



Corporate Entrepreneurship – November 2011

Professional Corporate Entrepreneur

By Susan Foley

Is it time we recognized corporate entrepreneurs (Intrapreneurs) as a new profession? If yes, then why aren't organizations proactively acknowledging this role?

If you search the most popular career web-sites you find that none of them post jobs for corporate entrepreneurs or Intrapreneurs. If you look at corporate web-sites you find the same thing. Talk to executive search firms and they use other labels to describe these individuals.

Sure some organizations may use different terms to identify these people but titles like business development don't do justice to these individuals. Call them what they are - *Corporate Entrepreneurs, Intrapreneurs, Social Intrapreneurs, Entrepreneurial Leaders*. Recruit them for what they do and openly acknowledge the contribution they are making to the organization.

One corporate entrepreneur said she had to define her own job spec because the human resource department didn't know how to define what she did. The reality is that she didn't fit the profile of the traditional employee, manager or leader. Corporate entrepreneurs don't fit, *that's the point*.

It is because of this that most corporate entrepreneurs take ownership for their own growth and development. They know what they need to do to grow and be successful. They take the initiative to understand their own strengths and weaknesses. *They are willing to look at themselves in the mirror*.

They find it difficult to get good feedback especially from traditional leaders who can't relate to what they do. They seek advice, counsel and mentors outside of their organizations. They find courage and strength from other corporate entrepreneurs who understand their plight. *They face the same issues*.

A few progressive organizations are developing new competency models for their leaders that include some of the competencies that corporate entrepreneurs possess. That is a start but it does not go far enough. Organizations must distinguish between those competencies that make sense for the core business and those that are needed to build new businesses. *They are different*.

Organizations have been doing a great job of identifying high potentials for the core business, now they must do the same for corporate entrepreneurs. It is often the depth of a competency that distinguishes an entrepreneurial leader from a traditional leader. *It is a fine line*.

Collectively corporate entrepreneurs must stand up, speak up and lead the way. Ultimately it will be up to them to establish the role of *Professional Corporate Entrepreneur*.

It will only be through their efforts that organizations see the value of the professional corporate entrepreneur and their impact on the 21st century economy.

Take the *Corporate Entrepreneur Profile™* to see if you have what it takes to be a professional corporate entrepreneur. <http://www.corporate-entrepreneurs.com/ceprofile.html>