

# THE BRIGHTON GROUP

an OI Partners company

## FORMER TOP-LEVEL EXECES FACE TOUGH TRANSITION HURDLES

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Bellevue – Sept. 14, 2010 – CEOs and other top-level executives who lose their jobs usually need to overcome three big hurdles before they can get on with their careers. These obstacles are: inability to understand their real strengths and weaknesses; long service with one company; and trouble accepting they may not be top-level executives at their next employer, according to a survey by OI Partners – The Brighton Group (Bellevue), a global talent management firm.

What the former top executives need most to help them make a successful transition are: an objective evaluation of their leadership styles; coaching in new management skills and techniques; and better methods for motivating and engaging employees, according to the survey of human resource professionals from 243 companies by OI Partners ([www.oipartners.net](http://www.oipartners.net)). The survey was conducted by OI Partners at the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) annual conference in San Diego in June.

- 6 out of 10 companies (59%) agreed that senior-level executives they have let go have needed an impartial evaluation of their leadership styles and behaviors.
- More than half of companies (53%) said the executives need coaching in new management styles and techniques, and 51% of employers said the executives need to work on motivating and engaging employees.
- Almost half of companies (48%) said the executives' inability to understand their real strengths and weaknesses is a major barrier.

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- Long service with one organization was cited as a potential transition problem for the executives by 46% of companies.
- 33% of companies said their former executives had trouble accepting they may not be at the top-level with their next employers.

“Since they have reached the highest levels of management, many have not received an objective critique of their leadership styles and behaviors and the ways they manage. Most have spent a number of years with one company climbing the career ladder to the top, and they have not learned other ways to manage and motivate employees. If the executives do not recognize these limitations, they may have a very short tenure in their next positions,” said Lee Foote, managing partner of OI Partners – The Brighton Group.

To address these needs, OI Partners has developed a new C-Suite Transition Program specifically designed to assist with the professional and personal needs of those transitioning from the highest management levels.

Although long service with one company is often considered a prerequisite to making it to the top levels, this presents some special problems when these executives leave and are in transition, according to the survey.

“Executives who have been with one company for a long time are less likely to be skilled at managing and engaging conflict, creating an innovative organization, and leading change, than other similar-level executives, the survey found,” said Foote. “Executives who have spent most of their careers with one employer need a higher level of assistance in exploring their full range of options during their transition, including considering entrepreneurial ventures. They also need more help networking with similar-level colleagues and peers,” said Foote.

The executives in transition are often seeking highly personalized networking support. OI Partners offices are conducting frequent networking meetings for C-Suite executives in transition. To assist executives seeking to build a portfolio career, including directorships, the C-Suite Transition Program provides them with access to OI Partners’ alumni contacts and those of the talent management firm’s managing partners.

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According to results of the survey:

- The biggest career transition needs of top-level executives are:
  - Impartial evaluation of their leadership styles: (59%)
  - Coaching in new management techniques and skills: (53%)
  - Assessing personal and professional goals, and developing a plan to achieve them: (37%)
  - Developing an appropriate message and personal "brand": (23%)
  - Networking with similar-level colleagues and peers: (21%)
  
- The biggest obstacles top-level executives face while in transition are:
  - Inability to see or understand their real strengths and weaknesses: (48%)
  - Long service with one organization: (46%)
  - Trouble accepting they may not be CEOs or C-Level execs in next position: (33%)
  - Concern about equaling their past compensation: (28%)
  - Unwillingness to consider a broad range of career opportunities: (26%)
  - Not being current with technology and social networking tools: (26%)
  
- The skills that former, top-level executives most need to develop in transition are:
  - Motivating and engaging employees: (51%)
  - Communicating effectively: (48%)
  - Strategic thinking: (42%)
  - Leading change: (40%)
  - Team building: (39%)
  - Leadership: (38%)
  - Commitment to developing people: (25%)

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### **About OI Partners**

OI Partners is a leading global career transition and coaching firm that helps individuals find new careers and employers to improve the performance of their employees and organizations. OI Partners is comprised of certified career management professionals who specialize in executive and group outplacement, executive coaching, leadership development, workforce planning, and talent management. The company was established in 1987 and is now located in 200 locally-owned offices in 27 countries with more than 100 U.S. offices. Please visit [www.oipartners.net](http://www.oipartners.net) <<http://www.oipartners.net>> or call 800-232-5285.