

Microspeak: Hipo

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A friend of mind was asked out of the blue, “What does *hypo* mean?” She started to flash back to high school English class and Greek word roots. “I’ve started to hear it everywhere. Like *Everyone in that meeting is a hypo* or *We need to reach out to hypos*.” My friend realized that she had mis-heard the question. It was not about the Greek root *hypo* but rather the bizarro Microspeak word *hipo*, shorthand for *high-potential employee*. As I researched this term (which I had never encountered before), I found that it fell into that special category of Microspeak known as *if you have to ask, I’m not going to tell you*. Identifying and developing high-potential employees is one of the charter activities of the ExPo project. And if you look through the ExPo Web site, you’ll find that nowhere do they tell you what *HiPo* and *ExPo* stand for. “If you have to ask, I’m not going to tell you.”

My friend suggested that “ExPos are people who have a lot of potential and enjoy showing it off to others.”

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