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Friends are like Diamonds

Marilyn L. Grady

There is constant reference to the “Old Boys Network” in the literature about access to administrative roles for women. Two books by Bob Greene capture a “Boys Network” both young and old. Perhaps you have read them? The first is *Be True To Your School: A Diary of 1964*. It is Bob Greene’s journal of his high school years presented as a book. It chronicles his experiences as a teenager growing up with his friends in Bexley, Ohio.

I have used *Be True To Your School* as a required reading in classes. It provokes quite a discussion among students. The book reflects high school life in the mid-1960s and precipitates an opportunity to compare high school life then and now. Many embrace the book with enthusiasm and pass it on . . . others are somewhat offended by the frankness of the journal reflections.

In 2006, Bob Greene’s *And You Know You Should Be Glad: A True Story of Lifelong Friendship* appeared. This book is the story of the same five fellows. It is a revealing portrait of the friendships that have endured in their lives. Families, careers, distance and years have not weakened the bonds of friendship for these five friends. Their commitment to each other in a time of great challenge is memorable and worthy of attention. They remind us how we have lived our friendships.

When I think of the “Old Boys Network,” I think of enduring friendships and what they signify. Greene describes friendship and his network with great clarity. He provides a mirror for each of us as we examine our lives.

We work in a profession that is deep in human interactions and interpersonal relationships. We are blessed by the friendships that have emerged from these associations. We should write the stories of our lives as the stories of our friendships.

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Registrations for the *20th Annual Women in Educational Leadership Conference* are being accepted! The conference will be October 8-9, 2006, in Lincoln, Nebraska. For information about the conference contact Marilyn Grady at mgradyl@unl.edu

Women in History

Maria Poveka Martinez

Tina Koeppe

Native American artisan Maria Poveka Martinez played a vital role in the revival of pottery making throughout the Southwest United States. Born in 1887 in the San Ildefonso region of New Mexico, Maria first made pottery as a child and received encouragement from her aunt, who was an excellent potter. 1907 is the year that Maria began her pottery career in earnest. During this year, Maria's husband Julian worked as a digger at an archeological site near their pueblo. Maria was at the* excavation site when the diggers uncovered shards of decorated black on cream pottery. She took great interest in the pottery shards and was asked by some of the archeologists if she could recreate some of the vessels and prehistoric decorative patterns. Excited by the project, Maria carefully studied the patterns and then created some historically inspired pottery for the archeologists. Impressed with Maria's pottery, the archeologists placed more orders for her work and she began to earn an income by selling her pots. Prior to this point in history, the ancient tradition of Native American pottery making had begun to wane, possibly due a lack of interest by Anglo society.

By 1915 Maria had mastered the art of making larger vessels and attained a level of skill that surpassed all other San Ildefonso potters. Her pottery was characterized by relatively thin walls, hard firing, careful forming, smooth and clear finishes, carefully applied and well-executed designs, and, in the case of Black ware, a highly lustrous surface polish. Her pottery utilizes traditional techniques and demonstrates a preoccupation with form and balance. To create her famous Black ware, Maria utilized an ancient process of painting matte designs on the pottery with a red clay slip. When firing; this created a black on black effect.

San Ildefonso became known as the most progressive arts and crafts center in the Southwestern United States and Maria was acknowledged as the master potter of the community. Maria believed that her pottery making skills were a gift to be shared and she gladly taught others in her pueblo how to make pottery. The black-on-black ware in particular, brought prestige and a new source of revenue to their village. Because of the success in making and marketing high quality artisan pottery, the San Ildefonso pueblo began to

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Tina Koeppe is a master's student of textile history specializing in quilts and costume at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has a BA in English from UNL. Her areas of research include clothing of the 1930's and 40's, issues of gender and craft, social history, pop culture, art, and ethnography and their relation to textiles. She works as a research assistant at the Department of Clothing and Textile Design at UNL, assisting with the care of the school's historical textile collection. Email: tinakoeppe@yahoo.com

achieve a higher level of economic viability. Community members were able to improve their lives through better housing and sanitation. Maria taught generations of people how to make and appreciate Indian pottery and introduced innovations that significantly impacted the style of contemporary pottery. Maria ran her pottery workshop while raising four sons, taking care of her home and actively participating in her community. Julian eventually learned painting techniques and began decorating Maria's pottery and the husband and wife duo forged a successful business partnership that lasted more than 40 years.

Maria collaborated with her family (husband Julian, son Popovi Da, daughter-in-law Santana). In 1934 President and Mrs. Roosevelt invited Maria and Julian to the White House. Although she had a career that spanned most of the 20th century and received national and international recognition during her lifetime, Maria never had a major retrospective exhibition in her native state, New Mexico, until after her death in 1980.

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Top Ten Reasons to Seek Professional Challenges*

Trudy Salsberry

When we first enter a new role in a profession, the challenges for growth are constant and almost overwhelming. As we gain experience and confidence, there is always a chance that what was once 'novel' becomes routine. Seeking professional challenges are the answer to remaining motivated and productive as we move from novice to expert. This past spring, I chose to take my own advice and engage in a role that was new me . . . serving as an overseas school evaluator.

For three weeks, I served as a stateside evaluator conducting school site visits at four Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DODDs) located in The Netherlands. Prior to the visits, I received intensive training from the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) for conducting the visits as well as learning about the culture of the educational environment of families in the military and the necessary information for international travel. Those three weeks in The Netherlands were filled with forming new relationships with team members at each school site, learning about the unique needs of children who are transferred nearly every three years, and working with teachers and administrators who are living in a foreign country and experiencing very diverse contexts. I evaluated one of the smallest schools in that area of Europe (a total of 40 children in an elementary school) situated in a small rural community as well as an international elementary school of about 600 children where administrators from three countries served as a leadership team and where all children were required to learn two languages.

What I learned from my 'professional challenge' as an overseas evaluator went far beyond how to serve in that evaluator role. I decided that the top ten reasons for seeking professional challenges are for:

1. Enhancing professional development. In my case, I had just created a new course on program evaluation and I was able to develop new skills and understandings related to a specific model of evaluation I

* A version of this essay was prepared as invited remarks to the opening plenary session at the national Women in Educational Leadership Conference held in Lincoln, Nebraska, October 2005.

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would discuss in the new course. I was able to illustrate with concrete examples the importance of evaluator training, appropriate data collection and analysis techniques, and the ethical issues involved in conducting evaluations.

2. Modeling what you believe. I always 'preach' to my graduate students that it is important to be a life-long learner. Through this experience I was modeling my commitment to learning something new at all stages of life.
3. Remaining humble. In the professoriate, I am generally regarded as having a certain expertise, poise, or 'presence.' When I took golf lessons a few years ago, I was incredibly awkward and unable to follow the instructor's directions. I had never even been on a golf course so you can imagine how embarrassed I was to try to hit the golf ball off the tee only to have my mighty swing hit the ground with a painful 'thud'! Many of my graduate students come to their first graduate level course nervous about their ability to handle the class or afraid to speak out because of how they might be perceived. Trying to acquire new skills or attempting new roles makes me more sensitive when working with others with varying levels of development.
4. Experiencing another culture. Culture can be broadly defined. I learned about the 'military' culture as much as I did about The Netherlands. The military observe a protocol that is not always familiar to those not employed in the armed forces. My role as an evaluator required me to learn more about the significance of rank, the importance of following protocol, and the conditions military families live in overseas. There was a real need to be aware of the impact of the current war as these children all had parents who might be involved in dangerous duties. In addition, each school site had high security not often experienced stateside. I had to travel with orders from the pentagon and be able to present those papers at any school entry checkpoint along with a passport and school identification. Armed guards greeted us each morning as we entered the buildings.

5. Breaking routines. Routines are helpful but by breaking routines from time to time you are able to see new perspectives. My drive from the lake to work had become monotonous until I broke that routine with three weeks overseas. When I returned, the drive was more scenic and I was excited to process new ideas with my colleagues.
6. Increasing your range of opportunities. This spring I will be traveling to Egypt to work with the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Schools (CITA) because of a recommendation from those connected to my earlier work with DODDs. I had not even considered these possibilities for travel a few years ago . . . I thought I had more to do at work than I could handle!
7. Affirming your value and credibility. There may be times when you feel a little unappreciated or you question whether you are 'current' or 'cutting edge' in your field. Stepping outside your present work place and being recognized for your contributions by other organizations reminds you of your many strengths and skills you have acquired and allows you to assess your abilities more accurately.
8. Learning about new practices. School leaders need to be aware of effective practices for a wide range of content areas. Observing other educators allowed me to affirm the behaviors of good teaching and strong leadership. In this situation, I was able to observe an international leadership team and how they negotiated when there were conflicting national standards for student achievement. I also saw classrooms where teachers modeled innovative ways to implement standards-based teaching and learning. I'll never forget viewing the 'Wax Musuem' where the elementary students researched, wrote biographies, and then dressed as famous people. When I stepped on the 'button' on the floor, the 'wax' figure came alive and told me their name and what role they played in the Victorian era.
9. Appreciating your current role. Changing your physical setting for a short while allows you to reflect on what you enjoy about your work and reminds you of the many privileges you have. I realized that while serving as an administrator or teacher overseas or acting as a consultant were all options for my employment, I did truly enjoy working closely with doctoral students to finish that dissertation or helping an advisee select the right courses so that they could land that administrative position in their district.

10. Appearing more exotic to my family and colleagues. Yes, finally, I will admit that in my case it was fun to be able to say . . . I'm off to Amsterdam next week! Or, I really enjoyed eating a Belgian waffle Sunday morning . . . in Belgium! And better yet, the chocolate from the U.S. can't begin to compare with what I brought home from Europe . . . here, have a taste!

The Art (Not Science) of Grants Management

Doreen Gosmire

Currently there are more than fifty thousand nonprofit agencies and organizations, including schools, that receive federal grants. These entities invest substantial time and money in seeking grant dollars (Schumacher, 2005). Recipients underestimate the investment and complexity associated with managing grants. The work of creating ownership, establishing and maintaining progress, spending funds wisely and living the grant cycle requires the creativity and diligence of the finest artist.

Creating Ownership and Understanding

The first artistic move in grants management is to create a culture of understanding and ownership for the grant. The culture provides an identity with which others can associate and frames the establishment and implementation of the marketing plan and campaign. The institutions and individuals that serve as the consumers or internal stakeholders must be identified and involved in creating the market plan. Wise grant directors invest time in getting to know the internal stakeholders, their needs, and capacity. A good motto to remember is “Go slow to go fast.” In other words, take time to take time to understand the culture and context of the key players. Sincere efforts must be made to connect the players and get acquainted. Most grants are funded because there is an opportunity to create new collaborations, connections and organizational structures. Creating a niche and identity for the project may seem like a surface level or nonproductive effort; however, if there are new relationships to form, there needs to be a name and identity for the project. An essential question is: If the internal players do not know what the project is, how can they get on board and be an integral part of the project?

