

And there is no reason to believe that human affairs are an exception.

Yet hardly a day passes that you do not hear someone blame his problems on "bad" luck. And it's a rare day that you do not hear someone attribute *another* person's success to "good" luck.

Let me illustrate how people succumb to luck excusitis. I lunched recently with three young junior executives. The topic of conversation that day was George C., who just yesterday had been picked from among their group for a major promotion.

Why did George get the position? These three fellows dug up all sorts of reasons: luck, pull, bootlicking, George's wife and how she flattered the boss, everything but the truth. The facts were that George was simply better qualified. He had been doing a better job. He was working harder. He had a more effective personality.

I also knew that the senior officers in the company had spent much time considering which one of the four would be promoted. My three disillusioned friends should have realized that top executives don't select major executives by drawing names from a hat.

I was talking about the seriousness of luck excusitis not long ago with a sales executive of a machine tool-manufacturing company. He became excited about the problem and began to talk about his own experience with it.

"I've never heard it called that before," he said, "but it is one of the most difficult problems every sales executive has to wrestle with. Just yesterday a perfect example of what you're talking about happened in my company.

"One of the salesmen walked in about four o'clock with a \$112,000 order for machine tools. Another salesman, whose