

# Think you're a leader? Take our test to find out the truth

## *Our Leadership Self-Assessment on Materials Management may open your eyes*

When anyone looks at individuals who are deemed true leaders in the materials management or supply chain segment of the healthcare industry, what sets them apart from their peers? Is it based on their ability to move products throughout the system without inventory investments? Is it based on their ability to negotiate a best price?

Although these factors are important, they are not what get these leaders noticed by the industry at large. Instead, before these individuals gain recognition from their peers, the professional societies or the trade journals, they gain recognition from within their organization. Simply, it is not their title or where their office is located, but how others in the organization perceive them. They are often seen as a resource to the rest of the organization, as the "go to" person when other departments are facing expense management problems. In many cases, these individuals are seen as a key player by the executive team and are often consulted when new strategies are developed for the organization.

With financial challenges continuing to top the list of CEO concerns, many healthcare organizations are starting to look for more ways to reduce expenses. How the materials managers of today position themselves for the tomorrow may well decide if they are perceived as a leader and a resource or a potential liability in future expense management initiatives.

### Why do this?

That's why *Healthcare Purchasing News* teamed up with **Strategic Initiatives In Healthcare LLC**, to create and develop a self-assessment survey for readers to gauge their place on the executive track. The purpose of this self-evaluation is to help materials management and/or supply chain executives determine how to position themselves in their organization. That is, are they on the road to becoming a recognized resource and leader within their organization? While this exercise is intended to help individuals help themselves, we included a general scoring mechanism to provide a little more perspective to the assessment. After carefully considering each question and deciding on your answer, you will be able to assess your own strengths and weaknesses.

If you aren't already headed toward a leadership position, your answers will provide a solid basis for the creation of a personal plan.

For every "yes" answer give yourself two points; for every "no" give yourself one point. *Healthcare Purchasing News* will provide the rationale for each question in a handout at the **HPN booth** at the annual conference of the Association for Healthcare Resource and Materials Management in Anaheim, CA, July 24-27. If you are unable to attend the conference or fail to stop by the **HPN booth** be sure to check the **HPN Web site** ([www.hpnonline.com](http://www.hpnonline.com)) for the handout the first week in August. **HPN**

#### SCORECARD

yes=2 points, no=1point

**0-10:** Shape up because you're phoning it in.

**11-20:** Loosen up because you're entrapped by bureaucracy, stereotypes and tasks.

**21-30:** Dial up your efforts a bit because you're striving to be a leader but still have miles to go.

**31-39:** Keep up the good work because you're so close to the executive track that you can taste it.

**40:** Open up because just about everybody needs to meet you and learn from your experience.

**Remember: To be meaningful, it is essential to answer the following questions with "Yes" or "No" as honestly as possible.**

1. Do you find your position in the organization to be both challenging and rewarding at the same time?
2. Does the executive team of my employer view the materials management/supply chain function as critically important to the long-term financial viability of the organization?
3. Do you feel that your employees fully understand how and why decisions are made by you?
4. Do you encourage employees to contribute opinions and ideas to you to help with the formulation of decisions pertaining to changes that will impact your department?
5. Do you have regular meetings (at least once per month) with your supervisor to discuss the big picture strategies for the organization and how you can make additional contributions to support those strategies?
6. Do you believe your peers perceive you as a resource when it comes to expense management opportunities within their departments?
7. Does the executive team solicit your input on any issues when developing strategic plans for the organization?
8. Do you make a habit of regularly soliciting feedback, in person, on your performance from other department directors?
9. Are you invited to attend the medical staff meetings as a guest on a regular basis?
10. Are you open and honest with everyone when you make mistakes?
11. Do you truly enjoy working with people and helping them to work through problems?
12. Have you read at least two self-help/professional development books each year for the past two years?
13. Do you try to maintain a respectful but earnest interest in your employee's personal well-being?
14. Do you personally conduct exit interviews with all employees within your operational infrastructure when they resign?
15. Other than your boss and your "direct reports" are the remaining members of the executive team and the other department directors aware of the full scope of all of the services provided by your department(s) and the benefits derived by the organization?
16. Do you publicly recognize members of your team who have contributed to the success of the organization?
17. Have you communicated a clear vision for your department and its role in the organization?
18. Do you feel that your department(s) could do more for the organization?
19. During the past 12 months, have you conducted a personal SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)?
20. Do you have a process that enables and actually encourages the managers and supervisors who report directly to you to challenge and debate plans and processes?

*Editor's Note: Stay tuned to **Healthcare Purchasing News** this fall for our leadership self-assessment on value analysis, in conjunction with **Strategic Initiatives In Healthcare LLC** ([www.sihealthcare.com](http://www.sihealthcare.com)).*