

Critical Mindsets/Skillsets Companies Look For In Promotable Employees

Critical Mindsets (the 5 “Cs”)

- a. **Curiosity** – passion to learn, see and observe, experiment, embrace and lead change
- b. **Conviction and Commitment** – mindset to continually engage, act, work hard, achieve at a high level, gain real expertise, become a valued team/enterprise contributor, maintain a healthy competitive drive
- c. **Competence** – mastery of craft, being able to influence important outcomes and lead significant initiatives, being extremely reliable, and having others comfortable depending on you, having wisdom and foresight, having deep industry knowledge and knowhow
- d. **Confidence** – being comfortable with unsurety, being willing to experiment and fail, ability to maintain resiliency, perseverance, and courage, having others comfortable following you, accepting responsibility and accountability, maintaining conviction and passion
- e. **Compassion** – having empathy and a sound moral compass, being able to ethically inspire motivate and lead others, earning the admiration from others, influencing humane outcomes

4 Entry Skillsets

- 1. Critical Thinking and Strategic Problem Solving:**
 - a. Curiosity and confidence to explore new ideas and utilize new technologies to support problem solving
 - b. Ability to work through complex problems with limited or conflicting information
 - c. Capacity to develop pragmatic, yet creative frames around strategic problem solving
 - d. Ability to understand business models across multiple industries
 - e. Quantitative intuitiveness acute capability
- 2. Personal, Professional Maturity and Emotional Intelligence**
 - a. Ability to understand how others perceive you
 - b. Ability to establish a positive presence and demonstrate a strong sense of integrity and reliability for the benefit of all stakeholders
 - c. Ability to accept and give constructive criticism, and to be coached
 - d. Ability to articulate an effective argument or make a persuasive presentation
 - e. Ability to write a concise, coherent, and convincing executive report, paper, or memo
 - f. Demonstrating a healthy passion and competitive drive
 - g. Developing a personal frame of confidence with heart and humility
- 3. Effective Time and Project Management**
 - a. Obtaining a mastery of personal time management skills
 - b. Ability to develop an effective and implementable project work plan
 - c. Capacity to manage a task/project/major initiative (on time and on budget) while keeping all stakeholders informed and supportive
- 4. Early Organizational Contribution**
 - a. Ability to develop and present solutions versus questions and problems
 - b. Demonstrated ability, desire, and willingness to get the job done
 - c. Mastering a deeper awareness of the enterprise ecosystem one participates in, as well as its surrounding industry
 - d. Gaining a mastery of effective team engagement and team building skills
 - e. Ability to constructively act on positive and negative feedback

5 Mid-Career Skillsets

1. Advanced Organizational Contribution

- a. Achieving the knowledge and knowhow to engage and add value under a shared leadership model: i.e., perform, teach/coach, delegate, supervise, be supervised, provide (and accept/adapt from) positive and negative team feedback
- b. Developing insight and understanding for what is required to build “execution” capability in an organization, including the challenges around successfully organizing, hiring, training, motivating, managing, or working with talent to achieve superior results
- c. Capacity to motivate and manage people (versus tasks) to achieve project deliverables and get the job done
- d. Capacity to generate confidence from all stakeholders (peers, supervisors, supervisees, other internal support, external support, etc.) while maintaining a humane perspective

2. Financial Literacy and Financial Management

- a. Capacity to understand and work with financial statements
- b. Sound grasp of risk and return dynamics
- c. Ability to evaluate a product’s or business’s financial performance and benchmark its performance against competitors
- d. Ability to develop a basic financial business plan
- e. The capacity to manage the financial plan, and make appropriate adjustments, when needed, early and effectively
- f. Ability to evaluate disparate investment and capital strategies and their long term corporate impacts (positive and negative)
- g. Ability to evaluate and make sound financial “trade-off” decisions that optimize results and avoid peril
- h. Capacity to interface with, present to, and update capital sponsors

3. Customer, Product and Market Analysis

- a. Ability to identify and evaluate the customer needs and their level of importance/magnitude
- b. Ability to evaluate a product or service’s capacity to solve the customer problem and satisfy both the customer’s tactile and psychological demands
- c. Ability to assess the realistic size of an obtainable, serviceable, addressable, and total market
- d. Ability to benchmark against competitors including the attributes of their products and services which can thwart one’s market penetration
- e. Ability to evaluate the true opportunities and challenges of one’s product/company to reach its potential market, including accessing direct and indirect channels and partners
- f. Capacity to build and test a product/service with customers, assess feedback, and make necessary adjustments

4. Ability to Contribute to the Launch, Growth, or Building of Sustainability in an Enterprise (Includes Commercial, Public Agency, and Socially Minded)

- a. Ability to distinguish between a good product/business idea and a comprehensive product/business commercialization road map. This includes having the knowledge and knowhow to move from the first to the second.

- b. Gaining a deeper understanding of what is required to conceive, plan, and manage implementation through the various phases of enterprise evolution and what type of adjustments are needed as the enterprise grows
- c. A solid understanding of an enterprise's growth stages should include but not be limited to:
 - i. Idea generation: problem definition, ideating solutions, building customer personas, creating customer value propositions, product design and production planning, building lean canvases, assessing financial and funding viability, testing validating and iterating results, etc.
 - ii. "go to market" implementation: product production and distribution, wholesale and retail pricing strategy, developing marketing and sales channels, targeting awareness and endorsement campaigns, securing business and channel partners, implementing inbound/outbound marketing functions (from lead generation-to-sale fulfillment), hiring, training, and management of the marketing and sales force, providing ongoing customer support
 - iii. Establishing product market fit: fulfilling both customer and broader market stakeholder needs, developing and exploiting true differentiated advantage, navigating from beachhead market segments to mainstream market segments
 - iv. Scaling of the enterprise: Understanding how to build and fund the infrastructure to successfully grow including organizing, hiring, training, motivating, managing, and retaining appropriate talent, refining the manufacturing process, refining the distribution and marketing/sales processes, improving the value engineering of the product(s) and its supply chains, and securing sustainable long-term funding, etc.
 - i. Maintaining competitive advantage as the Enterprise matures: Capacity to view industries from opportunity and challenges, to evaluate mega trends, to assess competitors, to understand threats and challenges from significant structural obstacles or current and new disruptive forces, to think through how to create a sustainable competitive advantage. Ability to act on competitive market and industry mega trends, expansion opportunities, improved productivity opportunities, continued innovation, M&A capability to acquire new technologies, practices, products, or customers. Ability to build an organization that includes talent growth and succession planning, etc.

5. Ability to Comprehend and Navigate Legal Documents, Capacity to Negotiate

- a. Basic understanding of business law, corporate legal structures, and the impacts of both
- b. Understanding of prevailing transactional documents that enterprises utilize (investment and lending contracts, customer and vendor contracts, employee contracts, etc.)
- c. Knowledge of key fund raising documents, what the terms mean, and how to evaluate/negotiate key provisions
- d. Knowledge and knowhow of good negotiation practices