Grant funding attracts much attention from external players eager to “get their pieces of the pie.” External stakeholders provide key services and act as significant advocates for the project. Identification and public recognition of the “true” external players is critical. Some players who step forward to

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participate in the funding do not have the capacity or sincerity and commitment to serve the grant project. The wise grant director is willing to ignore the flattering attention that may emanate from power players and, instead, provide attention to external stakeholders with the genuine interest and commitment to the project. External relationships can be cumbersome or clumsy. There will be a brief period of ambiguity in which the roles of the external stakeholder and the true connections to the project must be identified. External players may also change throughout the life of the grant, causing again a certain amount of clumsiness.

Grant projects require a work team focused on the vision and long-range efforts as well as the day-to-day operations. Called the “worker bees” of the project, the work team is created only for the life of the grant and may or may not have employment with the fiscal agency when grant funding ends. This creates an ambiance of short-term existence that must be addressed since this may result in uncertain long-range employment opportunities for participants. The reality is that most of the work team is in this for the short term experience. The loyalties and commitments of the work team may be divided. The grant director must understand and orchestrate a work team united for work completion on the goals of the project but divided in terms of individual professional goals. Recognizing this and then communicating with team members about future goals, ideas and directions allows the work team to support each other individually and as a unit.

Establishing and Measuring Progress and Accountability

Effective grant directors document the progress on an initiative with three areas of reporting: accountability reporting, performance reporting, and reporting to the stakeholders.

Granting agencies, especially at the federal level, focus on data. Federal agencies now require that each grant program be evaluated annually for program purpose and design, performance measurement, evaluations, strategic planning, program management and program results. Meeting these

criteria require grant recipients to report annually and sometimes quarterly to a federal program officer assigned to the grant project. Masterful grant directors establish a productive working relationship with the federal grant program officer and understand the accountability reports that are submitted, the data that is collected, and the subsequent data analysis. Grant directors recognize that the federal program officer with whom they work is both an advisor and, most imperatively, a supervisor.

Grantors are also interested in tying performance measures to grants management. Organizations applying for grant opportunities should evaluate the goals and objectives of the grant to determine if goals can be met. Grants need to be implemented with performance data in mind. Grant directors need to set up a plan for annual and accumulated reporting on what they plan to achieve and what the performance measures are. Performance reporting, required by federal agencies, informs the grantee by allowing the grantee to peruse levels of achievements and determine areas in which they are performing adequately.

Grant directors for public agencies have an obligation to inform their public through the life of the grant and at the close of the grant about performance and accountability needs. Dissemination of grant results are aimed at both internal and external stakeholders and the reporting must be inviting, concise and engaging. Federal funding agencies have an implied requirement to distribute the performance results to a larger national audience in some venue. That reporting may not appear as a requirement by a granting agency, but is critical to the success of future grant applications.

Spending Funds Wisely and In Compliance

Grant directors are responsible for the fiscal management of the grant. A detailed budget and spending plan is key to successful management of grant funds. Effective directors carefully plan all details of the budget to avoid further audit problems. The process and procedures for prior approval items such as travel and equipment purchases, are defined and documented in writing by the fiscal agency before submission to the federal granting agency. Directors are explicit and make no assumption about procedures and how business will be done. Grant directors should have a second set of eyes to examine the budget to ensure identification of all costs.

Identifying and documenting the number of sub awards under a grant is important to strong fiscal management. Sub-awards should be based on performance measures and intermittent accountabilities to the goals and objectives of the grant. Pay only after services are rendered or intermittently along the way. Sub awards must have clauses for noncontinuance based on

granting agency funding renewal. Furthermore, a clause for noncompliance must be included in agreements of the parties involved. Sub grantees must know that funds come from a federal source and have accompanying requirements. It is the grant director's responsibility to manage the sub grantees and keep them informed. For a sub-grantee easily can become disconnected from the overall performance goals of the grant.

Several types of special funding issues arise throughout the life of a grant. For example, the documentation of in-kind, or matching, funding must be an integral part of the budget and data collection procedures. Relying on estimates of such costs causes red flags and that may lead to an audit. The matching costs for a particular program originate in the statute. It is a binding and legal agreement between the grantor and grantee. In some instances, fees are collected for activities within the grant; this is known as program income and of course requires management and monitoring. Program income, or gross income received directly from the grant-supported activities, generally may be accounted for in two ways. The amount of the program income can be deducted from the total allowable cost for the grant, or it may be added to the funds provided under the grant to further the purpose of the grant.

Fiscal management of a grant is a team effort. The grant director, human resources officer, and finance office of the fiscal agency need to work as a team. It is important to know the funding requirements and have a clear understanding of the Office of Management and Budget guidelines that pertain to the grant project.

Understanding the Grant Cycles

Federal competitive grants account for \$100 billion of the \$400 billion distributed in assistance programs annually (NGMA, 2005; Wrenn, 2004). To maximize the availability of these funds, a person must understand the federal funding cycle for competitive grants. Authorization of a program happens through legislation that has occurred in Congress and after the President has signed the legislation authorizing the program to move forward. Next, Congress has to appropriate the funds. This may be a one to two year process depending on the budget allocation.

After a grants program is approved and funded, the regulations and instructions for the program are written. This is a 30 to 120 day process, depending on the history of the program. Federal program offices then set up a time frame for applications and the process for applications. Review panels are scheduled and trained to review the applications according to the standards that are set forth in the legislation and defined by the federal programs office. An application is screened by the Federal Grants Office

before submission to a review panel. The screening process eliminates applications that do not meet mandatory application qualifications, deadlines and format requirements. A review panel sends its results back to the federal program office that in turn, reviews the evaluation results. The federal program office mails the funding recommendations to the Federal Grants Office. A negotiation takes place between the two federal agencies as to the amount and the number of awards. Finally, the grant awards are processed and the grantees are notified. There is also notification given to unsuccessful applicants. Unsuccessful applicants are debriefed only upon request. The entire application process may take 6 to 12 months. Three years could pass between the first legislation and the granting of monies from the federal agency.

Post-award monitoring begins once the initial grantee notification takes place. In cases in which quarterly and annual reporting requirements are established, requirements and training for performance and reporting are put in place. Some grants require annual meetings of project directors with the federal agency and other grantees. Grants may also require a site visit from the federal program officer. Multi-year grants are renewed or provided funding annually based on reporting requirements and performance, and continued funding may not occur because of performance results or nonallocation of resources in the federal budget.

The final phase of the grant cycle is project close-out. The federal program officer determines if all the grant terms and conditions have been met. This is based on the annual performance reports and the final project report. The grants are then officially closed out by the Federal Grants Office. An audit resolution or transaction may occur if there is a discrepancy between funds allocated and funds spent. This can occur when all allocated funds are not expended. Grant close-out is the responsibility of the grant director. The life of the grant is over, the work team has disassembled, and the internal and external stakeholders have changed focus.

The life cycle of grants can be an emotional process for a grant director. The grantee begins the process with hopes and anticipations of accomplishments and expectations. Once the work has begun, grant administrators must maintain the interest and motivation to accomplish the work of the grant. When the grant comes to the last nuances of existence, fireworks are released and the "oohs and aahs" are heard. Success for the grant is not in the fireworks itself, but in the mental images or models that are created, the relationships and fellowship of those gathered to see the fireworks, and the plan that begins for the next fireworks. This emotional cycle should not be seen as a personal endeavor for the grant director, but rather as a natural occurrence of the grant cycle.

A true artist continuously identifies new material, gathers new colors or instruments, and extends experiences. An effective grant director follows a similar process, she explores new applications, seeks new resources, and identifies extended contexts to lead organizations and to develop as a professional. The grant administration experience can be viewed as a tool to practice leadership in organizations. It is an art because of the complexity, culture and context of each project.

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The Value of Professional Development Activities in Advancing the Careers of Women Chief Academic Officers in Community Colleges

Brent D. Cejda

Previous research has shown that there are not distinct career lines leading to the chief academic officer (CAO) position in community colleges. Rather, it appears that a variety of skills and experiences contribute to advancement to this position. This paper examines the perceptions of women CAOs as to the importance of professional development activities to their career advancement. Responses from women community college CAOs from nine states (Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming) indicate that current position holders perceive that a number of professional development experiences were important to their advancement to the CAO position.

Women make up an increasing proportion of CAO in the community college sector. In 1985, Moore, Martorana, and Twombly reported that women made up 15.9% of the CAO population in community and junior colleges. Several years later Vaughan (1990) surveyed the same population and found that 21% were female. Hawthorne's (1994) survey of two-year institutions determined that women held 27% of the CAO positions in community colleges. A national study at the turn of the century found that women comprised 39% of the public community college CAOs (McKenney & Cejda, 2000). The most recent data (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002) indicated that 42% of the CAOs at community college were women.

In examining representation, Kanter (1977) identified 35% as a minimal level necessary to reach "critical mass," the point at which a category of individuals moves from "token" representation to a collective "group." This concept of critical mass has continued to be incorporated in research focusing on academic women (Riger, Stokes, Raja, & Sullivan, 1997; Twombly,

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Brent Cejda is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and also serves as the Executive Director of the National Council of Instructional Administrators an organization that is housed in the Department. His research interests include the career paths of postsecondary administrators, transfer issues, and issues related to access and equity. Cejda serves as the editor of *Instructional Leadership Abstracts*, and *Community College Exemplary Initiatives*, is a book review editor for *Christian Higher Education*, and is a member of the Council for the Management of Education Finance. Email: bcejda2@unl.notes.unl.edu

1999). Recognizing the demographic evidence, Clark (1998) called for research on women faculty and administrators in the community college that moves beyond male-versus-female comparisons to in-depth investigations of their experiences and professional advancement.

The majority of career studies on community college CAOs have been individual in orientation, reporting demographic and background characteristics. Studies that have utilized a structural orientation have focused on the sequence of positions, or the career lines of those that hold the office. Twombly (1988) was the first to suggest that a variety of experiences, rather than just the position held, contribute to career advancement. A study of women CAOs in community colleges (McKenney & Cejda, 2001) supports this contention. The purpose of this investigation is to determine the perceptions of women community college chief academic officers regarding the importance of external and internal professional development experiences to their advancement to the CAO position.

