Following from this, advice will be sought from senior managers to pass on to newer managers who aspire to senior positions.

A literature review was undertaken to investigate the issue of key factors and developmental influences important to reaching senior management positions. This will serve as the base upon which to develop the primary research component of the research - a survey of senior executives of Australia's top 150 companies.

It is expected that the results of the survey will align closely with findings in the literature review. In comparing the outcomes of the primary research with that undertaken by Mukhi (1982a) areas of similarity and contrast will be found. Similarities will include: the continued importance of motivational issues, in particular having a need to achieve results; the importance of strong technical training; and developing interpersonal skills – such as the ability to influence and negotiate. Areas of contrast – defined here as new areas that will emerge very strongly in the research include: the importance of ethics and integrity to reaching senior office; learning political, social and interactive skills; the ability to network – to develop relationships across all levels of the organisation as well as outside the organisation; and the development of strong communication skills, understanding of self and others.

2. Introduction

The roles played by senior managers and generic prescriptions for leadership success are widely reported areas in management and business writing (Cox and Cooper, 1989; Parry, 1996; Sarros and Moors, 2001; Gorten, 2001; McKenna, 2002; Stephenson et al, 2003). A less reported area is just how senior managers and business leaders reach levels of success – what makes these individuals tick and the factors and influences upon them as they develop and learn to take up high level positions in Australian corporations and organisations.

In 1982 a study was undertaken by Mukhi (1982a, 1982b, 1988) to examine these issues. Outcomes of the study not only provided candid insights into influences on these individuals as they developed as managers but also provided an opportunity for senior managers of the future to learn from those who had gone before them – to gain insights into key factors and developmental issues in reaching high office.

With a whole new generation of senior managers now working who would have been *in training* around the time of the release of Karpin's (1995a) report, it was deemed appropriate to look again at the themes explored by Mukhi (1982a) and ask the question – *what are key factors and developmental influences important to reaching senior management positions in Australia today – have things changed since Mukhi's (1982a) research and if so how and why? Following from this, what can be gleaned for newer managers who aspire to senior management roles?* Central to these questions are factors surrounding learning to be a senior manager; as well as factors that help individuals actually reach senior positions. It was then deemed appropriate to *turn the tables* on today's senior managers and gain insight into their thoughts on developing senior managers of the future - providing useful insights from these managers for use by those charged with developing Australia's senior managers of the future – both business practitioners and academics alike.

3. Discovering Themes - Literature Review

In undertaking the literature review surrounding the issue of key factors and developmental influences important to reaching senior management positions today, Mukhi's (1982a, 1982b) study of Australian chief executives and Karpin's (1995a) prescription for Australian leaders of the future have been used as a base upon which to commence analysis.

The purpose of this literature review is to analyse and critique current thinking in the area of management and leadership development of Australia's senior managers and relate the key themes to the study undertaken by Mukhi (1982a, 1982b). The next step is to determine areas for further analysis for the primary research component of this project.

3.1 Major influences that help development as a manager

In Mukhi's (1982a) study respondents were asked about the major influences that helped their development as a manager (See Appendix A for overview of results). Responses from chief executives from Australia's private and public sectors listed the same top three factors as of substantial importance – *having a need to achieve results; the ability to work with a wide variety of people; and having an ability to influence and negotiate*; the last indicating that the ability to manage people is of greatest importance to senior managers, assuming that aforementioned factors are achieved through others (Mukhi, 1988: 16). Interestingly, private sector and public sector chief executives nominated the same three factors of least importance – *formal management training; overseas experience and armed services background*. In an era of globalization and right-sizing (wherein competition for jobs is forever on the increase), one wonders whether these bottom three factors would rate similarly today.

In seeking to determine management development influences on today's chief executives, three approaches will be undertaken: examination of outcomes of other studies of developmental influences

on senior managers; examination of influences upon how managers learn; and environmental influences – such as those noted by Karpin (1995a) – today’s globalised, customized and technologised business environment.

3.1.1 Outcomes of other studies on the profiles of senior managers

In seeking to learn more about the personality, background and characteristics of successful managers, Cox and Cooper (1989) identified five key influences on British chief executives (See Appendix B).

