

Women in Leadership

Mini-Programme

dcm THE
LEARNING
EXPERTS

 **Member
Events**





Speaking with Strength – Assertive Communication





About Me

Rachel Owens

DCM Trainer

Adult Educator

Industry Knowledge

Public Sector

Life Science

Hospitality

Roles & Experience

PA & Administration

Marketing

Leadership/Management





Female Drivers – Women in Leadership



April 18th

Speaking with Strength



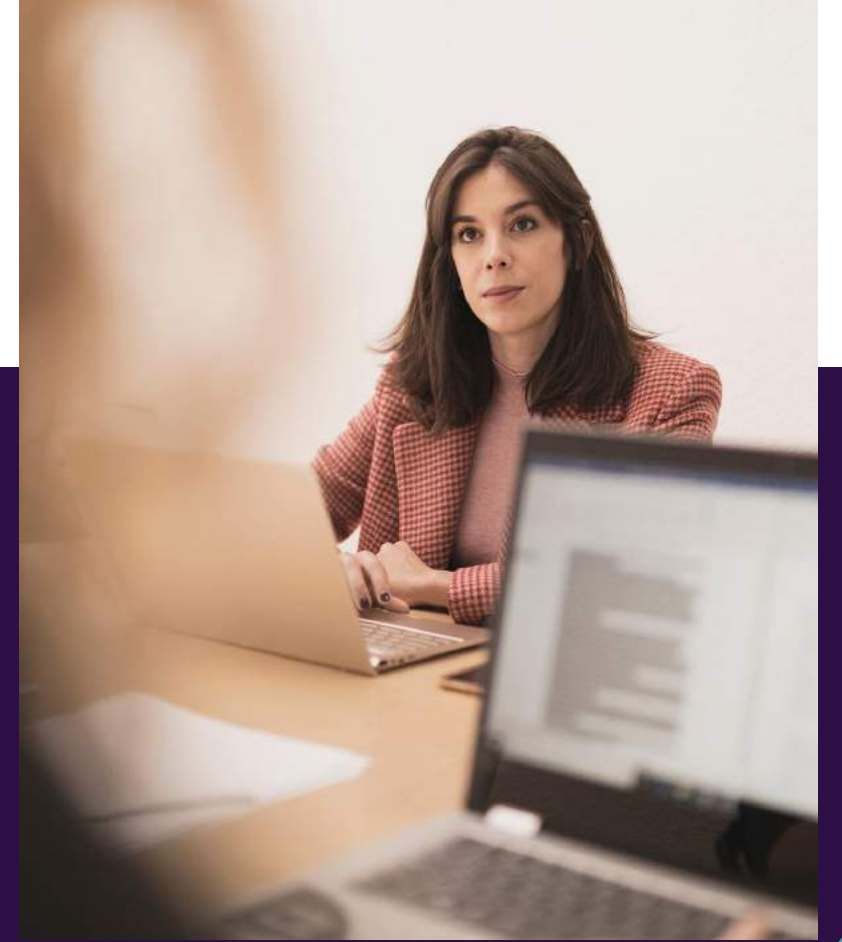
May 20th

Finding Your Tribe



June 24th

Self Advocacy





Our Journey

- **Gender Stereotypes & Assertive Behaviour**
- **What does it REALLY mean to be Assertive?**
- **Adopting an Authentic Approach to Assertive Communication**
- **Trailblazers & Success Stories**





Gender Stereotypes - Challenges for Assertive Women



Research indicates that although there are differences in female and male leadership styles, those differences are small—there is significant overlap in how females and males lead.

In contrast, however, there is a large disconnect between leadership stereotypes and gender stereotypes. This mismatch creates unique challenges for women aspiring to leadership roles

