**SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS OF OPPORTUNISTIC SELF-INTEREST**

**LEVEL 1 OPPORTUNISM:**

**Personal Characteristics and Potential Self-Gain Advantages**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Personal Assets** | **Examples**  | **Potential Self-Gain Advantages** |
| Achievement or power-oriented temperament | * “Type A” (goal-driven) work ethic
* Extraverted, dynamic personality
* Personal charisma
* Strong will power
* Capacity to influence people personally (interactive) and impersonally (organization structure)
 | * Promotions and rapid professional progress
* Being in charge
* Taking credit for the accomplishments of others
* Generating personal publicity, attention, notoriety, celebrity
 |
| Family and background empowerment  | * “Ivy League” vs. “working class”
* Family name and social “pedigree”
* Access to influence and wealth
 | * “Doors opened” (preferential treatment) to success and elitism
* Fast-track to becoming an “insider” in elite organizations
* Being an exception to many rules, regulations, responsibilities, and hardships
 |
| Intelligence and “savvy” | * Learning capacity
* Formal education
* Professional experience
* Networking skills
* Bilingual, bicultural
 | * Professional and leadership opportunities
* Impressing others
* “First-in-line” professional opportunities and benefits
 |
| Low or neutral moral standards | * Playing the success game by conforming & fitting in: “go along to get along”
* Ignoring or upholding unfair or unprincipled professional behaviors or organization behaviors
 | * Being an insider instead of an outsider
* Benefitting personally from exploitative impersonal political, social, and economic systems for which you are not personally held accountable (colonialism, imperialism, monopolies, oligarchies, etc.)
 |
| Majority status | * Ethnicity and religion
* Lifestyle
* Political affiliation
* Cultural norms
 | * Benefitting from favoritism and “good old boy” acceptance
* Greater opportunities for personal success, status, and wealth
* Expedited access to higher status neighborhoods, schools, organizations
 |
| Personal attractiveness: physical, personality  | * Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders
* National media news anchors
* Actors, models, entertainers
 | * High income from “telegenic” jobs
* Popularity and favoritism in many social situations
 |
| Reputation  | * Awards and honors
* Nominations
* Acceptance of the “in crowd”
* Covering up personal mistakes and failures with PR and the protection of “powerful people in high places”
 | * Opportunity “magnet”
* Receiving the benefit of the doubt
* Social respect, comfort, and status
* Invitations to elite events, projects, groups
 |
| Social status and wealth | * “Who’s-Who”
* Personal servants and assistants
* Leisure and travel
 | * Exclusive domains: neighborhoods; country clubs; executive levels of organizations, Ivy League schools
* Affiliation with prestigious community organizations
* “A” list social invitations
 |

**LEVEL 2 OPPORTUNISM:**

**Personal Opportunistic Social and Economic Systems**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Opportunities for** **Self Gain** | **Examples** | **Means of Empowerment** | **Potential Personal or Professional** **Pay-Offs** |
| Access to capital | * Family wealth
* Large corporations
* Venture capitalists
* Government loans or subsidies
 | * Executive management
* Stock options
* Stock trading
* Ponzi schemes and insider stock trading
 | * Upper class wealth
* Materialistic wealth
* Family dynasties
 |
| College degree(s) or other professional licensing | * Undergraduate and graduate college degrees
* Professional certifications (CPA, personal financial planning, etc.)
 | * Family or government education loans
* Scholarships
* Professional experience
 | * Career > job
* Higher monetary standard of living
* Professional development and career-building
 |
| Crime or corruption | * CPA firm scandals of 1990s
* Mortgage industry scandals, 2000s
* Ponzi schemes
* Corporate political campaign funding and lobbying
 | * Deregulation of business
* Weak prosecution of white collar crime
* Political lobbying and campaign financing
 | * Unearned financial rewards
* Fast track career-building
* Industry and corporate short-term profit stimulation, stock option windfalls, and stock price rigging
 |
| Image enhancement | * MBA degree from Ivy League school
* Fast-track promotions
* Social websites
* Resume enhancements
* Who’s-Who membership
* Publicity and media accolades
 | * Media access and appearances
* PR agents and business agents
 | * Celebrity status (or “fifteen minutes of fame”)
* Job-hopping
 |
| Networking | * Membership in professional groups and clubs
* Digital professional networking: LinkedIn.com, etc.)
* Facebook
* Country clubs
 | * Educational background
* Social websites
* Professional organizations
 | * Gaining access to power and professional opportunities
 |
| Politics | * Running for office
* Running political campaigns
* Financing political campaigns
* Lobbying and political action campaigns (PAC groups)
* Serving on the boards of corporations
 | * Law school
* Practicing law
* Personal wealth
* Lobbying
 | * Influencing legislation
* Political appointments
* “Pork barrel” returns (business loans, subsidies, tariffs, industry deregulation, etc.)
 |
| Reality manipulation | * Political campaigns
* Advertising
* Publicity
* Corporate annual reports
* Political campaign involvement
* Personal resume
* Corporate public relations
 | * Marketing campaigns
* Media ownership
* Talk shows and their hosts
* Advertising and publicity agencies
* Lawyers and law firms
 | * Ideological brainwashing
* Political power and manipulation
* Career-building
 |
| Referent power (who you know) | * Family dynasties such as Kennedy and Bush
* Friends and relatives in positions of power
* Memberships in exclusive clubs and organizations
 | * Family background
* Ivy League school self-selection (“taking care of your own”)
 | * Opportunity comes to you
* The powerful do you favors
 |

