



# Women's Resource Center NEWSLETTER

A Quarterly Newsletter

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## “Is Your Glass (Ceiling) Half Empty or Half Full?”

by  
Kirstin Carey

The infamous “glass ceiling” is blamed for business issues for women from poor salaries to lack of corporate advancement. This invisible barrier holds many women captive in unpleasant work environments, settling for pay which is far below industry averages, accepting weak titles and agreeing to poor advancement opportunities.

Some say the glass ceiling is just a figment of the imagination while others are sure it is a real blockade created to prevent women from reaching corporate success. So, is your glass (ceiling) half empty or half full? In other words, are you going to be kept down by something you can't even see or are you willing to do what it takes to crack through and shatter this issue?

If you've decided that as a woman it will be impossible for you to reach corporate business success, then you are right. That thought process will get you nowhere but where you are right now. On the other hand, if you are part of the growing group of women who want to break through to their own successes and remove the glass altogether, then keep reading.

To move forward, you must analyze your own communication skills and be brutally honest with yourself about your skill level. Weak and ineffective business communication skills are often the primary reason women feel held back in their careers and in their lives.

Review this list to help determine where your skills stand.

1. Do you ask for raises?
2. Have you ever asked for a promotion or an improved job title?
3. Do you negotiate effectively for yourself?
4. Are you able to specifically explain the value you bring to your company or clients?
5. Are you an effective presenter or public speaker?
6. Do you apologize for things that aren't your fault or are out of your control?
7. Review your email or other writing. Do you start sentences with the word “I”?
8. Do you see negotiating as a barrier to getting what you want?
9. Do you have difficulty saying “no,” even when you really want to?
10. Are you overwhelmed or consumed by stress?
11. Do you have difficulty explaining things or getting people to understand what you are trying to say?

If you answered “no” to any or all of the first five questions, then your assertive skills need an overhaul. If you answered “yes” to any or all of questions six through

eleven, then your communication skills are ineffective in helping you advance in your career. Essentially, you could be creating your own glass ceiling and holding yourself back.

To help put yourself back on the right track and stop constructing transparent blockades to your own success, review the three following *PowHERful* skills that will help put you on top.

### 1. Ask for it.

If you want something, then ask for it. Make it clear what you want and you are more likely to get it.

A university study of 40 employees found that men are more likely to ask for things when they want them – AND they are more likely to get what they ask for. Of the 20 women, only one asked for a raise when first offered a job. She was granted the hike in salary. Of the 20 men, 18 of them asked for a raise and all 18 were given it.

If you're one of those people who thinks it's better to magically get something without asking for it, then don't complain when you don't get it. Don't expect people to read your mind or know what you want. It's simply not the way things work.

### 2. Learn to speak and present effectively.



People who communicate well in group settings are viewed as leaders. This perception will get you noticed and help you stand out as someone who is worthy of promotion and other opportunities and bonuses. The number one reason why most people are terrible presenters stems back to speech development. The purpose of business

presentations are to inform, persuade or both. Therefore, the structure of the presentation must be clear and not bogged down with unnecessary information.

One of the biggest mistakes presenters make is trying to fit too much information into too short a period of time. They jam paragraphs of information on slides and handouts and begin to drone, ignoring time restrictions and forgetting completely about the audiences needs. Simplify your presentation and only have highlights and supporting information on slides and handouts. Don't overwhelm your audience with too much information at once. Avoid having more than five main points for the entire presentation.

The adult human brain can only absorb small chunks of oral information at one time. If you have to present for long periods of time, be sure to build in small breaks – even if the breaks are only five minutes.

Presenting to a group may be nerve-racking, even paralyzing for many people, but it doesn't have to be. Effective presenters know the simple secrets on how to craft and deliver good speeches. If you feel scattered, nervous or ineffective when you present to groups, you owe it to yourself and your career to take a public speaking training course or at least buy an audio CD or book on how to improve your skills.

### 3. Quantify and Present Value.



When volleying for a raise, a promotion or new client contract it is crucial that you know how to specifically explain value. Though it is impossible to quantify the value of everything, most things can be measured. When you communicate in quantifiable terms, people are more likely to understand the value. If you can quantify the gain of doing what you want or the loss by not doing it, you will be more successful in getting it.

