

Sudo Coaching

Developing tomorrow's tech leaders

Coaching Geeks

Observations about Ways that We Hold Ourselves Back

Sue Dorward, Tech Management Coach

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How We Hold Ourselves Back

- Patterns I observe coaching tech women
- Things I didn't observe as a manager
- Useful for
 - Self - employee, professor, student
 - You to support friends and peers
 - As a manager, advisor, department head

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Agenda


- Internally (Feelings)
 1. Impostor
 2. Loner
 3. Outsider
- With Others (Behaviors)
 4. Humble
 5. Silent Analyst
 6. Accommodator



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- Proof of geekhood
- Grad student, instructor, programmer, VP
- Coach training at NYU
- Specialize in coaching high-potential tech managers
 - get more women through that pipeline!
 - J&J, Smith College's exec ed program

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Coaching



- Personalized leadership development
- 70% of senior execs have a coach
- One-on-one meetings
- Confidential
- Help identify vision, goals, challenges, actions
- Facilitate change and action to achieve goal
- Not consulting, counseling, or advising
- “Teach to fish”

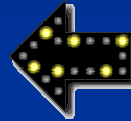
1. Impostor Syndrome



- Dr. Valerie Young, impostorsyndrome.com
- The Impostor Phenomenon
“Many bright, capable individuals do not experience an *inner sense* of competence or success, believing instead that they have fooled others.”
– Dr. Pauline Clance and Dr. Suzanne Imes (1978 journal paper)
- 70% of us experience this at one time
- “Gremlin” thoughts, “should” and “never” rules

Impostor Syndrome

- At risk groups:
 - In atypical job for gender
 - Students
 - First generation professionals
 - High-achieving parents
 - First or few in field/workplace
 - Work alone or in creative field



- Dr. Valerie Young

10 Ways to Feel as Bright and Capable As Everyone Else Knows You Are

- Separate feeling from fact – QTIP (Quit Taking It Personally)
- Break the silence
- Your feelings are normal
- Accentuate the positive
- Create new rules for self
- Find the humor
- Develop new responses
- Visualize success
- Become comfortable winging it, ID when others do it
- Reward yourself

- Dr. Valerie Young

How to QTIP (new slide)

- Does the person really know you and your skill set?
- Is this a one-time occurrence?
- Does the person do this with other people who are like you?
- Can your co-workers shed light on it?
- Can you talk to the person about it to shed light on it?
- Break it down – Is any of it valid? Invalid? What can you get from it that is useful to you? Write off the rest.

Perfection is Not Required

- “Perfectionism has nothing to do with getting it right. It has nothing to do with high standards. Perfectionism is a refusal to let yourself move ahead.” – Jennifer White
- “I use not only all the brains I have but all that I can borrow.” – Woodrow Wilson
- “Everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects.” – Woodrow Wilson
- “I was gratified to be able to answer promptly. I said, I don't know.” – Mark Twain
- “Don't agonize. It slows you down.” – ‘Non-perfectionist’ Isaac Asimov

- impostorsyndrome.com/wisewords.htm

2. Going It Alone

- Cause and effect?
- We “should” be able to do everything ourselves
- Don't ask for help (weak)
- Don't feel anyone would help anyway



Why So Alone?

- We feel alone as women in a group of men
- Want to prove ourselves
- Don't want to bother/burden others
- We do not trust our co-workers
- Don't want to expose any vulnerability
- Geeks tend to be introverts/loners
- We're bright, have succeeded alone in the past



Going It Alone is a Problem

- Can feel awful
- Not leveraging other's knowledge
- Wasting time
- Missed opportunities
 - Building relationships and trust
 - Teamwork
 - Learning from others
- Micromanager, not leader (trust)



You Are Not Alone

- Would you help others if asked?
- What do you think of others who ask for help?
- Quid pro quo
- Offer help to others.
- Your manager's job is to help you.
- Want to build relationships and trust?
 - Look for team project.



3. Feeling Like an Outsider

- Woman in male culture
- Feel compelled to accept status quo
- Don't want to cause trouble
 - Change is difficult and scary
- Always the outsider

- Camp story



It's Your Group Too

- If you're there, you're changing the group
- Take advantage!
 - What do you want to bring to the table?
 - What does group need?
- Open up
 - Informal one-on-ones
 - Stay in touch



4. Excessive Humility

- We know we're good
- Nobody else seems to
- How would they know?

