

Women & Leadership: Ten Critical Steps Forward (for women & men)

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A post for women and men who seek to empower stronger and better leadership in a world of unprecedented change, challenges and opportunities. The future lies in the hands of those who can empower and enable others. It is time for women and men to light the fire of human potential, of great leadership; doing so starts with women leading forward! © Irene Becker, Just Coach It-The 3Q Edge™



When we embrace our true potential, and do so with humanity, humility and the desire to serve the greatest good, we rekindle the most important fire of all; the fire of human potential-the fire of leading forward together! Leadership is a 3Q Equation: (IQ) Intellect-Strategic Thought EQ (emotions-empathy-self & social mgmt) SQ (values-integrity-humanity). It is a gender-less equation that must be enfranchised by those who have typically been disenfranchised.

The writing is on the walls of our lives, our communities, our organizations and our world; it is time for women to lead forward. And it is time for men to champion their sisters, because our individual and collective hope for a better future lies in men and women collaborating and leading forward together.

You cannot light a fire with wet wood. The future lies in the hands of those who can empower and enable the best in others.

I am grateful to the sisters, the women before me who suffered for my human rights, and to those men who had the courage to stand alongside them. As a woman, as a part of an ethnic minority, as a member of the human race I am grateful to those who suffered before me for the rights and freedoms I have now.

The most important fire we can light is the fire of human potential, and I believe that women have a critical role to play.

It is a role that takes courage, resiliency and the ability to stand tall. It is the most important role we can play. Most of the world, and most of womankind goes to bed hungry, disadvantaged and beaten in one way or the other. The strength of those who have a voice and their ability to use their voices to lead forward is critical. The strength of those who have been enabled with learning to use their knowledge to help others is imperative. The strength of those who refuse to let go of their faith, hope, humanity, integrity and courage is our hope for a better future.

1. Empowerment is both an internal and external journey that takes time. It is important to stand up, not down; it is important to R-E-A-C-H forward

When the external conditions enfranchise human rights and voice, those who have been disenfranchised must then reset their own internal GPS. We will not go from a mindset of being dominated, to finding freedom and empowerment without resetting our own internal GPS by celebrating the power, the positive contribution we can and will make. What became clear to me, as I grew, learned and

evolved was that it takes time for those who have been disenfranchised to step up to the plate. Laws and society must first welcome them, and then those who have been underdogs need to go through their own metamorphosis where the chains of disenfranchisement and victimhood no longer impeded their own sense of self esteem or abilities.

2. Stereotypes must be challenged, because the pull of the past is strong, and the past will not take us forward. Strong women scare weak men. This does not mean that we must undervalue our strengths. It means we must stand up and stand tall. Typically men are taught to overvalue their strengths, and women to undervalue theirs. Stop stereotyping yourself. See your strengths for what they are, and use your challenges to enable your potential. I believe with all my head and heart that women are in the midst of an important reset, as are other groups who have suffered. And, it is those who can rise above what was, and see their ability to build a bridge between sisters, brothers, diversity, constituencies...between the human divide before us that will be able to lead forward.

3. Do not become a victim of your biology, rather the biological imperative that women have to help the world lead forward. Men are typically wired to control and women to connect. Don't hide your desire to build a better world under a bushel, celebrate it, ignite it and pass the torch forward. The same inherent strengths that make most of us great nurturers are what the world needs now more than ever before. Will we survive and thrive with a winner takes all model of leadership? Will we develop learning organizations, better societies, improved lives for all constituents by continuing models of leadership, governance that no longer work? Is it not time to celebrate our difference as women, our ability to really champion building organizations that strive and drive collaboration, communication and results for all constituents according to their respective abilities and potential?

4. Purpose = profit. A whole new world, workplace and

marketplace will continue to show us that leading forward means harnessing the potential of human being better, not simply doing faster than ever before. The inequities before us are incredible, but so is our power to lead forward. If we are daunted by what is, we cannot begin to use the very challenges we face to create what can be. We must stand up, and standing up means rally the full force of our courage and commitment to doing what is in alignment with the integrity, humanity and values that will sustain our world.