Rather than telling your boss you want a raise, quantifiably show him/her why he/she should give the raise to you.

Weak Raise Request: "I've been with the company for a long time and I'm a good and dependable employee who works hard." *PowHERful* Raise Request: "Over the last 18 months, the six software projects I worked on for the company have attributed to a 13% reduction in customer complaints, a 29% increase in production, and a 43% increase in online orders. These improvements have resulted in \$1.5 million in profits for the company." See how the quantified example got right to the "bottom line?" It is here, at the bottom line where nearly all business decisions are made. Let the numbers do the persuading for you. Numbers are tangible. Numbers are concrete. Numbers mean value. Value speaks volumes.

By mastering the above three skills and continuing to improve your assertive communication skills you will no longer be trapped by the glass ceiling or any other barrier which may get in your way. You will be an assertive, *powHERful* business person worthy of raises, promotions, and anything else you decide you deserve.

#### *About the Author*

Kirstin Carey is an award-winning speaker and consultant. She is owner of Orange Tree Training & Speaking Group. She works with organizations on effective and persuasive communications. The Orange Tree Group has a special division which focuses on helping women advance and succeed through more effective communication skills without having to communicate like a man. Visit Carey's website at [www.powHERful.com](http://www.powHERful.com) Article adapted from the *Advancing Women* web site at <http://www.advancingwomen.com/glass-ceiling2>.



### **Creativity series returns during July 2007**

Each of us has our own inner creative resources that need to be fed, developed, and nurtured. Have you been doing that? Have you noticed what happens when you do not? On July 10, 17, and 24, **Pam Murray, B.A., M.B.A.**, a local artist and art instructor, returns to campus to conduct a three-part series of workshops entitled "*The Age of Creativity.*" Murray will guide participants through the process of exploring and accessing their respective creativity levels.

The focus of this series of workshops will be on developing your right brain capabilities. Participation in the workshop should aid you in being more perceptive and observant of your world, and hopefully be inspired to nurture your creativity! Participants can start (or continue) to develop their own creative process through the use of such things as journaling, art, exploratory activities, and mapmaking. These are just a few of the tools and resources for you to practice with and take with you as you continue on with your own unique creativity process *in all areas of your life, including the workplace.*

Scheduled for **July 10, 17, and 24**, all sessions will be held at the Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, basement suite 2, at noon. **Reservations are required.** To reserve a spot or should you need additional information regarding this series, contact the Women's Resource Center at 423-439-7847.

### **"Dealing With Disability"**

**Linda Gibson, M.Ed.**, director of the Office of Disability Services at ETSU, is guest speaker for "*Dealing With Disability.*" Scheduled for Thursday, June 28, 2007, location and time for this *Women's Professional Enrichment Lunch Break Seminar* is the East Tennessee Room, D.P. Culp University Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, at noon.

Statistical information compiled by the National Council for Support of Disability Issues reveals:

- Approximately 54 million people in the United States have some type of disability.\*
- Whether a disability comes about from birth or by accident, not all disabilities can be seen with the naked eye.\*\*
- Some people may feel uneasy being around a person with a disability; however people with disabilities are simply people and need to be treated as such.\*\*

Join Gibson on June 28 when she speaks about "*Dealing With Disability*" in a higher education setting. Areas addressed by Gibson include disability awareness and etiquette issues, visible vs. invisible disabilities, barriers encountered by disabled individuals, disability misconceptions, and federal provisions for people living with a disability. If you are working alongside a co-worker with a disability, have friends or family members with a disability, or want to increase your level of awareness about disability issues, then this seminar is for you.

For more information, contact the Women's Resource Center at 423-439-7847.

\*Source <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/newfreedom/summary.html>.

\*\*Source <http://www.peoplereources.org/employers/DSTraining.pdf>.