In comparing the outcomes of Cox and Cooper’s (1989) study with that undertaken by Mukhi (1982a), similar trends are found regarding the importance of motivational and achievement-based influences. Cox and Cooper (1989) note that the pattern of motivation that emerged in their study was very consistent with McClelland’s (1982) leadership motivation pattern, which entails a moderately high need for power, coupled with a lower need for affiliation and high self-control (Cox and Cooper, 1989). Other important motivational dimensions not found in Mukhi’s (1982a) study were: *involvement with and enjoyment of work* and findings regarding *development of an internal locus of control/self confidence* (Cox and Cooper, 1989: 241) – reported in British chief executives as a result of childhood experience of separation and having to take responsibility for oneself. A similar theme is noted by Way (2000), regarding the role of the chief executive – who is often required to make tough decisions alone.

In studying Australian chief executives, Sarros and Moors (2001) note that the innate characteristics of leaders are multilayered and multifaceted (Sarros and Moors, 2001: 65). While their findings are listed as *key attributes* (See Appendix C) as opposed to developmental influences, extrapolation of their findings and comparison with Mukhi (1982a) adds useful dimensions to Mukhi’s (1982a) work.

Again, the influence of motivation and drive are very strong as found by Mukhi (1982a). Issues surrounding emotional stability are also raised (Cox and Cooper, 1989) and we see emergence of a new theme – the importance of integrity and ethics. Interestingly, the second-ranked major influence in outcomes of Mukhi’s (1982a) study *ability to work with a wide variety of people*, is not mentioned as important by Cox and Cooper (1989) nor Sarros and Moors (2001).

In research surrounding profiles of Australian leaders, Parry (1996) develops a profile of *future leaders* which is somewhat akin to Karpin’s (1995a) prescription. Comparison of Parry’s (1996) profile has been undertaken with the outcomes of Mukhi’s (1982a) survey to ascertain similarities and differences.

Table 3.1 Comparison of Parry and Mukhi’s study.

Parry (1996)	Mukhi (1982a)
Is developed rather than trained in an MBA type format (i.e., specialized in-house training)	“has formal management training”
Is continuously learning	Not addressed specifically – could be implied under “stretched by immediate superiors”, although not necessarily so
Constantly develops and trains other leaders	Not addressed
Has a desire to be changed as much as a desire to change	“width of management experience”; “ability to change management style”; “desire to seek new opportunities”
Possesses ethical and socially responsible values	Not addressed
Will be part of a team as much as “head” of a team	Addressed to some extent – “ability to work with a wide variety of people”, although Parry’s reference implies that the CEO works via a flat structure approach, not necessarily implied by responses in Mukhi’s (1982a) study
Will possess “feminised” characteristics	Not addressed
Promotes upward, downward and sideways communication; and will be collaborative in an individually considerate form	Not addressed
Will be both transformational and transactional	“ability to change management style”

It is recognised that this approach is overly simplistic; nevertheless, it provides useful insights into some of the emerging themes that could be impacting upon development of current chief executives. Areas *not addressed* by respondents to Mukhi's (1982a) survey are interesting. One theme that emerges and that is mirrored in the work of Cox and Cooper (1989) and Sarros and Moors (2001) is the influence of integrity and ethics. In critiquing Karpin's (1995a) report, Hamson and Morgan (1997) note that while key features of senior managerial work appears to remain unchanged, there is nevertheless increasing importance of political, social and interactive skills – reflected in Parry's (1996) findings regarding the influence of the importance of *continuous learning*, *collaborative* communication styles and *feminised* characteristics.

3.1.2 Influences on how managers learn

In analyzing how high performance managers learn Hodgson and Crainer (1993) put forward a four step model which incorporates:

- *finding the right situation* – to move forward and develop, managers must put themselves in situations where they can learn, whether this be from senior managers, subordinates or colleagues;
- *using mistakes* – as noted by Cox and Cooper (1989) the benefits of learning from one's mistakes are noted, particularly for senior executives who are often fed on a diet of corporate politics wherein covering one's footsteps is imperative;
- *looking beyond the office* – learning from other areas of commerce and society; and
- *accepting chance* – learning is often far from systematic and often a matter of chance (Hodgson and Crainer, 1993: 127).

Hodgson and Crainer's (1993) model fits closely with the findings of Cox and Cooper (1989) and there are also elements evident in Mukhi's (1982a) study – using mistakes and accepting chance could be akin to Mukhi's (1982a) findings regarding *willingness to take risks*. An area that offers another dimension for consideration, however, is the influence of *looking beyond the office*, implying an impact of developmental influences beyond immediate work experience and business training. The senior executive of today's search for balance (Dunn, 1998) and the impact of societal imperatives on senior executive decision-making (Garten, 2001) are cases in point.

