



CAREER SUCCESS BUILDER™

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Validated Self-Insights for Career Success

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Since 2000, CMP has supported thousands of companies, clients, and individuals with their career journeys. Over the years, we have utilized various tools and coaching approaches, refining our methodologies to meet each client's unique needs. Two decades of this on-the-ground experience has allowed us to create and leverage best practices in career transition and development. In the process, CMP has authored two seminal books on careers, *Make it Work* and *Don't Dread Monday*, conducted regular studies on career progression, and actively contributed to a number of publications on issues of assessment and careers, including Forbes.

In our decades of work with careers and assessment, we have realized there are key behaviors indicative of career success—organizational and career navigation behaviors outside actual performance on the job. When professionals learn and apply these career navigation behaviors, they consistently attain greater career support, satisfaction, and upward mobility (if they want it). Since 2016, our goal has been to validate these behaviors and make them readily available to all people who want to create a great career.

Our goal was realized with the **Career Success Builder (CSB)**. This research overview will further outline the CSB's construction process, including emerging theme identification, final Career Predictor development, and Item and rating scale construction. We also outline best practices for correctly and consistently utilizing the CSB for its specific and intended purpose: as a practical and empirically supported career insight and behavioral development tool.

CSB ASSESSMENT DESIGN

Emerging Theme Identification

As trends and patterns became clear in our research, themes emerged. Themes were classified as issues, characteristics, behaviors, professional experiences, and other matters affecting individuals seeking their next career and/or role opportunity.

Our research yielded an initial list of 20 Emerging Themes. They are as follows:

1. **Succeeding through determination and grit.**
2. **Taking a stance and speaking up with conviction.**
3. **Demonstrating influence and passion.**
4. **Desiring corporate professional development opportunities.**
5. **Demonstrating networking and collaboration.**
6. **Building and leading coalitions.**
7. **Optimism for the future.**
8. **Taking ownership of pursuing opportunities.**
9. **Valuing personal, meaningful, and genuine relationships.**
10. **Self-awareness through reflection and self-examination.**

11. Living in alignment with core values.
12. Demonstrating humility and a humble spirit.
13. Conducting research into different paths.
14. Seeking feedback and input from others.
15. Having a life path in sync with destiny.
16. Broadening the scope of experiences.
17. Being socially active and family-focused.
18. Demonstrating resilience and perseverance.
19. Contributing novel ideas.
20. Taking risks, such as running small businesses and other entrepreneurial pursuits.

Final Career Predictor Development

We further reduced and refined the Themes into 14 definable and actionable Career Predictors (see Table 1) during our subsequent CSB development process. Our goal was to craft a final set of CSB Career Predictors that:

1. Uniquely derive their meaning from the emerging themes.
2. Are written and defined in clearly actionable terms.
3. Are manageable and practical in number.

Table 1: CSB Career Predictors and Definitions

CSB Career Predictors	Career Predictor Definitions
Create Connection and Advocacy	Establish beneficial connections and relationships with key stakeholders. Create meaningful partnerships and alliances that generate mutual value.
Align Career with Purpose and Values	Surface and align your core purpose and values with your work life. Operate with passion and purpose.
Focused Development	Leverage experiences and educational and professional opportunities to expand, learn, and grow.
Build Resilience	Demonstrate poise and perseverance under pressure. Handle challenges and stress with composure.

Practice Determination and Grit	Persevere through pressure, obstacles, and difficult situations without losing your focus or composure.
Extend Influence	Utilize effective communication to engage others and broaden the scope and depth of your interpersonal impact and influence.
Lean In	Put yourself in motion to make things happen and participate in accountable activities without being told.
Invest in Relationships	Make an intentional effort to build your connections and bond with others. Create relevant and meaningful connections through diversity in relationships.
Widen Your Tent	Include different opinions, perspectives, and approaches to generate deeper insights and better solutions.
Create a Compelling Destination	Hope for better things to come, see the world in a positive light, and rebound from difficult situations. Your glass is “half-full” vs. “half-empty.”
Take Calculated Risk	Pursue a less predictable direction based on analysis. Take a “leap of faith” and assume some risk to achieve a larger reward.
Minimize Blind Spots	Regularly seek feedback and apply new insights to improve performance. Solicit input from others to develop skills and influence.
Communicate with Confidence	Insert yourself into the discussion, openly express your ideas, opinions, and perspectives, and share your unique point of view through confident communication.
Get Out of the Box	Apply a creative lens to generate novel ideas and insights. Turn an idea into a solution and implement new ideas that generate value.