### **Women's Health Series – Summer 2007 Schedule**

Long linked to the health of pregnant women and their infants, folate is growing in reputation. Physicians now prescribe diets rich in folate and folic acid, its synthetic equivalent, to patients at risk for heart disease and stroke. Recent studies also suggest that this B vitamin may keep depression and certain cancers at bay.\*

If you want more in-depth information on the numerous health benefits associated with folic acid, then mark your calendar for Thursday, August 16, for "*Fortify Yourself: The Benefits of Folic Acid.*" Guest speaker **Charlene Ellis, M.A.**, director of program services for the March of Dimes – Appalachian Division, will speak about the many health benefits attributed to the daily intake of folic acid.

Location and time for the Ellis *Women's Health Lunch Break Seminar* is Meeting Room 6, D.P. Culp University Center, at noon. For more information, contact the Women's Resource Center at 423-439-7847.

\*Source <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/featured-nutrient-folate-folic-acid>.

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***ETSU Women's Resource Center***  
**Program Schedule**

For more information on the events listed contact the *WRC* at 423-439-7847.

**JUNE – AUGUST 2007**

***Main Campus Programs***

**Wednesday, June 20**

**Book Review Group.** Participants will meet to discuss *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls. New readers welcome.

**LOCATION & TIME:** Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, Basement Suite 2, noon.

**Thursday, June 28**

**"Dealing with Disability" – A Women's Professional Enrichment Lunch Break Seminar.** Linda Gibson, M.Ed., will discuss disability awareness and etiquette issues, visible vs. invisible disabilities, barriers encountered by disabled individuals, disability misconceptions, and federal provisions for people living with a disability. See article page 2.

**LOCATION & TIME:** D.P. Culp University Center, East Tennessee Room, noon.

**Tuesday, July 10**

**Tuesday, July 17**

**Tuesday, July 24**

**"The Age of Creativity" – A Women's Professional Enrichment Lunch Break Series.** Pam Murray, B.A., M.B.A., a local artist and art instructor, is facilitator for this three-part series. Murray will guide participants through the process of exploring and accessing their respective creativity levels. The focus of this series of workshops will be on developing your right brain capabilities. **Reservations are required.** See article page 2.

**LOCATION & TIME:** Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, Basement Suite 2, noon.

**Wednesday, July 18**

**Book Review Group.** Participants will meet to discuss *Singing Bird: A Novel* by Roisin McAuley. New readers welcome.

**LOCATION & TIME:** Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, Basement Suite 2, noon.

**Wednesday, August 15**

**Book Review Group.** Participants will meet to discuss *Babylon Sisters* by Pearl Cleage. New readers welcome.

**LOCATION & TIME:** Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, Basement Suite 2, noon.

**Thursday, August 16**

**"Fortify Yourself: The Benefits of Folic Acid" – A Women's Health Series Lunch Break Seminar.** Charlene Ellis, M.A., director of program services for the March of Dimes – Appalachian Division, will discuss the health benefits attributed to the daily intake of folic acid. See article page 2.

**LOCATION & TIME:** D.P. Culp University Center, Meeting Room 6, noon.

**ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

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## New Faculty Orientation

Monday, August 20, 2007 08:45 AM through Tuesday, August 21, 2007  
118 Sherrod Library

New Faculty Orientation is a two-day series of activities for new tenure-track faculty. Information is provided about technology services; library and instructional support services; resources and support services for teaching, advising, and supporting students; annual evaluation and tenure and promotion policies and procedures; ETSU's mission and goals; and resources and support services for professional development and research. The objectives of New Faculty Orientation are to connect new tenure-track faculty with people and services that can support their teaching, research, and service; to provide basic information for getting a good start at ETSU plus more detailed information to use later, and to connect new faculty with the larger institution.

The New Faculty Orientation is scheduled for Monday, August 20, 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Tuesday, August 21, 8:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Both days' events start in 118 Sherrod Library.



WOMEN'S

## Equality Day

August 26  
Celebrating Women's  
Right To Vote

August 26 commemorates the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote. This was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world's first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York.

The observance of *Women's Equality Day* not only commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, but also calls attention to women's continuing efforts toward full equality.



### HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

ETSU will be closed and classes will not be in session Wednesday, July 4, and Monday, September 3, 2007.

### FALL SEMESTER 2007

Classes begin Monday, August 27, 2007.



### Women's Resource Center NEWSLETTER

The ETSU Women's Resource Center Newsletter is published quarterly at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn.

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