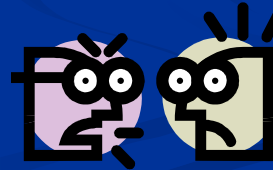


Establishing Geek Dominance

“...geek groups have largely been testosterone havens where groups of mostly men compete for dominance based on decidedly nontraditional criteria. ... Geek machismo is expressed in ways unfamiliar to outsiders.”

– Paul Glen, *Leading Geeks*, pp. 54-5

- One-upmanship
- Shouting matches
- Snide jokes
- Dismissive behavior



Establishing Respect

- Deserving it is not enough!
- Look at your resume
- Communicate accomplishments regularly and confidently
- “Praise buddies”
- Review resume with people whose respect you seek



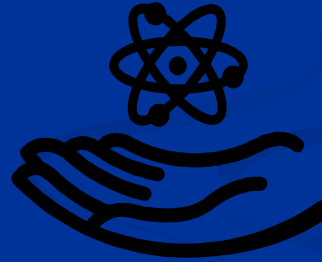
5. Silent Analyst

- Trying to figure out people and dynamics
- Interpreting behavioral data
- Insufficient or unclear data
- Make assumptions
- Take it personally / worst case
- We try to adjust
- Wasting a lot of emotional energy!



“Quantum Physics” Response

- State what you observed
- State your reaction
- Ask for clarification
- Give them an “out”
- Talk about next time
- Come to a clear agreement



(Elizabeth Guilday, MCC)

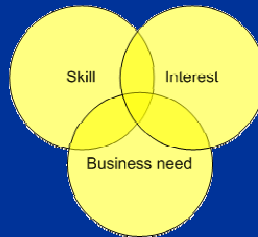
6. Accommodator

- Avoid conflict
- Say yes
 - “Would you do this?” as rhetorical question
 - Overextend, feel responsible for everything
- Accept no
 - “really thought about it” vs. “don’t feel like it”
- Don’t negotiate
 - What, I could have negotiated that?



It's Okay to Say No

- Set limits
- Prioritize



- Jon Bentley

- Make it a negotiation

Negotiate More



“Women often don’t get what they want and deserve because they don’t ask for it.”

Babcock et al, “Nice Girls Don’t Ask”, Harvard Business Review 10/03

- CMU MBA salary negotiation - 7% vs. 57% (\$4k)
- Men are 8 or 9 times more likely to negotiate
- Men see more as negotiable, so ask more and get more

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Why Negotiation is Hard

- “fear that asking for something they want may harm their relationship with the person they need to ask” – Babcock and Laschever, *Women Don't Ask*, p. 116
- Negotiation as conflict
- Anxiety
- “going to the dentist” vs. “winning a ballgame”



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Making Negotiation Easier

- Cooperation/collaboration, not conflict
 - Better than male competitive approach
- Shadow negotiation (“Breakthrough Bargaining”, Kolb and Williams, HBR 2/01)
- Negotiate for others
- Be aware of ambiguity



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Supervisors' To-Do's

- Don't just give when asked, then men get more
- Advise women about benefits of asking and what can be negotiated
 - “women respond immediately and powerfully ... and rapidly begin to see the world as a much more negotiable place” – Babcock *et al*, “Nice Girls Don't Ask”
- Remove ambiguity
 - define processes & standards



Develop Yourself Infinite Loop

- Identify one thing to improve on
- Set a SMART goal (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, Time bound) (3-6 months)
- Come up with a plan to get there (read)
- Do something every week to get there
- Evaluate progress and revise plan (weekly to monthly)
- Celebrate getting there!
- Repeat



Resources

- Leading Geeks, Paul Glen
- You Want Me to Work with Who?: Eleven Keys to a Stress-Free, Satisfying, and Successful Work Life ... No Matter Who You Work With, Julie Jansen
- Nice Girls Don't Get the Corner Office: 101 Unconscious Mistakes Women Make That Sabotage Their Careers, Lois Frankel
- The 12 Bad Habits That Hold Good People Back: Overcoming the Behavior Patterns That Keep You From Getting Ahead, Waldroop and Butler
- Feedback Toolkit, Rick Maurer (receiving feedback)

Negotiation and Impostor Resources

- “Breakthrough Bargaining”, Kolb and Williams, HBR 2/01 (8 pages)
- “Nice Girls Don't Ask”, Babcock *et al*, HBR 10/03 (2 pages)
- Women Don't Ask: Negotiation and the Gender Divide, Babcock and Laschever
- If I'm so Successful Why Do I Feel Like a Fake?, Harvey and Katz
- www.impostorsyndrome.com
- Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life, Martin Seligman

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