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# 1. Education and career counselling

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A recent study of university students' perceptions of successful male and female managers found that the 'male as manager' stereotype is alive and well (Paris and Decker, 2012). Over 50 years of research has been conducted on gender issues in management and very little has changed. Facebook's Chief Operating Officer, Sheryl Sandberg, further drives this point home in an address to an audience at Harvard Business School. According to Sandberg (2013), 'if current trends continue, fifteen years from today, about one-third of the women [in this audience] will be working full-time and almost all of you will be working for the guy you are sitting next to. . . . If you want the outcome to be different, you will have to do something about it' (pp. 65–6). Currently, women comprise over 58 per cent and 60 per cent of US undergraduate and Master's degree students respectively (US Department of Education, 2012). The number of women in higher education has also increased worldwide (Becker et al., 2010). Women have an increasing presence in mid-level leadership positions, academia and entrepreneurial start-ups, and are working side by side with men in classrooms and businesses around the world, yet are faced with a persistent 'male as manager' stereotype to overcome as women work to obtain upper-level management positions (Paris and Decker, 2012). Given that women have a significant presence in business and business education, they comprise only 4.2 per cent of the Fortune 500, 4.5 per cent of the Fortune 1000 and 15 per cent of the top executives worldwide (Catalyst, 2012). As educators, how do we explain to over half of our student body that their chance of obtaining an upper-level management position is less than 15 per cent?

The lack of women in management is a global problem, though in some countries women fare a few percentage points better when it comes to obtaining upper-level management positions (ibid.). Trends around the world demonstrate that the gap between the perception of men and women as successful managers remains persistent (Schein, 1973, 1975, 1994; Brenner et al., 1989; Schein et al., 1989; Schein and Mueller, 1992; Heilman et al., 2004; Gorman, 2005; Duehr and Bono, 2006; Powell, 2012). Gender inequities appear early in a woman's career. According to Silva and Carter (2011) problems for women begin with their very first job after graduation and increased levels of education for both men and

women compounds the problem. The more education received, the greater the gap in starting salaries in favour of men (Compton, 2007). Women usually start from behind when it comes to pay and hierarchical position, after which the gap continues to widen. To address gender inequities, business schools have added diversity studies to the curriculum, to create awareness of the problems that women face as leaders and to challenge traditional 'male as manager' schemas in an attempt to move towards a more inclusive model of leadership.

Cognitive research has demonstrated that an individual's schema may change over time, based upon exposure to counter-stereotypical information (Spence, 1984; Fiske and Taylor, 1991; Mackie et al., 1992) or an intervention (Duehr and Bono, 2006). Ideally, one would think that diversity awareness in formal business education programmes should serve as an intervening force and provide individuals with counter-stereotypic information, prompting a reorganization or shift in schema (ibid.). Schools around the world accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) are required to include diversity education in the curriculum (Moore and Yakhou, 2006). Based upon the theoretical underpinnings of Lord and Maher's (1991) recognition-based processes model (Baumgardner et al., 1991), Paris and Decker (2012) hypothesized that students with greater familiarity of managerial role and managerial attributes would demonstrate fewer gender stereotypes of 'male as manager' than individuals who have not received formal business education. The hypothesis was not supported and according to the study, the greater the familiarity with the leader role the greater the 'pro-male bias'. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the female business education students stereotyped the managerial role with a 'pro-male bias' to a greater degree than their non-business student counterparts. Clearly, something is wrong with the current path that formal business education programmes are taking. As educators, we are preparing students for that critical first job, the one that helps to set their trajectory. We must be a solution to the problem by taking a more active role in ensuring that business schools focus on the current realities that female business students face as they enter the workforce, which will benefit the male business students as well (Simpson and Ituma, 2007).

In this chapter, we have identified knowledge, skills and abilities that benefit all students, but are of particular importance to female students. We address communication and the role it plays in perceived negotiations, connections as in fostering networks and mentoring relationships, and increasing competency-based self-efficacy of the female business student population as these areas are critical for women to understand and manage in order to 'Get In' and attain the job that they deserve. Most

likely, communication, connections and competencies cause difficulties for women due to their lack of prominence in the curriculum of many business schools (*ibid.*). In this chapter, we suggest strategies for educators in an attempt to provide our female students with career management tools and knowledge that they can utilize as they embark on successful and satisfying careers.

