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**How to Succeed in a Macho World**

**By Valerie Vauthey**

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Did you know that there was a time when women ruled the world? When the most revered figures were females: goddesses, empresses, and mothers.

but

Three thousand years ago, the vast majority of humanity abandoned goddesses for gods as our ancestors settled and developed agriculture.

This was the end of direct female domination.

Or was it?

Thanks to their formidable inner-strength and to their unflinching determination, women soon started to develop their very own talent to get what they desired, be it a husband, a child, wealth, a house, and more.

Women understood early on that reaching their goals was far more important than the path they took to get to them.

Women understood before time that they should never let men feel they lost face or have been manipulated.

Women fundamentally knew that men needed to believe they were responsible for their success to fully enjoy it.

Women have always been aware that confrontation was not the way to victory (ultimately).

How do these secularly developed techniques translate into today's world?

How can we thrive in today's macho business environment?

## How to Succeed in a Macho World

There are several ways to succeed. They might all be combined, or they can exist individually..., which makes it fairly easy in the end to succeed in a macho world!

MyPrivateCoach conducted a survey where we asked 256 people if they agreed or not on 8 statements and the results are exciting! (With a 50/50 men to women ratio.)

The vast majority of women think they need to behave like men to be successful whereas men believe that what makes a woman successful is actually her femininity!

Just before sharing the results, Let one of our surveyed people, Rebecca, sum up the fine line women are walking on when doing business in a macho world: "If women are strong, they are ball busters, and if they show any weakness or softness, they are little girls trying to play in a man's world."

–1– Use feminine attributes (Men: 90% – Women: 25%)

Interestingly enough (and should I say, as expected), men and women are absolutely not in agreement on this statement.

Little girls' education gives us some undeniable advantages to compete in a dominantly male group or company: better communication skills, better empathy with colleagues and clients and most importantly, better cooperation and better understanding of the modus operandi of our work mates.

We also have a body, a way of expressing our femininity, which men believe we try to hide more often than we should. This is even truer since lawsuits against sexual harassment started to take off. However, businessmen are begging us: be yourself! You can dress professionally and in all your femininity without being provocative. Be a woman and be proud of it (keep in mind though that a little pinch of perceived vulnerability won't hurt a bit). Yet, I do notice that many female executives and CEO (still too rare) in the software, legal, banking and high-tech industry wear rather conservative suits (usually pants) and short hair cut... maybe something to think about... is this the reason for their success? Or are they trying to avoid despising comments like: "I know how she climbed the ladder, short skirt and sexy attitudes".

–2– Talk about facts, not feelings (Men: 95% – Women: 30%)

Again, it all goes back to our childhood games and women tend to give more weight to non-tangible elements than facts in a business relationship. While this attitude can be a great sales closing tool, more often than not, it will hamper our efforts in the day-to-day corporate world.

Strive at not letting your emotions take over facts. Do not take things personally.

When you foresee your feelings may prevent you from considering facts straight or negotiating successfully, sit back, relax and reformulate your thoughts and ideas in a logical and rational way. Rather than saying: "I like this idea", try to (think) and say: "This idea will work because X YZ logical

reason or marketing reason that we know about this audience". This will make wonders in a

male/female business relationship.

If we look at what men and women think about this statement, we get an enormous gap! Almost all men agree on the fact that facts matter! Women don't seem to realize how much of a showstopper the "facts vs. emotions paradigm" is.

-3- Don't imitate male machismo (Men: 76% – Women: 20%)

Thriving in a high-profile executive job requires a "genetic" mutation: the development of the thick skin (Men: 54% – Women: 89%) of a man to prevent direct attacks from hurting while remaining soft so that not to hurt the male ego.

The most effective female business leaders I have met don't try to imitate male machismo. They use some "feminine" attributes such as greater attention to interpersonal interaction, and a degree of approachability to lower people's defensiveness. But underlying this soft approach they remain focused on the bottom-line goals, express self-confidence and succeed in achieving those goals without having the men around them feel that they have lost face or been manipulated.

Additionally, imitating is irritating. And, though men are not people readers in general, they can see through a bad imitation almost instantaneously.

