Negotiation Strategies for Women in Business
John Hopkins University Alumni Event
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Why a Workshop on Negotiation Strategies for Women in Business?
Wage Gap

- There is a 7.6% difference between the salaries of men and women with MBAs
- However, only 7% of women negotiated their offers while 57% of men did
Objectives

✓ Navigate gender influences in negotiations
✓ Negotiate better deals and compensation packages
Impact of Linguistic Style

- Directness v. indirectness
- Word choice, pacing
- Humor, figures of speech, stories
- Questions
- Apologies

How we Say What we Say
Beginning in Childhood We Learn to Communicate Differently

Girls and boys build rapport and confer status
Girls learn conventions to . . . . build rapport, emphasize similarities, gain closeness, downplay superiority, and balance needs.
Boys learn conventions to . . . emphasize status, resist challenges, challenge others, and display knowledge and abilities.
Gender Influences in Communication

- What are the elements of your linguistic style?
- What style patterns do you observe in your workplace?
- How effective is your personal style?
Gender Influences in Communication

Taking Credit –

- Men speak in ways that claim status ("I" statements)
- Women speak in ways that save face for others ("we" statements)
Gender Influences in Communication

Apologies –
- Men avoid apologies due to one-down implications
- Women say “I’m sorry” more than men, often as a ritualized expression of concern and rapport
- People who frequently use ritual apology may be viewed as weaker, less confident, and more blameworthy
Gender Influences in Communication

Confidence and Boasting –
✓ Women **downplay** their certainty
✓ Men **minimize** their doubts
✓ Direct result of childhood socialization
✓ U.S. **business communication norms** based on the interaction styles more commonly used by **men**
Gender Influences in Communication

Asking Questions -
✓ Women use questions to show engagement

Men are less likely to ask questions, more attuned to potential loss of face
Women have a tendency to

✓ Underestimate their worth
✓ Be more rule-oriented
✓ Take disagreements personally
✓ Be too deferential
✓ Under-use silence

Men have a tendency to

✓ View more of their interactions as potential negotiations
Gender Influences in Communication

**Contributing Social Factors –**
- Early socialization about putting others’ needs first
- Emphasis on community, relationships
- Aggressive women are less well-liked
- Men and women take a harder line against women negotiators
Workplace Negotiation Strategies
• Don’t assume that your choice is either yes or no
• Use the “and” stance
• Negotiate for “fit” as well as dollars
Negotiate for small and large wins
Negotiate for the present and the future.
Don’t down play your strengths or emphasize your weaknesses
Don’t assume that your position speaks for itself
Avoid thinking, “I can pick up the slack.”
Negotiate for a persuasive introduction
Assume that all the elements of your professional life are negotiable.

Put yourself forward.

Volunteer for assignments that interest you.

Actively pursue your professional goals.
Workplace Negotiation Strategies

- Use low risk occasions to practice negotiation skills
- Work on one skill at a time
5 Steps to your Goal

- **Step 1**: Know yourself
- **Step 2**: Know the company
- **Step 3**: Know their labor Market situation
- **Step 4**: Know the fit
- **Step 5**: Know the issues

- ✓ Identify what is unique about you
- ✓ What are your fundamental interests?
- ✓ What are their interests?
- ✓ What are their current strategies, expansion & acquisition plans?
- ✓ Explain how you fit the job
- ✓ Know what the job requires in terms of tasks, knowledge, and skills
- ✓ Know the compensation package issues
The Impact of Not Asking: “Accumulation of Disadvantage”

- If both receive 3% raises until age 60, salary gap > $15K.
  - Woman will earn 76,870, Male 92,243
- Over the 38 years, the male earned $361,171 in salary.
  ✓ If invested @ 3% = $568,834.

Babcock & Laschever, *Women Don’t Ask*, p. 5.
"You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take"
- Wayne Gretzky
For more information about business negotiation training, contact me at

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