

Insightful Career Strategy Tips for Women

- 1. Knowing Ourselves** – Understanding our unique qualities and gifts allows us the opportunity to make good choices for our lives. This includes identifying our natural behaviour, what talents make us happy, what our personal values are and what our current priorities are in our all aspects of our lives. As Career Professionals our personal and professional lives are intertwined completely and we can't be content in one without considering the other. Typically, we take care of ourselves last but the longer we do this the more discontented we will grow. Taking care of our needs first, provides more for our families, partners, friends and careers which translates into greater satisfaction for our entire lives. Remember, our lives are an evolution so consciously keeping abreast of the changes will only benefit you.
- 2. Plan Thoroughly** – Our lives have many twists and turns in them and some significant ones are not planned and, therefore, are the ones that can cause us the most grief. Planned change, no matter how uncomfortable is always better than unplanned change that is thrust upon us. Once you have what you believe is the right information from “Knowing Ourselves”, take reflective time to establish and review past successes. Celebrate what you did well. As women, we are very hard on ourselves. Cut yourself some slack and praise yourself! *We do great work!* Next, identify where you could change based on what you weren't happy with or where you want to get to. Set some regular goals for your career, what skills do you have and what skills do you need to get. Spending dedicated time to this process generates new and creative ideas, re-energizes us and allows us to clearly see where we are going; it's our personal performance review to see our accomplishments and our accomplishments build our confidence. Even if you deviate from your plan, you will do it in a conscious manner and not a “shot in the dark”. Planning time will never be wasted.
- 3. Address your fears and challenges** - An interesting fact is that we perceive our challenges to be negative in nature but in many cases they can bring out our greatest rewards. We all have them and some may be buried so deep we're not even conscious of them. Work to identify them and write them down because as soon as you do they lose power over you, allowing you to move towards something better for your life. Set goals outside your comfort zone, identify the support you need to help you achieve your goals and go for it! We live in a world of constant change, adapting to it is not optional if you want to keep your career vibrant.
- 4. Invest in your future** – Education is all around us, be aware of your learning opportunities. While enhancing or learning new skills in a formal setting is important for our success, it may not be possible all the time. With significant demands in our personal and professional lives, taking on new learning opportunities at work (that will advance your career goals), volunteer activities or educating yourself with resources on the web can be incredible ways to speed up your learning or shift you into a new area of expertise. These are considered low cost, high value alternatives.
- 5. Networking** – Women are better talkers than men and naturally better at relationships with our nurturing side but we are less likely to network in a way that provides results for us. Real networking is not getting what you want but it's about caring and investing in others too. We can do that...what's uncomfortable to us is asking for something - but think about it, we would help anyone if they asked us for something so *we need to get out of our own way*, solidify our relationships (social and personal) and be prepared to ask for what we want. Self promotion is difficult for women but understanding your accomplishments and how they can contribute in different areas is genuine and real. Practice and you will find comfort in it. Lastly, since we are good at connections find a way to stay connected with your network and never neglect them!
- 6. Find a mentor** – Whether this is a friend, partner, colleague, boss or a coach. Your mentor should be someone who you hold in high regard. Your mentor will guide you, support you, help you when the going is very overwhelming and support you with your career aspirations and hold you accountable. Share your plan with your mentor, let them give you input and provide you with their wisdom. It will make your journey smoother.
- 7. Get your resume updated** - and keep it that way. A solid resume will ensure you are ready for any opportunity that comes your way. It will also keep you on track for ensuring your skills are marketable, your accomplishments current and boosts your self confidence by realizing how really good and prepared you are.