Interestingly, the professional development activities of CAOs has received little scholarly attention. Studies have instead focused on the activities of community-college presidents (Cavan, 1995; McFarlin, Crittenden, & Ebberts, 1999; Merriam & Thomas, 1986; Reichard, 1995; Wallin, 2002) and other instructional personnel such as faculty and department chairpersons (Fugate, 2000; Spangler, 1999; Williams, 2002; Wolverson & Poch, 2000). Some researchers have inferred the inclusion of CAOs in broadly describing professional development for community-college administrators (Anderson, 1997; Gutierrez, Castaneda, & Katsinas, 2002; Hopkins, 2003; Stolzenberg, 2002; Valeau, 1999).

Two possible reasons may explain why researchers have overlooked the professional development activities of community college CAOs. The first

involves a degree of scholarly “economy of scale.” Murray, Murray, and Summar (2000) and Vaughan (1990) indicated that CAOs occupy a position between institutional presidents and faculty members. Having generated volumes of professional development information regarding these two positions, scholars may simply have sidestepped the issue as it applies to CAOs—to avoid duplication.

Community college experts may also have discounted the role external professional development can play in career advancement. Vaughan (1990) noted that CAOs oversee from 48 to 168 internal duties. Researchers may have glossed-over the importance of external experiences because CAOs possibly do not have the time for such activities. Findings from Martin and Samels (1997) and Mech (1997) tend to support this notion. Since most CAOs receive little or no training before beginning their instructional-leadership role, they must focus almost entirely on internal matters. This may cause some institutions to view only internal professional development activities as a necessity.

Literature Review

As mentioned above, the overwhelming majority of research concerning professional development has focused on community college presidents and instructional personnel. The literature has, however, revealed several common activities that might advance the careers of CAOs. Wallin (2002) emphasized the critical nature of professional development for community and technical college presidents. She defined professional development “as those activities and experiences that increase job-related skills and knowledge and support the building of positive relationships” (p. 27). Her research found that presidents place great emphasis on networking with peers and local politicians, and attending professional conferences and leadership seminars. McFarlin et al. (1999) identified professional development as a key ingredient for successful community-college presidents. Formalized leadership opportunities, like those offered through the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), Harvard, and the University of Texas, and participation in mentor-protégé relationships and peer networking all served as common activities. Substantial participation in professional development was also found to be a key factor in a study of female presidents at two-year institutions (Deitemeyer, 2002).

Spangler (1999) showcased the Administrative Leadership Institute (ALI) of the Los Angeles (CA) Community College District. ALI specifically focuses on developing the leadership skills of community college department chairs. Lindholm (1999) also chronicled ALI and similar

professional development activities at North Carolina State University and The Chair Academy. She explained how these training programs were critical for department chairs to succeed in their many challenging tasks. Lindholm also championed these activities as a way to help cultivate the senior community college administrators of tomorrow.

Kirkpatrick (2001) advocated national workshops and conferences as excellent tools to enhance faculty diversity and better support the community-college mission. Fugate (2000) analyzed the careers of faculty members and found that, although many participants did not follow a predetermined path to their teaching careers, all saw a direct link between professional development activities and their ability to teach. Senn (2002) examined faculty members who advanced into community-college administrator positions. Participants in her study identified professional development as essential for transitioning successfully into a leadership role. Comparing experiences in the career paths of female community college administrators in California and North Carolina, Hawkins (1999) found that attendance at various leadership institutes increased the odds for organizational advancement.

In one of the most comprehensive studies to date, Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) explored the career paths and backgrounds of senior community college administrators. Many respondents acknowledged participation in a variety of external activities such as attending conferences, serving as board members of professional forums, and working as paid consultants. Lesser numbers of administrators reported participating in highly-selective and well-recognized programs such as the American Council on Education Fellowship Program and the League for Innovation's Executive Leadership Program. Internal activities included institutional task forces, specialized committees, staff development, and personnel actions.

With CAOs performing some of the most important tasks to support student learning and teaching, professional development must play a key role in the careers of these administrators. As Laden (1996) remarked, these activities can provide the "opportunity to gain practical and conceptual orientations, improve interpersonal skills, learn the latest management and technological skills, develop network alliances, and keep abreast of changes" (p. 57).

Methodology

The information used in this study is drawn from a survey sponsored by the National Council of Instructional Administrators (NCIA). To conduct its research, NCIA obtained permission to use the instrument from *Today's*

Community-College Administrators (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002) to survey two of its organizational regions—VI and VII—encompassing the states of Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming. The NCIA study included the entire population of CAOs ($n = 202$) at two-year institutions located in the aforementioned nine-state area as identified in the *Higher Education Directory* (Rodenhous, 2002). Two mailings yielded the return of 115 (56.9%) usable instruments. Included in the returns are 46 (40%) responses from women CAOs.

The portion of the survey used for this study consists of multiple-rating lists containing 26 single-response items on external professional development activities, external community activities, and internal professional development activities. Alreck and Settle (1995) have advocated the use of multiple-choice, single-response items “when only one alternative is to be singled out from among several by the respondent” (p. 115). The survey requested respondents to identify whether they had participated in external and internal activities and how they viewed the potential of each for advancing one’s career.

Results

Table 1 provides information about the level of participation in nine external professional development activities. More than two-thirds of the respondents had participated in four of the nine activities: attendance at a professional forum for women; presentation of scholarly work; serving as a board member for a state or regional organization; and publication of scholarly work. Table 2 presents the same information in a different way, by rank order of those who perceived the activity to be important to their advancement to the CAO position. The four external professional development activities that women CAOs most frequently reported are ranked seventh, third, second, and sixth, respectively, in terms of the perceived importance to obtaining a CAO appointment. The activity perceived most important to career advancement, participation in state or regional leadership programs, is tied for seventh in the ranking of participation. It should be noted, however, that among those who participated in each of the nine activities were perceived as important by two-thirds or more of the respondents.

Table 3 presents 10 external community activities by rank order of participation. More than 70% of the respondents participated in 4 of the 10 activities: philanthropic or cultural; church or religious organizations; local schools; or economic development and business. Table 4 presents the same information, by rank order of those who perceived the activity to be important to their advancement to the CAO position. The four external

community development activities that women CAOs most frequently reported are ranked sixth, seventh, second, and fifth, respectively, in terms of the perceived importance to obtaining a CAO appointment. More than two-thirds of the respondents perceived 6 of the 10 community activities as important to obtaining the CAO appointment, and less than the majority of participants perceived that two of the activities were important to their career advancement.

Table 5 presents seven internal professional development activities by rank order of participation. The overwhelming majority (89% or above) of the respondents participated in four of the seven activities: in-service staff development; special task forces, committees, and commissions; opportunities for additional responsibilities; and formal performance reviews. Table 6 presents the same information, by rank order of those who perceived the activity to be important to their advancement to the CAO position. The four internal professional development activities that women CAOs most frequently reported are ranked fourth, first, second, and sixth, respectively, in terms of the perceived importance to obtaining a CAO appointment. Three-fourths or more of the respondents perceived six of the seven internal activities as important to obtaining the CAO appointment.

Table 7 considers all 26 activities, presenting the top 10 by rank order of participation. In terms of the level of participation, activities from the internal professional development list are most often reported. Four of the top five activities involve internal professional development, with 89% or greater of the respondents participating. Among the other activities in Table 7, three are from the external professional development and three are from the external community development categories. Table 8 also considers all 26 activities, presenting the top 10 by rank order of perceived importance to advancement to the CAO position. More than three-fourths of the participants in each activity viewed the activity as important to obtaining the CAO appointment. Five of the activities in Table 7 also appear in Table 8. The activity with the greatest level of participation, however, does not appear in the rankings of perceived importance. However, the two activities with the lowest levels of participation are both included in the rankings of perceived importance. Among the activities in Table 8 are three from the external professional development, three from the external community, and two from the internal professional development categories.

Discussion

The respondents to the survey participate in a wide range of professional development activities, as half or more participated in 16 of the 26 items

listed. Internal professional development is most-often reported, as four of the top five activities, in terms of participation, are internal activities. Respondents perceived that two internal professional development activities were the most important to their career advancement. Amey et al. (2002) found that 52% of community college CAOs had been hired from within the organization. Serving on task forces, committees and commissions and accepting additional responsibilities are internal activities that provide the opportunity for the participant to gain administrative-like experience and demonstrate leadership skills and also may serve as a 'testing ground' for the institution to evaluate administrative candidates.

One of the predominate themes that appeared in the literature of professional development was participation in leadership seminars and workshops. Two leadership program categories based on geography were included in the survey, state or regional and national. Participation in these two categories ranked in the bottom five of all activities. Considering the attention placed on this type of activity in the literature, a greater level of participation was expected. State or regional leadership programs ranked third among all activities in perceived importance to advancement to the CAO position, supporting the importance the literature has placed on this experience. This particular finding raises several questions. Is the limited participation by choice or because of lack of opportunity? Why have so few women CAOs participated in national programs? Given the level of participation, why are there so many professional development programs?

The literature also stressed the importance of networking in the community and with politicians as important to the career advancement of community college leaders. Respondents to the survey tended to participate more in external community activities offering a direct impact on the institutional mission and, in turn, enhancing one's career. Cultivating a future student base by participating in the functions and governance of local schools, networking with community leaders in the areas of economic development and business, and participation in civic and cultural activities all fit with the mission of a community college. For a CAO, the career-enhancing benefits of these experiences are obvious.

This study also raised additional questions about the career advancement of women CAOs. Why did they perceive certain activities as important to their career advancement? What specific knowledge, skills, or abilities were gained or developed in these activities? How could the respective professional development activities be improved? Are the perceptions of CAOs the same as the perceptions of women holding other leadership positions, such as chief student affairs officers or presidents? Additional research to answer these questions is warranted.

Graduate programs preparing community college leaders are also challenged to answer questions raised by the findings of this study. Can the experiences gained by serving on task forces, committees, commissions, or by accepting additional responsibilities also occur in simulations, case studies, or internships? What are the similarities and differences between the curriculum of professional development programs and courses in the degree program?

Most important, however, may be the benefit of these findings to aspiring women CAOs. Current women CAOs perceive that professional development activities were important to their career advancement. From the list of 26 activities, more than the majority of participants perceived that 24 of the 26 had been important to their career advancement. Simply put, it appears that the woman who is doing something in the area of professional development is more likely to advance to the CAO position than the woman who does nothing. The activities perceived as important by the greatest percentages of respondents are not national in scope, but can be found at employing institutions, or within the state or region. Participating in the community through service in civic or fraternal organizations, with the local school, and with political or governmental entities are also viewed as important to career advancement. When possible, make scholarly presentations at conferences and conventions.

More women occupy the position of community college CAO than any other upper-level administrative position in higher education. The study described in this paper contributes to the understanding of how the current position holders advanced to their position. Additional research is necessary, however, to more fully understand the contribution of professional development activities to the career advancement of these women and to increase the percentages of women occupying other leadership positions.

