

Self Promotion: How to Promote Yourself Without Looking Like a Self-Serving Idiot



What is it about the combination of the words "self promotion" that makes most women cringe? And why is it that, in particular, women struggle the most in this arena?

Research has shown that there are a number of barriers women must overcome with the concept of self-promotion. Unfortunately, we are socialized as children not to talk about ourselves. And like most children, some of us took this message to heart. The result is that many women not only loathe talking about themselves but they also loathe talking about their accomplishments. Why? Because most women feel that this is - dare I say it? - bragging.

In our adult lives, many women often feel that their work should speak for itself. While that sounds good on paper, this strategy simply doesn't work very well for most women. The result is that many women are often passed over for plum assignments, or worse, for that coveted pay raise or promotion.

It is critical for women to develop a comfort level with talking about themselves and their accomplishments. Self-promotion can help do the following: make you visible, help you realize your goals and dreams, establish you as an expert in your field, and perhaps most importantly, lay the groundwork for future opportunities.

Effective self promotion requires preparation. Here are a few simple steps to get you started:

1. Take Inventory. You need to have a sense of what is worth promoting about you and why it is important.
2. Identify Your Key Accomplishments. These should be quantifiable and showcase your contributions.
3. Describe Your Accomplishment. A simple technique is the "CAR" method: Describe the challenge, the actions, and the results. Think in terms of telling a story.
4. Craft a Vision for Your Self Promotion. Start by answering these questions: What is the outcome you want to achieve? By When? How will you measure success? What is your timeframe for getting started?
5. Identify Individuals to Help You. Include individuals both inside and outside your organization. Don't be afraid to ask for help!
6. Implement Your Strategy!

It's critical that you feel comfortable with whatever steps you choose to take in your quest for self-promotion. One piece of advice: start small and practice with a trusted colleague or a business coach. Keep telling yourself that there is nothing wrong with self-promotion. And remember, success doesn't usually come to those who wait for it. It comes to those that have their "face in the place" both literally and figuratively.

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Regina Barr is president and founder of Red Ladder, Inc., an organization that helps women develop their leadership skills, and works with companies to help them attract, develop and retain women leaders. Services include consulting, keynotes, workshops, teambuilding, management coaching, and research. Contact Regina at 651-453-1007 or by email at info@redladder.com. www.redladder.com