5. Stop competing, start collaborating. Celebrate the biological differences that can make us stronger TOGETHER. The corpus callosum that separates left and right hemispheres in women is thicker than in men. Yes, the biological imperative that helps most women be mothers, tend to multiple responsibilities also gives us an ability that is now critical to our individual and collective survival and prosperity. While we know now that we can all build new neural connections, and that men can learn to be more whole brained; women are hardwired to do so. Women need to take the lead in modeling new and better ways of communicating, collaborating and building relationships and in helping our brothers develop these critical skills. While there are many men who are great communicators, collaborators and relationship builders, many can benefit from growth in these areas just as women can benefit from learning more from men about positioning themselves in ways that help them to lead forward in a still male dominated world and mindset.

6. Get empowered, re-inspired and use this momentum to inspire others because the traditionally male model of leadership is not working. It is time to develop a new androgynous model of leadership that must be championed by women and men. The testosterone surge, the brute strength and desire to win above all that has taken us to where we are now, must be transformed. Women and men are critical to this transformation, and the imperative to work together has never

been more important.

7. Celebrate organizations and male leaders who have the courage, vision and values to champion women leaders and the leadership of those men and women who have been traditionally disenfranchised. Help men build skills and strengths that have been traditionally ascribed to women, help those who have been traditionally disenfranchised so that they can become 3Q Leaders who can optimize brain power, emotional power and the spiritual strength needed to lead forward with values, vision and action.

8. Come out of the closet. Too many women are relationship builders, nurturers, communicators and leaders who want to be part of developing a new way, a better way to lead forward together. We want to make a difference, but we can get stymied by ego, by societal definitions. Remember... Purpose = profit. Celebrate your purpose as a woman to help heal the world. Yes, I did say heal and I know this is a term that many might frown at...but, take a look around you. We need to heal as women, heal as minorities because the quicker we can stop looking at what was and use the strengths we have now to build and rebuild what can be, the faster and better we will move and lead forward!

9. Appreciate your ability to be empathetic and to become a WHOLE human being, a whole brained and whole heart leader.

Men typically have a much higher concentration of testosterone, which is great when aggressive action is needed. Women are typically better at building relationships, collaborating, solving problems and analyzing people problems. Recognize it as one of the greatest challenges AND strengths you have. The importance of understanding how people feel, and using this understanding to appreciate and motivate the best in others is critical. Model, teach and mentor empathetic leadership and watch it grow.

10. It is time to celebrate and USE our differences and

strengths as women and men to lead forward together. We will never accomplish this without women pushing forward in a positive way with a voice that must be heard. The voice of reason, the voice of compassion, the voice of collaboration, the voice of a new type of leadership that can take both men and women forward together. Our voice is not loud enough yet, but it is getting louder. We cannot and must not relent in removing the internal and external barriers before us. Our ability, as women, to light a fire of passion, purpose and potential is exponential. Every time we lead forward, we help others do the same.

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More on Women? More on Leadership? YOU Betcha!

Women Leading Forward

Against All Odds

Extraordinary Women Interview

Great Read Excerpt and Review: Dare-Dream-Do

Leadership Tips & Tools

Winning the Race with Wolves

Men and Women Leading Forward: Building 3Q Leadership™

The Leadership Compendium

I am committed to helping smart people and organizations use changes and challenges to optimize and catalyze their potential to communicate & LEAD FORWARD. Use changes and challenges to improve communication, management, leadership...career success? Yes!

Helping my clients build their 3Q Edge™ and develop the R-E-A-C-H™ that helps them lead forward smarter, faster and happier is what I do best!



Irene Becker | Just Coach It-The 3Q Edge™ | Reach-Resonance-Results

Executive Coaching, Consulting, Training and Keynotes with a 3Q Edge™

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irene@justcoachit.com Twitter @justcoachit

Tel: (1) 416-671-4726 Skype: beckerirene