-4- Be a warrior (Men: 25% – Women: 75%)

Let's not deny it: not giving in male machismo does not mean we should all be subdued to everything! Being a warrior, or developing a survivor's spirit will help women be more successful. NO question about it. Problem is: we are not wired to accurately identify rivals. We are not wired to be warriors. We have to work on becoming one.

If you develop into a warrior yourself, think like men and play their game. Since women have this great ability to adapt to nearly any situation, this should not be too tough. This attitude paradoxically will help you mingle in men's groups where you are the only woman. Once blended in, remember to shift to a more feminine (and more efficient) attitude.

-5- Treat men as equal (Men: 60% – Women: 76%)

Stop thinking he is man, I am woman, there must be some difference. By brainwashing ourselves into thinking about differences, we focus on the wrong element.

Let's stop thinking about differences, let's believe about one species: the Business Homo Sapiens Sapiens. Not a woman. Not a man.

-6- Learning when the game is over (Men: 82% – Women: 13%)

Going back years in history and recalling past events when in the heat of an argument, is a woman's all-times favorite. This childish attitude is particularly detrimental to our business success in a dominant male world. What happened five years ago, is over. No need to bring it to the (business) table

anymore. Hey! I know it is a hard one. We are wired to react this way...but aren't we also wired to be extremely adaptive? ;—)

Keep in mind that this wiring happens when we are very young. Little boys are taught to play war games, sport games, which have a clear end. We play dolls and cooking with no real clear-cut ending; it is more of a process than of a timed game.

Very interesting poll result where women do not consider this attitude as a showstopper when it comes to their success in the corporate world.

I bet that you have found yourself using (consciously or not) one or more of these key factors of success in the macho world, and discovered that it was not THAT easy and THAT straightforward.

Recapturing the old women's glory, not to mention its social, religious and political power, is considered difficult if not unattainable. But is it necessary? I don't subscribe to this point of view. I don't support allegation about gender struggle, as I have never believed that businessmen and businesswomen were doomed to be at odds.

The old dichotomy black/white, man/woman, power/submission is long gone.

In 2004, the "businesswoman homo sapiens" species has evolved and is now a patent pending complex mix of 10% man, 2% warrior, 88% woman....and maybe some additional secret things which we cannot publish here.

I will leave the last words to one of the surveyed man, who is definitely not a macho: "best way to succeed in a macho world is to make up your own rules, rather than compete with the macho element.."

The bottom line is that the macho thing may look formidable, but it's really not an effective business

strategy; (my opinion) it lacks subtlety..."

Valerie Vauthey is the founder of

### **FUN LOOK AT A LADY HANG–GLIDER**

**By VJ Gibson**

### **FUN LOOK AT A LADY HANG–GLIDER by VJ Gibson**

Women can be sports widows when husbands take to the tube, but what's a man to do when his lady love is a hang–glider? Cyril May and Jack McDonald explore this question in their playful tune, Macho Mountain Mama on their CD, "Off The Beaten Track."

## How to Succeed in a Macho World

`When warm winds from the valleys

Sweep on up the mountain side

When the thermals are a pumping all around

When the birds are all grounded

`Cause the wind's too rough to fly

Then Macho Mountain Mama's up there flyin' high.'

In the song, Cyril's lyrics show a real appreciation for the adventurous woman obsessed with a pastime that leaves her man far below. But a twinge of jealousy for her high-flying freedom comes through as well. The lilting instrumentals add bounce to the piece, and keep our feet tapping along in time. Jack McDonald adds his special arrangements to the mix, and the result is a musical romp.

`She's my Macho Mountain Mama

Like a bird, her spirit's free

She flies a big hang-glider through the skies

And I feel up there she's closer

To her real true love than me

And I envy how my Macho Mountain Mama flies'

For more commentary of everyday life, check out sample tracks of "Off the Beaten Track" at [www.cyrilmay.com](http://www.cyrilmay.com) or contact him at by phone: 562/433-0734, email: [divingds@juno.com](mailto:divingds@juno.com) or snail-mail: 266 Orizaba, Long Beach, CA 90803.

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