Item and Rating Scale Construction Process

Our intent in constructing items for the CSB was ease of understanding, content alignment with the Career Predictors, and length of assessment administration time. Upon administering the CSB to an initial benchmarking sample of 106 individuals across a wide span of demographics and professions, items were further refined to promote more significant scoring differentiation (see Benchmarking Process for more information). A total of 70 questions were included in the final version of the CSB.

A 5-point Likert rating scale, shown below in Table 2, was chosen as the CSB response structure. The research literature supports the use of multiple and clear rating choices for behavioral and leadership-style assessments (Assessments 2013: Finding the Perfect Match, Aberdeen Study, 2013). There is some debate as to a 5-point vs. 7-point rating scheme to further “space out” the choices for an individual assessment taker (see 15 Common Rating Scales Explained, Jeff Sauro, Ph.D., Aug. 14, 2018), but we chose simplicity and user-friendliness in selecting the 5-point Likert rating scale.

Table 2: Item Rating Scale

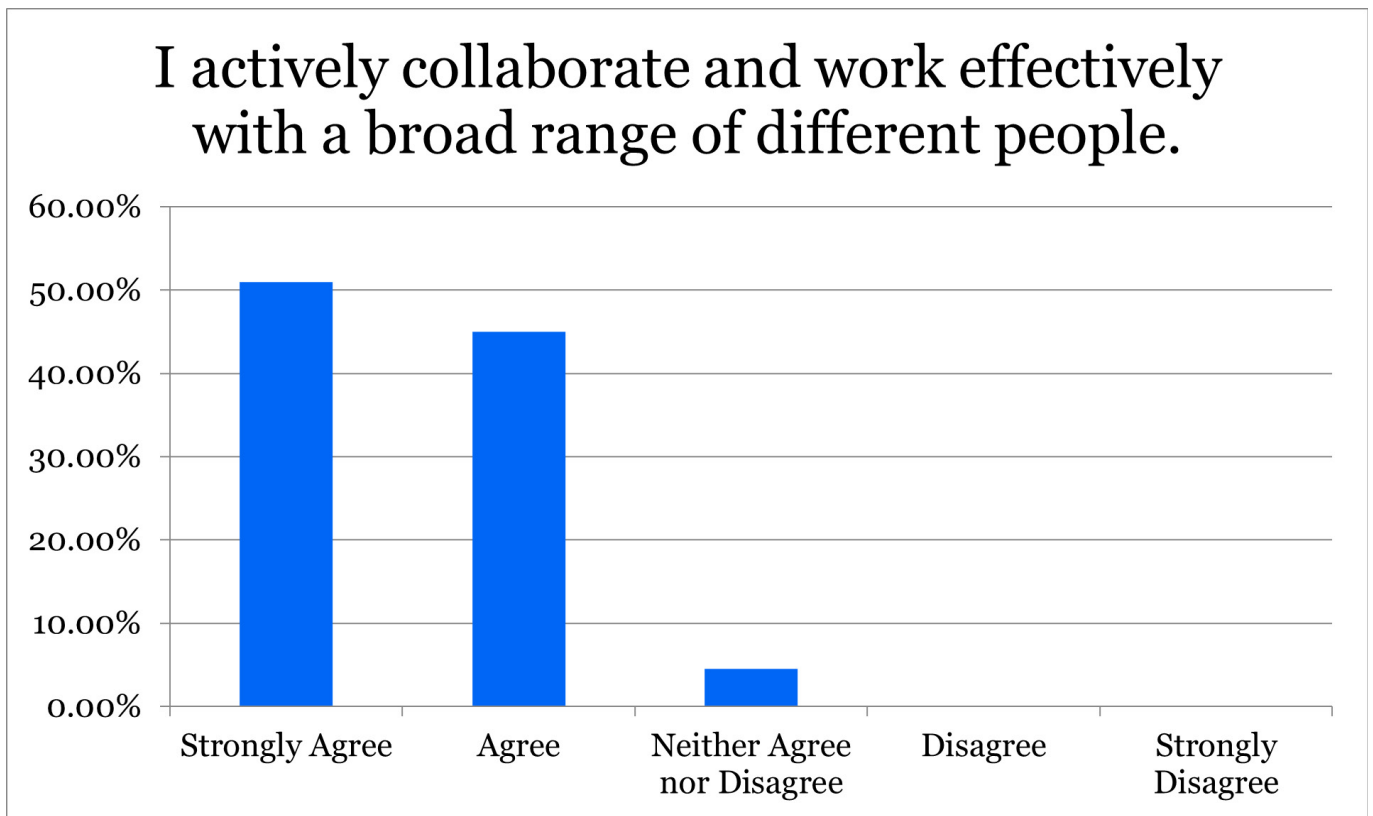
Numerical Rating	Rating Level
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Benchmarking Process