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Table 1

External Professional Development by Rank Order of Participation

	Level of Participation	
	<i>n</i>	%
Attendance—Professional Forum for Women	43	93.5
Scholarly Presentations	39	84.8
Board Member—State or Regional Organization	36	78.3
Scholarly Publishing	32	69.5
Paid External Consultant	25	54.0
Attendance—Professional Forum for Minorities	21	45.7
Board Member—National Organization	17	36.9
State/Regional Leadership Programs	17	36.9
National Programs	8	17.3
ACE		
Kellogg		
League for Innovation		
Harvard		

(Respondents *n* = 46)

Table 2

External Professional Development by Rank Order of Importance

	Participated AND Important		Participated but NOT Important	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
State/Regional Leadership Programs	15	88.2	2	11.8
Board Member—State or Regional Organization	29	80.6	7	19.4
Scholarly Presentations	31	79.5	8	20.5
National Programs ACE Kellogg League for Innovation Harvard	6	75.0	2	25.0
Paid External Consultant	18	72.0	7	28.0
Scholarly Publishing	23	71.9	9	28.1
Board Member—National Organizations	12	70.6	5	30.4
Attendance—Professional Forum for Women	29	67.4	14	32.6
Attendance—Professional Forum for Minorities	14	66.7	7	33.3

(Respondents *n* = 46)

Table 3

External Community Activities by Rank Order of Participation

	Level of Participation	
	<i>n</i>	%
Philanthropy/Cultural	39	84.8
Church/Religious	34	73.9
Local Schools	34	73.9
Economic Development/Business	33	71.7
Civic/Fraternal	29	63.0
Health and Social Services	25	54.3
Political/Government	19	41.3
Social/Environmental	15	32.6
Veterans/Military	9	19.6
Elected Position at Local Schools	5	10.8

(Respondents *n* = 46)

Table 4

External Community Activities by Rank Order of Importance

	Participated AND Important		Participated but NOT Important	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Civic/Fraternal	25	86.2	4	13.8
Local Schools	29	85.3	5	14.7
Elected Position at Local Schools	4	80.0	1	20.0
Political/Government	15	78.9	4	21.1
Economic Development/Business	25	75.8	8	24.2
Philanthropy/Cultural	26	66.7	13	28.3
Health and Social Services	14	56.0	11	44.0
Church/Religious	19	55.9	15	44.1
Veterans/Military	4	44.4	5	55.6
Social/Environmental	5	33.3	10	66.7
(Respondents <i>n</i> = 46)				

Table 5

Internal Professional Development by Rank Order of Participation

	Level of Participation	
	<i>n</i>	%
In-service Staff Development	45	97.8
Special Task Forces, Committees, and Commissions	43	93.5
Opportunity for Additional Responsibilities	43	93.5
Formal Performance Reviews	41	89.1
Formal Career Reviews	30	65.2
Temporary Job Rotation	21	45.7
Subbatical	7	15.2
(Respondents <i>n</i> = 46)		

Table 6
Internal Professional Development by Rank Order of Importance

	Participated AND Important		Participated but NOT Important	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Special Task Forces, Committees, and Commissions	41	95.3	2	4.7
Opportunity for Additional Responsibilities	41	95.3	2	4.7
Sabbatical	6	85.7	1	14.3
In-service Staff Development	34	77.3	10	22.7
Formal Career Reviews	23	76.7	7	23.3
Formal Performance Reviews	31	75.6	10	24.4
Temporary Job Rotation	13	61.9	8	38.1
(Respondents <i>n</i> = 46)				

Table 7
Top Ten Activities by Rank Order of Participation

	Level of Participation	
	<i>n</i>	%
In-service Staff Development	45	97.8
Attendance—Professional Forum for Women	43	93.5
Opportunity for Additional Responsibilities	43	93.5
Special Task Forces, Committees, and Commissions	43	93.5
Formal Performance Reviews	41	89.1
Philanthropy/Cultural	39	84.8
Scholarly Presentations	39	84.8
Board Member—State or Regional Organization	36	78.3
Local Schools	34	73.9
Economic Development/Business	33	71.7
(Respondents <i>n</i> = 46)		

Table 8
Top Ten Activities by Rank Order of Importance

	Participated AND Important		Participated but NOT Important	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Opportunity for Additional Responsibilities	41	93.5	2	4.7
Special Task Forces, Committees, and Commissions	41	95.3	2	4.7
State/Regional Leadership Programs	15	88.2	2	11.8
Civic/Fraternal	25	86.2	4	13.8
Sabbatical	6	85.7	1	14.3
Local Schools	29	85.3	5	14.7
Board Member—State or Regional Organization	29	80.6	7	19.4
Elected Position at Local Schools	4	80.0	1	20.0
Scholarly Presentations	31	79.5	8	20.5
Political/Government	15	78.9	4	21.1
(Respondents <i>n</i> = 46)				

Breaking Perceptions of “Old Boys’ Networks”: Women Leaders Learning to Make the Most of Mentoring Relationships

Linda Searby
Jenny Tripses

Women often perceive a disadvantage over similarly qualified males in professional advancement because they are not part of the “old boys’ network.” Based upon the assumption that women and minorities struggle to gain access into educational administration positions due to lack of professional networks and mentors, this phenomenological qualitative study sought to understand, from the protégé perspective, how women develop the capacity to enter into mentoring relationships. Subjects in the study were 14 women participants in a mentoring conference sponsored by a statewide women’s administrative organization. Conclusions from the study address ambivalence experienced by protégés in seeking out a mentor as well as implications for women’s professional organizations seeking to develop strong mentoring cultures.

Introduction

Women and minorities traditionally struggle to gain access and entry into educational administration positions (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000; Gupton & Slick, 1996). Reasons often cited as explanations for discrepancies between numbers of women in the teaching ranks and women in leadership positions are lack of networking, few positive role models, and inadequate sponsorship and mentoring among women (Blount, 1998; Gupton & Slick, 1996). In a study by Yonson (2004), women aspiring to school superintendencies identified the career barriers they had experienced. They included gender bias, perceptions that women are too emotional for top leadership, do not understand budgets, and are not strong managers. Lack of geographic mobility and a perception of the “glass ceiling” were also mentioned. Of significant importance were the lack of professional networks and lack of mentors as barriers.

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Rhode (2003) stated, "A central problem for American women is the lack of consensus that there is a significant problem. Gender inequalities in leadership opportunities are pervasive; perceptions of inequality are not. A widespread assumption is that barriers have been coming down, women have been moving up, and equal treatment is an accomplished fact" (p. 6). In a study of accomplished Illinois women school leaders, in response to a direct question about whether gender affected their career opportunities, 7 responded in the affirmative, 4 reported no effect and 5 answered both yes and no (Lyman, Ashby, & Tripses, 2005). Finding mentors and access to informal networks of advice, contacts, and support is a common obstacle. Surveys of professional women reveal both perception and reality of exclusion from "boys clubs" or "old boys networks." The result is that many women remain out of the loop in career development (Rhode, 2003).

Evidence of women excluding other women is unfortunately available. The "Queen Bee" phenomenon sometimes operates: women who reach

positions of influence enjoy their status as one of the few females at the top thus taking no responsibility to assist less experienced women to reach their leadership potential (Rhode, 2003). Due to the pressures of working in androcentric cultures that do not recognize or support them, many women are ambivalent about helping other women professionally (Bell, 1995). In a study of barriers women face in entering administration, Shepard (2000) concluded that "women may be their own worst enemies" (p. 182). Having identified barriers, Shepard asserted that women must support other women to positions of school leadership. Lacking support from women already in leadership positions, aspiring women leaders likely will not assume positions in any great numbers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore ways in which women develop capacities to enter into and engage in mentoring relationships with more experienced leaders in education. The study grew out of a mentoring conference sponsored by Illinois Women Administrators (IWA) to encourage educational women leaders at all stages of their careers to engage in mentoring relationships. The mission of IWA is "to improve schools by networking and mentoring women educational leaders into positions of influence in school administration" (Tripses, 2004, p. 9).

Based on the results of a planning study distributed to IWA membership in Fall 2003, the IWA Executive Board organized a two-day conference on mentoring. The purpose of the conference was to provide a forum for aspiring and practicing women administrators to explore networking relationships and mentoring opportunities at different career stages. The conference, specified for women only, had 40 participants. Support and encouragement were offered through the conference to aspiring and practicing school administrators, administrators considering changing roles, administrators interested in mentoring other women, and women aspiring to teach in higher education either as adjuncts or in tenure track positions.

Literature on mentoring often focuses on the responsibilities and roles of mentors. The focus of this study was instead upon the protégé. Planners of the conference intended that participants would gain insights, information, and motivation to effectively seek out and engage in mentoring relationships. Data for the study were obtained by asking participants questions, during and after the mentoring conference, that would yield information about the women's awareness of their needs in a mentoring relationship, the qualities desired in a mentor (whether they were seeking professional skills, personal

qualities or both), strategies employed to engage in a mentoring relationship, and finally, a description of the relationship itself.

Theoretical Framework

Feminist Theory

Using a feminist framework, we looked at several interrelated concerns from the perspective of the protégé. We were interested in learning how women engage in mentoring relationships, what barriers they might perceive, and differences between their stated intentions for entering into a mentoring relationship and actual outcomes of their mentoring relationship.

A feminist approach validates personal experience and recognizes marginal voices. Gardiner et al. (2000) define feminist tradition as follows:

Feminist research validates multiple and diverse perspectives, in particular the values of examining these perspectives to clarify one's own beliefs and values, and for the pedagogical opportunities to help one to consider viewpoints of other individuals. Women learn from other women's voices and experiences. (p. 29)

Mentoring from the perspective of women in professional relationships then takes into consideration experience, gender differences where noted, power relationships and authority conflicts. Diverse perspectives are sought out and carefully considered (Gardiner et al., 2000).

Definition of Mentoring

For the purposes of this study, the following definition of mentoring was used. Mentoring is a personal learning partnership between a more experienced professional who acts as a guide, role model, coach, teacher, and/or sponsor and a less experienced professional. The mentor provides the protégé with knowledge, advice, challenge, counsel, and support in the protégé's pursuit of achieving professional and/or personal goals (Johnson, 2002; Portner, 2002; Zachary, 2000). A mentor is the keeper of selected wisdom valuable to the protégé (Sinetar, 1998) who embodies hopes, casts light on the way ahead, interprets obscure signs, warns of impending dangers, and points out unexpected insights (Daloiz, 1999). Mentoring relationships are particularly important in the early stages of a career or during crucial turning points. Mentors manifest for protégés someone who has accomplished the goals to which they aspire, offering encouragement and support (Daloiz, 1999).

