

Women Leaders: What the Research Tell Us

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Women in the Workplace

- ◆ 50.5% of managerial and professional positions
- ◆ 15.7% of Fortune 500 corporate officers
- ◆ 7.9% of Fortune 500 highest titles
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earning, January, 2003
 - Catalyst Census of Women Board Directors, 2003

Women in the Workplace

- ◆ Focus is on leadership style
- ◆ Relatively stable patterns of behaviors displayed by leaders
- ◆ Popular press, drawing on interviews and informal surveys states that women are:
 - Less hierarchical, more cooperative and collaborative
 - more team oriented

Traditional Categories of Leadership Styles

- ◆ Task Oriented = concern with task accomplishment
 - Plan, organize, coordinate, set performance standards
- ◆ Person Oriented = concern with maintaining positive interpersonal relationship
 - Supportive, show trust and confidence, friendly, develop subordinate potential
 - Participative in decision making
- ◆ Effective leaders are task oriented AND person oriented

Traditional Categories of Leadership Styles

◆ Task Oriented

- I set clear goals so employees know what needs to be done
- I have a clearly written agenda of things to accomplish during department meetings
- I spend most of my time directing employees to make sure they meet department goals

Traditional Categories of Leadership Styles

◆ Person Oriented

- I seek the advice of my employees when making decisions
- I work to develop trust between my employees and myself and among department members
- I encourage my employees to solve problems related to their work without having to get my permission to do so

Traditional Categories of Leadership Styles

◆ Task Oriented

- No differences between male and female leaders

◆ Person Oriented

- Small differences between men and women, with women being more person oriented

Traditional Categories of Leadership Styles

- ◆ When leadership behavior is experimentally equated, people react more negatively to women as opposed to men who use a directive task oriented style
 - Stronger effect when organization is male dominated (engineering??)
 - When evaluators are primarily men

- ◆ NET RESULT: women as compared to men less frequently adopt a leadership style that produces unfavorable evaluations of their behavior
- ◆ WHY?
 - Joint effects of leader roles and gender roles

Roles in Organizations

- ◆ Provide norms for behavior
- ◆ Also provide an internal standard
- ◆ Gender role
 - Women = kind, friendly, unselfish
 - Men = assertive, independent, competitive

Roles in Organizations

- ◆ Leadership role
 - Intelligent
 - Decisive
 - Dedicated
 - Determined
 - Confident
 - Good communicator
 - Charismatic
 - Caring
 - Motivator

Roles in Organizations

- ◆ Incompatibility between female gender role and leader roles
- ◆ Peoples' beliefs about leadership are more similar to beliefs about men, than beliefs about women
- ◆ Two implications
 - Less favorable evaluation of women's potential for leadership
 - Less favorable evaluation of women's actual leadership behavior

Contemporary Leadership Styles

- ◆ Transformational Leadership Style
 1. Charisma
 2. Communicate values, purpose and importance of organization mission
 3. Show optimism and excitement about goals and future
 4. Look for new perspectives to solve problems and complete tasks
 5. Focus on development and mentoring of subordinates
- ◆ women score higher overall and on all subscales except # 1

Contemporary Styles

- ◆ Transactional Leadership Style
 1. Provide rewards for subordinate performance
 2. Focus on subordinate mistakes and failures
 3. Wait until problems are severe before intervening
 - ◆ women score higher on #1, and men score higher on # 2 & 3

Contemporary Styles

- ◆ Laissez-Faire

1. Exhibit frequent absence and lack of involvement at critical times

- ◆ men score higher

Contemporary Styles

- ◆ Outcomes of Leadership
 1. Inspire extra effort
 2. Subordinate satisfaction with leadership
 3. Overall effectiveness
 - ◆ women score higher on all three
- ◆ Attests to the ability of women to perform very well in leadership roles in contemporary organizations

Implications of Contemporary Styles

- ◆ Being transformational and participative fit peoples' stereotypes about women. MAY help women
 - help overcome resistance
 - win acceptance
 - gain self-confidence
 - be more effective