3.1.3 The impact of technological change, globalization and customisation

Karpin (1995a) notes three key issues that will drive change and affect organisations and their managers: technological change, globalization and customization. This environment of continual change will have considerable impact upon the way senior managers will operate as well as the structure of the organisations which they manage (Drucker, 1997) and the highly diversified cultures they will lead (Pickett, 1995). While in Mukhi's (1982a) study, *overseas work experience* and *having formal management training*, ranked very low amongst major influences that helped management development of chief executives, it is likely that these areas will receive increased importance as a result of the impact of the needs of these individuals to operate effectively in the global marketplace as well as the need to keep abreast of fast-paced change.

Assuming chief executives operating in today's environment are of similar age to those in Mukhi's (1982a) study – that is, around forty (although it is likely that many could be younger, particularly with the rise of the "e-CEO") (Dessler, 2001), these individuals would have been learning their craft through the emergence of world markets and rapid switches in global economies when companies that survived were those that were led by sharp-eyed observers able to predict what was coming next (Johnson, 1996). These individuals would have experienced first-hand the down-sizings, right-sizings and flattening of structures that resulted in the lean and mean organisations of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Today's chief executives live in a world of tremendous uncertainty where the trade-offs between one course of action and another are almost impossible to quantify and require an unusually

high dose of “gut instinct” (Garten, 2001); in considering questions to be posed to these individuals regarding the influences upon their management development, Mukhi’s (1982a) original set could need further refining to include issues such as *ability for high performance during frequent change, creativity and innovation and making the right ethical decisions*.

It is anticipated that the impact of the changing roles of government and business enterprise (with the latter increasingly taking on roles that were previously the domain of government) will also have greater influences upon chief executives and their formative experiences. As a consequence of business enterprises becoming increasingly visible, there will be an implied need to set standards of conduct, accountability and social tone – as noted by Parry (1996) in his profile of the leader of the future, who will possess *ethical and socially responsible values* (Parry, 1996: 168). A major concern for managers will be ethics – individual and corporate. In the past unethical conduct on the part of a business executive was seen as a purely private affair (Drucker, 1997: 17) however, today it is being seen increasingly as a matter of public trust. A case in point is business’ response to corporate governance responsibilities following corporate collapses of the 1990s.

3.2 Important Factors In Management Development

3.2.1 Learning to be a senior manager

In Mukhi’s (1982a) study, the main criterion for successful performance at a senior level was found to be *motivating and managing people to achieve the best results*. Interestingly, this was given more weight than the category on leadership functions. Overall, learning to interact with people and to manage and motivate using a democratic, tolerant and self-controlled style was regarded as of major importance when compared with the more functional aspects of a job such as training people, delegating, setting priorities and understanding the system (Mukhi, 1988: 18). (See Appendix D for overview of results).

A similar theme is noted by Karpin (1995a) regarding the need for development of people skills for Australian managers.

The most common theme that emerged from the contemporary literature was the importance of leadership (Dalziel, 2002; Jamieson and Orton, 1998; Lublin, 2002). While a number of different models abound, a common theme in prescriptions for leadership for the next millennium is the importance of integration of personalized roles and skills in a total organisational context (Jamieson et al, 1998: 41). Leadership is recognised as a function that occurs throughout the organisation not just at its head (Karpin, 1995a; Parry, 1996; Dunn, 1998; Kotter, 1990). In short, it is believed that to manage and lead organisations that will experience constant change in a globalised, competitive workplace, people at all levels of the organisation must be involved. As a result, chief executives and senior managers are called upon to foster a learning environment that develops employee skills, motivations and knowledge (Goldrick, 1997: 16). This means that learning to be a senior manager will not only require technical competence, but the ability to empower, build teams and resolve conflicts (Goldrick, 1997: 18), as well as operate using democratic approaches to governance. Dalziel (2001) notes that in learning to be a good chief executive an individual’s focus must be on leadership as much if not more than on profits (Dalziel, 2001: 22).

Enterprising Nation (Karpin, 1995a) describes a perceived change in the role of the senior manager. In the past, the senior manager could have been characterized as an autocrat (planning, leading, organising and controlling). In contemporary management, the senior manager is expected to be more of a communicator – with an emphasis on vision, leadership and motivation. Learning to be a senior manager today will involve movement into the role of leader/coach, with key words being enabling, consulting, empowering (Sheldrake, 1995:6). Interestingly, this point was noted by respondents in Mukhi’s (1982a) study, with motivational issues given paramount importance. Accordingly, one could say that Karpin’s (1995a) findings were not necessarily reflective of senior management thinking – or

as Hamson and Morgan (1997) note, this could be the result of the gap between rhetoric and reality (Hamson and Morgan, 1997: 469).

