

THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN

Welcome,

We hope you enjoy reading our first Xplorer newsletter for 2011. Hopefully you will already be on your way to achieving the goals you set yourself for this year, so we're here to support you and guide you through your plan.

In this edition of The Xplorer we discover what it is that makes women successful and what we need to do to ensure the continuation of this success.

You can have the best experience but if you don't effectively position yourself you won't achieve your potential. Overcome limiting beliefs and sabotaging behaviour that keep you from being successful – have the confidence to propel yourself beyond your goals!

We look forward to working with you in 2011.

The Xplore Team

In This Edition...

1. Introduction
2. Success of Women
3. Support International Women's Day
4. Women leading under pressure
5. Xplore success stories
6. Top tips for career success in 2011
7. Xplore's Senior Career Resiliency program
8. 2011 networking events program
9. Dress for success
10. Reading recommendations & links
11. In the next edition of The Xplorer...



SUCCESS OF WOMEN

Welcome to 2011! As I sit to write this article I am reflecting on the fact that this year may well be an important one for the success of women around the world. Firstly, there will be the additional focus on women around the centenary of international Women's Day on March 8. Much of this focus will be on disadvantaged women in third-world countries. If you would like to read a challenging book on this area try 'Half the World' by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn.

Secondly, the new ASX reporting guidelines will ensure that in Australia, at least those organisations in the ASX 200, will focus on measuring the success of their women employees in moving upwards in their organisation. The most important part of this focus by ASX is to ensure that organisations have the metrics that make the situation in their organisation crystal clear to their boards and senior management. In many organisations, there has not been consistent measurement and focus on the rate of success ensuring that the top talent is promoted. <http://www.asxgroup.com.au/diversity-resources.htm>

It is important to reflect on the importance of diversity in a broader perspective, to seek answers to the quandary of why in Australia more than any other English speaking country around the world, we have not seen more women promoted to senior positions. It is relatively easy to measure the percentage of women in senior roles and board positions, and we know the results are exceptionally low in Australia and have shown little

increase over the last 10 years, hovering about the 10% level. This is despite the fact that Australia has an excellent reputation in educating women and that women achieve excellent results in higher education.

The low figures may well be due to the fact that so many senior positions are still filled through individual personal networks. I believe as many as two thirds of the board positions are filled with no due process and many senior promotions are made with a tap on the shoulder – normally a male shoulder. This has been the foundation of our corporate history and is understandable, as research shows that when we know someone, we feel more comfortable in recommending them or placing them in a position of higher responsibility. However, it is no guarantee that the most skilled person available will be offered the position.

Research has shown that we are more likely to feel comfortable in association with others with similar interests, similar styles, similar values and even similar 'looks'. Leadership positions are commonly filled in Australia with Caucasian men of above average height. In other words, we hold, yes all of us, a subconscious bias against those who look, act and operate in a different way. This, I believe, is the foundation of Australia's problem - the wastage of talent, and our lag behind all of the other English speaking western cultures in the percentage of women holding senior positions.

Until we bring our unconscious biases for others who are dissimilar to the forefront, we are unlikely to consider



those who are different as we make selections for special projects, awards, remuneration, senior management positions etc. In fact, those who do not bring their natural biases into their own consciousness will likely continue to proclaim strongly that 'they always pick the best person for the position' despite these positions being constantly filled with 'similar' people.

Before you say "I'm not like that!" can I suggest you read Blink (especially chapter 3) and take special note of some of the examples and also do the Harvard IAT bias test (www.implicit.harvard.edu) in terms of gender, race or some other factor of difference where you may hold a subconscious bias.

When I did the IAT test on gender bias, I held a slight bias against women and

SUCCESS OF WOMEN (continued)

that made me feel most uncomfortable. However, when I look at why that might be so, I was raised in a family with a highly educated father and a less educated mother. My mother held the view that to be a 'good mother' I should be at home even after my children were at school. She went so far as to comment when I got promoted that 'that was nice but when was I going to return to the home'.

I went to a selective public school in Sydney and about 50% of the women of my age went from school to university. The equivalent boys school had an 80% conversion. Of the 50% of girls most went to university with the view of a career in teaching. Many 'boomer' women started out in teaching and then moved into other career streams. There was no strong message to consider a broad range of careers as most women of my time worked for a few years, got married, started a family and then undertook unpaid or poorly paid work as their family responsibilities took priority. This has left many women poorly financially prepared for older years.