The original Mentor was an Ithacan noble in Homer's *Odyssey*. A wise counselor to his friend Ulysses, Mentor was entrusted with the care,

education, and protection of Ulysses' son, Telemachus. The Greek goddess of wisdom, Athena, disguised as Mentor, spoke at critical times to Telemachus. She frequently intervened on Odysseus' or Telemachus' behalf, often in disguise and sometimes as Mentor, the prince's advisor. Mentor, then, was both male and female, mortal and immortal, an androgynous demi-god, wisdom personified, responsible for nourishing all aspects of Telemachus' life—intellectual, spiritual, social, and professional (Daloz, 1999; Galbraith & Cohen, 1995; Johnson, 2002; Gardiner et al., 2000; Mullen, 2005). From this epic, we learn that mentors transmit wisdom during important stages of transition. Myths, fairy tales, fantasy and children's stories abound with mentor figures: the spider woman in Native American lore, Gandalf in the Tolkien, Charlotte in *Charlotte's Web*, Shazam in the Captain Marvel comics, the little old lady in *Babar*, Tiresias in Greek legend, and the skin horse in *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Jung (as quoted in Daloz, 1999) explained that the archetype of mentor may be of either sex or both and represents "knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness, and intuition" (p. 17).

Women's Organizations and Mentoring

Mentoring can either maintain or break the status quo of organizations. Traditionally, access to mentoring relationships has been more available to selected males than to women, minorities and males not matching organizational leadership stereotypes. Mentoring practices have traditionally served to keep dominant white males in power. As an activity, mentoring has privileged a few and excluded many. Mentoring has been associated with power, privilege and social stratification (Gardiner et al., 2000).

Closely related to mentoring, networking is another type of relationship that serves to create, strengthen or change cultures. The term networking frequently refers to the "old boys' network," an invisible network of sponsorship by which experienced professionals groom young versions of themselves to leadership positions (Gardiner et al., 2000). Networks comprised of women can powerfully impact the culture and policy of organizations and professions. They provide women avenues to develop talents, build relationships, and support job equity (Wellington, 1999). Women administrators need support, encouragement, and a sense of being connected to others who understand the world in which they live (Irby & Brown, 1998). Levine (as cited by Irby & Brown, 1998) reported that women participating in a small informal peer support group of professional women educators at similar levels of management from different organizational contexts derived several benefits from their association in the group: (a) discovering a new way of looking at a problem, (b) benefiting from one

another's failures and successes, (c) serving as resources to help one another form new professional relationships, (d) providing professional contacts to offer and receive support, and (e) meeting other dynamic women educators in a wide range of management positions. Levine concluded that small support groups for women leaders can have a significant impact upon women's potential and be a "mechanism for broadening perspectives, generating alternative solutions to managerial problems, and enhancing professional and personal esteem." (Irby & Brown, 1998, p. 75).

A recognition of the importance of mentoring and networking to ensure that aspiring women overcome barriers to school leadership may be necessary but it is not always readily accepted. Accomplished women often resist the idea that they could benefit from support from a mentor or network. Quoting a subject in one of her studies on mentoring, Grogan (Brunner, Grogan, & Prince, 2004) cited one woman who said, "The last thing I want to do is go out there and ask for help. I can do it on my own and I'm very proud that I can do it on my own. I don't want to be thankful or grateful to anyone else" (p. 42). Looking back on her own career, Grogan said, "It never stopped me if there wasn't someone around to say, "You can do this." I just told people what I was going to do next. I didn't wait for someone to encourage me to do something" (p. 42). Providing a broader explanation of mentoring, Grogan concluded that mentoring can also be defined where the protégé initiates a mentoring relationship to acquire skills or knowledge needed to achieve career goals. She wrote, "Women are good at putting together their own mentors." Mendez Morse has a term for it. She called it "constructing a mentor." We need to help others. We need to encourage aspiring women to seek out assistance when needed with assurances that other women will encourage and aid them (Brunner et al., 2004).

Women in leadership need support and nurturance for their careers just as men do. They need to identify with those who are successful in administration. They need role models that reflect their values and beliefs about education, schools, and relationships. Women need mentors who believe in them and offer support and encouragement through tough situations. The careers of most school administrators are relatively lonely (Gupton & Slick, 1996). Women are especially isolated because they function in an androcentric culture. Edson (1995) conducted a ten-year longitudinal study on successful women administrators. She concluded "that despite all the obstacles for women trying to advance in a largely male arena, these female educators continue to be committed, resilient, and for the most part, successful" (p. 46). She reflected on how little is needed to encourage women in administration and recommended further study on the process of encouraging and supporting women professionals (Edson, 1995).

Mentoring Relationships

Mentoring relationships require active participation of both the mentor and the protégé. Women protégés must actively seek out mentors who demonstrate a willingness and the necessary expertise to guide them effectively. The possibility of identifying multiple mentors who can offer different kinds of leadership and competence is frequently overlooked even by women who seek out a mentor. Women protégés must also develop capabilities to realize when a relationship is no longer productive (Gardiner et al., 2000).

The protégé plays an active and critical role in mentoring relationships. The protégé shares full responsibility for setting the priorities, the learning, the resources, and also takes increasing responsibility to be self-directed. As the relationship evolves, the mentoring partners increasingly share responsibility for achievement of the goals of the protégé (Zachary, 2000). Portner (2002) listed several preconditions for protégés wishing to attain maximum benefits from a mentoring relationship. They are: recognition of the need to learn, confidence that mentoring relationships benefit one's career, and a genuine desire to strive for professional potential.

Mentorships are reciprocal collegial relationships that require professionalism and ethical behavior by both parties. Explicit preparation to clarify expectations and establish ground rules for the mentoring experience sets the stage for a productive learning experience (Johnson, 2002). Taking full responsibility for her own learning, the protégé recognizes the importance of effective communications skills, confidentiality issues, keeping commitments, actively seeking out and objectively processing feedback, establishing times and means of meeting, and always striving to become more independent. These are critical to the success of the relationship (Portner, 2002; Zachary, 2000).

Besides the traditional one-on-one mentor/protégé model, there is another construct to consider. Mentoring *mosaics*, a term coined by Mullen (2005), enables a protégé to access multiple mentors for learning, feedback, or support. Mentoring mosaics can take the form of networks, community, and family resources and are dependent upon the needs of the protégé.

Within the mentoring mosaic, the individual taps the strengths and qualities of one's partners. Members interchange roles as mentors and protégés, sponsoring the learning of all parties through synergistic, flexible structure. This kind of network is indispensable for cultivating peer mentors, compensating for the dissatisfaction of traditional mentoring relations; and facilitating larger, team-oriented projects. (Mullen, 2005, p. 82)

Mentoring, Reflection, and the Relational Process

Mentoring is a relational process in which a mentor, who knows or has experienced something and transfers that something (resources of wisdom, information, experience, confidence, insight, relationships, status) to a protégé, at an appropriate time and manner, so that it facilitates development or empowerment (Stanley & Clinton, 1992). The emphasis is on the relational process. In order for this process to unfold, mentors must help protégés tap into their inner lives through the act of reflection. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) defined reflection as:

... a cycle of paying deliberate, analytical attention to one's own actions in relation to intentions—as if from an external observer's perspective—for the purpose of expanding one's own options and making decisions about improved ways of acting in the future, or in the midst of action itself.
(p. 183)

Deliberately paying attention to one's own thoughts and actions leads to self-knowledge. Lambert (2003) identified self-knowledge and the ability to clarify one's core values as the chief requisite for developing individual leadership capacity. Hock (1996) further advised leaders: "If you look to lead, invest at least 40% of your time managing yourself—your ethics, character, principles, purpose, motivation, and conduct" (§ 8). Reflection is a tool for managing self. It is an act of bringing one's ideas and thoughts into the conscious level for examination and deliberate evaluation. It is the way in which leaders can scrutinize their existing paradigms.

A mentoring relationship can be a catalyst for leaders to conduct regular and periodic personal audits of their beliefs, values, intentions, and actions in an intentional manner. A good mentor is a reflective coach, drawing out the protégé's thoughts and helping to bring unconscious musings to the conscious level for examination and discussion.

Mentors can help protégés "go to the balcony from the dance floor"—an apt metaphor used by Heifetz (1994) to describe the act of reflection. Going to the balcony is a mental activity of stepping back in the midst of action and asking "What's really going on here?" The process of gaining distance from the dance floor in our minds in order to analyze what is happening often reveals patterns not previously noticed. Taking a step back from the action with the assistance of a mentor can guide the protégé to a greater awareness of paradigms, assumptions, and the extent to which the protégé might be affecting the dance as a whole. Coming back to the dance floor from the balcony, one can develop the capacity to be increasingly proactive in determining the next course of action.

Mentors guide protégés to reflect on their espoused theories compared to their theories in use (Schön, 1983). Because individuals often are unable to see the messages contained in one's actions, seeking feedback from a mentor can aid in closing the gap between desired ways of behaving and the actual way of behaving. This kind of shared reflective activity results in "double-loop learning" described by Argyris (1994), where problems are not only detected, but the individual responsible for correcting them is able to think deeply to discover why the problem occurred and examine what to do with the underlying causes.

Ideally, mentors achieve objectivity by being somewhat removed either by experience or literally in another organization from the work/personal world of the protégé. Mentors assist the protégé in verbalizing and articulating the loose thoughts that swirl around in the head and help the protégé organize her options clearly enough to analyze them.

In summarizing the most important benefits of reflection and how they can assist in a mentoring relationship, we refer to the following list:

1. Reflection helps to align actions with core values.
2. Reflection provides new perspectives and alternative solutions to problems.
3. Reflection raises unconscious thoughts to the conscious level for examination.
4. Reflection helps integrate theories of effective leadership with day-to-day practice. (Hart, 1990)

Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the ways in which women develop capacities to enter into and engage in mentoring relationships with more experienced school leaders. Using a phenomenological approach, the researchers designed the study to understand the essence of the phenomena around which women seek out a mentor (Morse & Richards, 2002). The three-stage data collection process sought to "focus on the ways that the life world—the world every individual takes for granted—is experienced by its members (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 489). Through initial surveys that gathered basic demographic information about the subjects of the study, in depth journal reflections written by the subjects during the mentoring conference and a follow-up survey eight months after the conference, the researchers sought to gain insight into the processes by which women engage in mentoring relationships.

Subjects in the qualitative study were participants of a two-day Mentoring and Networking conference sponsored by Illinois Women Administrators in June 2003. Forty women attended the conference including several experienced women administrators and college professors who participated as presenters because of their interest in mentoring other women in the profession. Participants in the conference included women aspiring to positions in school administration and practicing women administrators seeking to move up in administration or into college teaching positions. Participants in the conference were only considered subjects if they agreed to submit reflective journal entries responding to the investigative questions posed by the researchers.