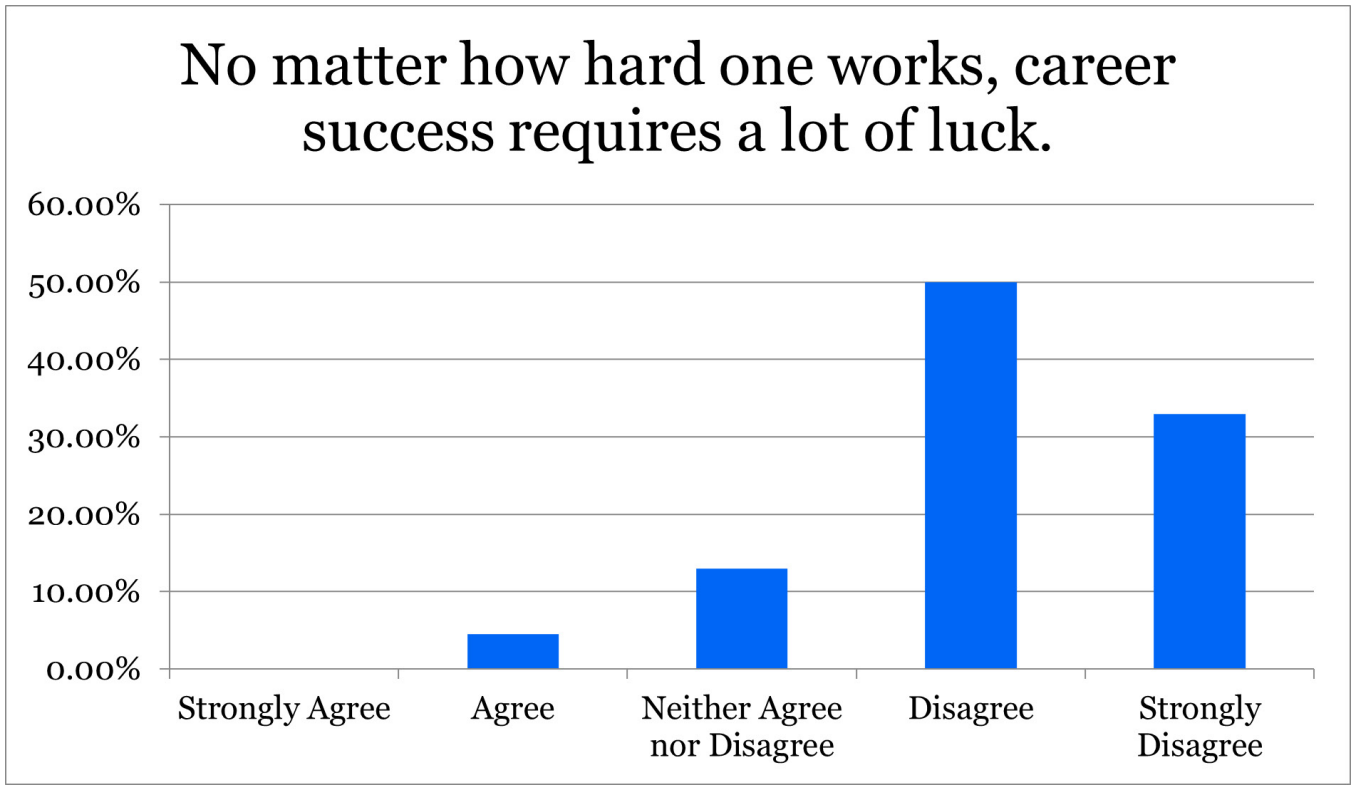
The CSB Version I (before making any Item modifications) was administered to a varied group of individuals (N = 106) to establish Item and Career Predictor benchmarks. Each item’s distribution pattern was studied to determine if item refinements could potentially achieve greater differentiation. In some cases, Item responses were grouped too heavily on the “Agreement” end of the rating scale (see Item Example A) and, in other cases, too much on the “Disagreement” end (Example B). Examples A and B are original CSB Items that were modified in the final CSB Assessment based on this methodology. A total of 12 out of 70 Items were modified by the end of our research. Example C illustrates an Item retained in the final CSB where no modification was necessary based on the normalcy of the curve.