When I worked in the IT environment men held all senior positions for many years. It would also be fair to say that the power base in the organisation was made up of alpha style men. They continued to promote and hire more men with similar style. These men did not dislike women, they just didn't see women as serious contenders for senior positions and, unless they could display alpha characteristics in their communication, their views did not hold much weight.

It would be fair to say I am forthright, focussed, decisive, determined and can display many alpha characteristics and perhaps that was an excellent foundation for my career success at that time. I would prefer to be termed assertive rather than aggressive, as I am sure these characteristics would be described if I were male. However, an important lesson for me as I moved through my career, was that I learned to understand that some of my team who were different in their style added incredible value to our team.

The executive team that I brought together had strong men and women who were not afraid to raise their opinions or express an opposing view. Working in a team that had great diversity of style but also strong values of respecting other's view and opinions did not develop by accident. It took time and effort to ensure that those on the team believed their views were valued and their personal style would be respected and seen as a positive addition to the team.

So my wish for 2011 is that everyone will openly reflect on their own natural biases so that they can become conscious of them. They will seriously consider and reflect on the value added by others of differing styles. If those in senior positions achieved this, then I believe that women would have more opportunities to succeed in business, as the senior leaders would accept that they need to bend and flex to ensure the very best talent was promoted.



To find out more about Xplore's Diversity program call Diana Ryall on 02 9660 4526 or email office@xplore.net.au.

Don't forget to check out Xplore's full range of Programs and Workshops to assist you and/or your organisation to achieve success.

SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2011

Xplore asks you to celebrate International Women's Day 2011 and support the work of Dress for Success in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane.

This year International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrating its centenary. In 1911, rallies were held for the first time to mark the official declaration of IWD. Over one million participants campaigned for women's rights to vote, hold public office, right to work, education and to end discrimination.

The new millennium has witnessed a significant change in both women's and society's attitudes about women's equality and emancipation. International Women's Day has become a day to celebrate the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. One of the main aims of International Women's Day is to inspire women and celebrate their achievements, but also ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe and rewarding.

The theme for International Women's Day 2011 developed by the United Nations is: Equal Access to education, training and science: Pathway to decent work for women for more information go to the official website:

www.internationalwomensday.com/

Xplore asks you to consider supporting Dress for Success in Australia by holding a fund-raising event in your workplace or your home, and celebrate the contribution of women to the Australian community. This will support the work of Dress for Success in Australia in

its mission to facilitate the pathway to decent work for disadvantaged women.

All proceeds from IWD events will be used by Dress for Success to support the centres enabling them to assist more women and provide a range of services, including work preparation programs. This will help to ensure a smoother pathway to decent work for disadvantaged women

You might like to host a cocktail event, a luncheon, a morning or afternoon tea or even a dinner. You might like to use the opportunity to launch a relevant project or celebrate your own achievements.

This is a unique opportunity to support and celebrate International Women's Day. It is also your opportunity to help ensure that disadvantaged women have a brighter and more rewarding future.

We will be sending more details closer to the date and have a look at the websites for DFS to see how you can get involved on contact on of the affiliates at their email below:



SYDNEY

www.dressforsuccess.org/Sydney/
sydney@dressforsuccess.org

BRISBANE

www.dressforsuccess.org/Brisbane/
brisbane@dressforsuccess.org

MELBOURNE

melbourne@dressforsuccess.org

DRESS FOR SUCCESS Coming Event

In conversation with Maxine McKew - 'Success, Defeat and Everything In Between'

Join us for an enjoyable evening of drinks, canapes and networking as Maxine McKew talks candidly about both her triumphs and defeats and shares intimate insights into what she considers to be common threads in her success - be that media, politics or life.

Date 17 February 2011 (Thursday)
Time 5.30 to 7.30pm
Venue: Deloitte, Grosvenor Place,
225 George Street, Sydney
Tickets \$65 per person*

**As this event is generously supported by Deloitte all proceeds from ticket sales will go directly to supporting Dress for Success Sydney's dressing program and 2011 projects.*

Stay informed by joining DFSS social network groups on LinkedIn and Facebook.

Xplore for Success is a proud sponsor of Dress for Success Sydney.



WOMEN LEADING UNDER PRESSURE

Adapted from <http://www.sfwmag.com/career/women-leading-u-p-under-pressure>

With the financial scandals, terrorism, natural catastrophes and numerous organisational disasters that have rocked the world during the past decade, you may be starting to wonder whether crises, generally defined as rare and extreme occurrences, are the new normal.

