**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 |