## CURRICULUM

According to the above study by Paris and Decker (2012), business schools appear to be negatively impacting the perceptions of women as managers. One explanation is that business schools and instructors use materials based upon traditional managerial research and paradigms, which include very little gender diversity (Sullivan and Buttner, 1992; Bryans and Mavin, 2003; Simpson, 2006) to the degree expected by AACSB. A review of contemporary business education materials by the current authors indicated that women are largely absent from popular business and management textbooks and the organizational research upon which these texts are written. Bryans and Mavin (2003) also noted that popular books used in MBA programmes are heavily male dominated. While it is impractical and naive to believe that instructors will be able to follow all of the current research on women in management and integrate this information into their coursework, it is imperative that organizational issues pertaining to women's success in the workplace be addressed at both a course and programmatic level to ensure success for all students. For instance, what knowledge, skills, and abilities do female students need to open doors to better employment opportunities? We discuss some subject areas in the next sections that can provide these knowledge, skills and abilities.

## COMMUNICATION

Communication, specifically oral communication, is one of the top skills that employers deem necessary for new graduates to possess (Shuayto, 2013). Communication affects an individual's career from the moment of hire and increases in importance as the individual climbs the corporate ladder (Gallois et al., 1992; Jahnke, 2011). Images of confidence and credibility are developed almost exclusively through communication patterns and behaviour (Brownell, 1993). In job interviews, applicants using a dominant or assertive communication style received higher competency ratings, more favourable applicant impressions, and a greater desire to

hire from the interviewer (Juodvalkis et al., 2003), while non-assertive applicants were viewed as less confident and socially incompetent (Gallois et al., 1992).

In studies of leadership effectiveness, there are few real differences between male and female leaders' style and behaviours (Eagly and Johnson, 1990), with the exception of communication differences (Bass, 1990). Female speech patterns differ from men significantly and in ways that make women appear powerless in the work environment (Brownell, 1993). For instance, women are more likely to use qualifying phrases, such as 'I think' or 'I feel', couch statements as questions, speak with an upward inflection that makes statements sound like questions, ask permission, apologize, use minimizing words, not answer the question, talk too fast or too softly, and use a naturally higher pitch that makes women sound childlike and incompetent (Frankel, 2004). Women also tend to use inclusive strategies in the workplace and are concerned with letting others have the opportunity to speak versus expressing their own opinion. Women have a challenge when it comes to communication. When they use gender-inappropriate communication behaviour (dominant behaviour), they improve their overall impression; however, they decrease their likeability and appear less social (Juodvalkis et al., 2003). While we want all students to communicate with integrity, honesty, and authenticity (Buckingham, 2012), we want them to be successful. To help female students with communication, their presentations should be carefully monitored to recognize and correct for some of the traditional, gender-based communication patterns mentioned above. Educators can also use oral presentation as a tool to help female students recognize and correct passive forms of communication.

In the future, diversity and globalization may eventually challenge traditional patterns of communication, with effectiveness being measured by an individual's ability to vacillate between stereotypically male or female communications as required by the context and/or situation (Fisher, 1999; Wood, 2003). Currently, however, most cultures still value an aggressive, linear, direct, and sequential communication style, one that is considered more conducive to a male's style of communication than to a female's (Gentile, 1998).

A critical area where communication skills play an important part is in negotiations. Women have been 'marked' with a stereotypical female negotiating style, such as, being nice, as problem solvers and as builders of relationships, which may be described as cooperative negotiating, while men have been granted the descriptors of aggressive, confrontational and less personal, which may fit the distributive negotiating style (Halpern and Parks, 1996; Lewicki et al., 2007). These tendencies are ingrained from an

early age and unconsciously impact our activities, such as communication, negotiation, and value. Studies indicate that women feel a great deal of apprehension when negotiating starting salaries (Small et al., 2003) and lower self-efficacy, as they perceive that they are not as competent and deserve to earn less than men (Lagace, 2003). 'The combination of lower expectations and misinformation about their worth may contribute greatly to women receiving less when negotiating salary' (Barkacs and Standifird, 2008, pp.4–5) and perhaps why they experience negotiating apprehension. To take this negative perception out of salary negotiations, women need to study the information on the range of salary for the particular position as well as the benefits available and decide not to just take the first offer, but an offer that supports what skills and talents they bring to the company. Women coming to the negotiation table armed with current salary and benefit information and recognizing their value to the company, should be able to negotiate starting salaries comparable to the men. In a study where graduating MBA women had relatively good information about the industry standards, they were able to negotiate salaries that were no different than their male counterparts. In situations where the salary information available was relatively poor, there was a 10 per cent salary difference between males and females (Bowles et al., 2005). Another study conducted on women in single-sex higher education institutions found that women received significantly lower salary offers than their peers from coed academic institutions (Belliveau, 2005).