It is undeniable that the state of business has become increasingly complex. With that complexity comes a greater likelihood that things will go wrong, and sometimes in catastrophic ways. More often, however, organisations are simply experiencing a heightened level of pressure to compete globally, manage diverse stakeholder needs, and produce more with fewer resources.

The challenge is to develop a leadership orientation that will allow you to go from merely surviving under pressure to thriving in it. People who skilfully lead under pressure have certain character traits that allow them to think differently, and more positively, about organisational problems and threatening situations.

The timing is right for women to step into the challenges of leading under pressure. Interestingly, research shows that firms with a higher proportion of women in executive positions perform better in recessionary times than firms with fewer women at such levels. Although it would be inappropriate to conclude from this research that women are naturally skilled in leading under pressure, there is no doubt that the perspective and experiences



of operating under pressure that women bring to organisations can add tremendous value.

One key to surviving a crisis is displaying strong leadership. In times of uncertainty, people will take their lead from you. And, if mishandled, the aftershocks of a crisis can last for years.

Your company will probably never have a crisis as severe as what has happened in Queensland recently, but Anna Bligh, Premier of Queensland, is almost universally admired for her handling of that crisis. Even under that extreme duress, she was able to exemplify those qualities that help people cope better during times of crisis. She stayed calm, but not dispassionate or disinterested. She stayed visible, and she was as close to the scene of the tragedy as he could be. She communicated what she knew to be accurate information as soon as she knew it, and she made sure that there was a steady stream of communications from chiefs of police. She gave the people of Queensland, and the people of the entire country, the sense that as dreadful as this event

was, their leadership was functional, in control, and dealing with events as they unfolded.

During a crisis, people tend to be confused, anxious, and highly suggestible. Good leadership and clear communication can help people cope. It's important to direct people — staff, customers, vendors, community members, or anyone else affected by the crisis — to provide guidance on how they should conduct themselves. It's important to inform them about what you know and what you don't yet know.

People in crisis need more than just information; they also need 'emotional leadership'. Rationality doesn't convince people; emotional resonance does. Great leaders move us, and that requires a relationship between leader and audience.

So, what would a great leader do in a crisis beyond giving information and direction? She would help manage our expectations, touch us, and inspire us. As a leader, you can help people in crisis manage their expectations by conveying that, as much as possible,

WOMEN LEADING UNDER PRESSURE (con't)



the very best is being done. Messages such as this can help people maintain perspective and tolerate uncertainty longer.

Competent emotional leadership also speaks to and about shared values — those things that bind us as a company or as a community. When we remind people what we are about, we inspire them to function at their best. And to do this, you need to be visible. You must have the courage to share your reactions with the people around you, so people know you care about them, and they feel an emotional bond.

Reflect, learn and adapt. People who are able to adjust to the rapidly increasing pace of change, and to learn from the failures and successes, are positioned to lead effectively under pressure.

Scan the environment and see possibilities. People with this leadership trait can identify new patterns, see ways to do things differently, and spot a potential trend long before others can. Recognise the potential for opportunity. Pressure-laden and threatening situations can present amazing opportunities. People who can

see the light during dark times can lead their teams to success.

Expect mutual trust and respect. No one functions alone in times of peril, and cooperation only comes when you have proven yourself to be a trustworthy leader. Such trust is earned by extending trust to others.

So do you think that Anna Bligh showed strong leadership qualities during the Queensland crisis? Join the discussion over on the Xplore for Success LinkedIn Group page.

Here's how the media reported it:

The Australian — Anna Bligh steps up and takes control: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/anna-bligh-steps-up-and-takes-control/story-fn59niix-1225987489173>

SMH — Has Anna Bligh earned herself a second chance? <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/blogs/blunt-instrument/has-anna-bligh-earned-herself-a-second-chance/20110113-19ojm.html>

Xplore Programs

Xplore's Senior Career Resiliency program aims to assist senior professional women make successful choices and create strategies for a rewarding career and life.

It is a hybrid program including group sessions and leadership coaching. Incorporated into Senior Career Resiliency are 4 x 3 hour structured group sessions plus 4 x 1 hour individual leadership coaching sessions. We also offer additional coaching sessions as an add-on offering.

The 4 group sessions are:

1. Self Awareness and Resiliency
2. Personal and Organisational Presence
3. Leadership and Leading Teams
4. Future Resiliency

All participants have access to senior role models and are given opportunities for active dialogue with their peers. The program is tailored to small groups of women (limit 8), in senior leadership positions.

