

EXECUTIVE WOMEN'S SUCCESS INSTITUTE

New Rules for Executive Women Success

A Special Report

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Do you feel that you've gone as far as you can with your current position? Despite knowing that you have much more potential, is there a limit for "people like you" in your organization? If so, you've hit what's known as the "glass ceiling." This is the point at which you can clearly see the next level of promotion – yet, despite your best effort, an invisible barrier seems to stop you from proceeding.

New Rules for Executive Women Success™

Whether you are seeking to be promoted or making a transition, there is a slow path and a fast path to get there.

Women professionals who have moved up the ranks have certain key traits that got them there and shows they are distinctly different from the ordinary and average. Our research and experience have uncovered these **secrets** that will get you on the fast track to success. Research and experience suggest there are eight key characteristics for women to maximize their success. These characteristics are known as the **“8 Habits of Highly Successful Women™.”**

The current economic climate has forced many companies to streamline, trim and make more efficient use of their present staff. There’s never been a better time for ambitious women to position themselves for advancement in their careers. Through dedication and commitment, you can strengthen and enhance your leadership skills, bring your worth and value to the forefront, and land that executive-level promotion you’ve dreamed of.

Countless professional women have propelled themselves into upper management positions by showcasing their talent and abilities - and so can **YOU!**

A Few Facts

A report by Catalyst published on *The Myth of the Ideal Worker: Does Doing All the Right Things Really Get Women Ahead?* (October 2011), tackles persistent myths about the gender gap. Career advancement strategies used by women and men were compared to determine if using the same strategies ultimately leads to the same career outcomes. Findings revealed that:

- Men benefited more from adopting proactive strategies.
- When women did all the things they have been told will help them get ahead—using the same tactics as men—they still advanced less than their male counterparts and had slower pay growth.

The accepted message on gender disparity in the workplace has for the past 10 to 15 years been one of acknowledgment and reassurance: Yes, women represent just 3% of *Fortune* 500 CEOs and less than 15% of corporate executives at top companies worldwide, but give it time. It’ll change. After all, women also make up 40% of the global workforce, with double-digit growth in certain countries. They’re earning advanced professional degrees in record numbers and in some areas surpassing men. Companies have implemented programs to fix structural biases against women and support their full participation in leadership. Women are finally poised to make it to the top, the argument goes. Not yet, but soon.

If only that were true. New research by Catalyst published March 2010, on *Women in Management: Delusions of Progress* shows that among graduates of elite MBA programs around the world—the high potentials on whom companies are counting to navigate the turbulent global economy over the next decade—women continue to lag men at every single career stage, right from their first professional jobs. Reports of progress in advancement, compensation, and career satisfaction are at best overstated, at worst just plain wrong.

It's especially disconcerting that, after a decade of aggressive efforts to create opportunities for women, inequity remains entrenched. Companies must acknowledge their failure on this front, learn why they haven't succeeded, and come up with better programs to help talented women advance.

My Journey Guides Women Up the Ladder to Success

I know how you feel! I've always had a passion for helping others in any way I could. During the time I served in the military, I was blessed with a mentor who saw my gifts and helped me reach ranks that few women do – let alone a woman of color – in the armed services. Both then and later in my role in civilian federal government, I began to realize that women were coming to me for advice on a lot of things such as reviewing their resumes, advice on what they should do next to move their careers along, helping them get through an interview - and mentoring, just as I had had earlier.

I also noticed that there were not many women helping each other to move up the ladder. They either wouldn't take the time or have the willingness to share their knowledge with others behind them on the journey to success. Seeing these things, I knew I had honed in on my purpose.

This inspired me to start my own business to provide guidance, coaching personal and professional development to those who needed and wanted to advance in their careers or to start a business. It also inspired my two books "*Playing from the Blue Tee: Women in the Federal Government*" and "*Finding Your Best Inside: How to Persevere and Become the Person You Are Meant to Be.*"

Barriers You May Encounter

Although many of the structural barriers that might impede women in their attempts to climb the corporate ladder have been removed through legislation to promote gender equality and to combat discrimination, there is no denying the reality that men continue to predominate in the upper tiers of management. The barriers that remain derive from a combination of stereotypical attitudes and perceptions, which continue to compartmentalize people and leadership qualities by gender, and the existing imbalance itself, which is self-supporting and restricts access to female role models and mentors for the pipeline of potential women leaders.



You can break through.

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Gearing Up for Success

How far you advance in your vocation or line of work will determine whether it is a career or merely a job. Some women are content to just bring home a paycheck every week while others aspire to greater professional accomplishments. With that in mind, you must do a self-assessment and make a decision as to which side of the spectrum you're on.

What are your immediate and long-term goals?	
What are your interests and aspirations?	
Are your capabilities under-utilized in your current job?	
Evaluate your personal and career objectives	
Take inventory of your current skills.	

You may already possess the talents, business aptitude and determination that it takes to move ahead, all you need to do is cultivate them.

Essential Elements for Career Advancement

Here are a few of the key elements I have discovered you need to advance in your career, and about which I mentor young women:

- ▶ A desire to advance
- ▶ Being willing to work hard to achieve your goals.
- ▶ Realizing your worth and value so that others will.
- ▶ Adopting a professional demeanor – conducive with an upper-level executive.
- ▶ You must develop distinguishable attributes that set you apart from your co-workers.
- ▶ Communicate your desire for advancement to your superiors. (Employers are greatly impressed by conscientious employees).
- ▶ You must outshine your co-workers.

Be Knowledgeable to Gain Credibility

The old adage “*what you don’t know won’t hurt you*” is not true when it comes to advancing in one’s career. In this case - Knowledge is King! When moving up in an organization is your objective, you need to learn as much as possible about the company’s history, founders and standard company operating procedures. By doing so, this sets you apart and will garner you some very positive recognition from superiors.