Another strong theme identified in the literature was the importance of the ability to nurture strong relationships – particularly at a high level with boards and directors – this being a critical part of future success for ‘CEO Wannabes’, according to Lublin (2002).

Returning to Karpin's (1995a) analysis regarding the need to develop leader-managers that can operate effectively in the global marketplace, the findings from a survey of chief executives of *Fortune* 500 companies, by Morrison, Gregersen and Black (1998), is relevant. In this survey, the most critical factor in achieving international success was most cited to be *having competent global managers* – a factor far surpassing issues such as financial resources, quality local workforces, government assistance and communications technology. A global model that *can be applied everywhere* that *transcends national schemes* and can be a *powerful tool in recruiting, developing and retaining future leaders* is prescribed (Morrison et al, 1998: 47). However, while the leaders who participated in the survey recognise the need for such development of individuals to lead their organisations in the future, it appears that many companies actually do very little to systematically develop such global leadership traits (Morrison et al, 1998: 51). While a handful of organisations might be leading the fore (Fulmer and Goldsmith, 2001), they are the exception rather than the rule.

Consequently, learning to be a senior manager today is as much about developing oneself and taking initiative (Baber, 2002; De Lacey, 1997; Morrison et al, 1998; McCall, 1998) as it is about continual learning and personal renewal (Morrison, et al, 1998: 53). Another dimension is added by De Lacy (1997) who notes that for high-potential individuals mobility is also very important. Significant development often occurs through an individual's exposure to a wide range of situations, mentors and challenges, ideally underscored by key strategic, technical and academic input (De Lacy, 1997: 6). Interestingly, neither of these areas were raised by respondents in Mukhi's (1982a) research.

If we are to understand leadership development we have to spend more time in enabling senior managers to understand both themselves and others (Margerison, 1980, 14). While Garten (2001) notes that there is *no elegant theory of management that chief executives can use to deal with their many problems* (Garten, 2001: 35), he also notes that his survey of chief executives of *Fortune's* top 500 companies found one commonality – today's senior executives find themselves operating within a revolution. New opportunities, new setbacks, new competitive challenges are the order of the day. The only constant is making trade-offs and juggling responsibilities and conflicting priorities at ever-increasing speeds (Garten, 2001: 37); this fast-paced environment resulting in use of *gut instinct* to a greater degree than ever before (Garten, 2001: 33), implying considerable reliance upon an internal locus of control (Cox and Cooper, 1989) and high self-confidence (Sarros and Moors, 2001).

3.2.2. Important factors in developing others

In Mukhi's study (1982a) people-centred areas - human relations, interpersonal skills, personnel management, industrial relations - were ranked in the *top three* areas of importance by public and private chief executives among areas that included analytical skills, initiative and risk taking, financial ability and technical, product and commercial skills. However, there were differences between responses of public sector and private sector respondents, with early responsibility and mobility ranking as of higher importance to public sector chief executives than private sector chief executives (See Appendix E for overview of results). Overall, however, the two categories of people-related skills and early responsibility-mobility related areas accounted for almost half of the total comments made (Mukhi, 1988: 18).

Karpin's (1995b) comments correspond with those found by Mukhi (1982a), although appear somewhat *behind the times* as chief executives interviewed for Mukhi's (1982a) study were already

espousing the views noted by Karpin (1995a) – a weakness recognised by Hamson and Morgan (1997). Karpin (1995a) notes the need to re-evaluate what we are looking for in managers as well as a need to broaden their skill set. Concepts surrounding the *learning organisation* are also called to the fore (McLean, 1995) as well as improvement in management learning in the areas of: people skills, leadership skills, strategic skills, international orientation, entrepreneurship and relationship building skills across organisations.