Read more [www.xplore.net.au/programs_scr.htm] about the Xplore Senior Career Resiliency program.

For a confidential discussion on how Xplore could assist you with resiliency programs please contact Diana Ryall on 02 9660 4526 or email office@xplore.net.au.

TOP TIPS FOR CAREER SUCCESS IN 2011

Make 2011 your most successful year yet!
Here's our advice on achieving career success:

- 1 Be clear on your career and life goals. Take the time to record them in the next week – goals that are written are more likely to be achieved. Ensure they are SMART <http://www.projectssmart.co.uk/smart-goals.html>
- 2 Talk to those around you on your desired career outcomes for 2011. So often managers and others in your career circle are not clear on your aspirations. Don't leave others to guess, they may believe that you have no aspirations.
- 3 Develop a 'personal board' of people who will give you ideas, feedback and confidence. These should include some in your organisation and others outside. These people provide a frame of reference as you seek new challenges.
- 4 Be prepared to talk about your successes to others. Do not count on others noticing or being your personal promoters. Be able to express them confidently and concisely.
- 5 Be aware of the remuneration you deserve in your current position in the industry sector in which you work. Ensure your manager knows that remuneration is important to you. Remuneration is often used as a way to gauge skills, if you are not paid to market you may be assumed to be less skilled.
- 6 Make time for yourself and those family, friends and relations who are important to you. There is no way to backtrack and rebuild these important personal links. They provide the solid ongoing foundation for your life.
- 7 Remember 7 x 24 is a myth and you are replaceable. In fact you can only be promoted when you have made yourself replaceable. Prioritise what you do and accept that the inbox and in-tray may never be empty. Always prioritise!
- 8 If you are unhappy in your role, take the time to work out why and do something to change the situation. Maybe you can adapt the role you have, find a new role within the organisation or find something entirely different. However, you must be clear on your aspirations before you can seek change.
- 9 Be prepared to take new challenges, try new ideas and be wrong. Ask yourself what is the worst that can happen? Often the unknown can be daunting and yet the new experiences build new skills.
- 10 If it does seem to all fall apart, be open to the support of others. It may simply be the opportunity to take a new direction in your life.

2011 NETWORKING EVENTS PROGRAM

We had such an overwhelming response to Xplore's Women's Breakfasts in 2010. Thanks to everyone that came along to make them an event not to be missed!

We're pleased to be offering these fantastic events again in 2011. Kicking the off the year with 'Building Career Opportunities'. Start your year off with confidence. We'll be discussing ways

to build your career opportunities with subjects such as:

- Influencing through networks
- Seeking promotion
- Communicating your goals
- Displaying confidence
- Finding sponsors

Come along and share your thoughts and ideas with like-minded professionals. Be sure to secure your seat:

Sydney
Friday 25th February
7:30am to 9:30am

Register now by visiting
www.xplore.net.au

READING RECOMMENDATIONS



In the last few years I have read a number of books that discuss the situation of women in poorer countries around the world and the positive outcomes of supporting women in education, small business and community positions. If this of interest to you here are some books and websites to provide you with some projects that have made a difference:

Half the Sky – Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn
www.halftheskymovement.org

3 Cups of Tea – Greg Mortenson
www.threecupsoftea.com

Leaving Microsoft to Change the World – John Wood
www.roomtoread.org/Page.aspx?pid=183

Hands across the water – Peter Baines
www.handsacrossthewater.com.au

LINKS

Kiva

<http://www.kiva.org>

Women in Business

Womeninbusiness.com.au

Women's Network Australia

www.womensnetwork.com.au/index.cfm

Women Chief's of Enterprise

www.wcei.com.au/asp/home.aspx

Success Women's Network

www.successwomensnetwork.com.au/

Previously:

www.sydneywomensnetwork.com.au/

Career Mums

www.careermums.com.au/

Ask Her

www.askher.com.au/

Business Chicks

www.businesschicks.com.au/

Femail

www.femail.com.au/

Mums@Work

www.mumsatwork.com.au/

XPLORE SUCCESS STORIES

We've had some amazing women completing our programs and we want to share their success stories with you. Read their journeys of self-discovery and learn how they overcame challenges to be successful.

Xplore Success Stories - www.xplore.net.au



In the next edition of The Xplorer

In the next edition of The Xplorer... we will be covering "Making your Mark". Feel free to send us your recommendations of topics to discuss thexplorer@xplore.net.au.