Negotiations may also need to be framed differently for women than for men. Instead of entering into negotiations with an adversarial mindset, they may be more effective entering with a protective, team orientation. For example, when women understand that they are negotiating not only for themselves, but also for others, they tend to negotiate more confidently. One study showed that women negotiated for higher wages or resources when they believed that they were negotiating for others versus when they were negotiating solely for themselves (Bowles et al., 2005). When women are negotiating for salary, they need to remember that they and their entire family benefit from the outcome of the negotiation (ibid.). To neutralize gender difference in negotiations women should be taught to anticipate gender-related triggers, do their homework, and understand and anticipate the context of the negotiation situation, to determine who are the parties in the negotiation process (for women that would include who am I negotiating for?).

Wage parity comes when women understand the negotiation process. Unless students take a specific negotiations course, most will only have a cursory understanding of negotiations and the negotiating process. Negotiating is a skill that takes time for students to hone. Recommendations

to help students improve their skills include having all students role-play negotiation exercises in class or inviting members of the business community to judge and provide feedback for students, specifically indicating how gender potentially entered into or affected the negotiation process. Through time, practising negotiation exercises and situations in class may help to increase female students' perception of competency in negotiating. Bringing community members into class to engage with students will also help female students begin to work on creating connections.

## CONNECTIONS

Social capital is created when the relations among people facilitate instrumental action (Coleman, 1990), for instance, relationships with other people that foster job attainment and advancement (Siebert et al., 2001). Recruitment agencies, friends, acquaintances, and organizational employees who one can refer to for future employment, are positioned to foster social capital. In establishing social capital, both men and women have traditionally had a tendency to rely on same-sex contacts (Still and Guerin, 1986; Ehrich, 1994; Bussey, 2012). For women this is detrimental to their careers because they are not linking themselves to men who hold the majority of power positions in organizations (Travers et al., 1997; Bussey, 2012), thus women possess less social capital than men in the workforce. Since women have less access to people at the top, they need to be particularly focused on using networking and mentoring to further their career opportunities.

An integral part of what managers do is networking. It is 'the process of contacting and being contacted by people in our social network and maintaining these linkages and relationships' (Burke, 1993, p. 347). Networking plays a critical role in job attainment (Mavin and Bryans, 2002) as individuals who have a networking strategy are better positioned to find employment (Shantz et al., 2011). Networks also provide members with support, information, and lead to organizational advancement (Michael and Yukl, 1993).

According to Powell and Graves (2003), men and women's networks differ substantially. Women's networks are primarily kin-centred networks comprising warm relationships with peers, socio-cultural, and feminist-type organizations. Men use their networks more successfully, promoting self and business to a much greater extent (Chapman, 1986; Still and Guerin, 1986; Broadbridge, 2010). Men are more motivated to use their networking in a utilitarian or transactional fashion, with each contact being assessed in terms of pay-off (Van Emmerick et al., 2006).

Men favour male-oriented professional organizations, such as service, political, community-based and sporting organizations, to achieve career goals. They also tend to have a more geographically dispersed network. Women need to take advantage of the benefits of networking with men. Women who take advantage of opposite-sex networks have reduced intentions to leave an organization early, due to the necessary job ties created from networking (Ng and Chow, 2009). Networking also increases internal visibility (by accepting highly visible work assignments or by participating on taskforces or committees), provides the opportunity to prove one's capabilities, and is significantly related to career success for women. Furthermore, networking leads to an increased number of promotions, total compensation, and perceived career success (Forret and Dougherty, 2004).

The university environment provides a hotbed of networking opportunities, yet many students do not take advantage of these opportunities. Students should be encouraged to join professional and trade organizations related to their major course of study (Powell and Graves, 2003) and join campus groups and forums. Women in particular need to broaden their access to power by joining co-educational and mainstream networks (Ehrich, 1994). Students should be taught the importance of networks and immediately start to create networks once they begin their business studies. Educators can also engage students in networking simulations that provide concrete experiences, feedback and opportunities to reflect on their networking skills and how networking helps individuals find jobs (Sanyal and Neves, 1998; Friar and Eddleston, 2007). Practising networking skills in a mixed-gender environment is a start to allow women to build networks with their male counterparts and become more proficient at carrying out the behaviour in an organizational environment. Networking is not only important in and of itself, but most likely will lead to a successful mentor and/or sponsor relationship.

