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3 ways to tell if you need assertiveness training

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CEO, High-Heeled Success

While a woman can dress professionally, wear the right shoes and jewelry and use the correct power gestures in meetings, she sabotages herself when her appearance and verbal communications are diametrically opposed.

I have 25 years of experience studying women in the workplace and how they can best achieve their professional goals. I've found that women of all ages need help with assertiveness training. Do you? Consider these red flags:

1. Are you the nicest person in the room? This is a trap many women fall into. An executive I know was taking home mountains of work at night and on weekends. She was the boss, yet allowed employees to dominate 90 percent of her work time with their projects and problems. She couldn't finish her own work within office hours and worked nights and weekends instead. With assertiveness training, she made enormous strides and recaptured her personal life.

2. Can you say no without explaining? Many working women are mothers, and over-commit. If you spend your life catering to everyone else's needs, you become a piece of driftwood in the stream of life. Once I returned home at 11 p.m. from an out-of-town presentation and remembered one of our children needed brownies for a school party the next day. So despite my exhaustion, I was cutting fresh brownies on the kitchen counter at midnight. What did I learn from that experience? 'If Kroger doesn't make it, I don't take it.' Women want to do a lot, and can do a lot, but we have to set boundaries and be realistic about our limitations.

3. Are others offered opportunities you are not? If you obsess about what you should have said in meetings, you may not be communicating your wants and needs effectively at work. I counseled a woman executive who was determined to attend a national convention. She wanted to network, build relationships and increase her value to her organization. She cleared her schedule, registered for the conference, purchased her plane ticket, and discovered a few days before departure that a colleague was also attending — and the company was paying. What was the difference between the two women?

My client didn't ask.

Assertiveness training helps with asking for a raise, saying no to extra projects, standing up for yourself with colleagues, and reining in aggressive behavior in others. And while it's difficult to believe that in 2017, assertive women can still be perceived as being aggressive for exhibiting the same behaviors men in the workplace exhibit, the bottom line is this: When a woman is assertive, everyone's rights are adhered to. When a woman is aggressive, the only rights being paid attention to are her own.



Provided

Kay Fittes runs High-Heeled Success, a women's business consultancy that she founded. Enroll in her Sept. 23 assertiveness training seminar by calling 513-561-4288 or emailing

Kay@highheeledsuccess.com.

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