Implications of Contemporary Styles

- ◆ Caveat = these behaviors HAVE to fit with the organization culture

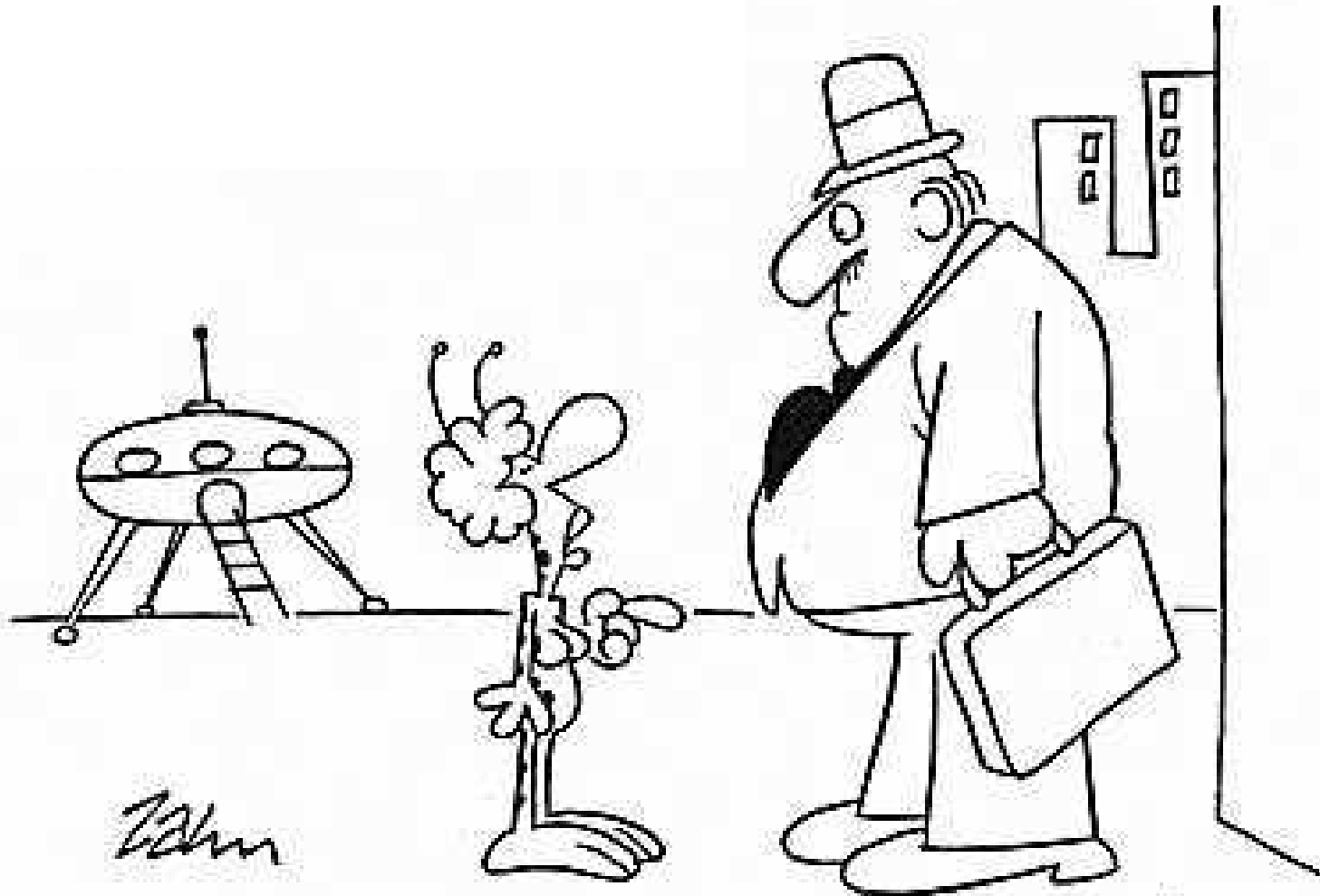
“ these behaviors may be especially devalued in leadership roles that are male dominated, strongly hierarchical and ordinarily enacted in a command-and-control style.” (Eagly, 2003)

What to Do?

- ◆ Change the organizational culture
 - NSF ADVANCE program
 - Role of top leaders
- ◆ Change the organization structure
 - Move from the vertical hierarchical structure to more horizontal structure focused on workflow or core process

What to Do?

- ◆ Provide more career building opportunities for women
 - Mentoring, shadowing programs
 - Profit and loss responsibilities
 - Visible and challenging assignments



" YOU'RE KIDDING! YOUR LEADER IS A MAN!

References

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