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Transformative Women's Leadership: How to Move the Business Forward with the Teams You Lead

ABSTRACT:

What are the core capabilities for effective women's leadership? Assertiveness is a key one, but it's a widely misunderstood characteristic and a word with a lot of baggage, most of it negative. Some interpret it as being "bossy"; some interpret it as "standing your ground" or "speaking your mind" and some interpret it as "taking charge" or being aggressive.

Assertiveness is none of these things, yet it's an essential skill in business and a quality that all successful leaders have. And it IS a skill – it can be developed and honed, like any other skill. Effective assertive skills manifest themselves in better negotiating tactics, stronger leadership, better team performance and higher levels of employee engagement.

Often, women who work in predominantly male industries feel pressure to perform at their peak, while also not appearing to be seen as too "domineering." This balancing act requires women in executive roles (or rising stars at their company) to become more assertive, in order to lead effectively.

For many women, negotiating can be challenging because women tend to be "people pleasers" and often put the needs of the group (their team or your associates) before their own needs. Effective negotiating is not about "winning" – it's about ensuring that both parties arrive at a place of mutual benefit. And being assertive is not at odds with teamwork – in fact, it is constructive for your team and your organization. Assertiveness is a management and performance quality that is highly charismatic and appealing.

KEY POINTS:

- The four core capabilities for effective leadership and how they can differ or manifest themselves for women executives
- Which natural characteristics women bring to work are assets and those which can be a liability if not expressed appropriately
- How to develop your assertive style in a manner that appeals, not repels
- How to communicate, empower and lead in predominantly male industries or teams
- Effective negotiating strategies that yield best outcomes for all business partners and associates