

ACE WOMEN'S Network™ Michigan

Mentoring Mondays
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MENTORING MONDAYS

To continue our review of *“How Women Rise”* by Sally Helgensen and Marshall Goldsmith, today we will examine Habit #2 of “break the 12 habits holding you back from your next raise, promotion, or job.”

Habit 2: Expecting Others to Spontaneously Notice and Reward Your Contributions

If advocating for yourself makes you feel awkward, then get ready to see how this can sabotage your best efforts and result in your hard work being overlooked. Expecting others to notice – and champion – your contributions, or believing that they should is not only a good way to keep yourself stuck, it can also diminish the satisfaction you feel in a job you would otherwise enjoy. This type of thinking might get you to start believing you don't really belong in your job. After all, if people around you can't see the amazing job you are doing, perhaps you would be better off somewhere else. Taking this approach is self-defeating.

Let's look at Maureen's story. She was a senior partner in a law firm. “Despite her stellar early performance, she made partner later than a number of men who joined the firm the same year she did. This made her feel so undervalued that, at the start of her fifth year as an associate, she decided the firm wasn't a good fit for her. When a client approached her about a position in his company's general counsel's office, she met with him several times. Then with great trepidation, she let her practice head know she was looking around. ‘Would you consider staying if you were made partner?’ he asked. Without hesitation, she said yes. ‘Assume it's going to happen,’ he told her. ‘Don't make any move till it does. I don't think the members of our partnership committee realized you were set on it (*being a partner*).’ How could they not know she thought; hadn't anyone noticed that she had been working her tail off since the day she arrived? Why on earth would they not assume partnership was her goal? Two months later she was made partner.”

The lesson in this story is that you have to let the decision makers know your goals and expectations, and be enthusiastic about where you want to go in the company. This story goes on further and Maureen's experiences taught her to “become passionate about letting women

entering the firm know how important it is to take responsibility for getting noticed. ‘If you want to make partner, you need to say so, over and over.’ Just working hard won’t get you where you want to go.”

Here is another example of advocating for yourself – **the elevator speech** – an approach favored by Dong, who is an executive sponsor for the women’s initiative at a London-based global financial institution. “During a recent conference at an off-site, a participant asked him during the large plenary session what one thing he thought women should do to better position themselves for leadership in the organization. He responded with a story about finding himself in the elevator at the bank’s London headquarters. . . . A young male analyst who had recently joined the organization was standing next to him when a high-profile senior official stepped inside. The young man was from the Middle East, very polished, obviously confident, but also polite. Not swaggering or arrogant. . . . The official had no idea who the young analyst was. As the elevator started to move, the executive asked the young man what he did at the bank. Without hesitation, he responded with three clear and succinct sentences. He mentioned his present job, said his goal was to lead a telecom investment team to south Asia, and noted ties between his country of origin and the region he hoped to work in as well as two key relationships that would be useful. The little speech took less than a minute but was packed with information. He had clearly given thought to every word and thoroughly rehearsed it.

“When the spiel was finished, the analyst stopped speaking and handed his card to the official, who then held the elevator door open as he got off. ‘I’m going to pass this along to the head of our subcontinent investment team,’ he said. ‘If you don’t hear from him, let his office know I personally told you to call.’”

The lesson in this example is: “Having a clear, concise statement ready to deliver at any moment, one that says what you do now but emphasizes what you want to do in the future and why you’re qualified to do it, gives you a huge advantage in terms of visibility and positioning.”

This is truly an exciting read. If you are interested in securing your own copy of the book *“How Women Rise,”* I encourage you to visit www.hachettbooks.com.

Stay tuned next week and learn about Habit #3 and how to break it.