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# Online Degrees



## Celebrity CEOs

By Dawn Papandrea

We admit it: Reality TV has finally gotten the best of us. So much so that we've been trying to put together the ultimate celebrity dream corporation. Part *Surreal Life*, part *The Apprentice* (only we do the hiring!), part *Dancing with the Stars* (let's face it, you have to master the right steps to succeed). See if you agree with our picks, then learn a few things about how to boost your own star power at work and avoid being *The Biggest Loser*.

### The do-it-all leader

Television star with 30 million viewers. Magazine publisher with 2.7 million readers. Producer. Actress. Humanitarian. Oprah Winfrey has worked her way up from the throes of poverty to become one of the most powerful women in the world. She's known for her generosity, likability, and genuine team spirit. She inspires creativity and encourages effort--which is why many say she's an example of an ideal leader.

Case in point: When Winfrey's *O, The Oprah Magazine* celebrated its five-year anniversary, Oprah threw her staff a party and gave each staff member a \$5,000 bonus. "The standard and correct answer for happy or satisfied employees is recognition," affirms Dr. Ruth Achterhof, a business school instructor at Jones International University (an MSN Encarta advertiser). "It can be done with praise--a pat on the back, a mention in a newsletter or meeting--or with the bonuses and perks that an Oprah Winfrey is noted for."

That's why Achterhof's lessons include getting students to realize that a corporation's people are its most important assets. "Using and acknowledging that resource can have invaluable rewards," she says. For Winfrey, those rewards amount to over a billion dollars.

When it's your turn to be a leader, remember--a CEO is a walking celebrity. Eric Yaverbaum, author of *Leadership Secrets of the World's Most Successful CEOs*, puts it like this: "If the CEO walks around in a bad mood, the whole office's mood changes."

But the same can happen with optimism, too.

"Some CEOs can say two sentences to an employee they never met [before] that will affect that person for the rest of his or her life," Yaverbaum emphasizes. With leadership comes power, and that responsibility entails more than just commanding money, resources, and profit margins.

### The brains behind the empire

How about commanding the universe? That statement's not a stretch for George Lucas, which is

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