**LEVEL 3 OPPORTUNISM:**

**Corporate Assets and Social and Economic Systems**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Corporate Assets and Power Systems** | **Means of Empowerment** | **Potential Pay-Offs** |
| Financial clout | * Competitive strength
* Industry dominance
* Positive cash flow
* High credit rating
* Revenue growth stream
 | * High stock price
* High national currency
* Strong balance sheet
* High profit margin
* Financial stability and high return on investment
* Low interest rates
* High credit rating
* High potential for success against competitors
 |
| Global reach and influence | * Free trade agreements
* Supply chains
* Off-shoring business operations
 | * Global supply chains
* Off-shored manufacturing
* Ownership of foreign capital assets: land, facilities, stocks and bonds
 |
| Global supply chains | * Free trade and national exporting specialization
 | * Increased manufacturing efficiency (cost minimization) and stability
 |
| Imperfect industry competition | * Lack of government regulation
 | * Opportunities for market-control, profit-enhancing oligopolies, and monopolies
 |
| Industry growth | * Expanded markets and profits
* Entrepreneurial opportunities
* Job creation and full employment
 | * Profit center expansion
* Higher return on investment
 |
| Invention, innovation, and intellectual property | * Research and development
* Technical professionals
* Corporate “intrapreneurship”
 | * These are the highest value-adding, most profitable product components
 |
| Managing employees as commodities | * Part-time jobs
* Off-shoring & outsourcing
 | * Cost minimization, profit maximization
* Flexible operations
 |
| Recipient of government support (subsidies, tariffs, guaranteed loans, etc.) | * Mixed capitalism
 | * Competitive edge over foreign competitors
 |
| Strength of global rationalization: maximum exploitation of global opportunities at minimum cost | * Using the entire world as an operating arena for capitalistic opportunity and profit maximization
 | * Increased rationality (profit maximizing-cost minimizing) over product production and marketing
 |
| Value-added chain product profile | * Range and profitability of contribution to a total product or service
 | * Product return on investment increases as corporate business processes move away from low utility products and undifferentiated branding towards lifestyle products and brand elitism.
 |

**LEVEL 4 OPPORTUNISM:**

**Nationalism Opportunistic Assets and Economic Systems**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Opportunities for Nationalistic Gain and Geo-Political Dominance** | **Means of Empowerment** | **Potential Nationalistic** **Pay-Offs** |
| Capitalism strength and access to lucrative global markets | * Free enterprise, free trade, competitive industry structures
 | * Corporate colonialism
 |
| Cultural imperialism and influence | * Exporting capitalism, language, consumerism, lifestyles, secularism, government philosophy
 | * International cultural influence
 |
| Economic power | * Capitalistic systems: financial markets, industries, business infrastructure
* Corporations
* Consumer markets
* Strong national currency
 | * Strong capitalism, trade, and high standard of living
 |
| Exports, high value-added | * Intellectual property: invention, innovation
 | * High profit margins and control of market penetration
 |
| Fiscal government surplus or balanced budget | * Political party cooperation and ideological compromise
 | * Lessened fiscal dependency on other nations
* Inflation control
* Lower leakage of national revenues to interest payments
 |
| Middle class social structure | * Plentiful, accessible jobs
* High employment
* Strong national educational system
* Stable families
* Work ethic
* Equal opportunity
 | * Lucrative production and consumerism markets for capitalism
 |
| Military power | * Overt and covert wars
* Colonialism
* Proxy wars
 | * Colonialism and mercantilism
 |
| Natural resources breadth & depth | * Potable water, crop land, minerals, wood, temperate climate, etc.
* National geography, conservation systems, controlled consumerism
 | * Above average economic self-sufficiency
* Strong currency
* Controlled government deficits
* Lending money to foreign governments and consumers
* Greater control over foreign policy
 |
| Protectionism | * Tariffs, subsidies, mixed capitalism (government assisting business)
 | * Infant of uncompetitive industry protection
 |
| Supply chain control & value-added chain | * Manufacturing, transportation, insurance, distribution, marketing
 | * Manufacturing efficiency
 |
| Protectionism | * Tariffs, subsidies, mixed capitalism (government assisting business)
 | * Infant of uncompetitive industry protection
 |
| Trade surpluses | * Positive current and capital accounts
 | * Strong currency
* Controlled government deficits
* Lending money to foreign governments and consumers
 |

**LEVEL 5 OPPORTUNISM:**

**Global Power Systems**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Opportunities for Global Gain** | **Examples** | **Potential Global Pay-Offs** |
| Dominance of free trade markets | * Low mixed capitalism
* Competitive industry structures
* Limited business regulation
* High business ethics
 | * Less economic nationalism and better balance of world incomes
 |
| Free trade agreements | * European Union
* North American Free Trade Agreement
* American-pacific Economic Cooperative
 | * Trade rationalization
 |
| Geographic access to natural resources | * Waterways
* Physical infrastructure
* Cooperative borders
 | * Natural resource conservation and renewal pricing
 |
| Global government and economic organizations | * United Nations
* World Trade Organization
* International Monetary Fund and World Bank
* European Union
* International Criminal Court
* International Standards Organization
 | * Win-win capitalism and trade
* Economic efficiency
* Trade cooperation
* Fair income distribution
 |
| Global warming damage, low vulnerability  | * Landlocked geography
* Fertile crop land
* Pollution control
 | * Higher crop yields and lower soil degradation
* Natural resource rationality
 |
| Non-government global organizations | * Greenpeace
* Human Rights Watch
* Kyoto Protocol
* et.al.
 | * Corporate social accountability potential
* Representation of non-corporate interests and stakeholders
 |