In relating the experience at the oil giant, Shell, Bailey (Dunn, 1998) notes that in selecting their top people, no matter how brilliant people are analytically, if they can't relate to people, they don't manage well (Dunn, 1998: 16). Relationship skills of a very high order are key to Australia's success in the global marketplace (Dunn, 1998: 16). Accordingly, Shell's criteria for selecting their top people are as follows: their track record, their natural competence in analytical skills and their relationship management skills. Similar themes are related by Fulmer and Goldsmith (2001), in their investigations into how the world's best organisations - General Electric, Hewlett Packard, Johnson and Johnson and The World Bank - gain strategic advantage through leadership development. In these firms, leadership development is closely aligned with and is used to support corporate strategy (Fulmer and Goldsmith, 2001: 9) a theme also noted by Johnson (1996) in his analysis of Lion Nathan's team leadership practices.

These organisations recognise that success in the future is dependent upon investment in people today (Johnson, 1996: 74) and that the role of senior management is to provide the vision to make this happen (Fulmer and Goldsmith, 2001; Kotter, 1990). In these world leading firms, leadership development programs are designed to provide participants with a variety of experiences that broaden their perspectives, skills, flexibility and overall effectiveness. Included are experiences that enhance understanding, respect and value for cultural differences; that foster creativity and help leaders think *out of the box*, creating a broader, more systematic view of organisations and their issues explored via non-traditional approaches to problem-solving (Fulmer and Goldsmith, 2001: 3).

Karpin (1995a) notes the importance of concentration on competencies required to meet business strategies, with corresponding tailor-made management development programs to meet these needs (Karpin, 1995b: 13). Sheldrake (1995) asserts that while Karpin's (1995a) analysis is central, his assessment falls far short of what is already taking place. Vocational training in the mid 1990s was in "the middle of a revolution which [would] completely change the way we think about our modes of learning for the next twenty or more years; a central tenet being the inability to solve problems with the same knowledge that has created them" (Sheldrake, 1995: 8). Sarros (Dunn, 1998) notes that since release of *Enterprising Nation* (Karpin, 1995a), "it has been a continual process of developing programs in leadership and management development that look at values, ethical issues and leadership as an all-encompassing aspect of a person's life, not only their working life" (Dunn, 1998: 14). So we see the enmeshing of personal, social and work-life issues discussed previously.

In today's increasingly dynamic global marketplace, it will be the organisation which establishes the climate for teamwork that will prosper. Working with the organisation's critical variables, its people, their tasks and work flows to establish co-operative teams will be essential for longevity (Ames and Heide, 1992). Accordingly, important factors in developing others will be imperatives surrounding teamwork – as noted by respondents to Mukhi's (1982a) study.

Mukhi's (1982a) findings regarding the importance of early responsibility and mobility in developing others are echoed in the work of Kotter (1990), who notes that *leaders almost always have had opportunities during their twenties and thirties to actually try to lead, to take risks and to learn from both triumphs and failures - such learning essential in developing a wide range of leadership skills and perspectives* (Kotter, 1990: 109). Kotter (1990) also notes that those who rise to positions of organisational leadership have opportunities to broaden their skills beyond the narrow base that often

characterises managerial careers. This is usually the result of lateral career moves or early promotions to broad job assignments (Kotter, 1990: 109). Correspondingly, there is an extension of the network of relationships of these individuals both inside and outside the company enabling the development of strong informal networks needed to support multiple leadership initiatives (Kotter, 1990: 111). While the importance of development of a broad skill set is reflected in Mukhi's (1982a) findings in the section of his study on influences on management development, there is less attention to the development of networks as an important part of development of senior managers of the future.

With the rise in popularity of leadership-centred cultures (Kotter, 1990; Fulmer and Goldsmith, 2001; Johnson, 1996) and the implications this has for the roles and responsibilities of current senior managers as mentors and coaches, one would anticipate an increase in the importance of *development of networks* and other socially-related leadership functions in responses from today's senior managers regarding important factors in developing others.

For companies of the future to be successful, top management must make heavy investments in management development (Ames and Heide, 1992). The work begins with efforts to spot people with great leadership potential early in their careers and to identify what will be needed to stretch and develop them. This is done by enabling such individuals to be visible to senior management (Kotter, 1990: 111) – areas noted by respondents to Mukhi's (1982a) study which appear as important today as they were twenty years ago.

3.3 Important factors in reaching senior positions

Respondents in Mukhi's (1982a) study ranked technical competence, training and experience, hard work and dedication in the top answers regarding important factors in reaching senior positions. (See Appendix F for overview of results).

