

# You're at the top of the ladder – now don't fall off

**Question:** I recently was promoted into an executive-level position, and I'm afraid I will fail in this new role. It seems like the skills and traits I exhibited that got me here aren't enough. Yet, I'm not really getting any training or even advice as to how to succeed. I need help!

**Answer:** Ironically, what you say is true.

The skills and strengths that sent your career soaring aren't the same ones you'll need to survive and thrive in the executive ranks. That's why, says Scott Eblin, author of *The Next*



*Level: What Insiders Know About Executive Success*, 40 percent of new leaders don't last more than 18 months. And that can cost a company up to \$2.7 million.

So how can you beat the odds? "Let

go of old beliefs and behaviors — and pick up new ones," Eblin says.

The former Fortune 500 executive offers this advice:

■ **Let go of self-doubt.** An insecure executive makes a lousy leader. Put confidence in your presence and purpose — even if it doesn't come naturally at first.

■ **Let go of running until you crash.** Working 24/7 may have made you a superstar. Keep it up at the top — where the expectations are enormous — and you'll burn out. Break

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the cycle by building time for recovery and renewal into your schedule.

■ **Let go of one-size-fits-all communication.** Customize every message for the group and goals at hand. Less is more, so become a master of the headline.

■ **Let go of self-reliance.** Replace "me" with "we." You may have advanced on your own, but now you're only as good as your team.

■ **Let go of the urge to tell "how."** No more micromanaging. Set the agenda for what gets done and leave the how to your team.

■ **Let go of responsibility.** Don't sweat the small stuff. Responsibility for a few results belongs to your team. Accountability for many results belongs to you.

■ **Let go of only looking up and down.** There's more to consider than what's up with the boss or what's going down with the subordinates. Look left and right, too. Partnerships with peers are key to success.

■ **Let go of an inside-out view.**

An internal perspective may have served you in the past, but not now. Lead with an outside-in view by understanding the issues in the external environment.

■ **Let go of the small footprint.** Your days of being "low profile" are over. At the top, you act and speak on behalf of your entire company. Mind your manners — and your messages.

### For more information

■ **Books:** *The Next Level: What Insiders Know About Executive Success*, by Scott Eblin; *Just Promoted!: How to Survive and Thrive in Your First 12 Months as a Manager*, by Edward H. Betof

■ **Web sites:** [www.ggci.com/NotJustTalk/2006/01/1qtr2006-feature-article.htm](http://www.ggci.com/NotJustTalk/2006/01/1qtr2006-feature-article.htm)

[www.coaching.com/Marketing/Common/news\\_betterleaders.htm](http://www.coaching.com/Marketing/Common/news_betterleaders.htm)

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