



Get Noticed, Give Value AND be Yourself!
by Sabana Crowcroft

One of the biggest challenges business women face today is to be accepted for who they are and to be acknowledged for their own unique leadership style, without feeling the need to compromise their behaviour in order to adapt to a patriarchal corporate culture, or the expectations of their male peers.

The good news is that EVERY WOMAN can influence this level of acceptance inwardly and outwardly. You can get noticed and promoted in the most challenging of environments without turning yourself inside-out to do it.

The Statistics Paint a Dismal Picture

The worldwide statistics show us that women still have a very long way to go to reach equality in the workplace. Two-thirds of the work around the world is done by women, yet only 10% of the earnings go to them, and women own only 1% of the property.

Despite a very progressive constitution empowering women in South Africa, a Census carried out in 2004 shows dismal results. It found that only 14.7% of all executive managers and only 7.1% of all directors are women, despite the fact that women make up 52% of the working population.*

This despite the fact that companies who do promote women into senior management positions have a 35% higher return on equity and a 34% higher total return to shareholders than companies who maintain the male status-quo.

The arguments as to why corporations has remained essentially the male domain are quite complex, many of which are discussed in my book "The Feminine Formula for Success in Business" published by New Africa Books.

Fit In and Get Lost

One of the major challenges business women face in the corporate world is the enormous pull to "fit in" in order to seemingly please superiors and those who handle their promotion prospects.





When we are passionate we get labelled “emotional”, when we are tough and clear we risk being called “the bitch”.

We believe still today that we have to work harder than our male counterparts to get the same recognition.

The feminine side of our personality is very often pushed away when it comes to managing and leading people, because of the pervasive patriarchal corporate culture.

Or Be Different and Get Noticed

Contrary to what we might believe, our desire to fit in does not support our promotion prospects – leaders want lateral thinkers, those willing to fight for what they believe and challenge accepted paradigms, not yes men and women.

I interviewed many successful business women for my book, and one thing struck me about all of them – they used both their female charm and masculine power to great effect at the appropriate moment.

The female brain is quite different to the male brain, one of the differences is its plasticity or adaptability to change. This is a double edged sword - it is both a wonderful asset and a dangerous tool that can lead to serious illnesses and depression when women adapt too far in order to be accepted.

Re-Frame our Historical Disadvantage

It's good to understand the historical and social conditioning both men and women have been subjected to, but at the end of the day we can only be responsible for our own mental state, subconscious programming and therefore our reality.

If we turn around these disadvantages and re-frame them, it's possible to see these challenges as advantages. There are many and when we can see them as our strength rather than our weakness this releases tremendous energy and a new reality shows up to support this.

When your inner world changes your outer world shifts instantly to support you.

During our workshops and presentations we examine the core beliefs, attitudes and values that are holding you back from achieving greater success.

We help you re-frame seemingly impossible situations, and help you discover your own uniqueness as a manager and/or leader of



people, as well as support to develop a strategic plan to promote yourself to your superiors.

Discrimination has made women hardworking, determined and resilient. You are only a few steps away from success – the key is to know which steps and how to take them.

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* EmpowerDEX & the BWA Women in Corporate Leadership Census 2004.