

REPORT

Are you an A-Player?

The label your company gives you
decides your salary and promotions

By Amit Patel

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This report is dedicated to all my subscribers on my Youtube Channel Musings by Amit, readers on quora, connections on linkedin and friends on facebook who constantly ask me how to get a salary increase or promotion within their own company.

Prologue

In the 23 years working in the software industry I have understood this one thing.

Whenever you change your job. Your experience and expertise does not matter much to the new company. Every company starts with accepting you as an average employee. Then they start collecting data through your manager, colleagues, clients and projects about your performance. At the time of appraisal they use this data to give you the right compensation according to them.

Though this looks like a simple system it is not. Making judgements about employees is very difficult for any company. And they are not always right.

But the one thing that matters the most is - Are you an A Player according to your company? If you are an A Player then your company will give you the best salary increases, stock options and promotions. Much better than any other employees of the company.

In this report I am going to explore and educate you about - The A Players. Why it is important to become an A Player? What it means to your compensation? and How you can become an A Player?

Let us begin.

Employee Ranking

You are labeled as a B Player or C Player as soon as you join your company. Rarely will your company ever declare that you as an A Player.

Every company is trying to find the best employees. The reason is the 80/20 principle also known as the Pareto Principle.

Wilfried Fritz Pareto; 15 July 1848 - 19 August 1923) was an Italian engineer, sociologist, economist, political scientist, and philosopher. He made several important contributions to economics, particularly in the study of income distribution and in the analysis of individuals' choices.

How is Wilfried Pareto connected with your employee rank?

Well he came up with a famous principle that is called the Pareto Principle also known as the 80/20 rule, the law of vital few, or the principle of factor sparsity.

The Pareto principle states that, for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes.

The management gurus across the world have used this principle to state that 80% of results come from 20% of employees.

It simply means that if the company can find out who are the top 20% of employees in the company then the company can easily achieve 80% of results that the company is already achieving.

These 20% of top employees are called the A Players. All the rest of the 80% of employees are called the B Players and C Players.

We will go in more details about A Players, B Players and C Players. But before that you have to understand the Vitality Differentiation Curve.

The Vitality Differentiation Curve

A vitality curve is a performance management practice that calls for individuals to be ranked or rated against their coworkers.

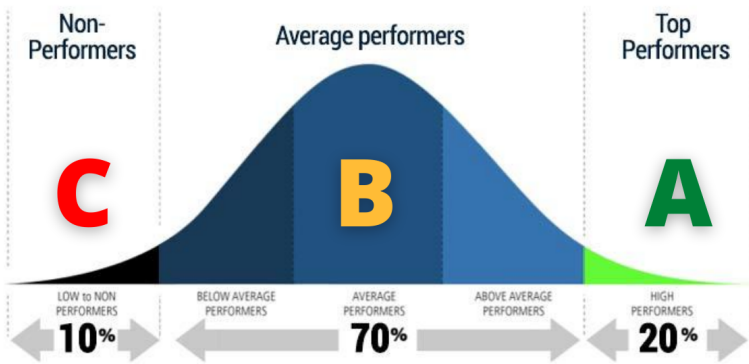
It is also called stack ranking, forced ranking, and rank and yank. Pioneered by GE's Jack Welch in the 1980s, it has long been a controversial practice due to its negative effects on employee morale and potential for bias and discrimination.

Many companies have abandoned the system in recent years, including GE, Microsoft, and Goldman Sachs.

As organizational behavior expert David A. Thomas put it, "companies are playing their version of 'Survivor'"

As behavioural expert David Thomas debunks the theory that companies have abandoned this practice. The real truth is that every company has their own version of the Vitality Curve in practice.

Here is a glimpse of the actual vitality curve as pioneered by GE's Jack Welch.



In some shape or form even today companies use this to rank employees. Every company has their own name for ranking employees.

During the appraisal period you will know what system your company is using. But the ultimate goal of any appraisal system is to find out,

- The A Players : The best employees in the company.
- The B Players : Important but not top employees.
- The C Players : The company can live without them.

The B Players and the C Players

Before we talk about the A Players let me put some light on the B Players and the C Players. To understand the A Players it is important to understand who the companies define as B Players and C Players.

This definition is from the Chapter People's factory in the Book "Jack - Straight from the Gut" a business biography of Jack Welch. In this book he talked about how GE used the vitality curve and the meaning of A Players, B Players and C Players to GE.

Let us start with the C Players.

The C Players

C Players - are people who can't get the job done. Cs are likely to enervate rather than energise. They procrastinate rather than deliver. You can't waste time on them, although we do spend resources on their hiring and training. C Players are the bottom 10% people in the company. From there they can either become B Players or if they don't improve they can be asked to leave the company.

The B Players

B Players - are the heart of the company and are critical to its operational success. Companies devote a lot of energy towards improving the Bs. Companies want them to search every day for what they're missing to become A Players. Most companies give training and guidance to these people so that they can become A Players. B Players are the Middle 75% people of the company. From there they can either become A Players when they find the secret to becoming an A Player. Or sometimes they will slip into C Players when they stop getting things done.

So the vitality curve defines B Players as the heart of the company. These are people who get a lot done.

In contrast the C Players really slack off in a company. They are the people who are not getting the work done. The C Players are easily identified in the team.

Whereas there will be a constant tussle to find out who are the B Players and much better who are the A Players.

Let us look at the A Players.