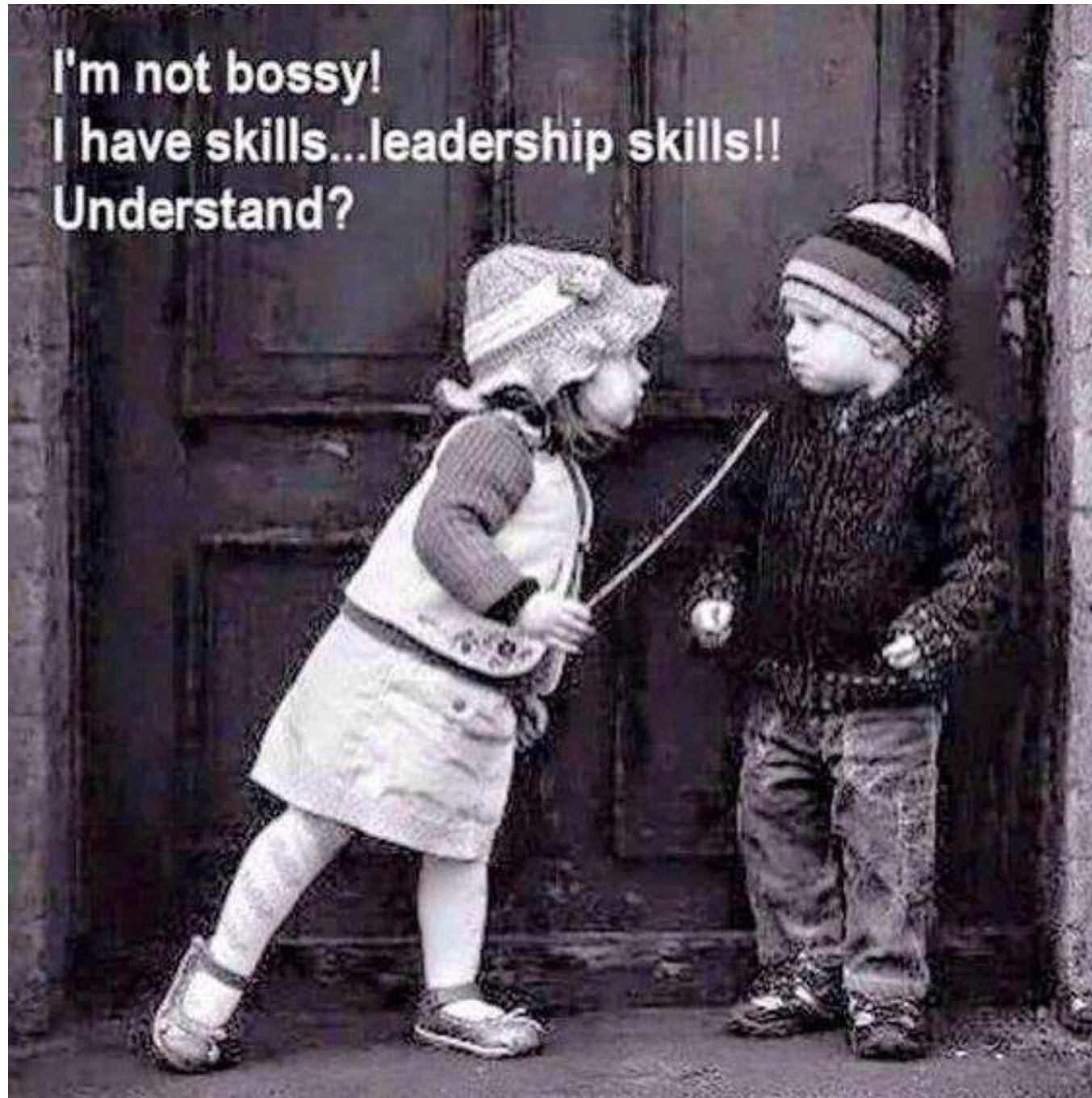
Gender & Leader Stereotypes

The traits and characteristics that we typically associate with effective leadership endorse stereotypically masculine attributes like assertiveness, ambition, and competition and simultaneously discount stereotypically feminine traits like collaboration and homemaker.

Because masculine stereotypes align with leadership stereotypes, a man is more likely than a woman to be assessed as a potential and competent leader.



The Double Bind – The Assertiveness Penalty



Gender stereotypes typically prescribe for men to be dominant, competitive and assertive, and for women to be submissive, warm and nurturing.

Studies show that when women exhibit stereotypically masculine traits commonly associated with leadership like assertiveness, they are less-liked when compared with men exhibiting the same traits.

To emerge as a leader, women must adopt traits consistent with leadership stereotypes, i.e. act more stereotypically masculine. But, when women do act more assertively, they breach feminine stereotypes and suffer a likeability penalty that, in turn, limits their professional success.



Managers are significantly more likely to critique female employees for coming on too strong whereas the same traits are perceived positively in men.

- ❑ Women receive “negative personality criticism”, such as being called bossy or told to “watch their tone” Men, on the other hand, rarely do.
- ❑ Women receive 2.5 times the amount of feedback men do about aggressive communication styles, with phrases such as “your speaking style is off-putting.”
- ❑ Women are described as being “abrasive” far more often than men



Internal



External



Take time to reflect . . .

What is holding you back from
being assertive

Is it Internal or External ?

Save these thoughts for later ,
see if you can change and
influence

A scenic landscape featuring a winding asphalt road that curves through a valley. The road is flanked by a metal guardrail on the right and a steep, vegetated hillside on the left. In the distance, rolling hills are visible under a sky transitioning from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange and yellow near the horizon, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall atmosphere is serene and hopeful.

