Why Good Girls Don’t Get Ahead But Gutsy Girls Do
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The Big Idea
Are you a rule follower, a people pleaser or a paper pusher? Have you been passed over for promotions despite your efforts to be well-liked? Chances are, you are a good girl and this might just be the reason why you are being held back.

Former Good Girl Kate White brings you a 9-step program that is designed to transform you from being a good girl to a gutsy girl. Learn how to change your style and self-image and gain that much needed edge in your career.

The Myth of the Good Girl
When you were younger, everyone told you that it was important to be a good girl. You were told that you should follow the rules, act nice to everyone, and that you should hold your tongue when it comes to people of authority. You were rewarded for being a good girl and punished for being the exact opposite.

Today, you are a career woman who might still be trying to follow the path of a good girl. You must realize, however, that doing so might affect your career negatively. In fact, your good girl mannerisms and traits might be undermining your career.

Before you begin misbehaving though, it must be stressed that being a gutsy girl does not mean being bad. You must still be hardworking, respectful and kind. However, you should not be afraid to take risks. You also should not allow other people to chart the direction of your career for you.

Strategy # 1: A Gutsy Girl Breaks the Rules
If you wish to stand out, you must break the rules. You must be willing to twist rules around to come up with bold and different solutions. Of course, this does not mean that you should go around breaking rules left and right. You should only break rules when you are doing so to achieve your goal.

You must realize that rules exist for a reason. Probably, they were quite helpful at some point. However, some of the rules get outdated, even meaningless, over time. As a result, the rules end up hindering your success.

Two Points to Consider Before Breaking a Rule
Before you break a rule, find out if breaking the rule would:

1. Make money for your company.
2. Save money for your company.

If breaking the rule won’t affect the two factors mentioned above, it might be better to just stick to the rules momentarily.

How to Break the Rules and Not Get Burned
How can you get away with breaking the rules? Here are some ways to protect yourself:
1. Establish a track record of competence.
2. Get the support of your boss.
3. Know the landscape. Observe what happens to people who make gutsy moves.
4. Be ready to repackage your idea if someone tells you that your idea is not complementary of how things work in that office.
5. Always share the glory.

Strategy #2: A Gutsy Girl Has One Clear Goal for the Future

You need a vision. You need to build all your gutsy moves and rule-breaking around one clear goal. Focusing on a single goal might be difficult for someone who is used to doing everything on her own but it is something that must be done. Remember, without a goal, you will lose direction.

Creating Your Vision

Here are some tips that you can use to help you create your vision:

1. Your vision should be as specific as possible.
2. Name your destination.
3. Spell out directions for getting there.
4. Specify criteria for measuring your success.
5. Listen to your instincts.
6. Write your vision down.

Strategy #3: A Gutsy Girl Does Only What's Essential

Women always have a tendency to work harder and longer. It seems like women are trained to be perfect. It is only correct that you do not hand in sloppy or incomplete work. You must, however, take into consideration that taking too long to do a single task might be detrimental.

The Art of Delegating

Working on something you should have delegated to someone else is even worse than working too hard. If you start noticing that you've been staying all night at the office, you might be better off delegating some of the work you're doing to other people.

Three Step System for Doing Only What is Essential

1. Discover the Double To-Do List. Use a master list that describes all the steps you need to undertake for achieving your single goal. Use your master list to make your daily to-do list. Make sure you have time to do the important stuff that is related to your goal.
2. Make it Snappy. Remember that you do not have to be perfect. Sometimes it is better to come up with a half-baked concept really fast than try to hone an idea into perfection and take forever. Set deadlines for yourself.
3. Give Away the Grunt Work. Save all the important and fun work for yourself. Delegate everything else. If a task does not need your expertise, give it away. If the job will not help you get closer to your goal and if your boss wouldn’t mind someone else doing it, delegate. If you know someone who can do the job equally well, delegate.

Strategy #4: A Gutsy Girl Doesn’t Worry Whether People Like Her

You must stop trying to please everyone as this will only waste your time and energy. The desire to be liked can be detrimental to your career and might make you look desperate. Remember that work is not a popularity contest.
Saying No
When you are trying to please everyone, you will find that you are saying yes all the time. Now that you have decided to give up on the pleaser role, you must learn how to say no.

Handling People
Strive to be a fair and yet firm boss. Do not be overly nice to your subordinates. Do not try to be the best friend of your employees. You must be thoughtful but you must never allow your staff to push you around.

The Six Most Important People to Cultivate (Besides Your Boss)

1. Secretaries (gatekeepers to power).
2. The keepers of information.
3. Suppliers of services (print room, mail room, computer services).
4. Employees of other departments with responsibilities that can affect yours.
5. Bosses in other departments.
6. Talented people who once worked for you.

Strategy # 5: A Gutsy Girl Walks and Talks Like a Winner

Style and substance both matter. Having both guarantees success. Remember though, you have to both look and sound the part.

No matter how talented you are, it might not be enough. You must find out how other people see you. Watch a videotape of yourself and look at everything - your energy level, posture, gestures, body language, the sound of our voice, etc. Remember that even the way you dress is important.

