

Women Logica vs the Altitude of Success

By Valerie Naidoo

Women supporting women is one of the most empowering acts and can achieve the greatest amount of success within multitudes of communities. The femosphere, however sees everything as an emotional battleground. I believe that this is an issue that sets the sexes apart; hence the femosphere vs. the manosphere. Women ganging up on a woman traditionally dates back to many centuries. If another woman does well, it becomes a rival female's mission to try to punish her and knock her off her perch. The sisterhood feels threatened to the core and starts acting out in naked vengeance.

Sadly, the ugly side to the feminine psyche is not only confined to the workplace but also makes a bold appearance in other domains of life. According to John Gray the author of "Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus" the same communication difficulties women struggle with in their personal lives also play out in the office. I feel that this kind of behavior stems from social and psychological issues which plague women and hold them back in both their personal and professional lives. The attitude that some women have towards the altitude of the successes of other women and the fear of achieving their own success forms a strong correlation. The imposter syndrome inherently comes from within us; as women we feel that we don't deserve to be on the runway of success and this is displayed in our behavior towards other women and their victories. This leads to women operating from a platform of fear which expands the already massive confidence gap.

Many professional women feel that they are in a catch 22 situation; they suffer a chronic and constant pull of whether to be or not to be. Speaking up during meetings, taking the initiative in the boardroom, speaking up for their rights, etc might render them as unpopular. There lies the risk of being branded as too "masculine" while the lack of action on their part might class them as less assertive and incompetent. Women have become beneficiaries of unappealing brands and labels in the office; unfortunately the female gender has also contributed to this trend. Aspects such as women at boardroom level using raging hormones to make decisions, displaying jealousy and vengeful behavior towards other females, etc does not promote women empowerment. Shying away from building strong professional relationships with men and communicating from a platform of coyness and uncertainty does not help to propagate gender equality. We seem to misunderstand important laws of the professional jungle, resulting in us handing over our

feminine power. The lack of gender intelligence in the workplace definitely adds to the problem in a testosterone saturated society. So how do we move forward?

I feel that accessing skills that balance women logic can result in women working together to achieve phenomenal results within a male dominated environment. Demonstrating the following behaviors is a step closer towards achieving this:

- Get into the habit of inculcating a culture of women working together to form a strong female support structure
- Be the first to applaud the successes of your female colleagues and give recognition to their initiatives
- Understanding the opposite sex will massively bridge communication gaps. Men focus on immediate problems while women focus on the greater picture. This is where the miscommunication stems from, so taking the time to understand this will alter perceptions to improve working relationships
- Take the lead in building professional relationships with the men in your company. This does not imply becoming more masculine but more about using effective communication skills.
- Putting your head down and getting the work done does not make you stand apart from the crowd, instead work to do something that will positively impact your organization and the people around you.
- Keep those raging female hormones at bay
- Invite and encourage men to also participate in your networking sessions

A lack of confidence prevents women from moving forward in sports, in relationships, in their careers, etc and causes them to act out viciously when another female dares to be different. By having the confidence to act from within we can perform just as well as men do and this also garners behaviors towards that of empowerment of the women around us. These actions help to supersede stereotype attitudes towards women in leadership roles. If men start seeing more of this positive behavior, this will lead to an inducement of a structure that promotes gender intelligence and equality. Thankfully the initiation of the dismantling of the patriarchy and the attitudes towards women in the professional arena are positively changing. Ladies, we now have the platform to work together to become ambassadors of women empowerment, if not for ourselves then let's do this for our daughters.