How women can succeed in a man's world

Tips on how women can survive and develop in a male-dominated business environment, especially those who aim for high-level management positions. Read on for some useful information.

Don't wait to speak up

In business conferences, a man is more likely to share his thoughts even if they are still not fully formed. Women tend to hear other people's views first before disclosing their own. Inevitably, they frequently miss the opportunity of expressing their thoughts because of time constraints. The reality is that people rarely remember details of a discussion but they do remember who talks and who doesn't. Quieter people are taken as either lacking in ideas or lacking in commitment. Women should learn from their male counterparts and fight for every chance to have their say.

Learn to say 'no'

Men are more inclined to say "no" to administrative assignments that either are not within their job description or are avoidable. In contrast, women are more willing to help out if there is an additional workload or administrative tasks. As a result, women tend to receive more such work that contributes little to the next career move. Some bosses would rather retain hard-working women than promote them to save trouble looking for hard-to-find replacements. Women should learn from their male peers to say "no" and justify why.

Set up realistic expectations

Although female business leaders tend to spend more time caring for their families than their male counterparts, it doesn't necessarily lead to lower expectations of their performance. Shareholders make no distinction over business targets or the bottom line between leaders of different genders. This is the reality that women need to understand and accept before they decide to take on more responsibility at work. Every gain has a price. This applies to female bosses. They have no choice but to ignore their gender at work in order to live up to stakeholders' expectations.

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