A total of 14 subjects completed the journaling activity. Their roles at the time in education were as follows: one school superintendent, one combination superintendent/ principal, seven principals, three classroom teachers seeking administration, and two university professors. The school districts or universities where the subjects were employed represented a cross-section of small, rural towns, medium sized downstate Illinois communities, larger cities of near 100,000 population, and the densely populated urban Chicago area. Their short term and long term career goals represented a spectrum of aspirations. Some women focused on obtaining a first job as a principal. Others hoped to successfully continue in administration or to move up a level in school leadership. Women in doctoral programs were interested in completing the dissertation and moving into teaching at the university level. Several women currently teaching in higher education were interested in tenure and promotion issues.

The study consisted of data collection at three stages relative to the Mentoring Conference. Conference participants completed a survey prior to attending the conference that included demographic information, career goals, areas seen as strengths and areas the subjects wanted to develop. The second stage of data collection occurred at the conference where participants provided data through journal reflections. Subjects devoted an hour during the conference to journal their responses to specific prompts about mentoring and to reflect about entering into a mentoring relationship. The participants were aware that their reflective journaling would be copied to provide the qualitative data needed for this research project, but were assured that their personal identities would be kept anonymous through the use of number-coding of their journals. These data were copied for use by the researchers and the subjects kept their original journals. Reflection questions sought to probe the perceived benefits and risks of entering into a mentoring relationship and asked about any strategies the participants may be formulating to enter into a mentoring relationship. The final phase of data

collection was conducted six months after the conference to determine if subjects had entered into a mentoring relationship and if so, they were asked to describe the relationship. Subjects who had not engaged in a mentoring relationship were asked to write about intentions to engage in a relationship in the future and to describe any obstacles they may have encountered in entering into a mentoring relationship. The results appeared to yield honest, transparent sharing of their thoughts and feelings.

Results

Analysis of the responses revealed a wide range of general thoughts about engaging in a mentoring relationship. From those who had just been introduced to the possibility of seeking a mentor, there were responses such as “I like the idea, but feel resistant to setting up a formal structure;” “I rely more on networking than mentoring;” and “I am more used to processing things on my own—I need to remind myself to reach out.” Some comments reflected a “head knowledge” of the importance of mentoring. Participants predicted that mentoring would be worthwhile, would help ease a woman’s transition into a new administrative position, would help establish professional connections, and could result in reflection and unexpected learning.

Participants were asked to identify the needs they felt could be met from engaging in a mentoring relationship. Their responses can be clustered under two main themes: Personal Needs and Professional Needs.

Personal Needs

Participants identified many perceived personal benefits of being involved in a mentoring relationship. The researchers could almost “hear” a yearning for such a relationship in their journal entries. There were entries that spoke of the need for support and encouragement from a mentor, of having someone to share successes and failures with, and of having a confidante—“someone to share personal problems with.” Participants identified the desire to be reflective and increase their self-awareness. They identified the need to have someone help them realize when they were making a mistake or stepping on a “land mine.” Women wanted an honest critic to consider their ideas and frustrations, and help them gain a more realistic view or a new perspective on their personal situations. One participant spoke of needing someone to help her keep her focus when she was losing it. The strongest theme appeared to be the need to have a “safety net” relationship with someone who had already walked the road ahead. A very expressive subject summed up her need for this safety net by stating “I need someone to make the ‘stupid’ statements to,

someone who will tell me that I am professionally ‘all wet’ or that I am ‘doing it right.’”

Professional Needs

The perceived professional benefits of a mentoring relationship were also recognized. Participants desired job-related advice from someone with a lot of expertise in administration. Augmenting their professional networks and reducing professional isolation were perceived as important. Participants mentioned that having a mentor would help them become more aware of their professional responsibilities and assist them in developing leadership skills.

Perceived Risks

The subjects expressed perceived risks in becoming involved in a mentoring relationship. The chief concern was the vulnerability that inevitably comes when you open up your life to another person. The women said, “I am somewhat afraid of engaging closely with someone over time and exposing my weaknesses” and “there is a fear that my mentor might use my weaknesses against me.” Similar to those misgivings were fears that a mentor might breach a trust or break confidentiality. One woman expressed a similar trust issue in that she feared that a mentor might want to lead her in a direction she would not want/should not go. One subject shared her fear that her mentor would end up competing with her.

Women were sensitive about being successful in a mentoring relationship—the age-old “fear of failure” reared its ugly head. Comments such as “I might make a mistake;” “I might be too demanding of a mentor, expecting more than he or she can give;” “the mentor might be negative and critical;” and “I risk having a damaged relationship if the mentoring goes sour” were made by the subjects. There was also a fear that professional jealousies might arise out of a mentoring relationship or turn out to be a huge disappointment, thus causing the protégé to feel failure or rejection. A final concern expressed frequently was the time commitment required to be involved in a mentoring relationship.

Participants’ Planned Strategies for Engaging In a Mentoring Relationship

We sought to prompt conference participants to act upon their new knowledge about mentoring by asking a final question: What plans or strategies might you employ to engage in a mentoring relationship? Subjects who journaled on this question shared musings that indicated plans to

implement both informal and formal strategies to engage in mentoring relationships.

Several women mentioned reflecting on professional and personal goals prior to contacting a mentor. Subjects who intended to seek out a mentor indicated they planned to use information shared by the presenters at the conference, including setting goals and establishing parameters with their mentors for the relationship such as timelines and schedules. One woman wrote that she planned to read the books on mentoring she purchased at the conference. In their journals, women reflected upon their need to maintain contact with women at the conference and to consider other professionals as possible mentors. Women expressed the need to proactively seek a mentor, even if it meant taking a risk and asking others to mentor them.

Evaluation of the Mentoring Conference

Based upon journal reflections, we concluded the conference provided the participants an avenue to explore the topic of mentoring in meaningful ways. Besides strongly citing specific speakers and their informative workshop sessions as being helpful, participants spoke of their appreciation for a book table of professional reading resources available for their purchase. The participants also cited the following:

1. The *informal networking* that took place throughout the conference was the most beneficial aspect of attendance.
2. The *stories and experiences shared* by other women in administration brought insight and inspiration to the participants.

These two findings have profound implications and should be further considered by professional organizations, university educational administration departments, and practicing school administrators to determine if women administrators are provided adequate opportunities for informal networking and sharing of stories.

Follow-Up Survey Results

A follow-up survey was mailed to study participants eight months after the Mentoring Conference. We wanted to know if the participants had engaged in a mentoring relationship in an intentional way, and if so, how they went about selecting their mentors. We asked them to describe the goals for the relationship, any unexpected challenges, successes, and their feelings about mentoring.

Twelve of the original 14 participants returned the surveys. Of those 12, five had engaged in a mentoring relationship. Seven participants had not,

citing reasons that included not having the time to foster such a relationship, not feeling the need at the present time, and being assigned to mentor someone else professionally. The following analysis focuses on the five participants who entered into a mentoring relationship after the Mentoring Conference.

The subjects selected their mentors in a variety of ways. Reputation as an accomplished administrator with knowledge and expertise was key for three of the five. An administrative intern selected a highly respected principal in her district. A young principal selected a department chair from a nearby community college as her mentor. This woman had previously interviewed her for a job at the college, which she did not get, but they stayed in contact and had many professional conversations through the years. A newly-hired superintendent was encouraged by her school board to use the mentoring services of a retired superintendent who was available for coaching. The board paid for this retired male superintendent to supervise the new female leader. A female university professor selected a peer who had fresh ideas and a newer approach to the work of educational leadership.

Two participants were less explicit in their reasons for selecting a particular mentor. One participant stated that her relationship with her mentor just “evolved over time,” and never was really formalized. The fifth participant said she chose her mentor because “I liked her style.”

Goals for the mentoring relationships varied. Two participants admitted that there were no goals established for the mentoring. They explained this by stating that the relationships were not formal with regularly scheduled meetings. They talked of being able to access their mentors on an “as needed” basis. Aspiring and new principals had goals of learning more about the specific roles and challenges of the position, as well as “seeing the big picture.” The novice superintendent stated her goals as: wanting advice, but not a dictate on how to do her job, wanting a sounding board to bounce ideas off of, and wanting examples of what her mentor had seen as successful in his experiences. The college professor wanted to share ideas for scholarship and publication with her mentor, as well as having an editor for her writing.

The participants were unanimous in stating the biggest challenge in a mentoring relationship was finding time. With busy professional schedules, participants found that they often fell back on e-mails and phone calls to access their mentors. Those who overcame the time constraints found that successes centered on relational benefits, technical administrative assistance and support to make a career change. The feedback received by mentors appears to have been well received. None of the participants mentioned difficulty in this area.

Specific positive benefits of the mentoring relationship were mentioned. First of all, getting to know more about the mentor's personal life and struggles made the protégé's problems seem more manageable (mentioned by three participants). Second, technical help came from a mentor who helped a protégé update her resume and gave her tips on time management. Third, mentors gave good advice and served as a sounding board for the protégés. Finally, one mentor acted as an advocate to other professionals who did not know the protégé well.

All participants reported positive feelings about their mentoring relationships. Mentoring relationships proved to be beneficial in helping the protégés set goals, know how to "navigate the waters" of their current position, and to acquire new learning. However, several expressed shyness about entering into the relationship. One participant said,

the idea of actively seeking a professional mentor made me nervous. I was afraid I was too new, too green, in too small of a school, and too rural to be able to establish a positive professional relationship. I also worried about taking time away from someone's very busy schedule if seeking the help of a currently employed superintendent.

Discussion

More than 50% of the original study participants did not engage in a formal mentoring relationship. The three reasons that emerged revolved around time and energy issues, lack of a feeling of urgency or need to seek a mentor, and the fact that informal or situation-specific mentoring was meeting one's needs at present. The time constraint was an issue that came out in the journaling experience as well. There seemed to be a perception that a formal mentoring relationship would take more time out of one's already busy schedule. Women participants expressed chagrin at being overcommitted. Several were already mentoring someone else.

An interesting finding emerged on the topic of the perceived risks involved in entering into a mentoring relationship. We found an incongruity between the long list of perceived risks and fears about engaging in a mentoring relationship at the beginning of the study and the actual citation of only two reasons for not seeking a mentor eight months later. There seemed to be an approach-avoidance conflict (Lewin, 1934) expressed by the women administrators in the study. Approach-avoidance conflict occurs when a person experiences tension due to simultaneously being attracted to and repulsed by the same goal. Through journal entries and follow-up surveys, women expressed ambivalence around expressed needs or desires for a mentor, along with fears about entering into such a relationship. Did these

fears actually paralyze many subjects and keep them from seeking a mentor? Could it be that the women were avoiding facing their real fears?

