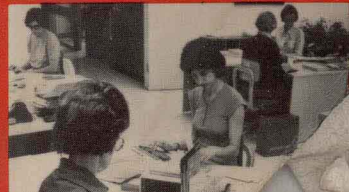
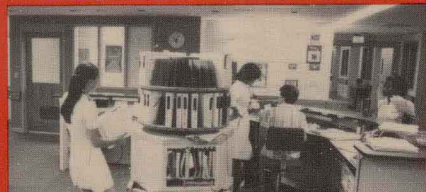
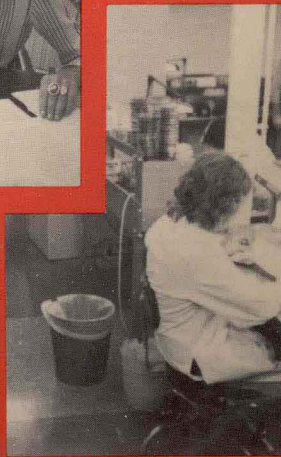
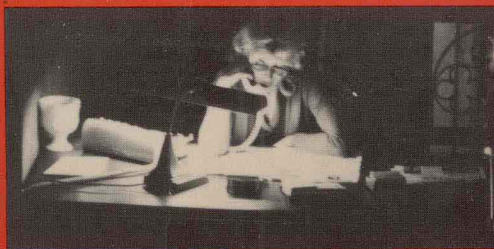
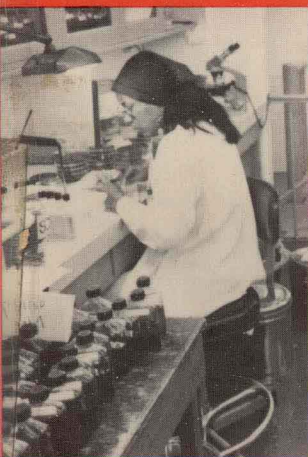
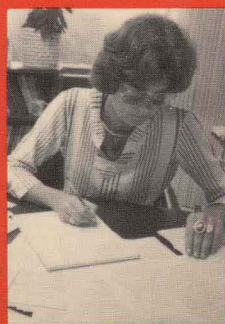
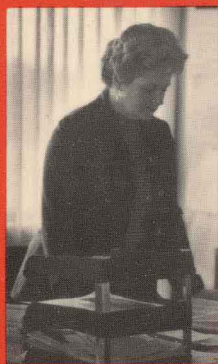
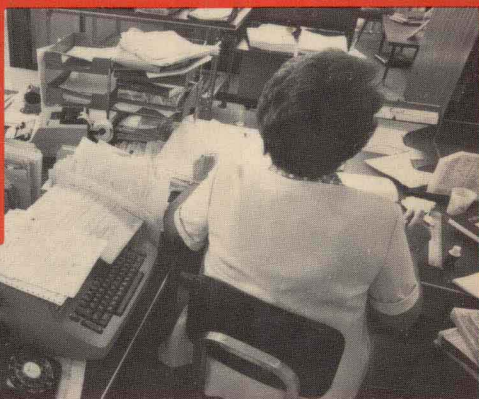
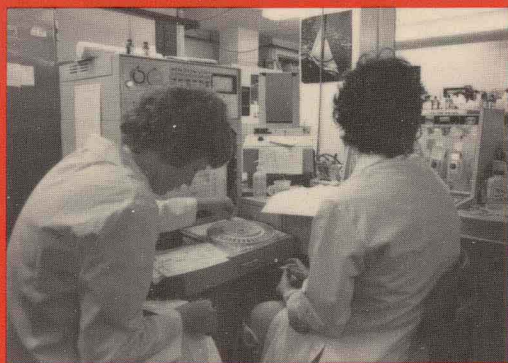


WOMEN AT WORK:

Overcoming the Obstacles

Marlene Arthur Pinkstaff
Anna Bell Wilkinson



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FOREWORD

In the past twenty years many changes have taken place in training and development. Theories and programs have run the gamut from job instruction training to organization development, with intermediate stops for human relations, sensitivity training, Management by Objectives, and managerial Grid, to name just a few. All too often, however, the training and development of the woman worker in business and industry have been determined by the degree of aggressiveness of the equal employment opportunity (EEO) program.

What is needed today is a methodology—a system of examining and overcoming obstacles facing women in the workplace. If women are to develop and progress on the job, they need to move around the developmental triangle (see Fig. 1).