The successful woman must be **Knowledgeable** – Learn all you can, from your job and anything you can from others around you. Knowledge is the key to credibility for any professional. Most experts will not challenge your credibility in an open forum. However, you may be evaluated in conversations and you may or may not be given the opportunity to explain your position.

*The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance, it is the illusion of knowledge.
(Stephen Hawking)*

The Road to Success Is Not Always Easy

If you're employed by a large company or if you're in an industry where there's room for advancement, don't be afraid to throw your hat into the ring when there's an opportunity you feel suited for. If you're in a smaller company, find out if it's perhaps a subsidiary of a larger company. It's not uncommon for small companies to be owned (wholly or partly) by major corporations. Many successful career-minded women have started out in the smaller divisions and worked their way up to top-level positions in the parent company.



On the other hand, if you're employed by a small company, which offers no room for advancement, you have some decisions to make. In this instance, the need for self-exploration and evaluation of your options become paramount. In your pursuit of career success you must be open and receptive to making life-altering changes that will get you to where you want to be.

Keep in mind that you will encounter office politics and personality clashes in every corporate setting. However, the closer you get to executive status, the further removed you'll be from office pettiness.

Your Pursuit of Career Success

To make it up the ladder you need to establish yourself as more than just the average employee. You must showcase your talents, abilities and aptitude; call attention to the attributes that set you apart.

In your pursuit of career success you must be open and receptive to making life-altering changes that will get you to where you want to be. Few things can rival the self-gratification in knowing you've made it; you've reached your goal. But have no illusions that it's a piece of cake or a walk in the park. If it was *that* easy to climb the ladder to success, everyone would be on the top rung. Every successful person has a story of the struggle involved in getting to where they are. It's not easy, but it's attainable if you're made of the right stuff.

***Success takes dedication
and the willingness to
work hard to achieve your
desired outcome.***

The old saying “it’s lonely at the top” has been around for so many years because it has been true for so many years. What has historically been a male-dominated environment is now quite populated with women, and each one has her own story of triumph and the obstacles she had to overcome.



You must take whatever steps are necessary to enhance the skills you already possess while developing the ones you need to get ahead.

Let’s think of the word career as an acronym, and then seek to be what each letter represents:

- C** ----Consistent
- A** ----Assertive
- R** ----Reliable
- E** ----Effective
- E** ----Efficient
- R** ----Responsible

If you possess these qualities you have the makings of a dynamic leader.

It may be another generalization, but women are considered better at interpersonal communication. Female leaders are in the position to provide feedback to other women, to assist them in their quest for excellence. The most important thing an established leader can do is to help others achieve their goals as well.

In a nutshell, just like anybody else. Helen Reddy sang, “I am woman, hear me roar,” but women don’t need to roar to be heard. Persistence, personality, and plain, old-fashioned hard work are the stepping stones on the path to success.

To level the playing field you must know how the game is played. As a professional woman, if you feel as though you’re auditioning for a part in a theatrical production everyday....it’s because you are.

A successful leader recognizes the success of others and celebrates their achievements. The best leaders, the ones who earn their admiration of those around them, are not micro-managers and are not glory hogs. A female becomes a success by recognizing what needs to be done, and she gets it done.

Key Points

To get ahead and reach the leadership level you want, you need to champion and market yourself. That means proactively managing every step of your career. If you can't seem to break through a glass ceiling, you might have to work harder than others.

We can't all be exactly the type of upper management person our company wants. What we can do is develop the skills that the company values. Arm yourself with a development plan as well as the help of your boss, a strong network, and, hopefully, a mentor. You can then build and showcase the skills that will help you climb the corporate ladder. Push yourself beyond your comfort zone, and you may find new zones of opportunity.

Are You a Visionary?

Women make great worker-bees, but visionary leaders--not so much. Margaret Thatcher is often quoted as saying: "If you want something said, ask a man. If you want something done, ask a woman." Unfortunately, that's the kind of thinking that keeps the vast majority of women stuck in middle management, while men move forward into leadership roles. At a certain point, you've got to give up the grindstone to pursue vision and strategy.



Conclusion

Females bravely go where no woman, or man, has gone before. The image of a successful female is a woman who chooses to lead; she has a vision for the future, and is a person that others choose to follow.

Are you that woman? Do you provide inspiration and provide opportunities for others to grow? Do you live your values? The quintessential female executive leader has high expectations of herself and others, yet is an encouraging example, not a dreaded task master. She has learned to be an expert in time management and she knows to stay to true to herself.

The greatest executive females exude the confidence that they are doing exactly what they are meant to do. They are living out their passion and others want to grab a hold of their coattail. Helen Keller said, "One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar." The image of a female leader who excels in an executive position is one who soars, and she teaches others to fly as well.

Getting ahead is about breaking bad habits like always wanting to be humble and not too visible. As we always tell our children, 'Just do it.' Do you want that job with the raise? Do you want that promotion? You really have to know why you want it and you have to be able to taste it. Confidence comes from clarity of purpose and repeated action.



If You Want to Learn More

Find out what it takes to get your career on the fast track to executive success. Learn what other highly successful women already know.

To learn more about the **“8 Habits of Highly Successful Women™”** teleseminar or coaching packages visit website <http://www.executivewomenssuccessinstitute.com> or contact Dr. Madeline Ann Lewis at info@executivewomenssuccessinstitute.com or call 301-693-3284 for a complimentary strategy session to see how our services can help YOU advance - or to find out about upcoming training dates or coaching programs available.

To your successful journey,

Madeline

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**IF YOU
WANT TO
LEARN**