What Your Body Says About You
Your body gestures can tell other people how you feel. It will show in your facial expression, physical mannerisms and posture. If you feel uncertain or insecure, your body movements will show it. Learn how to control your body language. It is also important that you are able to hold other people’s stare.

Three Little Ways to Sound Gutsier

1. Always cut to the chase.
2. Never start a statement with “I don’t know.”
3. Don’t hedge.

Strategy # 6: A Gutsy Girl Asks for What She Wants

It is not easy to ask for what you want. Unfortunately, you might have been brought up thinking that you should not have to ask. You might think that if you work hard, you will be rightfully rewarded. You might also be hesitant to ask because you do not wish to appear greedy or a little obnoxious.

The truth is, to get what you want you have to ask for it. Furthermore, your boss would actually appreciate if you do so. Of course, you have to learn to ask for what you want in the right way.

The Perfect Way to Ask
Here are some principles you can use when you want to ask for what you want:

1. Discover the Other Person’s Secret Greed. When you ask for something you need, ask it in such a way that you seem to be addressing the other person’s needs as well.
2. Ask Fast. Speak quickly and clearly when making your request. It might be best to rehearse what you’re going to say before you say it.
4. **Ask for the Business**. Make sure you have made your request. Pop the question.

**Asking for More Money**
Asking for an increase is always difficult. Here are some tips you can use:

1. Determine what you are worth.
2. Add 20% to the figure you come up with.
3. Allow your boss to name the first figure.
4. Ask for more money than what is offered.

**Strategy # 7: A Gutsy Girl Faces Trouble Head-On**

Saboteurs, office politics, offensive males at work - these are all some of the problems you might encounter in the workplace. When you encounter these problems, it is best to take the problem head on.

**Saboteurs**
There are three kinds of saboteurs:

1. Your boss.
2. Your subordinates.
3. Your peers

When you are faced with the problem of office saboteurs, you must do something. The worst thing you can do is to not take action. Remember that not doing anything will make the situation worse.

You have to confront the situation and talk to the person involved. If your problem is with your subordinate, call him into your office and in a clear and direct manner, tell him the situation. Then, come up with a resolution together.

If your problem is your boss, talk to him and express confusion. This way, you do not sound accusatory. In fact, you will end up sounding concerned.

If your peers are your saboteurs, it is best to express confusion as well. Tell them about the situation but explain that you are giving them the benefit of the doubt.

**Males at Work**
Unfortunately, discrimination and sexual harassment still exists in the workplace. There still exists a lot of chauvinism in the world today, although they are often disguised. Sometimes, men even express chauvinism unintentionally. Often, they are merely ignorant.

When faced with this matter, it is still best to confront the issue. Talk to the person involved but do not blow your gasket. Here are some tips you can use:

1. *Inject a little humor into the situation.* Make a humorous comment to the person involved but also show him that you mean business.
2. *Be firm and not feisty.* If you can’t find humor in the situation, tell the person off using a firm and yet neutral comment.
3. *Include men.* Invite more men into formerly all-female activities. Share ideas with them. More often than not, they will reciprocate.

**Strategy # 8: A Gutsy Girl Trusts Her Instincts**

Sometimes, you just have to trust your gut. Trusting your instincts uses your intuition rather than your brain. You must learn that trusting your gut is one of the best things you can do to further your career.
Relying too much on statistics and rules will hinder you from being bold and creative. As a woman, you might be pleasantly surprised to find out that research shows that your gut feelings are more accurate than the intuition of men.

Five Ways to Know That Something Is Up

1. **Look at something you dismissed a second time.** When you hear yourself telling yourself that something will never happen, go back to that remark and think again. Consider the worst implications.
2. **Play connect the dots.** Look for patterns between small incidents.
3. **Pause.** Talking to people and asking them questions is a great way to find things out. Remember, though, that you have to be patient. Learn to pause after their initial remarks. Listen to what they will say next.
4. **Watch what other people say.** Learn to analyze other people’s body language. Crossed arms or a yawn can mean a lot.
5. **Develop validators for your gut reactions.** One of the best validators is networking.

Strategy # 9: A Gutsy Girl Takes Smart Risks

Only people who take risks achieve remarkable success. Unfortunately, most people are hesitant about taking bold moves. The secret to being able to take smart risks without fear is through practice. Once you have experienced the great feeling of taking risks, you will start doing it more often.

This does not mean, however, that you should keep taking risks. There are wrong risks to take. Before risking anything, do the following:

1. **Give risk a different name.** Anxiety might make you feel out of control. The best way to get around this is to give risk a different name. Instead of calling it terrifying, call it challenging. Instead of saying that a situation might expose your ignorance, say that the situation will provide great opportunities to learn.
2. **Know exactly what you have to lose.** Before you risk anything, calculate what is at stake.
3. **Take smart risks.** Do not take stupid risks. Make sure that all your bases are covered and that you have told the right people about the step you are going to take.
4. **Have a safety net.** A risk is something that could fail. Make sure you have a safety net that you can fall back on. Allies are probably the best safety net to have.