Three-Dimensional Glass Ceiling

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Do we need more women in upper echelons?

A strong correlation was found in Fortune 500 companies between the number of women in top executive positions and the financial performance of the companies. (The Economist, 2005)
Impact on performance

Companies with three or more women in top management functions score more highly for each organisational criterion than companies with no women at the top.

To what extent is your company effective in each of the 9 organisational dimensions?

Percentage of employees with positive evaluation:

- **Work environment and values**: 48% (Companies with no women) vs. 55% (Companies with 3 or more women) (+7 pts)
- **Direction**: 51% vs. 57% (+6 pts)
- **Coordination and control**: 56% vs. 61% (+5 pts)
- **Leadership**: 68% vs. 72% (+4 pts)
- **External orientation**: 64% vs. 67% (+3 pts)
- **Motivation**: 63% vs. 66% (+3 pts)
- **Capability**: 70% vs. 71% (+1 pt)
- **Accountability**: 64% vs. 65% (+1 pt)
- **Innovation**: 52% vs. 53% (+1 pt)

**Financial**

- **Average return on equity 2007-2009**: 22% vs. 15% (+41%)
- **Average EBIT margin 2007-2009**: 17% vs. 11% (+56%)

*Analysis conducted on a sample of 101 Worldwide companies, or 55,240 persons surveyed.
Note: Given the sample size, a 1% difference is statistically significant.
Source: McKinsey
Do we have women in upper echelons?
Three-Dimensional Glass Ceiling

Invisible barriers to women’s career advancement put by:

- Men and male-dominated work contexts
- Other women
- Women themselves
“We were discussing why there weren’t more women on the boards.

And you know what the men said?

They said, ‘Who are they? Show me who they are and we’ll think about it.’

So the problem wasn’t a resistance against hiring women, it was that qualified women didn’t make the radar screen”

(Fionna Anderson, 2008)
Women’s Self-Inflicted Barriers

- Successful women may experience ‘fear of success’
  - Fear of being perceived as a ‘bitch’
  - Fear of being perceived as ambitious
  - Fear that people won’t like you
  - Fear of failure (perfectionism)
  - Fear of making compromises
Are these ‘fears’ substantiated?
It appears yes: research findings...

What if a Successful Manager is also Assertive?

**Scenario A: Assertive manager**

“Melisa’s / Stewart’s coworkers agree that she / he demands a lot from the employees, they have also described her / him as someone who is fair-minded when treating others. She / he emphasizes the importance of having an open forum for the exchange of ideas and has been commended for her / his efforts to promote performance excellence within her / his department”

**Scenario B: Communal manager**

“Sarah’s / Markus’ coworkers agree that she / he demands a lot from her / his employees, they have also described her / him as an involved manager who is caring and sensitive to their needs. She / he emphasizes the importance of having supportive work environment and has been commended for her / his efforts to promote a positive community”
Self-promotion

Question: “Are you a good computer games player?”

Self-promoting answer: “Yes. In fact, I would say that I’ve totally figured out the games that I own on my system at home. At different times I’ve been interested in different types of games, such as strategy games. Eventually, I figured out the tricks in all of them so that scoring high was easy. Yes, I would say that I am a good computer games player”
To get ahead, without getting hurt…

Don’t lose touch with your “communal” side

“Relationships are important to women and that’s fantastic – something that we should be proud of. We want to be kind, we want to be respectful and we are touched by sadness. So do women need assertiveness training or do men need sensitivity training?”

(Cecelia Goodnow, 2008)
Don’t let your sense of worth shattered by what others think of you

- Take out your glasses and have a blurred vision of others – TRY IT NOW....
- So what they don’t like your idea, your dress, your body shape?
  What do YOU think?
- Don’t try to please everyone!
Feel proud of your achievements, feel at peace with your imperfections
Be assertive, but not pushy or snob
Question: “Are you a good computer games player?”

Self-promoting / assertive answer: “Yes. In fact, I would say that I’ve totally figured out the games…”

Unassertive answer: “Well, I am no expert. But I have many games at home and I reach the advanced levels of those most of the time. It is fun to try and do better than I did the last time”
Stop being a GUILT producing machine

Forgive me God, for I have sinned…

- For being ambitious
- For being more successful and earning more than my partner
- For being a part-time mother to my children, and part-time daughter to my parents.

“I am 30 years old and single. I have to choose if I want to make my professional dreams come true or my woman dreams. I’m living with my parents and I’ve been selfish because I am quite ambitious” (A Mexican woman)
Imitate men…

- Think less complicated
- Support and promote each other
- Forget easily (don’t hold grouch)
- Be worry-free
Correlates of WFC: A Model for Women

- Emotional Spousal Support
- Work Overload
- Organizational Support
- Satisfaction with Childcare Facilities
- Perceived Satisfaction of Child(ren) with Time Spent with Parents
- Life Satisfaction
- Depression
- Satisfaction with Parenthood
- Employment Related Guilt
- Children’s Behavioral Problems
- Marital Satisfaction
- Performance Change

Work-family conflict
Correlates of WFC: A Model for Men

Work overload at work

Work overload at home

Life Satisfaction

Depression

Satisfaction with Parenthood

Marital Satisfaction
Seek and you shall receive!

“If you don’t believe in yourself, nobody will. If you don’t ask for the position, nobody will give it to you in a silver plate”

(A Turkish executive)
Conclusions

Women have the gift of having it all!

- sensitivity – toughness
- assertiveness – subtlety
- self-promotion – humility

We just need to figure out when to use what & trust our guts for that…