Mentoring is a powerful and critical resource used by organizations, to develop and enhance protégés' professional and personal development (Kram, 1983; Eisenberger et al., 2001). Mentoring relationships may develop informally or through formal organizational programmes. Mentoring may provide protégés with career guidance and/or psychosocial support (Kram, 1983). Career mentors act as coach, provide challenging assignments, protect and make the protégé visible within the organization in an attempt to advance the protégé's career (Allen et al., 2004). Psychosocial mentoring comes in the form of friendship, acceptance, counselling, emotional well-being, personal growth and self-worth, and career advancement (Tharenou, 2005).

Mentorships are critical for career progression (Sandberg, 2013) and

are beneficial for women and minorities (Tharenou, 2005; Schipani et al., 2009). Mentoring relationships help women break through the glass ceiling and can lead to higher compensation, greater number of promotions, greater career and job satisfaction, greater loyalty, increased career commitment and decreased stress (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Allen et al., 2004; Tharenou, 2005; Schipani et al., 2009). Mentoring may also increase a protégé's confidence and help them navigate an organization's culture and politics (Lockwood, 2004).

The results are mixed when it comes to the gender of the mentor and protégé and the benefits of formal versus informal programmes. Career support from a female mentor to a female protégé is extremely important. Female mentors have dealt with similar constraints and have succeeded. However, as with networking, white male mentors are traditionally better positioned in organizations and are likely to be the most beneficial mentors for women (Powell and Graves, 2003). With male mentors, however, there is also a tendency to provide too much psychosocial mentoring versus career mentoring to female protégés. This needs to be carefully balanced, with more focus on career mentoring (Fowler et al., 2007).

The results are also mixed when it comes to finding a mentor through formal or informal means. Many studies demonstrate that, for women, formal mentoring programmes are more effective than informal mentoring (Washington, 2011). One study demonstrated that women who found mentors through formal programmes were 50 per cent more likely to be promoted than women who found mentors on their own (Ibarra et al., 2010). Powell and Graves (2003) argue that an effective mentoring relationship cannot be engineered and should grow organically to allow for a spontaneous mentor/protégé relationship to develop based on two people recognizing value in relating to one another. Unfortunately, women have a difficult time finding mentors (Ragins and Cotton, 1999; O'Brien et al., 2010), so creating a programme to provide some type of formal mentoring in the university setting is valuable.

Mentoring is clearly identified as a key to career development and is arguably indispensable for women's advancement to positions of power (Leck and Orser, 2013). Mentors select protégés based upon performance, potential, and trust. It is imperative that mentors trust protégés. Recent research demonstrates that male mentors trust their male protégés more than they trust female protégés, with trust being measured by a mentor's perception of the protégé's ability, benevolence, and integrity (Leck and Orser, 2013). Clearly, women are as benevolent and possess as much integrity as men so much of the trust issue may lie in the perception of ability. According to Sandberg (2013), 'Excel and you will get a mentor' (p. 68).

Much of what we discussed about education relative to networking



applies to mentoring. Business members in the community are generally quite willing to extend their knowledge and encouragement to students. To increase mentorship possibilities, faculty or advisors should encourage students to meet at least one business leader that shares subject matter interests. A graded exercise where the student must conduct research on the industry and the individual and attend the meeting with well thought-out questions can be used to facilitate the establishment of a mentee/mentor relationship.

We have to add a caveat about mentoring that instructors should share with students. Clearly females need mentoring relationships for career advancement, yet many potential male mentors in the USA are reluctant to select a female protégé due to possible sexual innuendo. A majority of men in upper-level positions are hesitant to have a one-on-one meeting with a more junior female and about one-half of junior women avoid close contact with a senior man (Powell and Graves, 2003; Hewlett et al., 2010). Suggestions for establishing a more comfortable relationship for mentors/protégés of the opposite sex include focusing mentoring meetings in places where both parties can feel comfortable, meeting for a few minutes after a meeting, having breakfast and lunch meetings, and meeting at coffee shops.

