



A CEO Peer Group of Successors

Over the course of my career I have benefitted from the shared wisdom of many colleagues. Sometimes this came through relationships and ad hoc encounters or from my board of directors. However, one of the most effective forums in which I had the privilege of participating was a CEO peer group. My participation in what was originally called *Inc. Eagles* and later renamed *10X CEO* entailed a very structured and rigorous environment where I was compelled to finely hone my CEO skills. My group served as my personal board of directors, not distracted by any incentive, focused entirely on my organization's success. They pushed me to expand my goals and held me accountable for my commitments, coaching I couldn't get in another environment. There are a host of these organizations throughout the US and around the world that are an effective forum for the development of improved CEO leadership skills. But Proclus is different...

Despite the immense value that I received in my group, I was always a bit different than the rest. Most of my peers were founders of their organizations. I was the successor to the founder/CEO of mine. As such, I encountered a special class of challenges truly different than those of other CEOs. And while I got great advice and accumulated wisdom from my fellow members, none was sensitive to many of the unique issues I was encountering.

Anyone who has ever done it knows that following a founder requires extraordinary navigation. Taking over from a revered founder who manages by "doing", expects customers to call his cell phone number when they have problems, treats the company as if it is his or her baby, and likely is still around looking over your shoulder, poses some special challenges. Having succeeded a founder six times, I'm hyper sensitive to the unique challenges of this role.

As such, I am organizing a group of CEOs who are successors to founders. Each member will have the opportunity to benefit from the collective wisdom of the group and will be held accountable for improving their skill sets and upping their game. Since we each face similar founder-successor challenges, I expect the direct benefits of participation will be enormous.

The group will meet quarterly rotating amongst our member's offices for an intensive day and a half of group interaction supplemented with monthly consultation and more frequent ad hoc conversations. An evening will serve as bridging social function to enable development of personal relationships among the members that will no doubt prove helpful over the course of your career.

The group is scheduled to begin this fall. I am in the process of recruiting a small number of "founding" members. If you are interested in being considered for participation or you know someone you would like to refer as a potential member, please call, text or email me to discuss your or your referral's qualifications.

Les Trachtman

By the way, the Proclus name comes from Proclus Lycaeus, called "the Successor," a Greek Neoplatonist philosopher, one of the last major classical philosophers. His works, including one of the most elaborate and fully developed systems of Neoplatonism, had a great influence on the history of western philosophy.