

## Do you need to be a bitch to get ahead? Top Tips for Women Professionals

In 2017, [6.4% of Fortune 500 companies](#) are led by women CEOs. This is the highest proportion of female CEOs in the 63-year history of Fortune 500 and a significant increase from last year. However, don't break out the champagne just yet. Discrepancies in advancement, salary, and recognition continue and progress seems slow for women currently in the workplace.

What can women do to set their boost their trajectory to the top?

### 5 Tips for Success from Women at the Top

#### Be yourself

“Bitches get stuff done,” says Tina Fey. Unfortunately, research shows those same ‘bitches’ are overlooked for promotions, do not receive equal pay for equal work, and frequently have their ideas and accomplishments stolen by coworkers and management. ‘Nice girls’ don't fare much better. They are victims of the same treatment as their bitchier counterparts because they are perceived as weak. What's a woman to do? Top female professionals have this piece of advice for women in the workplace: Be **you**. If you are [naturally a friendly person](#), embrace that in the office. Are you direct when you speak? Don't shed that skin the minute to enter the building. Identify the assets you bring to the table and build a reputation for being unwavering in your beliefs and ethics, regardless of what others think. If your organization doesn't support or reward those things, hit the road, Jane.

#### Speak up

[What Works for Women at Work](#) authors, Joan C. Williams and Rachel Dempsey, discuss the “tightrope” women walk between “appearing too feminine, which undermines their credibility and stymies their opportunities for advancement and acting too masculine, which makes their male counterparts think they lack social skills.” A dangerous tightrope, indeed. Women must decide what they want and go for it. If your goal is a promotion or a leadership role in the new project, get off the tightrope and get in on the action. Michelle Bergquist, CEO and Co-Founder of [Connected Women of Influence](#), tells women to ask for what they want, clearly and without hesitation. “Learn to ask for the promotions and bigger projects. Step in for consideration for the things you want.” You can't receive what you don't ask for.

[Listen to successful business owner, Michelle Bergquist, share Top Tips for Young Women Professionals](#)

#### Say what you mean and mean what you say

A significant obstacle women face in the workplace, is themselves. [The Content Factory](#) shares, “As women, our fear of the dreaded bitch label is so strong and so pervasive that it affects our behavior in ways we don't even recognize. It alters the way we communicate, how we speak and

how we are treated. Subtle word choices and statements weaken women's voices in the workplace. Something as small as changing how you say things can help you start reclaiming the respect you deserve." Ladies, stop modifying your statements with caveats such as "I'm sorry but..." or "Could you do me a favor and...". Don't apologize for holding coworkers accountable or asking for what you need and deserve. Your team isn't doing you a favor, they're doing their jobs.

### **Flaunt what you've got: Your accomplishments**

Men are applauded when they share their accomplishments. On the other hand, women are labeled snobbish or braggadocios when they exhibit the same behavior. (That's if they share them at all.) There is no shame in enjoying a victory. Where appropriate, [let upper management know what you've been up to](#) and the goals you've met. Maria Xenidou, Senior Associate with National Starch & Chemical Company, shares, "I give a one sentence update on what I am working on or a recent challenge I mastered," when a senior person asks how she's doing. "By doing so, I keep upper management up-to-date about my career and what might have been a quick hello in the hall often turns into a longer conversation." Ladies, be willing to talk yourself up. Don't wait for someone else to do it.

### **Face reality: You can't have it all or do it all (but neither can men!)**

Currently, 48% of families in the United States are [dual income households](#). At the same time, women continue to do [60% of the unpaid work](#), including household work and taking care of the kids, spending twice as much time with the kids than dads do. Women (and their partners if they have one) must create their own definition of success. For some, the best choice is to stay home with the children. For others, working full/part-time job to meet professional or financial goals is the priority. Regardless of what 'success' looks like, it is not free. The challenge is for women to determine what they are willing to give up or take on to consider herself successful.