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Posted: August 13, 2010 at 7:27 am | Comments 2

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Not long ago an advertisement in our daily newspaper for a local CPA firm caught my attention, for the wrong reason. It was a photo of all the accountants at the firm. They were all men.

During the recent campaigns for our primary elections, the commercial of a candidate for judge caught my attention, for the wrong reason. The candidate had a string of supporters offering testimonials as to why we should vote for him. They were all men.

Last year my husband and I built an addition on to our house. When we met with the banker regarding financing, he caught my attention, for the wrong reason. During that first meeting, he never looked at me once. Oh, except when we realized an additional piece of information would need to be brought to him. Then he looked at me and said, "The next time you're out, you can drop it by."

Each of these examples serves as a reminder of something that is difficult to comprehend in today's time, yet is unfortunately still true: as women, we are easily overlooked. As a result, it is imperative we be proactive in doing all we can to equip ourselves with the necessary tools that will allow us to stand up and stand out from those around us.

One of the most essential tools is **courage**. I learned early on I was lacking in this feature. I worked as a lifeguard at our city pool during the summers I was in college. I was promoted to assistant manager and one day, was faced with the situation of having to remove some bullies from the property. I walked toward them and when I was about twenty feet away, stopped in my tracks. I turned around, headed back to my office and called for someone else (my older brother) to escort the troublemakers out. I lacked the courage to do it myself.

Later on I did one of the best things I could ever do to gain not only the courage to speak up, no matter what the situation, but also equip me with the skills to articulate my thoughts in an effective, confident manner. I joined Toastmasters International.

One thing is clear. Being an effective communicator sets you apart from others. When you are vying for a position you may be up against many others, just as knowledgeable or experienced as you. When you are in a meeting, several of you may have the same thoughts. By being the one who can most clearly articulate your knowledge, your thoughts, you will be noticed. And when you are noticed for your communication skills, you will also be looked upon as a leader.

By the way, a few months ago I watched a television program where Bill Gates and Warren Buffet were on a university campus, being interviewed by business majors. One asked Mr. Buffet to name one thing he did to which he attributes his success. His answer was, "I learned to communicate my thoughts articulately."

We, as women, are just as intelligent, just as capable, just as worthy as men to be successful in business. We just have to fight a little harder. In order to do that, we must have the courage, and the skill, to speak up. Don't let a lack of confidence keep you from your dreams! Be noticed...for the right reason.

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9.9.2010 9:39am | Viviana Sutton | They'll see her coming and turn the other way! Wow. Dana, in many instances I have noticed that women are just as likely as men to enga...



9.9.2010 5:15am | danamdavis | This is a sad truth. Just yesterday I was told about how others perceive a new leader in a company I do work for. She's older but I didn't...

9.8.2010 9:38pm | MaizyT | Very inspiring. It's leaders like you that help us gain confidence in ourselves.



9.8.2010 12:47pm | Lisa Quast | Inspiring words by Dr. Mark Goulston to focus on the most positive and uplifting people in our lives. I've learned from experience to avoid ...

9.8.2010 12:26pm | harveyc | Very interesting, my "take-aways" are the inspiring comment that Christie made regarding, "you are the sum-total of everything that you have..."

9.8.2010 12:01pm | cashows | I enjoyed the teleseminar. A take-away is to be true to yourself. We all hear it, but it is what drives our personal brand. I enjoyed the...

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