CMP will continue to update our benchmarks as the data becomes available.

Example A: “Agreement” End of Scale (Positively Skewed)



Example B: “Disagreement” End of Scale (Negatively Skewed)



Example C: “Normal” Distribution



Reporting

CMP chose a dual-reporting structure to enable a personalized developmental experience for the assessment taker. First, a unique “profile” for each individual, based on their responses and scores, provides a tailored “lens” from which to view the results. We call this report the CSB Profile Report, which is customized to reflect the individual’s benchmarked results on each Career Predictor (see Table 3 below).

Table 3: Career Predictor Scoring Ranges

Scoring Range	Interpretation	Developmental Path
	Strength; compares favorably with the benchmark.	Behaviors and preferences to leverage for continued success.
	Solid; compares near the center range of the benchmark.	Behaviors and preferences are supportive and complimentary.
	Gap; compares with less alignment to the benchmark.	Behaviors and preferences to develop and coach.

Second, a development resource that is adapted to each CSB participant’s “profile” is a flexible and practical way to facilitate a meaningful and personal experience. The resulting CSB Development Guide is a comprehensive set of behavioral indicators, actionable insights, and real-life business scenarios defined uniquely for each of the 14 CSB Career Predictors. Upon completing the CSB, participants receive a report of the results of their CSB along with detailed development modules for the lowest three CSB predictors. This CSB Development Guide is intended to be a practical tool that will facilitate the focused development of each participant.

BEST PRACTICES

The Career Success Builder (CSB) was created with a very specific purpose: To support the personal and professional development of those in job transition at any stage of their career journey. The CSB is not a measure of fit or prediction in a hiring or promotion context and should only be used for self-insight and development.

CMP recommends the following best practices to ensure consistent and proper use of the CSB for its intended purpose.

1. Please always remember that the CSB is not intended to be used for a pre-employment assessment, employment placement, or promotion decisions.
2. Individuals in transition should complete the CSB to identify potential Gaps to develop and Strengths to leverage for their career success.
3. We encourage each individual to complete the CSB periodically. We promote this method to gauge development progress.
4. Connecting the results of the CSB with other data points can often yield a fuller profile perspective. Other evaluative ratings-based events, such as performance appraisals, can surface deeper development insights.
5. Participants should consider sharing their CSB results with people in their circle of influence who know them well and can share valuable feedback and insights.
6. The CSB results support the creation of an individual development plan. Resources for moving the CSB results into actionable change are included in the CSB Development Guide.

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