



## The Power of Thinking Big: Five Steps to Make Your Mark Now!

At some point in your career, you may have felt frustrated or unfulfilled. Maybe it's because you were passed over when it came time for rewards and recognition despite working hard and delivering results. Maybe it was because on some level you felt (or knew!) that you were not living up to your full potential. Or, maybe on some level, you held yourself back, accepted what was offered to you and buried your hopes and your dreams. Now's the time for you to stand tall and take charge of your career!

Here are five steps that you can take right now to help you think BIG and make your MARK.

1. **Identify your BIG ideas and dreams.** Write down every big idea and every big dream you have or have had. Then say them out loud. (Okay. Maybe not right now because I know some of you are at work!) But say them out loud when you're in the car, the shower, to your mother, wherever! Just say them out loud. And then finally, I want you to share them with a trusted friend or advisor.
2. **Develop a laser clear FOCUS by establishing goals.** We all know we should set goals. We're required to set goals at work to accomplish our company's vision but rarely do we set our own personal and professional goals which is a big mistake. According to author Linda Babcock, who co-wrote, *Women Don't Ask: The High Cost of Avoiding Negotiation and Positive Strategies for Change*, one of the barriers women have in getting what they want is "FAILING to set HIGH goals." Do yourself a favor. Sit down, get clear and write out your goals. Aim high. Make sure you stretch yourself. In fact, make them BIG goals while you're at it.
3. **Condition yourself to EXPECT and RECEIVE new opportunities.** Unfortunately, we've all been conditioned to think small and expect little from our jobs, our life, and yes, even ourselves, especially women. This reminds me of the Burnt Toast syndrome. A few years back Teri Hatcher wrote a book titled, *Burnt Toast*, where she talked about the fact that her mother always ate the burnt toast. Does that sound familiar to anyone? Burnt Toast is a metaphor for women who too often take the leftovers for themselves. I believe that you can have anything you want - ask for it, choose it, be committed to it. Start thinking big. Ask for MORE. Don't buy into the Burnt Toast syndrome. We've been taught to be small and to accept less, and that's a tragedy.
4. **Surround yourself with POSITIVE people.** They say if you hang out with five people that you're going to be the average of those five people. For example, take a look at kids. If you look at a kid's five closest friends, take a look at their grades, then add the grades up and divide them by five, you'll find that their grades are the average of their five closest friends. The same concepts apply to you. Why is this important? You need to surround yourself with people that love you, that support you, and that have goals and dreams just like you do. Because collectively you will bring each other up to higher performance and more success, or alternatively, you will collectively bring each other down. It's that simple.

5. **See yourself as VICTORIOUS!** This is an interesting one. How many of you “see” yourself as victorious? I think we just don’t think that way, do we? We don’t take time to visualize our own success. Most of us are moving so fast from one thing to the next, multitasking our way through each day. Visualize yourself successfully bringing your big idea or dream to life. What will you look like? Where will you be? How will you feel? Who will be with you? What will you say? Then be amazed at what unfolds.

Donald Trump once said, “You have to THINK anyway so why not THINK BIG?” The positive outcomes of thinking big far outweigh any discomfort or fear you may have. Follow these five steps and you will be well on your way to making your mark!