

Elevate Your Career: *Ten Competencies of Successful Women Leaders*



1. *Have a positive vision*

A clear, compelling vision of your future makes it easier to take the 'right' small daily decisions and actions to get you there. Successful women build a vision based on their strengths and share it with supportive others who conspire to help them achieve it. **Small tip, significant impact:** Ask yourself every day "is what I'm doing right now taking me closer to or further from my goal?"

2. *Operate at the 'right' level*

Stepping into leadership requires a mindset shift about the way you spend time. It's probably right that your time is focussed on strategic delivery and developing your people; much less about doing detailed operational tasks. **Small tip, significant impact:** Reap rewards by sussing out the best way to delegate to each member of your team – whilst some may prefer a detailed description of what needs doing others are motivated by a broad objective and the challenge of working out how to meet it.

3. *Energise the people around you*

Be an enthusiast, upbeat and positive about what's going on in your organisation and the wider industry. If you lead a team, infuse their work with purpose and meaning by knowing what motivates each of them and setting clear goals collaboratively. **Small tip, significant impact:** Share optimistic views about a challenge your team/organisation faces.

4. *Create your own luck*

Psychologist Richard Wiseman has studied 'lucky' and 'unlucky' people and found the crucial difference is the way the two groups notice, respond to or create opportunities. As the US comic actor Milton Berne once said "*If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.*" **Small tip, significant impact:** Get into the habit of reinterpreting 'bad' events into an opportunity that you, your team or your business can benefit from.

5. *Take responsibility for fixing what's not right*

See a problem? Take the initiative to start sorting it out. That might mean doing it yourself, engaging someone who's better placed than you or rallying a team of people. As Ghandi said, "Be the change you want to see."

Small tip, significant impact: Always offer a couple of solutions when you outline a problem to your boss.

6. *Ask and negotiate*

There's evidence to suggest part of the reason why men earn more than women is because they're more likely to ask for what they want. Ask for what you want in a compelling way and should you get a 'no,' reformulate, persist and ask what could get them to 'yes.' **Small tip, significant impact:** Frame your requests around what would make them want to say yes.

7. *Connect, connect, connect*

Are you LinkedIn? Do you stop at the coffee machine to chat? Do you remember what's on other people's agenda and help them when you can? Three simple ways to keep your network warm and working. Research shows around 70% of jobs come by referral and the majority come from the contacts of our contacts; that is, people who we're one step removed from. **Small tip, significant impact:** Focus on being interested over interesting when you meet someone new. So rare is good listening that you'll be remembered favourably.

8. *Give and seek timely feedback*

Positive feedback reinforces good performance and boosts morale – if you see something good tell the person who's doing it and explain the impact they had. Similarly, let people know when their behaviour isn't what you'd hoped for and coach them to find a better way in future. **Small tip, significant impact:** Give some specific positive praise every day – you'll be seen as inspiring, confident and a leader people want to work for.

9. *Have a role model, be a role model*

Human experience is shaped by human experience. We learn from others so by watching and emulating people regarded as best in class you'll elevate your performance and be a role model yourself. **Small tip, significant impact:** Find a mentor who's achieved or connected to your aspirations.

10. *Persist, Persist, Persist*

If you believe in the agenda you're driving – be that your career goals, your team's priorities, a pitch for new business, whatever – keep going until you succeed or the counter-argument makes more sense than your original view. You may need to talk louder, sing about it, schmooze the person beyond the person you've been talking to or try something outrageous. **Small tip, significant impact:** Expect to have to work hard to convince people of the things you think are obvious.