From my experience in the past eighteen years in training and development, it has become clear, to me, at least, that the main reason women do not move into *skill* positions and ultimately management is not the lack of *job knowledge*. Rather, it is, first, the *attitude* area of the developmental triangle that prevents women from seriously moving into the more challenging positions.

Obstacles confronting working women are sometimes self-imposed

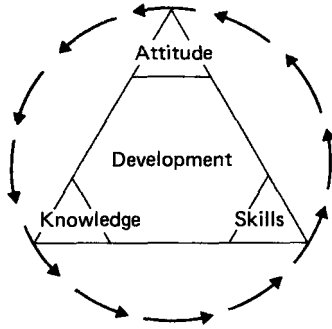


Fig. 1 The development triangle.

and sometimes imposed by others. The authors of *Women at Work: Overcoming the Obstacles* present a framework for women to examine themselves and their work situations. They can use the knowledge and information gained to help overcome present attitudinal obstacles and the ones they must face in the 1980s.

I think that every woman owes it to herself to work through this book, regardless of what kind of a future she perceives for herself at the present time. If she is standing at the edge of a promising career, this book will be invaluable reading. If she is already in management, *Women at Work* will provide a ready reference to assist this proven leader in becoming an effective mentor for other women.

Each chapter stands both independent of and interdependent with the others. The book therefore makes appropriate material for in-house workshop study. I recommend it as "must" reading for an organization's "people development" person and for the woman on the move.

Dick Pinkstaff

PREFACE

A recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* states that the nation's working women now number forty-one million. Women who hold paying jobs may soon outnumber those who stay home. Fifty-eight percent of the working women have school-age children. The profile of the typical working woman has changed dramatically in recent years.

This book came into being because of the realization that although there are many good books available to assist women who work, there are none that address the obstacles which hamper women in the realization of their career potential. Although the reader will benefit from just reading the book, the real value will come from completing the exercises and undertaking the personal evaluation that will result.

We are appreciative of the works of others in this area. Their efforts have provided us with the base of knowledge we needed to inspire us and start our creative juices flowing.

Our thanks go to our clients past and present and to the organizations with which we have been associated. They have all contributed to our development.

Our appreciation and gratitude also go to our colleagues on the staff of Dick Pinkstaff Associates for their support and encouragement.

We also wish to thank the many women and men who worked with us, who shared their experiences with us, who endured lengthy interviews, and who contributed in many other ways.

Tulsa, Oklahoma
April 1979

M. A. P.
A. B. W.

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CHAPTER ONE

SELF-IMAGE

YOUR SELF-IMAGE

Experts in the behavioral sciences maintain that the greatest barrier to women's succeeding in the business world is their perception of themselves. Their sense of self-worth is such that they do not recognize their capabilities and potentials; as a result, their efforts in the workplace are limited.

What view do you have of yourself? What kinds of things go to make up your opinion of yourself? There are a number of factors involved—chiefly, your self-concept, attitudes, and values.

Your self-concept is what you *think of yourself*—who and what you *think you are*. These ideas you have about yourself are formed over your lifetime. They are based largely on how others react to you. You use this information—others' reactions—to find out about yourself. For example, you may have been an “ugly duckling” who grew up to be a beautiful swan. In spite of the fact that you are now quite lovely, you may have difficulty *thinking of yourself* as attractive.

Your self-concept can also work to your advantage. If you *think of yourself* as intelligent and capable of handling difficult situations,

you probably are willing to take on tasks which carry some element of uncertainty.

You may also have included in your self-concept notions about *what you think you ought to be like*. You can see this part of the process at work wherever two or more teenagers are gathered!

Attitudes are your *feelings and beliefs* about other persons, events, activities, etc. These feelings and beliefs about people, events, and activities can be either positive or negative. Your attitudes are your likes and dislikes.

Attitudes are *learned*; you were not born with any. You learned your attitudes in several ways. You learned some of them from your parents and other family members. Other feelings and beliefs developed as a result of your wider surroundings: the schools you attended, the neighborhoods you grew up in, the religious group you belonged to, the opinions of people who mattered to you, the things that made for social acceptance.

Now that you are an adult, chances are that your attitudes about certain things have changed. New experiences and new information have caused you to change your mind, and this is probably good. Recognizing that your attitudes about things *will change* will help you to reevaluate them in the light of new knowledge.