What did emerge from the data gathered from those who had acquired a mentor was that mentoring experiences take many forms. They form a mosaic of knowledge sharing coming from diverse sources. There were many types of mentors: a “hired” mentor who was a male mentoring a female; a woman not in K-12 education mentoring an elementary principal; a “mandatory” mentor during an administrative internship; a mentor at the same level of administration; a mentor in a higher level of administration; a fellow teaching mentor at a university, and several relationships that “evolved over time.” All were reported as valuable.

Women administrators develop the capacity to enter into mentoring relationships in a variety of ways centered around three themes that emerged from the study: commitment to the relationship, initiative on the part of the protégé, and finally, understanding how mentoring works.

Commitment to the mentoring relationship involves first recognizing a need for another professional to guide the way. In order to develop a commitment that includes time and energies that could be devoted to other areas, women must anticipate the benefits of the relationship. Protégés who take the initiative to seek out a mentor may need to coach themselves first in order to develop the confidence to seek out someone perceived to be wiser and more experienced. There is risk involved in initiating a relationship that involves having the mentor decline the opportunity for whatever reason. Knowing oneself, including strengths and areas for growth, is another important aspect of taking initiative. Doing so heightens the likelihood of a relationship based on mutually developed goals for the relationship, which in turn increases the likelihood that the relationship will have benefits beyond a social level. The final theme, understanding of mentoring relationships, involves recognition that mentoring can take multiple forms. The relationship can be long or short term and will likely change over time. In addition, women may have many different mentors in their careers.

We were particularly interested in the differences reported by participants on their feelings about barriers to seeking out a mentoring relationship at the mentoring conference and eight months later. There is a need to understand if the time constraint mentioned after the conference actually masked other constraints such as fears about seeking out a mentor. If so, professional organizations such as Illinois Women Administrators can work to encourage women to overcome their fears about asking for a mentor, and for those who could be mentors to encourage possible protégés to establish a mentoring relationship with them.

Implications for Women School Leaders and Women's Organizations

Using the "old boys' network," aspiring male administrators may benefit from support mechanisms in the forms of mentoring and networking provided by experienced male administrators. Women may not be providing the same types of support for aspiring women school leaders. Aspiring women school leaders need to come to a better understanding of themselves, including recognizing internal conflicts about seeking out mentors, identifying strategies for engaging in mentoring relationships, and finally, persevering in the face of inequitable opportunities. Naming obstacles is the first step in overcoming them.

Women's organizations must take seriously evidence that women's organizations have much to learn from traditional men's practices of induction for aspiring males. Women have to become much more deliberate about teaching other women who aspire to leadership positions about ways to effectively engage in mentoring relationships. At the same time, there needs to be an understanding of the implications of failing to actively support inexperienced women school leaders. The issue runs deeper than finding time to devote to mentoring. Rather, it is a matter of mentors and protégés identifying priorities. "We need to help others. We need to say to our assistant principals and teachers, 'Don't wait for someone to come along and encourage you. You come and ask and we'll sit down with you'" (Brunner et al., 2004, p. 42). Women school leaders need to learn to make the most of mentoring relationships and to form a *new perception* of networking that is all about women supporting other women in accession to leadership. The rewards are waiting to be reaped.

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Voices of Women in the Field

Great Discoveries and Painful-at-the-Time Mistakes

Shari Cole Hoffman

My professional career has varied in leadership experiences. Unlike women who are coming of age today in leadership positions, I never had a “plan” for my professional career moves. I simply went about selecting the next interesting opportunity. Looking back, this may not have always been in my best interest, but I certainly had a full life of experiences because of this serendipitous approach.

Here are some ideas I learned along the way. In some cases, they were great discoveries. However, in most cases, they were painful-at-the-time mistakes that turned into life lessons.

- Your peers *do* have political agendas, even if you don't. I used to think, “Let's just work together ...” I assumed we shared the same purpose and wanted what was good for the organization, the team, or the students. Wrong. Some peers do not share this belief and use whatever means necessary to advance in the organization, to be on top, or to be the best. Being cognizant of the motivation of others will help keep a healthy perspective.
- Relationship building in a leader is finally appreciated. For years, women were subtly encouraged to abandon their “soft skills” and to focus on developing problem - solving capacities. It seems that the skills of caring about others, participating in personal conversations, and listening to someone vent are prized. Today organizations encourage that type of leadership behavior because it promotes a collaborative environment, which is what most women thought all along. Now that I am closer to retirement, I am finally a good fit for what is desired in a leader.
- Have the courage to initiate necessary but difficult conversations. This used to be the toughest leadership responsibility for me. Nevertheless, I have learned being brief, kind and considerate during these uncomfortable times allows others to maintain dignity despite the message.

About the Author

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- It is OK to say, “I don’t know.” We expect leaders to always have the definitive answer. That is unrealistic. When I have admitted aloud that I didn’t know, possibilities crept into conversations and I learned more from those “what if” discussions.
- If you think they don’t like you, they probably don’t. Cut your losses and find the next great adventure. Women tend to be more intuitive about reading between the lines. I stayed in a position for sixteen years, sure I was misreading the unspoken messages. One day unexpectedly, I decided to move on and didn’t look back. When a door closes, life gets scary in the hallway before the next door opens. Nevertheless, it will open. If not, just keep hammering away to create your own window of opportunity.
- Only follow a leader whose vision you support. I have worked for leaders who lacked vision or direction and I was miserable. I discovered how important it is for me to follow a leader with vision. I also discovered I have to buy in to the vision to stay. The leader’s vision was a daily inspiration for coming to work. I was excited to see how my day unfolded under this type of leadership.
- When good leaders go, you might consider going too. I used to think this was not necessarily true, that one should stay with the organization for the sake of the organization. I am not so sure anymore. In three of my professional experiences, poor leaders followed strong ones. The disappointments were overwhelming at times. It was tough on the new leaders too. Sometimes, it is in everyone’s best interests if you quietly move on too.
- Admit when you make a mistake. Not only is it the right thing to do, it diffuses the criticism quickly. It also moves the focus from the problem to the solution by following with a question, “What do I need to do to make it right?” In most cases, minor repairs solve the problem.

- Find someone you admire and want to emulate and ask them to become your mentor. Meet with them periodically to make you accountable for your professional growth. They will push you relentlessly and question your actions or decisions. A mentor is also someone to think aloud with and share ideas. However, be very selective in picking a mentor. They have the capacity to significantly influence your future.
- Almost every position I thoroughly enjoyed and grew from, I almost didn't accept because the positions did not fit my vision of the perfect job. In two cases, I stumbled upon them. What I learned is to be open-minded when pursuing a job, especially if it is a career change. These two initial positions eventually evolved into what I valued professionally. Had I not been flexible and open to possibilities, I would have missed these growing experiences.
- Schedule time each day on your calendar for one creative act. Most days we get so caught up in putting out fires, we forget to exercise other strengths. You deserve creative playtime. Review your job description to see if you were hired to be creative in some way. If not, find another job. If you are to be imaginative, give them their money's worth and play.
- It is important to be at the job 100% when you are there. Make sure you get enough rest, establish an exercise routine, and eat right so you can do your job. Leave work when it is time to leave. Consistently staying late and taking work home may be a clue that your time management skills need adjusting.
- My job does not define who I am. It used to, when I was younger. Today, it is a rich addition to a full life, but it does not complete my life.

FIRST THINGS FIRST: WRITING STRATEGIES

Passion is the Key

Marilyn L. Grady

One of the longest and most tiring writing tasks is writing someone else's passion. This is the situation when you accept a writing assignment on a topic that is removed from your core interests and experiences. This is much like being given a writing assignment on a topic you know little about and care even less about—the result of such a writing activity is often dismal. The experience is dreadful for the writer and tedious for the reader. Save us from this misery!

If you track the writings of prolific authors, you can identify their passions. Whether non-fiction or fiction, the “person-in-the-prose” may be visible. In the books written by Bob Greene, the “person” is present. *Be True To Your School: A Diary of 1964* is a book developed from the author's journal. *And You Know You Should Be Glad* is a continuation of the story of the author's life experiences. These books reflect lived-experiences.

Examine your life for the indicators of your passions. The Delphic Oracle instructs: Know Thyself. This admonition applies in choosing writing topics. Recall the issues in your work and life that have consumed your attention and efforts. Write about these. It is easier to maintain momentum on writing projects when you are fully invested in the subject. The themes of your writing should reflect the themes of your life and career.

In research institutions, faculty are advised to have research specializations. Another term for this would be research passions. These are the research areas that should interest you for a career of writing.

Write about what you believe in, what you stand for, what you want to be remembered for. If you need to, stop and reflect on your life experiences and your commitments. As you trace the activities and initiatives you have been involved in, you will be reminded what your passions are. Another way to consider your commitments is to consider how you spend your time, another good measure of what you value.

And when in doubt, read another good book! Try Gerard's *Creative Nonfiction: Researching and Crafting Stories of Real Life*!

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Book Review

Kolb, D. M., Williams, J., & Frohlinger, C. (2004). *Her place at the table: A woman's guide to negotiating five key challenges to leadership success*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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Introduction

The book, *Her Place at the Table: A Woman's Guide to Negotiating Five Key Challenges to Leadership Success*, discussed the challenges women still face as they transition to leadership positions. According to the authors, "with their numbers exceeding 50%, women are well represented in the middle ranks of management and the professions, yet, today they hold less than 1% of the top leadership positions" (p. 2). The lack of women in these positions is attributed in part to research demonstrating that women lack "the presumption of credibility and competence when she takes on a leadership role" (p. 3). Because of this perception, many of the women who are given leadership opportunities do not succeed, further reinforcing the stereotypes that may limit women's appointment to executive level positions.

Overview

The authors provide concrete information and examples of how women can overcome challenges when embarking on a new leadership role. They describe four tests women leaders can encounter when entering into leadership positions. These are the token test, the double bind test, the fitness test, and the right stuff test, and women should be ready to pass these tests before they can successfully lead in their organization.

In the token test, the authors state, individuals in the organization may not believe that a woman has earned an appointment, but rather was given it based on her gender. "To pass the token test, you need to be clear on why you were selected for the role and what you bring to the table" (p. 5).

The double-bind test asks, "Can a woman be both a woman and a leader?" The authors state, there is an expectation for women to enact male characteristics of leadership, but must do it in a feminine way in order to be perceived as authentic.