## COMPETENCY

According to Powell and Graves (2003), mentoring and networking are valuable pursuits; however, there are few substitutes for competency and self-efficacy, that is, the 'beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments' (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Both men and women must work at building their competencies and increasing their self-efficacy. Beginning in early education through college, girls demonstrate far more competence and success in the classroom than boys. However, boys demand and get more classroom attention. These measures do not suggest that girls are smarter than boys, but that boys receive more attention based on their gender, and girls do not get the recognition that they deserve (Powell and Graves, 2003). Even in the light of grades, stereotypes extend to perceptions of cognitive abilities, with men perceived as being more analytical and precise, and better at abstractions, reasoning and problem-solving, while women are seen as being imaginative, intuitive, perceptive and creative (Carli and Eagly, 1999). Naturally, a great concern is that men do not see women as leaders. Of greater concern however, is the fact that women do not perceive or believe in themselves as leaders (Paris and Decker, 2012). The perception that women are stereotypically feminine and do not fit the

image of the ideal leader is still pervasive and not only affects the evaluation and perception of women in a leadership role, but may also affect women's self-efficacy and perceptions of themselves as leaders (Paris and Decker, 2012; Coder and Spiller, 2013).

Self-efficacy, as a construct, has strong empirical support for its relationship to leadership. An individual's perception of their leadership capabilities may have more impact on their selection and acceptance of a leadership position than gender or gender roles (Coder and Spiller, 2013). The lack of self-efficacy may also make women want to check out of the leadership career path prematurely, because they do not believe that they can do it all. Many women do not believe that they have what it takes to be a leader and also worry prematurely that they may not be able to balance a family and a career, therefore take themselves out of the game before it starts (Widnall, 1988; Sandberg, 2013).

Many female students may have 'imposter syndrome', where due to pervasive sexism, women doubt their own abilities and achievements, feel inadequate and have a fear of eventually being found out. These feelings of inadequacy can lead to a decreased self-efficacy, which may result in female students having lower performance expectations, being less confident speaking in class, and having concerns that speaking in class may reveal inadequacies (Widnall, 1988). Even male communication patterns may negatively affect women, in that when men communicate in a competitive fashion, belittling the opponent in a 'take down' manner, they shake the confrontation off and walk away. Women have a tendency to internalize messages and hold on to negative messages for weeks or months, until it is internalized and damages the self-esteem (ibid.).

Male and female students need to be aware of the many accomplishments of female leaders and debunk the negative female stereotypes. For instance, the Fortune 500 organizations that have the highest number of females represented on the board of directors have a 46 per cent higher return on equity than those organizations with fewer women directors (Catalyst, 2011). To increase perceptions of successful female leaders faculty needs to discuss stereotypes and the implication for women's careers, and demonstrate how many women have limited their own career progression by placing unnecessary limitations on themselves (Chesterman and Ross-Smith, 2006).

Faculty and advisors need to believe in female students. Lower expectations on the part of faculty and advisors are quickly perceived by students and can lead to lower self-efficacy. Having an initial one-on-one consultation at the beginning of the term or having students fill out a bio-form will help faculty and advisors get to know their students and their career goals and interests.

Female faculty members need to lead the change to foster the career goals of female students. One exercise would be engaging female students in activities that stretch their experiences, knowledge and skills. To demonstrate that women have what it takes to be successful and competent leaders, educators should actively encourage them to take up a challenge or to even assign them challenging tasks. Challenging experiences have beneficial consequences such as learning and development (McCauley et al., 1994). Engagement with internships, service-learning courses, student consulting projects and alumni leadership organizations, help students to increase competencies and allow them to demonstrate these skills to others.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have identified the knowledge, skills and abilities that benefit all students, but are of particular importance to female students. We addressed communication and the role it plays in perceived competency and negotiations, connections as in fostering networks and mentoring relationships, and the importance of increasing competency-based self-efficacy in our female business student population, as these are critical areas that women must understand and manage in order to 'Get In' and attain the job that they deserve. Most likely, communication, connections and competencies cause difficulties for many female students due to their lack of prominence in the curriculum of many business schools (Simpson and Ituma, 2007). Improved career planning services to provide better education and career information for women is essential (Perry and Gundersen, 2011). We cannot assume that our female students are working on these activities alone. Many, if not most, of our female students do not know what these skills entail let alone have knowledge of the hidden gender pitfalls. In this chapter, we have suggested strategies for educators in an attempt to provide our female students with career-managing tools and knowledge that they can utilize as they embark on successful and satisfying careers.

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