

MISTAKES WOMEN MAKE AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

LESSON 2: BEHAVIORS AND ACTIONS

The three exercises in this Lesson will help you examine the way you think and then act based on the way you feel about yourself. Our self-perceptions can make us strong and confident or unsure with self-doubt. Being aware of how you perceive yourself is a good start to being able to shift the behaviors that no longer serve you.

Use a notebook or journal to complete the exercises below and keep your reflections together so you can refer to them throughout the Lessons below and the entire series.

EXERCISE 1: WAITING UNTIL WE'RE EXPERTS

PART ONE: Read the talent report by Maria Ignatova on [LinkedIn](#) which shows that in order to apply for a job women feel they need to meet 100% of the criteria for the job while men usually apply after meeting only about 60%. It turns out that women tend to screen themselves out of the conversation early on and end up applying to 20% fewer jobs than men.

<https://www.linkedin.com/business/talent/blog/talent-acquisition/how-women-find-jobs-gender-report>

PART TWO: Read the [HBR article](#) by Tara Mohr: **Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified**, which indicates that most women don't feel confident unless they have checked off each item on the list, which differs from how men act. Although this article is old, I think sadly, it is still true. <https://hbr.org/2014/08/why-women-dont-apply-for-jobs-unless-theyre-100-qualified>

PART THREE: (OPTIONAL BUT A REALLY GOOD IDEA) Read book, [The Confidence Myth: Why Women Undervalue Their Skills and How To Get Over It](#) by Helene Lerner. The book features many exercises to help find and then build your confidence. <https://www.amazon.com/Confidence-Myth-Women-Undervalue-Skills/dp/1626562024>

STOP: Consider stopping here and completing these items before going on to the next exercise as it's difficult to work on too many things at one time and doing this one first will allow you to have a stronger focus. However, feel free to load up on your practices and do them all at once if you prefer.

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EXERCISE 2: COOPERATION VERSUS COMPETITION

Either too much cooperation or too much competition are both obstacles to success. The goal is to know when to access one or the other and be able to keep your relationships from deteriorating at the same time. These four activities below will help you learn more about both so you can consciously make choices to further your growth and development. Most likely, you will not discover THE answer for yourself but more of a journey of tweaking your behavior and actions to suit your goals and desires.

PART ONE: Read **Harvard Business Review** research on gender and competition, where it discusses why the average woman is [less competitive](https://hbr.org/2019/11/research-how-men-and-women-view-competition-differently) than the average man and less willing to enter a competition than men. <https://hbr.org/2019/11/research-how-men-and-women-view-competition-differently>.

PART TWO: Read the summary of the **Academy of Management Symposium** that explains why women are less likely than men to engage in behaviors across most, if not all, contexts including career advancement. <https://journals.aom.org/doi/10.5465/AMBPP.2020.17068symposium>

PART THREE: Read **Forbes** article, **The Dark Side of Female Rivalry in the Workplace and What to Do About It** which reported that the male dominated workplace sets women up to compete due to increased scrutiny and a scarcity of top leadership positions for women. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bonniemarcus/2016/01/13/the-dark-side-of-female-rivalry-in-the-workplace-and-what-to-do-about-it/?sh=789870395255>

PART FOUR: Take a **temperature check** and ask your friends how they would rate you on a scale of 1-10 (1=low, 10=high) for your competitiveness and then again on your cooperation tendencies. Do the same with a few trusted colleagues. Do you favor one over the other more of the time? In what ways is your competitiveness or lack thereof negatively (or if you're too cooperative) impacting you personally or professionally and is there something you want to do about it?

STOP AND PAUSE THE VIDEO: Consider focusing on these items before going further.

EXERCISE 3: QUESTIONING OURSELVES

PART ONE: Is there a situation you're facing right now where you are second guessing yourself? Write it down so you can be more objective about it as you see it in black and white. See if you can identify the root of your self-doubt. Then check in with yourself to see if your concern is real or are you making it up or imagining it. And finally, is there something you need to do or say to self-correct?

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PART TWO: Situationally and on an on-going basis ask yourself, "Why am I questioning myself?" Is it self-doubt or self-confidence? What's the real reason? Is my fear real or imagined?

PART THREE: Watch Amy Cuddy's [Ted Talk, Your Body Language Can Shape Who You Are](#) in which she says body language affects how others see us, but it may also change how we see ourselves. She suggests "power posing" -- standing in a posture of confidence, even when we don't feel confident - can boost feelings of confidence, and might have an impact on our chances for success. Many high- powered keynote speakers have taken her advice to heart.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ks-Mh1QhMc>)

STOP: Consider focusing on these before going further.

JOURNAL AND REFLECTIONS

Reflecting on what you learned from doing all these exercises in Lesson, will give you more clarity about yourself, new behaviors and actions to practice, and maybe even some next steps to implement. Journal your answers to the questions below. Journaling is more about writing stream of consciousness versus getting it right or making it sound pretty. Journaling is a process that unearths curiosity and wonder within us. After completing the exercises above, answer the following questions...

What top 3 observations do you have?

What patterns, if any, do you notice?

What specific things resonated most or seem right on target for you? And why?

What resonated least or seems less relevant for you? And why?

What are your biggest ahas or take-aways?

What did you learn about yourself that delighted you most?

What are 1-2 next steps you will take with this information you now have?

FOLLOW UP

If you want more help understanding what this all means and how it relates to where you are or where you're going, reach out to me at Wendy Capland, wcapland@visionquestconsulting.com to schedule a one hour 1:1 Coaching Session. Investment-\$500.