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The fitness test is described as the process women go through as their colleagues determine if they have the right experience for the job. "Passing the fitness test means recognizing that nobody is a perfect match for a leadership role in a rapidly changing global environment" (p. 9).

Finally, the right stuff test requires a woman to convince her colleagues that she has what it takes to be a leader. Because women are less likely to have visible accomplishments and are less likely to have profit and loss accountability in their prior roles, women must prove their worth early on in their tenure.

Kolb, Williams, and Frohlinger provide concrete advice on how to confront and pass these tests. They interviewed more than 100 women. Half of the women were in their first leadership position and the other half were about to take a role with increased responsibilities. The women were diverse in age and ethnicity, but the sample was not scientific. The sample was drawn from both the private and public sectors. Through their research, five key challenges emerged. The book dedicated a chapter to each of these challenges. First, they outlined common traps found for each challenge, and then explored strategies to use to respond to each challenge. A case study of a leader using these strategies was described as a guide to help individuals get ready to address these challenges in their own work.

The advice was designed not only for individuals, but for "organizations committed to moving women into leadership positions . . . as it is critical that top management realize the part visible support plays in the process of 'proving up'" (p. 15). The book concluded with two appendices: Appendix A—a roadmap to the challenges for individuals, and Appendix B—an outline of what organizations can do to give an organizational response to the common traps described by the authors. The organizational piece is critical since women cannot stand alone in resolving these challenges. Organizational leaders are critical change agents in making the climate more accepting of women in leadership positions (Yoder, 2001).

The five challenges outlined by the authors were:

- Intelligence—Women leaders need to have the right information to make good decisions.

- Backing of key players—Women leaders need support from others to succeed.
- Resources—The credibility of women leaders is dependent on the ability to procure resources.
- Buy-in—Women leaders' success is dependent on support from their peers as well as their direct reports.
- Making a difference—Women leaders cannot make a difference unless their contributions to the organization are recognized.

In the first challenge, the authors stated, women must get enough information about a position to make an informed decision in determining not only if it is the right fit for her, but in determining what resources need to be negotiated for prior to accepting the position in order to be successful. The first trap that women faced was the belief that they will be judged solely on how well they perform. This, however, is not always the case, and new leaders must learn about the organization's underlying values and culture. The next trap occurred when women disregard the negative information they learn because they do not want to pass up a great opportunity. "Rather than ignore or suppress the bad news, let that bad news contribute to an informed decision and provide the foundation for some serious negotiations" (p. 23).

The third trap is the optimism a woman leader might feel about the challenge ahead of her. Although this optimism will help her, it may impede negotiations if she feels she "can tip the odds in her favor by sheer will and energy" (p. 23). Finally, new leaders are often given new responsibilities when they do not feel they have a choice but to accept. In these cases, women still must negotiate what they need to be successful.

Therefore, in order to gain enough information to make an informed decision, the authors described four strategic moves. The first is to tap into networks. It is important to use both internal and external sources to get multiple perspectives on the situation. Women also should begin building relationships with individuals within the organization to test how well you will work together. If there is confusion or conflicting information presented, it should be pursued, not ignored. Finally, women leaders need to anticipate blockers in the organizations. By identifying the individuals in the organization who are not in favor of your appointment, women can begin to develop a strategy for dealing with them.

In Chapter 2, the authors described the second challenge: mobilizing backers who will provide critical support during the transition period. In the authors' informal research, they found that 68% of women believed they were not expected to succeed in their new role, and that one third of them were surprised by the close scrutiny their ability to lead received. The authors

tell of a paradox new leaders can face. "In order to lead, they first have to be perceived to have the authority to lead" (p. 62). Because leaders must deliver results quickly, they also must garner support from key leaders within the organization so that they are in a position to perform.

Common traps for this challenge included leaders believing that their appointment speaks for itself. However, according to the authors, all new leaders benefit from a credible introduction. Women also can believe that their results are most important and will speak for themselves. This is dangerous, however, because results often lag significantly behind efforts and are not always immediately visible. Perceptions of performance are important, especially in the early stages and must be worked at along with one's actual performance. Finally, women believed that asking for help will make them seem weak both to the backer and to their colleagues. However, asking for help can help build future relationships.

To avoid these traps, new leaders need to negotiate their backing from key leaders prior to beginning their position. They should secure responsibilities that are results-oriented, visible and signal authority. Then, key leaders should make the case throughout the organization as to why their new leader was the best person to move the organization forward. Allies within the organization can then spread good stories that will help shape perceptions and win over skeptics. Yoder (2001) found this in her research, as well, and stated that, "organizations need not to only enhance women's abilities by offering them training, but also to make group members aware of women's expertise by openly legitimizing them" (p. 822).

In Chapter 3, the authors discussed the third challenge: garnering resources by negotiating key alliances. "Resources—be they financial, human, or simply time—are necessary on a purely practical level. You need them to get the work done" (p. 111). It was critical for leaders to negotiate for these resources early in their tenure. Common traps included the belief that "I can pick up the slack." However, if women succeed in achieving goals with the resources allotted, later failure will be attributed to lack of effort rather than insufficient resources. Another trap is the admirable goal of controlling costs. Although the importance of controlling costs was recognized, resources were described as a symbol of influence and inability to secure them can be taken as an inability to execute plans.

Strategies that can avoid these traps included aligning resource requests to strategic objectives. The authors stressed the importance of linking the new leader's agenda with the organization's stated priorities. In addition, leaders should appeal to others in the organization who could benefit to assist in both securing resources and in helping the project to succeed. Finally,

leaders need to leverage their successes. By showing small successes, leaders can pave the way for additional resources.

Resources determine to a large extent, what you can accomplish in a new assignment. But their impact is felt on two distinct levels: First is the practical, where trade-offs must be made between capacity and investment, between inputs and outcomes. But resources also carry symbolic weight. They are prime indicators of what an organization thinks important and who can be trusted to exercise judgment and leadership. (p. 144)

This is echoed by Yoder (2001) who stated that “having resources, both material and supportive, enhances women’s effectiveness. Thus, organizations may expand women’s power base by supplying leaders with the resources necessary to reward and help others” (p. 821).

In Chapter 4, the authors described strategies for negotiating buy-in from internal stakeholders. “To get peers and subordinates to put their weight behind a change agenda, you must first convince them that you can lead them through it successfully. You have to engage them on the agenda” (p. 151).

The authors described the first trap as “I know what I am doing is the right thing to do.” However, if the team does not feel that their voice has been heard when they voice objections, it can lead to the next trap of the new leader feeling that the ownership of solving a problem is all their own. Failure to bring in the team to help fosters mistrust. It also can lead to missed opportunities for resolution. Another trap is too much reliance on the support of senior management rather than fostering support from subordinates. Finally, the trap avoidance of issues in the short-run can allow resisters and blockers to gain traction and jeopardize long-term success.

Strategic moves discussed by the authors included listening to the team and to peers across the organization. This can lead to broad links across an organization that can move a new leader’s agenda and help their team to feel less isolated. New leaders should also work to solve nagging problems in the organization so that the team has concrete examples of how new changes have helped them within the organization. Finally, leaders need to create opportunities for themselves and their team to learn. By encouraging dialogue, taking chances and giving team members opportunities for new skills, buy-in will be smoother and more lasting.

Finally, in Chapter 5, the authors discuss the last challenge: making a difference. “Women want to make a difference. To do this their contributions have to be recognized and their value then becomes visible to others” (p. 15). Common traps in achieving this strategy included needing more expertise in an area, believing that performance speaks for itself, instead of understanding the need to call attention to successes, and setting the bar too high on their

expectations of success. Women need to believe in themselves first, and set reachable goals.

Strategies to avoid these traps included looking for opportunities within the organization's priorities where leaders can show incremental wins. Also, leaders should look to fill unmet needs and should make their value visible to the team. "By being seen as a leader who is trying new things, who has a vision for how work can be done, you make your value visible" (p. 232).

Discussion

The authors do a good job in providing pragmatic advice for women about to begin or aspiring to executive leadership positions. Although they acknowledge that it is unfair to women to be faced with these five challenges, they focus their attention on how to work within the system rather than change it. They do, however, challenge organizations to recognize the challenges so that organizational leaders can help women succeed.

Sometimes, the advice presented in the book is contradictory. Although organizations benefit from a feminine leadership style, women can be penalized for being too feminine. However, women can't be too masculine or they risk being blocked and their efforts resisted. Yoder (2001) acknowledged that this challenge is present in the research on women in leadership as well, and stated that "what emerges in scholarship on leadership may appear contradictory at times, arguing that women should do one thing as well as the opposite." The authors were aware of the dilemma, but their advice seemed difficult to execute while maintaining one's sense of self. For example, in describing the double-bind test, the authors advised women to "enact the 'masculine' requirements of leadership but in an authentic way that draws on 'feminine' abilities" (p. 7).

The case studies presented to highlight what to do and what not to do in each challenge assist the reader in applying the advice to actual work situations. Some, however, serve as a cautionary tale of what not to do, and there is no advice for women on how to salvage a leadership opportunity if a common trap has not been avoided. Readers who realize that they have not negotiated the challenges well in their current position may feel that their best option is to move to a new position and try again.

Although the focus of the book is on corporate leadership, educational administrators were included in the sample. The advice is clearly transferable to the educational arena and a helpful road map as women begin to prepare for their next opportunity. Although the gender gap in education is not as great as within the corporate world, there is still great disparity. In higher education, according to Tenenbaum (2000), only 20% of college presidents

are women. In the K-12 arena, 75% of education degrees are earned by women, but only 35% of principals and 12% of superintendents are women. Educational administrators, then, can take advantage of both the advice for their own personal advancement and incorporate the organizational solutions in their own workplace. The advantages for the educational organization are great. While discussing the higher education gender gap, Chliwniak (1997) discussed the advantages of increased female leadership and stated that

several scholars contend that a leader with an emerging, inclusive style of leadership could provide an institution with new values and ethics grounded in cooperation, community and relationships within the community. Higher education's leadership also needs to become more reflective of the constituents it serves. (p. 3)

Conclusion

In conclusion, *Her Place at the Table: A Woman's Guide to Negotiating Five Key Challenges to Leadership Success* provided sound advice for middle managers looking to move to executive leadership positions. The book also is useful for organizations looking for ways to change their climate to one where women leaders are more likely to succeed. The authors acknowledged that more women are needed at the leadership table, and that through no fault of women, they continue to experience challenges based solely on their gender. The authors acknowledge that "doing leadership differs for women and men and that leadership does not take place in a genderless vacuum" (Yoder, 2001). The case studies brought to life the challenges women face and the strategies women can employ to overcome them. I recommend it highly for educational administrators to use for their own professional growth as well to help affect change in their organizations.

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