Garten (2001) asserts that the imperative of today's chief executive is not just to find the right business model but also to keep changing it to meet the pressures of unprecedented competition. He notes that the corporate race today is less against some identified competitor than for markets that don't yet exist, for consumer needs that have not yet been identified, for young talent whose full creativity has yet to blossom. (Garten, 2001: 22). Here, factors crucial to reaching senior positions are painted as those which involve coping with fast-paced change; predicting the future and choosing people who will be able to take up the mantle of organisational leadership into the future. A similar theme is noted by Kavanagh (2000) in outcomes of interviews with Australia's most admired business leaders. *Change* and how to handle change in an environment of globalization, competitive markets, an e-commerce revolution and stricter ethical standards were noted as key ingredients to success.

Some of these themes are similar to those identified by respondents in Mukhi (1982a) study – who noted the importance of *imagination, vision of future and ability to predict* as well as *quick grasp of situations and problems* – but the latter factors ranked relatively low compared to the importance of *technical competence, hard work* and *achieving objectives*. One might deduce that these areas are still important but that factors surrounding abilities to meet fast-paced change (as predicted by Karpin, 1995a) will be of increased importance.

As noted by a number of authors referred to in this paper (Karpin, 1995a; Baber, 2002; De Lacey, 1997; Garten, 2001; Morrison et al, 1998) imperatives surrounding performance of senior managers in the global marketplace is another emerging theme in the study of factors in reaching senior positions.

In a cross-cultural study of what superior international chief executives actually do to succeed, Hay and McBer (Power and Kennett, 1996) found successful multinational executives were developing two dimensions of leadership to reach success. These were - international adaptability and universal competencies. International adaptability refers to the ability to make deliberate choices about how to conduct business successfully in a given part of the world. Successful global chief executives were

found to make these choices across three dimensions: how they build business relationships; the degree to which they plan versus *just do it*; and how they exercise authority. An interesting outcome of these dimensions is the increasing importance of individual relationships; planning mechanisms that feature increased levels of empowerment of subordinates; and the evidence of divergent authority mechanisms – with both participatory and centralized authority styles evident (Power and Kennett: 1995: 22).

Universal competencies were found to fall into three distinct clusters: sharpening focus; building commitment; and driving for success. The best executives were able to quickly identify issues most important to their company, in short to *see everything ahead of time* enabling protection of corporate interests and the ability to pursue business opportunities of benefit to the organisation. They could then communicate a clear sense of direction across divergent cultures using a high level of organisational know-how, impact and influence and leadership skills. This ability to adapt leadership styles across cultures was said to determine whether an executive *wins the game* (Power and Kennett, 1996: 24). They were also found to be highly motivated individuals with internal standards of excellence who were willing to take calculated risks on behalf of the organisation. The outcomes of the survey prescribe a *set of competencies* that can be used as a base from which prospective multinational chief executives can learn. A similar thesis is provided by Stephenson et al (2003) as they note that leadership in today's turbulent environment requires vision - and the skill to communicate it - as well as the ability to set direction while at the same time not *over planning* enabling some freedom of movement as the goal posts are so often moving.

In his study of high performing managers, McKenna (2002) notes that generalizations surrounding high performance and listing of competencies by which high performance can be achieved serves little useful purpose – in short, attempts to do so are overly simplistic and ultimately meaningless - as they are heavily contextually dependent (McKenna, 2002: 680). While this is understood as a weakness of the study undertaken by Hay and McBer (Power and Kennett, 1996) and other competency-based models, such work nevertheless provides useful insights from which management development issues can be extrapolated; such profiles enable complex issues to be represented in simple format; synthesis of large bodies of literature via reference to single profiles/competencies; and form useful concept maps that can assist the learning process (Parry, 1996: 167).

In reviewing Hay and McBer's (Power and Kennett, 1996) study against the "building blocks" model of leadership provided by Dessler (2001) the relevance of their findings become apparent. Dessler (2001) notes that managers with the power and personal traits to be effective in leadership situations can lead by taking four sets of actions: thinking like a leader; providing a vision; using the right leadership style; and applying organisational behaviour skills such as motivating. The findings of Hay and McBer (Power and Kennett, 1996) sit well with Dessler's (2001) model providing further emphasis on the ability to communicate vision, adapt one's leadership style to a specific context and use organisational behavioural skills as important factors in reaching senior positions. Interestingly, chief executives in Mukhi's (1982a) study made reference to these factors when asked about *important factors in their development as managers*, however, less importance was placed upon them when asked about *specific factors in reaching senior management positions*.