Values are different from attitudes. Values are of a more general nature and are more deeply ingrained than attitudes are. Values are *less likely* to change than attitudes. Values are what you *prize*, what you consider *good or bad*, and how you decide the difference between *right and wrong*. Values are the standards on which you make your choices—large and small. Your values, like your attitudes, come from your background and from your religious and ethical upbringing. Some values come directly from the culture. For instance, competition and strength are highly regarded values in this country. That is why more people turn out to see the Dallas Cowboys than the Dallas Symphony.

It is the sum total of your self-concept, attitudes, and values that you present to the world as you.

Your opinion of you How do you present yourself in your workplace? As a woman now in management or about to move into management, it is of the utmost importance that you have a good feeling about yourself. As you face new challenges, situations, and experi-

ences, your sense of self will in many ways determine how you handle them. This, in turn, will determine how others perceive you and your capabilities. In order to become comfortable with yourself, you need to know your dimensions. You can check yourself with the following Personal Traits Checklist. Don't mull over your responses too long. Your first impulse is usually the most accurate. Complete Column I before proceeding to Column II.

PERSONAL TRAITS CHECKLIST

COLUMN I—Circle the items that apply to you.	COLUMN II—Indicate whether you consider the circled items to be:	
	<i>Positive traits</i>	<i>Negative traits</i>
<i>Enjoy people</i>		
<i>Intelligent</i>		
<i>Good judge of people</i>		
<i>Possess a good sense of humor</i>		
<i>Too serious</i>		
<i>Often depressed</i>		
<i>Positive thinker</i>		
<i>At times feel "hemmed in"</i>		
<i>Fear the future</i>		
<i>Want to be "successful"</i>		
<i>Feel that money solves all problems</i>		

	<i>Positive traits</i>	<i>Negative traits</i>
<i>Capable in my job situation</i>		
<i>Manage my time well</i>		
<i>Lonely</i>		
<i>Well dressed</i>		
<i>Too fat/too thin</i>		
<i>Uncomfortable around men</i>		
<i>Have a great amount of self-confidence</i>		
<i>Unable to accept compliments</i>		
<i>Wish I had another job</i>		
<i>Like myself</i>		
<i>Often get my feelings hurt</i>		
<i>Too sensitive</i>		
<i>People trust me</i>		
<i>Don't think people take me seriously enough</i>		
<i>Work comes first in my life</i>		
<i>Fear growing old</i>		
<i>Haven't developed my talents</i>		

	<i>Positive traits</i>	<i>Negative traits</i>
<i>Social life is more important to me than work</i>		
<i>Always "planning" things, but never follow through on them</i>		
<i>Put up a good front</i>		
<i>Afraid for others to know the "real me"</i>		
<i>Interested in current events</i>		
<i>Enjoy life most of the time</i>		
<i>Have trouble controlling my temper</i>		
<i>Have a vague sense of guilt—about what, I'm not sure</i>		
<i>Don't enjoy my job</i>		
<i>Wish my job was more challenging</i>		
<i>Take criticism too seriously—especially when I know it is unjustified</i>		
<i>Afraid to make any changes in my life—moving to another apartment, buying a house, changing jobs, moving to another city, etc.</i>		
<i>Enjoy music, art, literature</i>		

	Positive traits	Negative traits
<i>Have at least two hobbies</i>		
<i>Feel I should go back to school</i>		
<i>Require a lot of attention</i>		
<i>Don't like to be alone</i>		

A look at your self-image How do you look to you? Take some time to read back over your responses to the Personal Traits Checklist. Pay particular attention to Column II. An individual item is not as important here as *how you feel about it*. Are your basic feelings positive or negative? Probably they are a mixture of both.

Do you see many negatives in areas that could be damaging your effectiveness on the job? These are the areas that we are going to consider for further evaluation.

You have no doubt heard many times that you cannot like other people until you like yourself. Have you ever understood what that means? What it *does not* mean is that you are selfish, conceited, or arrogant. What it *does* mean is that you recognize yourself as a person of worth—as someone with talents and capabilities that are uniquely yours. It also means that you are comfortable with yourself and that you accept yourself as a significant human being. It means that you do not send out “vibes” that diminish your own accomplishments. As one well-known psychologist/author has said, “Remember, at no time, under no circumstances is self-hate healthier than self-love.”

We are each painfully aware of what is wrong with us. There is no lack of sources to inform us of our shortcomings and defects. Our culture encourages accomplishment on one hand and discourages reveling in it on the other. Through the development of a positive self-image, we no longer need our worthiness verified through others. We can and must do it for ourselves.

Your self-image determines your public image. When you come to work in the morning, do you feel alive? Do you obviously enjoy your work? Your attitudes about these things are communicated to