



Stanford eCorner

Moving Laterally in a Company

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/10/Moving-Laterally-in-a-Company>

Bartz argues that you must understand how a company is run. Life is about horizontal and lateral moves. She also talks about the various positions she has held in the past, from analyst to VP of customer service. By the time she became CEO, she had acquired a strong background in various fields.



Transcript

But secondly, if you can really get jobs and understand how companies really run and take those lateral moves. First I was a programmer; system analyst. I was a sales support person, then a sales person, and I was switching companies along here; sales person, sales manager, a staff person to a national sales manager. Boy, staff people will have really tough jobs. But back in those days you have to be staff and line, and staff and line and do all that sort of... From staff person back to Senior Sales manager, out to a Marketing Director, VP of Marketing, VP of Customer Support, VP of a division, VP of World wide Sales and Marketing, and then CEO of all of this. So, the only thing I have not actually managed in my career is manufacturing until I became a CEO. Everything else I've either done or managed directly. By the time I got to be CEO, I knew all the tricks. By the way, I wasn't the best customer support person.

I wasn't best financial person. I wasn't the best of any. I'm not today. Everyone of my executive VP's are best are what they're doing but I had done it all and I can outtalk any of them and they know it. And it's fabulous because it's a more creative kind of place to be. If I had just gone up one chain; the sales chain, the marketing chain, the technical chain. First of all I don't believe I would have this job. And secondly, even if I would, I don't think I'd be very good at it. So, this process of laterally moving around is very important.