Leadership and Networking Skills for Women in Science and Technology

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Working to level the playing field for women in science and engineering in higher education and in research laboratories.

1997
Chemistry

Today
Physics
Engineering
Computer Sciences
Geological and Earth Sciences
Medicine
Mathematics
Materials Science
Biology

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Topics discussed in the leadership workshop

• Characteristics of good and bad leadership
• Elements of a successful leader
• Leadership styles effective for women
• Building and using networks for leadership building
• Career building strategies
Opportunities for leadership arise everyday.
Why do people take on leadership roles?

- To avoid someone else doing it
- For financial gain
- More in control of your environment
- Sense of duty
- Because your peers elected you
- Drafted by upper level management

From: Chairing an Academic Department by Walter Gmelch and Val D. Miskin
What are the attributes of a good leader?

1. Think of an individual that you know in your workplace that has been a good leader. What were his/her qualities?

2. Think of someone who has been an ineffective leader. What were his/her qualities?
Research on predictors of leadership success

- Trust
- Productivity
- Competency
- Ability to set reasonable agenda
- Self-awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses
- Integrity in the treatment of others
- Ability to learn from experience

From: The Lessons of Experience, McCall, Lombardo, Morrison
Reasons why leaders fail in the workplace

- Betrayed trust
  - Decline in productivity
  - Insensitive, abrasive and intimidating style
  - Cold, aloof, arrogant
- Over-managing
- Overly ambitious
- Unable to be strategic

From: *The Lessons of Experience*, McCall, Lombardo, Morrison
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

1. Develop a vision and communicate it clearly

- Involve the team in the development process to gain buy-in
- Prioritize tasks necessary to achieve the vision
- Focus the team on the most important and critical tasks
- Delegate tasks to the people best able to complete the task
- Regularly communicate the vision and core values
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

2. It’s never about you! Be selfless

- Demote yourself to serving those you lead
- Leaders serve others and help them accomplish their goals
- When you do things in the interest of people you lead, you earn trust
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

3. Work to earn trust and respect

Trust is based on the respect and expectations of a leader who cares and acts with compassion in a most positive way.

• Live the vision you project
• Be honest and transparent with your decision
• Be fair and consistent in how you treat people
• Foster good relationships
• Listen, listen and listen
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

5. Help your team to succeed by

- Coaching them to do the job better; giving feedback
- Mentoring them towards career advancement
- Communicating clearly your vision and goals
- Listening to hear their ideas, concerns and aspirations
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

6. Make the decisions and be held accountable

• Base decisions on as much data as possible
• Study the issue while not losing sight of the big picture
• Don’t make decisions too quickly
• Once a decision is made, be confident in persuading others
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

7. View leadership as a learning process

- What strategy works today may not work tomorrow
- Study the ever changing work environment
- Learn how to be flexible and help others adapt to change
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

- Competitors should be external
  - Avoid internal competitions among team members
  - Attribute success to the team as well as the individuals
Rules for Building Leadership Influence

8. Celebrate successes and have fun!

- Foster a feeling of family and support
- Provide a comfortable, inclusive and enjoyable workplace
- This is especially important during tough economic times
Unfortunately, leadership is gendered.

• Men are leaders

• Women are female leaders
Research shows that it is more difficult for women than men to be leaders

• Women face barriers at all levels

• It is tougher for women to be selected for leadership roles

• Women are evaluated more harshly in leadership roles

(Eagly and Carli, Harvard Business Review, September, 2007)
Women in leadership roles are expected to act consistent with culturally defined gender roles.
Realities of leadership as a female

1. What is effective for men is not necessarily effective for women.

2. What is effective for women depends on the context in which leadership is enacted.

For women, there is a narrow band of acceptable communication and leadership behavior.

Women are evaluated negatively for both masculine and feminine leadership behaviors.

What’s a woman to do?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS

Factors Influencing the Changing Role of Leaders in Organizations

» Global Competition
» Unprecedented Change
» Increasing Demands for Quality
» Flatter Organizations
» Emphasis on Teamwork
» More Diverse Workforce
» Need for Transformational Leadership
Models that work for women leaders

OPERATING STYLE: Cooperative

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: Team

BASIC OBJECTIVE: Quality Output

KEY CHARACTERISTICS: Lower Control, Empathic, Collaborative, High Performance Standards
Potential Obstacles for Women

Culture and reward system

• Women are often overlooked for the awards and recognition that result in career advancement

• Can be more problematic as women move up the career ladder
Potential Obstacles for Women

Desire to be liked

• Take on extra loads that reduce career productivity.

• Convince themselves that this service will overcome their other weaknesses.
Potential Obstacles for Women

Lack of Strong Career Building Networks

What networks do you have?
  Social?
  Professional?
  Virtual?
Career Building Networks

Research shows that:

• Men and women tend statistically to network with members of their own sex.

• Women tend to recognize this and work to diversify their networks towards 50% men.

• Men’s networks include very few women.

*This is problematic for women given that men occupy the majority of leadership posts in many fields.*

Torres and Huffman, Sociological Focus, 2002.
Career Building Networks

Research shows that:

• Men pass the news of job opportunities mostly through social networks.
• The news reaches women often after it has reached and passed several men.

Torres and Huffman, Sociological Focus, 2002.
Career Building Networks

The good news:
• Women tend to be more effective at networking and have broader networks.

The bad news:
• The breadth does not overcome the concentration of power in male networks.

Torres and Huffman, Sociological Focus, 2002.
Career Building Networks

Career advancement leads often come through “weak ties” - acquaintances or friends of friends.

And often rely on assumptions and biases that can put women at a disadvantage.

Torres and Huffman, Sociological Focus, 2002.
Career Building Networks

Recommendations:

Women need to:

• Add more men - especially high status men - to their professional networks.

• Make their interests and competencies as clear as possible.

• Put themselves in the path of the leads.

Torres and Huffman, Sociological Focus, 2002.
Career Building Networks - three levels

Aspirational network

Professional network

Support network
Other Potential Obstacles for Women

Men are more willing to
put themselves and their ideas forward.
self nominate for good assignments and awards.

Women expect to be tapped for things, based on merit.
Women often undermine their efforts

When things go wrong, women often blame themselves.

Men tend to put it on external factors.

When things go well, women often don’t take the credit.

Women often attribute their success to luck.

From Loden, Marilyn, *Feminine Leadership or How to Succeed in Business Without Becoming One of the Boys*, 1985
Women often use words that undercut their power

“I’d just like to say something about…..”

“I’m a bit concerned….”

“Perhaps we should…”

“I may not be right but what if we…. “
Women often use words that undercut their power

“You may already know this but…”

“I could be wrong…”

“It’s just my opinion but…”

“This is probably a stupid question…”

“Your probably know more about this than I do but…"
**Use powerful and strong statements**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Instead of</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m confident</td>
<td>I think</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know</td>
<td>I hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe</td>
<td>I feel</td>
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<tr>
<td>I will do</td>
<td>I’ll try</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m certain</td>
<td>I’m not sure</td>
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In summary

- Characteristics of good and bad leadership
- Elements of a successful leader
- Leadership styles effective for women
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- Career building strategies

Take control of your destiny
Thank You!!