

Influence

in•flu•ence ['ɪnfluəns] *ability to effect change in your sphere of responsibility*

Do women of color lead differently?

WHILE LEADERSHIP ABILITY has no relationship to pigmentation, stereotypes continue to abound and affect how women of color interact with peers, subordinates and senior leaders. “Women of color” references Asians, Latinas, African Americans and Native Americans.

For several years, we have designed leadership development programs for women of color in organizations that value diversity in leadership, including diversity among women in those roles. We observe a pattern that women of color lead effectively from three bases:

- ◆ Expert power resulting from knowledge and determination to achieve
- ◆ Personal power from strong relationships in and outside of work
- ◆ Spiritual power from faith in God

Women of color can uniquely shape the way leadership is defined, applied and experienced in an organization, because they lead effectively from the heart.



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WHEN ATHLETES HAVE CONFIDENCE in their abilities, not only do they play better, they sometimes deliver extraordinary performances. This confidence is fueled by their desire to win. In the world of sports, it is well understood that talent and skill are important, but confidence provides a winning edge.

Unfortunately, in our work culture, the “silver spoon” model of success prevails. The silver spoon model correlates success with in-born talent and ability. The premise is that those who are smartest are destined for highest levels of achievement. For example, graduates from the best and brightest universities are hired, identified as high-potentials and assigned to rotational programs. They are expected to gain more knowledge, more quickly, and, consequently, rise more rapidly to top positions. Sometimes, a host of shortcomings get overlooked because an individual is “so smart.”

There’s no correlation between IQ and ability to lead or succeed in life.

Ironically, research shows there’s no correlation between one’s IQ and ability to lead or succeed in life. Daniel Goleman in his book, *Emotional Intelligence*, suggests that at best IQ contributes about 20% of the factors that determine life success. (1) Only about 15% of the general population is considered as having “above average” intelligence. Under

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the silver spoon model, about 85% of the people in this country would be dubbed ill-equipped to succeed.

Our success model identifies more important factors than intelligence. The primary factor is a confident attitude – not a superficial representation like a firm handshake. Confidence that fuels success is belief and faith that you can do what it takes to achieve your dreams. Confidence fuels a combination of desire, willingness and energy to produce another factor we call sheer determination.

Sheer determination isn't just working hard. It involves first making a decision about what you want, then being disciplined about how you are going to get there. Sheer determination takes



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Confidence is belief and faith that you can do what it takes to achieve success.
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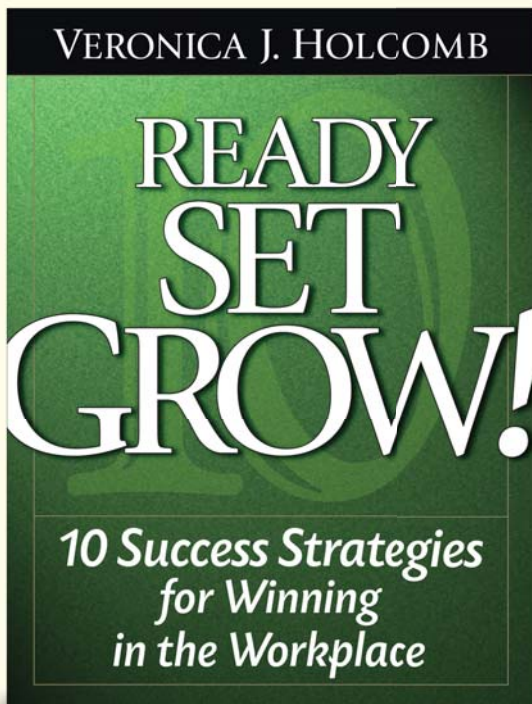
drive, energy and focus to achieve your goals and aspirations.

Where does confidence come from? Confidence is born out of one's experience with success. Successful outcomes are the result of your strong desire or determination to achieve. The greater and more frequent your success, the more your confidence

is strengthened. Stronger levels of confidence allow you to muster even greater determination, discipline and focus – leading to increasingly higher levels of success.

Leaders who build the individual confidence of their people will reap superstar performances.

(1) GOLEMAN, BANTAM BOOKS, 1995



Empower everyone to reach their full potential.

A true pioneer in the field of executive coaching, Veronica Holcomb has empowered hundreds of business leaders to higher levels of professional accomplishment. In **Ready, Set, Grow! 10 Success Strategies for Winning in the Workplace**, she provides a blueprint anyone can follow to tap their talents, fuel their passions and fulfill their potential.

Ready, Set, Grow! includes many of the self-assessments and exercises Veronica Holcomb uses with executive clients. Now, anyone — at any level — can use proven tools to capitalize on their strengths and overcome career-limiting gaps in critical interpersonal skills.

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Build Your Confidence

To succeed at work, you need three types of confidence:



Intellectual confidence typically stems from the experience of applying yourself to intellectual pursuits, such as college or other formal professional education. You believe you are smart enough to come up with new ideas, learn new things, and understand the complexities of your work environment.

Social confidence is reflected in how comfortable you are in social settings with work colleagues. Your social confidence balances professionalism with relaxed, friendly interactions with others.

Political confidence reflects an understanding of the unwritten rules, connections and relationships that comprise the power base in your organization. When you are politically confident, you understand the big picture as well as the nuances of how the ‘game’ is played in your workplace.

1. In which area(s) could you be more confident? Why?

- Intellectual _____
- Social _____
- Political _____

2. Consider the following three keys to building confidence. Identify 2-3 specific actions you can take to increase your intellectual, social or political confidence.

- ◆ Establish supportive relationships
- ◆ Develop a structured development plan
- ◆ Engage in healthy self-talk

Power Coaching Tip

Take at least one action step to move beyond your current comfort zone.

Adapted from *Ready, Set, Grow! 10 Success Strategies for Winning in the Workplace*, by Veronica J. Holcomb.