In a study commissioned by Rogen (Danks, 1999) into issues that senior executives consider important when looking to promote middle managers, the issue rated most highly after general intelligence was *persuasive communication*. This implies the ability to be direct and clear, outcome-focused and brief in communications. Again, this area was not addressed by respondents in Mukhi's (1982a) study.

3.4 Conclusions From Literature Review

3.4.1 Major influences that help development as a manager

Motivational issues, particularly abilities related to managing people were key themes in the study undertaken by Mukhi (1982a) and are recognised as equally pertinent today. Interesting departures from Mukhi's (1982a) findings were influences surrounding emotional stability and the importance of integrity and ethics. The emergence of these themes is a likely reflection of the torrid state of corporate and government life of the late 1980s and 1990s as well as the effect of environmentalism and social policies surrounding the participation of women and minorities in the workforce. Areas for further research could include: emotional stability issues (such as those raised by Daniel Goleman, 1995); ethical issues surrounding managing today's corporations; the influence of *continuous learning* and the rise of work-life balance issues and moves to collaborative communication styles – each of the latter noted as important to Australian leaders of the future by Karpin (1995a) and also reflected in literature reviewed for this paper.

In addressing the influence of today's environment of technological change, globalization and customisation, the increased importance of overseas work experience is predicted, compared with the findings of Mukhi (1982a). Other key influences predicted are those surrounding creativity and innovation; and learning to perform in environments of constant change.

3.4.2 Important factors in management development

In contrast to the findings of Mukhi (1982a), literature review in the area of important factors in learning to be a senior manager placed greatest importance on learning leadership skills as opposed to the more narrowly defined area of organisational behaviour skills as reported by respondents in Mukhi's (1982a) research. While the importance of leadership was noted in Mukhi's (1982a) study, it was not rated as highly as one might imagine today if practice is to follow theory. To manage and lead organisations that will be experiencing constant change in a globalised, competitive workplace, acquiring leadership skills that promote continuous learning, empowerment, team building and conflict resolution are believed to be tantamount. Correspondingly, learning to nurture strong relationships was also found to be important.

Another important theme that emerged was that in considering career development, today's senior managers must take greater responsibility for themselves and should seek a wide range of work experiences – implying mobility and overseas assignments.

In the area of development of others, the link between corporate strategy and management development was a key theme, this practice appearing to be common amongst some of the world's leading organisations (Dunn, 1998; Fulmer and Goldsmith, 2001; McCall, 1998). While this was not necessarily an area within the realm of Mukhi's (1982a) study, it could be an interesting dimension for further consideration.

3.4.3 Important factors in reaching senior positions

In current literature, factors crucial to reaching senior positions involve coping with fast-paced change and handling this change in an environment of globalization, competitive markets, an e-commerce revolution and stricter ethical standards. Of the themes identified in the literature, that most strongly identified was the importance of skills in the area of change management and corresponding flexibility and coping skills.

In working in this environment it is anticipated that important factors in reaching senior positions will be those surrounding development of leadership skills - particularly those relevant to leading multi-culture workforces – as well as ability to harness and communicate vision; and apply organisational behaviour skills such as motivating. None of the latter factors are new – all were noted in Mukhi's (1982a) study. There is, however, greater emphasis placed on these skills in the literature compared with respondents' views in Mukhi's (1982a) study in which technical competence, training and experience and hard work were ranked as most important.

APPENDIX A: Major Influences That Helped Development As A Manager (Mukhi, 1982a)

STATEMENT	PRIVATE SECTOR		PUBLIC SECTOR	
	Score	Rank	Rank	Score
Having a need to achieve results	4.21	1	1	4.03
Ability to work with a wide variety of people	4.08	2	3	3.93
Having an ability to influence and negotiate	3.99	3	2	3.94
Early overall responsibility	3.68	4	4	3.63
Desire to seek new opportunities	3.62	5	9	3.18
Width of experience prior to 35	3.58	6	5	3.47
Ability to change managerial style	3.51	7	7	3.38
Leadership experience early in career	3.45	8	14	2.90
Stretched by immediate supervisors	3.31	9	8	3.21
Willingness to take risks	3.23	10	11	3.06
Having more ideas than colleagues	3.19	11	6	3.44
Visible to top management before 30	3.11	12	13	2.92
Family support	3.10	13	15	2.79
Sound technical training	3.05	14	12	2.93
Manager early in career as model	2.95	15	10	3.14
Having formal management training	2.60	16	17	2.10
Overseas management/work experience (Experience in other depts./private sector)	2.36	17	16	2.71
Experience of leadership in armed forces	1.61	18	18	1.54

