

HOW DO WOMEN DEFINE SUCCESS IN CORPORATE AMERICA?

How do you spell success? More importantly, how will you achieve that success? These are critical questions that encompass choices made every day--from parenting to spirituality to earning a paycheck. Women face unique challenges in their quest for success, especially in the corporate world where they often must negotiate a rigid system based on criteria weighted toward masculine behavior.

A disturbing trend is developing as corporations continue to lose senior female executives to entrepreneurial pursuits. This so-called "brain drain"-- the loss of brainpower, expertise and competence when executives leave their jobs--and the subsequent need to recruit and train replacements can significantly deplete a company's resources. Recent statistics show that more than half of female entrepreneurs started their businesses due to a lack of flexibility in corporations. Where do women turn for support and information?

We found that women who had made it to the top of the career hierarchy did not primarily define success in terms of career. Instead, balance was critical. Two types of concerns influence women's lives: concerns for career and professional achievement, and concerns about personal relationships. To achieve success on their own terms, many women chose to pursue different goals than did their male counterparts.

Successful women have leadership and strength, and promote community and empathy. We don't dismiss motherhood, but [embrace our strengths](#) and use those to change the workplace, and we reap from it a much greater sense of fulfillment than ever before.

It is not a coincidence that at a time when power-hungry hierarchies are being broken down, women are leading and infiltrating the workplace. It is our skills and talents that have created a determination for success and a tremendous influential shift in this powerful quest to succeed.

Believe it or not, a large majority of women in the workplace are high-achievers, shrewd, well-dressed and sexy, while possessing an emotional intelligence that far surpasses our male counterparts. We don't rule by insecurities or fear, but by knowing ourselves well, and seeking connection with others. We combine "[physical potency with seriousness of purpose.](#)"

In short, we're women. [We strive to be who we are](#), in our sexual identities, and in how we construct our personal and professional lives. We acknowledge our own complexities.

Our personal and professional lives are blurred more than ever before, and a woman's strength in today's society is the fact we are true to ourselves -- more so than any other generation -- because past generations fought for our right to do so.

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