

UNLEASHING THE DIVERSITY OF HUMAN POTENTIAL IN THE WOMEN'S WIN NETWORK



The Double-bind

The double-bind means that in the workplace women are perceived as successful or likeable, but not both. Studies indicate that the double-bind exists because of stereotypes and unconscious bias – if a woman employs a “masculine” style (i.e. transactional, competitive, command and control) that violates the stereotype of “feminine” (relational, communal, nurturing), both men and women tend to like her less. On the other hand, if she employs a “feminine” style, she may be perceived as not having what it takes to succeed.

Questions for contemplation and action:

Have you experienced the double-bind and if yes, is your default style more “masculine” or “feminine”?

In what instances do you hold yourself back from asking for what you need at work for fear of not being liked? What tips will you implement to enable you to ask more effectively?

Following today’s session, what steps will you take to escape the double-bind?



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Imposter Syndrome

Imposter Syndrome is a term coined by psychologists in a 1978 study of high-achieving women which demonstrated a pattern of these women dismissing their accomplishments or feeling like their success would disappear once others found out that they were not sufficiently intelligent or competent. People with Imposter Syndrome tend to be unable to internalise their successes and instead attribute achievements to external factors such as luck, good timing or connections. High-achieving women who have acknowledged that they have Imposter Syndrome include Michelle Obama, Sheryl Sandberg, Kate Winslet and Sonia Sotomayer.

Questions for contemplation and action:

If you have Imposter Syndrome, what behaviours do you engage in to protect yourself from being found out? For example, do you over-prepare, play small, keep a low profile, procrastinate or self-sabotage?

What is the one self-limiting belief that lies at the core of your Imposter Syndrome? Write it down, acknowledge that it is a false belief and replace it with a positive belief (that is a true reflection of who you are and your achievements).

Following today's session, what will you do differently to cure your Imposter Syndrome (or at least overcome self-doubt some of the time) and own your success?



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Perfectionism

Perfectionists have been defined as “people whose standards are high beyond reach or reason...and who strain compulsively and unremittingly towards impossible goals and who measure their own worth entirely in terms of productivity and accomplishment. Perfectionism is NOT about the healthy pursuit of excellence or personal and professional growth. The costs of perfectionism include depression, anxiety, burn-out, unhappiness and shame – although it is not always gender-linked and perhaps is a personality trait common in lawyers, perfectionist thoughts and behaviours can hold women back.

Questions for contemplation and action:

Where do you sit on the perfectionist spectrum? When and where can you be more selective and strategic about striving for perfection?

What specific perfectionist thoughts and behaviours do you sometimes engage in?

Following today’ session, what will you do differently to overcome perfectionism?

Remember to be brave and take inspired and consistent action to overcome what holds you back to find a new level of success in-house that includes not only excellence but meaning, purpose, connection, well-being and joy for yourself and for those around you – a WINNING strategy!