



## A United Front

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As women in the workforce, it's time to jump back on the band wagon and to stop trying to reinvent ourselves. We should put our energies into a new strategy – one that will launch our careers as a whole “rather than,” as Gail Evans, author of “She Wins You Win,” states, “advance our careers at the expense of other women.”

The wage gap between men and women is seen across the board from non-profits to the limited number of top level positions currently held by women. In fact, studies show that women make up 47 percent of the work force, but that only 12 percent are in the upper executive ranks. However, research indicates that only 4 percent are top earners and 6.2 percent hold high-ranking titles such as, chairman, chief executive officer, chief operating officer, etc. And, did you know that among the Fortune 500 companies there are only four women CEOs?

As professional business women, we are caught in a vicious cycle of attempting to succeed in the way we think men want us to. The more we try and do this the further behind we fall. We have to stop this cycle now, which is why we should heed Evans' advice of following this one rule: “Every woman must always play on the women's team. Why? Because every time any woman succeeds in business, your chances of succeeding increase. And every time a woman fails in business, your chances of failure increase.”

So, let's unite to join forces and begin to create and play by our rules. We are all working on one team – the women's team. The best way to improve the situation for all of us – not just one of us – is to talk to each other and plan together. According to Evans, “This team cuts across the boundaries of business, ethnicity, age and nationality. It's a reality for which there is no exception.”

So, how do you join the women's team? The following are seven tips provided by Evans:

1. **Be a Mentor** – Mentoring means teaching; by example, writing books and articles. It can be formal or informal. The key is to do something that will help women to not have to face the same struggles you did.
2. **Weave a Female Web** – We no longer live two lives - business and personal. We live one life in which all parts exist. You would have no problem telling your neighbor about a great new restaurant in town, yet when it comes to “discussing business” with our personal friends, we “shriek” away. Additionally, instead of building “business contacts,” build relationships that include areas of your life that are of mutual interest.

3. **Unite With All Women at All Times** – We all work together. Women you might ordinarily overlook may become your biggest allies. Instead of always looking above, you look below or to either side.
4. **Uncover & Share Information** – Begin talking about your business lives. The next time you meet a woman for lunch instead of talking about the kids, husband, parents or any other of the many intimate details of your life, talk about your business life. Learn what is going on in other departments, other companies, in your industry. You need to begin to acquire the big picture in order to become a valued commodity and get promoted.
5. **Rainmake** – Hire a woman! When you look at your team of advisors - accountant, attorney, financial planner - are they women? When you go to make any type of purchase, stop and think if there is a woman you know and trust who can provide that quality service or product. Refer these same women when someone asks you for a referral.
6. **Keep Quiet** – When talking to men about other women *do not put other women down*. It only feeds into already existing stereotypes. When one woman is promoted that is good for you. When she is fired that is bad for you.
7. **Make Team-Related Choices** – When you are on a team you know longer look out for only yourself. Play for the team as well as for yourself. You will open more opportunities for both you and the team by supporting and ensuring other women's successes.

“Women will only make it if we make it together. One isolated success here or there won't do the trick. Only when we achieve critical mass at the highest levels can we fully realize our potential at the office,” said Evans.

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