



# 7 Simple Shifts to Seniority

# I know...

You have high aspirations and are willing to work hard for everything you want.

But working too hard can often come at the expense of other aspects of your life that matter to you.

I made a lot of sacrifices and it worked fine for awhile. But then exhaustion started to take over so I took a hard look at how I was managing my career and made a few simple shifts.

Within 12 months of making these shifts the trajectory of my career transformed:

- I went from being a 6-figure mid-level executive to a 7-figure senior executive
- I started getting weekly calls from recruiters
- I was asked to speak at conferences and events
- I felt more connected to and inspired by my job
- I became a healthier and happier person

Over the last two decades I have developed over 100 tools and techniques that I used in my own career and in coaching rising executives.

The "7 Simple Shifts to Seniority" is one of those tools and I'm thrilled to share with you something that has had amazing results for so many.

Investing in You,

*:Elizabeth*



Elizabeth Sandler  
Workplace Investor





## SHIFT 01

FROM ...TO  
HAVING GOALS... HAVING A MASTERPLAN

Earlier in my career I was diligent about having annual goals and objectives but they didn't sufficiently move the needle on my career. Once I started doing an annual Masterplan I was promoted from VP to Director to Managing Director in 4 years. The Masterplan enables me to filter and prioritize all decisions and actions. Starting with a robust vision means I put myself in the path for relevant opportunities and knowing where I want to get to means I am able to make choices aligned with my ambition quickly and decisively.

I have a proven Masterplan process that I use for myself and my clients but you can create your own so long as it includes at least the following elements:

- Vision Statements - focus on how you will feel and who will benefit
- Potential Roadblocks - think about both structural challenges and your mindset de-railers
- Leverageable Strengths - identify your signature skills and core character strengths
- Strategies to Achieve - include results focused milestones and supportive daily habits

## SHIFT 02

FROM ...TO  
DELEGATING TASKS... DELEGATING EXPERTISE

I learned how to delegate as soon as I had my first team. I was considered a good manager because of it. But I quickly learned that senior leadership isn't about learning to delegate work, it is about delegating expertise. Once I let go of trying to be the expert and grow a team who were better at certain functions than I was, my seniority sky rocketed. I also considered my peers part of my "results delivery network." I had no problem giving full credit to others if they were willing to accomplish something that supported my objectives. I made sure my bosses and clients focused on results rather than how many hours I work or tasks I completed. Now I teach clients to build a resource network diagram that delegates expertise even if you don't manage a big team. Being the only one who can do something doesn't make you more valuable, it keeps you stuck where you are.



## SHIFT 3

FROM  
PERFECTIONISM...

...TO  
SECOND TAKES

I have seen far too many mid-career executives fail by being unwilling to fail. Trying to be perfect all the time is inefficient and robs you of learning opportunities. It is the subtle difference between Ready-Aim-Fire and Ready-Fire-Adjust. When I first shifted away from perfectionism I was worried that people would think I had lost my edge, that I was getting sloppy or that I wasn't as good as people had thought. But the exact opposite happened. I was able to get everything done so much faster and when I got my team to embrace the same approach our productivity was exponential. I did this by telling myself that "the second version can be perfect." I'd make sure we did the best we could within a reasonable amount of time and then listened carefully to the feedback. Sure enough, a second take was usually all I needed to hit the mark.

## SHIFT 4

FROM  
EXPENSE MANAGER...

...TO  
INVESTOR

I started my career at an organization that taught us to treat company expense as our own. The culture completely removed the moral hazard that plagues a lot of corporate expense accounts. But as I became more senior I had to start empowering people to spend money without everything running through me. I did this by sharing my values regarding company resources but I also told them to think of us as investors in our own business. I didn't just shift this mentality for classic investments like technology, new headcount or infrastructure. I started investing in myself and my people, I began to treat our solutions as investments in our clients' success and I took functions often considered cost centers, like internal communications, and shifted them to be strategic contributors. I still invest over 10 hours a week on my own personal growth and development. I figure if it takes 10,000 hours to develop elite performance as an athlete, it should take the same to become the highest performing version of myself.



## SHIFT 05

FROM  
STORY CREATING...

...TO  
STORY TELLING

Not a work day goes by that someone doesn't tell me a story they created in their head. The ones where they assume someone's silence means they hated the presentation or that they won't get selected for that role. My favorite is that if they don't work all weekend to get something to their boss they will get fired. These are imaginary tales we tell ourselves without any facts to back them up (unless, your boss literally said that and if so, you don't want to work there!) Once I shifted away from creating stories and started focusing on observable facts in situations what I found was that I was able to put together really interesting and true stories.

This story telling technique helps me validate that I am focused on observable facts while providing a tool to share lessons learned and experiences with those I mentor and coach.

## SHIFT 06

FROM  
WORKHARD-PLAYHARD...      ...TO  
BASELINE BALANCE

I wish I had a method to calculate how many years off my life the "workhard-playhard" strategy stole from me. I also wish someone had told me that playing hard wasn't nearly as fulfilling as playing quietly with my friends. Once I shifted my focus away from the Work-Life Balance conundrum and started working towards a baseline balance across eight categories - Career, Finance, Love, Family, Friends, Society, Spirituality and Health - I started acting more like a senior executive who was responsible for a broad set of departments that had to work together to succeed. I coach a lot of rising executives who say their number one limiting factor is time. Most of them think if they put more time into work then they will be more successful so they sacrifice the other areas. However, when my clients shift their focus to baseline balance I find they become more receptive to the techniques for getting more done in less time and find themselves both productive and happier.



# SHIFT

## FROM SELF IMPROVEMENT ...TO TRIBAL SYSTEM

Several years ago an executive coach came into my office and mentioned that I had more books on leadership, team-building and business strategy than the bookshop. I defensively went through them, picked out my favorites (including all autographed copies) and then offered the rest to my team. I think that was the moment I shifted my focus from learning how to be a successful executive from expert resources to being supported in my leadership journey by real people. Having a coach was a valuable part of that but what was even more valuable was shifting my broader network away from business topics towards personal success topics. I joined an industry peer support group (they were all men by the way!), I became part of virtual communities with like-minded real people and I surrounded myself with women I could learn from. That shift was a core part of my senior executive journey and is why I built Echo Workplace to have a strong tribal system - women coaching, advising and supporting each other.

## SHIFTS CHECKLIST

- 1. I HAVE A MASTERPLAN
- 2. I DELEGATE EXPERTISE
- 3. I EMBRACE SECOND TAKES
- 4. I INVEST IN MYSELF
- 5. I AM A STORYTELLER
- 6. I BALANCE A FULL LIFE
- 7. I AM PART OF A SUPPORTIVE TRIBE

# Get to it!

These 7 Simple Shifts are all changes that you can start making immediately but the #1 thing you need right now is a Masterplan.

It will make sure that you are heading in the right direction, namely, on the right path for you.

If you felt this tool was helpful follow me on LinkedIn where I am always sharing free resources, tips, and advice.

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*Elizabeth*