**EVERY CHALLENGE,
EVERY ADVERSITY,
CONTAINS WITHIN
IT THE SEEDS
OF OPPORTUNITY
AND GROWTH.**



- ❖ Why the world of work changes what is required of a leader
- ❖ What does it REALLY mean to be assertive
- ❖ Assertive Communication Skills



What does Leadership look like in today's world and what role does assertive behaviour play?





We have come along way ...





Today's Leader

**Innovative &
Creative**

Soft Skills

**People
Orientated**

Collaborative

**Approachable
& Open**



What does Assertive REALLY mean?



Aggressive

**Lack of
respect for
others**

Assertive

**Respecting
ourselves &
others**

Passive

**Lack of self
respect**



For women in the workplace, being skilled in productive and assertive communication is especially critical to getting heard, gaining advantage and achieving goals.

This begins with awareness and use of the three integral and interconnected components of communication—or the three V's





The Three V's

- ❖ **Verbal**—what you say; your words, phrasing and sentence structure.
- ❖ **Vocal**—how you say it; your tone of voice, volume, pitch and pace.
- ❖ **Visual**—your body language, facial expressions, gestures and overall appearance





What is Assertive Communication?



Emphasis on clarity
& honesty



Expressing oneself
effectively



Standing up for ones
rights whilst
respecting others





A Balanced Approach to Communication



Assertive Communication



- ❑ Active Listening
- ❑ Effective Questioning
- ❑ Clear , concise and efficient use of language
- ❑ Self Awareness & Self Regulation
- ❑ Empathy
- ❑ Patience
- ❑ Integrity
- ❑ Open to Constructive Feedback



BLUE
BLUE

Bottom Line Up Front





Constructive Feedback

In order to be a good and assertive leader you have to hone the skills of both giving and receiving constructive feedback.

Feedback should be a two way street.

Always view feedback as an opportunity to develop and grow whether it be an individual or yourself.



Dame Amanda Blanc

- ❑ Chief Executive Officer of Aviva , she started her career with one of Aviva ancestor companies (Commercial Union) Following her success in senior executive roles across the insurance industry
- ❑ When it comes to assertive and strong communication Amanda endorses and advocates:
- ❑ Clear concise communication
- ❑ Clarity – “What gets measured gets done”
- ❑ Be focused and clear on what ‘You’ want and how that feeds into what the organisation and what others want.



Dame Amanda Blanc

- ❑ Always go back to your values and beliefs – they will aid you in communicating effectively and delivering your message and getting people on side
- ❑ It's all about teams and collaboration
- ❑ Use emotional intelligence to guide you, to empathise and to make effective and assertive decisions and solve problems
- ❑ If behaviours are not right – you have to deal with it
- ❑ Giving and receiving feedback is fundamental to being a good leader – listen first , guide using examples others will understand to get them on side or view something from another perspective.
- ❑ Treat every conversation with 'What am I going to Learn'. Don't assume you are always right.



Behaving assertively can help you:



- ❑ Gain self-confidence and self-esteem
- ❑ Gain a sense of empowerment
- ❑ Understand and recognise your feelings
- ❑ Earn respect from others
- ❑ Improve communication
- ❑ Create win-win situation
- ❑ Improve your decision-making skills
- ❑ Create honest relationships
- ❑ Gain more job satisfaction



Your Personal Action Plan



A skill you already possess that aids assertive communication



Something you learnt or were reminded about during the webinar that will help you be more assertive



Something you are going to work on to become a more assertive communicator

Resources

Gender, and Expression of Emotion in the Workplace". Psychological Science
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2008.02079.x>

Why Men Call Forceful Women 'Hysterical' And Try To Silence Them
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kathycaprino/2017/06/15/gender-bias-at-work-why-men-call-forceful-women-hysterical-and-try-to-silence-them/#3a690ea3ea2a>

Cooper, M. (2013). For Women Leaders, Likability and Success Hardly Go Hand-in-Hand. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from
<https://hbr.org/2013/04/for-women-leaders-likability-a>

Why being assertive is an essential skill for women in the workplace
<https://irishtechnews.ie/assertive-is-an-essential-skill-woman-in-business>

The Science of Women in Leadership – TedTalks
<https://youtu.be/FVzHBWoIGew>

Assertive Advice from Women in Leadership
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/assertiveness-advice-from-1-remarkable-women-philips-ivna-curi-mba/>

Amanda Blanc – “They said I wasn’t the man for the job”
<https://youtu.be/rwcFOBKM1cY>



Thank You

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