* Public sector response shown in brackets

Mukhi, 1982: 20

APPENDIX B: Five Key Influences On Development Of British CEOs (Cox and Cooper, 1989)

- Achievement and ambition: a high need for achievement and determination were exhibited;
- Ability to learn from adversity: most CEOs had experienced setbacks and problems during their careers and had used these opportunities for learning and development;
- Internal locus of control: CEOs were found to have a positive approach to life, derived from high self-confidence and a feeling that they are in charge of their lives;
- High dedication to the job: working very long hours and clearly regarding their job as the most important element of their lives;
- Sound analytical and problem-solving skills: a skill that involves having clear objectives, the energy and commitment to achieve them and the ability to take calculated risks (Cox and Cooper, 1989: 243).

APPENDIX C: Key Attributes Of Individuals Who Reach Positions Of Leadership (Sarros and Moors, 2001)

- Drive (achievement, ambition, energy)
- Leadership motivation (personalized and socialized)
- Honesty and integrity
- Self confidence (emotional stability)
- Cognitive ability
- Knowledge of the business; and
- Other traits (charisma, creativity, flexibility) (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991 in Sarros and Moors, 1991: 65)

APPENDIX D: Important Factors In Learning To Be A Senior Manager (Mukhi, 1988)

Rank	Typical statement	% total comments	% replies
1 (1)	Motivate people, get the best out of people, manage people, encourage team work	24.26 (22.41)	39.75 (31.32)
2 (2)	Patience, tact, tolerance, caution, understanding, self-control, democratic style	16.2 (15.52)	26.51 (21.69)
3 (3)	Make decisions, follow through, anticipate problems, accept responsibility, maintain independent judgement	13.83 (13.79)	20.18 (19.27)
4 (7)	Leadership, gain respect, maintain control, influencing others, impartiality	9.2 (6.87)	15.06 (9.64)
5 (5)	Delegate, direct work, accept help	8.6 (10.34)	13.86 (14.46)
6 (6)	Get priorities right, forward planning, set objectives	6.6 (7.75)	10.64 (10.84)
7 (8)	Understanding the system, understanding the business, product, problem	6.6 (4.31)	9.06 (6.02)
8 (4)	Choose the right people, train people, reward initiative, consolidate, promotions	6.2 (12.07)	8.18 (16.87)
9	Others	8.5 (7.75)	

* Public sector results shown in brackets

Mukhi, 1988: 17

APPENDIX E: Important Factors In Developing Others (Mukhi, 1988)

Rank	Typical statement	% total comments	% replies
1 (2)	Personnel management, human relations, interpersonal skills, industrial relations	28.87 (21.57)	49.4 (26.5)
2 (5)	Technical skills, knowledge of system, understanding of work, product market knowledge, commercial judgement	21.83 (5.8)	37.5 (7.2)
3 (1)	Early responsibility, mobility, opportunity	12.32 (26.47)	21.1 (32.5)
4 (3)	Problem analysis, problem-solving skills, analytical training	10.92 (18.63)	18.67 (22.9)
5 (4)	Develop initiative and risk taking	5.28 (11.76)	9.04 (14.5)
6 (6)	Financial ability or understanding	4.23 (0.98)	7.23 (1.2)
7	Others	16.55 (14.71)	

* Public sector results shown in brackets

Mukhi, 1988: 18

APPENDIX F: Important Factors In Reaching Senior Positions (Mukhi, 1988)

Rank	Typical statement	% total comments	% replies
1 (2)	Technical competence, training, experience	24.2 (18.27)	34.34 (22.9)
2 (3)	Hard work, dedication	22.3 (11.54)	31.33 (14.5)
3 (1)	Luck, right place at right time	14.0 (20.19)	19.88 (25.3)
4 (4)	Producing results, achieving objectives and goals	13.1 (11.54)	18.67 (14.5)
5 (7)	Popularity, getting on with people	11.9 (5.76)	16.87 (7.2)
6 (6)	Imagination, vision of the future, ability to predict	5.5 (5.76)	7.83 (7.2)
7 (8)	Early responsibility and opportunity, accepting responsibility	5.1 (2.88)	7.23 (3.6)
8 (5)	Logical, quick grasp of situations and problems	4.2 (7.69)	6.02 (9.6)

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Mukhi, 1988: 19

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