The A Players

A players are the top 20% of the employees in the company who are regarded as the best employees.

In a team of 10 people 2 will be considered as top. In a team of 100 people 20 will be considered as the top employees. So on and so forth.

As I mentioned in the earlier chapter that most entrepreneurs and management gurus believe that,

80% of results come from 20% of employees.

According to Geoff Smart, a well known author who published the books *Top Grading* and *Who A based hiring* says this,

“An A Player is a person who has 95% chance of achieving a set of outcomes in any work related situation that only 5% of possible people could achieve.”

But since we are looking at the People’s Factory definition of B Players and C Players. Let us look at what Jack Welch thinks about A Players.

The A Players

A Players - are people who are filled with passion, committed to making things happen, open to ideas from anywhere, and blessed with a lot of runway ahead of them. They have the ability to energize not only themselves, but everyone who comes in contact with them. They make business productive and fun at the same time. Sometimes A Players can slip to B Players when they stop applying the principles of success that made them A Players in the first place.

You can see the words used to describe an A Player vs the B Players and C Players they are completely different.

The thing to remember is that you cannot declare yourself as an A Player. It is your company, your managers, your colleagues and clients - who decide whether you are an A Player or not.

Why is this label of A, B and C Player important from your point of view? How does it make a difference?

Salaries and Promotions

Most companies use the vitality curve to rank employees. The curve helps in identifying the employees they consider in the top 20% (A Players), the vital middle 70% (B Players), and the bottom 10% (C Players).

If there were 20 people on the team, the companies want to know the top 20% best employees on the team or the 4 top employees in the team. And the bottom 10% or the 2 people who were C Players.

The C Players are given the performance improvement plan or asked to leave the company.

Making these judgements is not easy, and they are not always precise. There are times when companies will ask the wrong people to leave.

But using this system companies are able to build an all star team that helps the companies achieve dramatic performances on various projects.

It's possible and even likely for A players to be in the vital 70. That's because not every A Player has the ambition to go further in the organisation.

But the important part of the vitality curve is how it is used for rewarding the best employees. Most companies will reward employees with salary increases, stock options, and promotions.

The A Players get the raises that are two or three times of the size given to the B Players.

The B Players get solid increases recognising their contribution to the company every year. But this increase can be average across the company and even the industry.

The C Players get nothing.

Generally the C Players are asked to leave or they leave because they get no salary increases for a few years. When C Players leave companies are fine because it is difficult to deal with C Players explaining them why they are in the Bottom 10%.

How can you become an A Player?

Becoming an A Player

As soon as you join a new company they have a vague idea about your skills and talents. From the various interviews they think you are fit for the company. But they have no idea of your performance.

So initially the company just thinks you are a B-Player or a C-Player. Rarely in the rarest of rare cases the company will directly mark you as an A Player.

Irrespective of your experience or expertise the companies will shy away from thinking about you as an A Player. And you know that A Players get the best salaries, stock options and promotions.

That is the number one reason you need to become an A Player. No matter what job you are doing. No matter what company you are working for. No matter which industry you are aligned.

This A Player business is common across all types of industries and companies.

You become an A Player by understanding and enhancing these four Ps. The four Ps are *potential*, *proWess*, *performance* and *personality*. At a very broad level here is what you can do to enhance your four Ps.

1. **First - *develop your potential***: It involves developing a number of important personal strengths, including determination, vision, and confidence
2. **Then - *build your proWess*** : It involves building your expertise in your field of interest and enhancing some common skills required to do your job well.
3. **Next - *boost your performance*** : It involves getting the work done. It is about finding a way to do things in a productive and efficient manner.
4. **Finally - *shape your personality*** : It involves shaping your personality to adapt the qualities of the top 4% successful people in the world.

By becoming A Players you will position yourself for the best salaries, stock options and promotions. You will not be living pay check to pay check like most B Players.

What if you don't know how to become an A Player?

How to become an A Player?

In the 23 years of experience I had the opportunity to work as an employee for 12 years for five different companies and as an entrepreneur for 11 years for my own software company.

In these 23 years I discovered some simple principles that help in becoming an A Player. I learned these principles because I have a habit of reading books.

When I started working and even before that - I started reading a lot of self help and self development books.

To name a few, *The seven habits of highly successful people*, *How to win friends and influence people*, *Lead without a Title*, *The four hour work week*, *Think and Grow rich*, and many more.

I have read more than a 100s of books on self development and more than 500 books if you combine all the business books, fiction, non-fiction, story books, etc.

These books helped me in to understanding what makes a person an A Player. And I mentioned the 4 Ps in the last chapter, *potential*, *proWess*, *performance* and *personality*.

So I designed a course for those people who don't know exactly how they can become an A Player.

This is essential guide to professionals to Become an A-Player. There are four modules - potential, proWess, performance and personality. These are delivered in 20 video lessons.

You'll get the tried, tested and proven methods that I personally used to create professional success in my jobs and business.

You can complete this in 60 days when you start today.

Learn more about How to become A Players from the link below

[Get access to the Course Here](#)

Please see there is a limit to number of students because of a BONUS. Find out more by following the link above.

About the Author



Hello, I am Amit Patel having 23 years of experience in the Software Industry. I help professionals to transform their imagination to reality. Professionals want to grow in their career. I help them by sharing my experience and answering their questions. I hope whoever comes in contact with my content is able to grow 10x times faster in their respective field and industry.

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