

Women in Management: Beyond the Year 2000

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Abstract

Women managers and management style are explored looking ahead to the year 2000. Leadership styles of men and women are contrasted. Certain traits are attributed to men and certain ones to women. This research explores whether or not women's leadership style is more effective in supervising a diverse work group. This group of workers will require a manager who possesses certain skills and abilities to deal with the differences they have as well as the challenges they will bring to the work place. This research also looks at the effects on the family lives of women who have established themselves firmly in careers of leadership. This paper will examine how the female manager is often faced with conflicting demands of career versus family responsibilities. Achieving a degree of balance to these demands is often the challenge they must face.

Introduction

We have already witnessed women moving upward in corporations, the business world and law enforcement. As their numbers have increased in the work force, so has their presence in the upper ranks of management. With the turn of the century upon us, what role will women play beyond the year 2000 in the management arena? As the role of women has changed in the past decade in society, so have changes been made in the work place. Women are not only represented in the work force, but they are also key players in the decision making process. As women continue to be represented in greater numbers, they are developing their own unique management style in the work place. This paper examines and contrasts the management style of women versus that of men. It also examines how their particular style of management will impact an increasingly diverse work force that will be present in the year 2000. Finally this paper explores what effects their increased representation in the management ranks will have on their families.

Aburdene and Naisbitt (1985) suggest that women are bringing a style of management into the work force that is more caring and intuitive than that of their male counterparts. Men are thought to have a traditional approach to management. The traditional approach has characteristics of control, rigidity and chain of command. Women, on the other hand, are bringing a style of management to the work place with characteristics of openness, inclusion and empowerment for employees (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1985).

Most organizations and businesses today are initiating a change in management and leadership style in their organizations. The new approach is a participatory style of management. This management style is being put into place in many companies. (Eisler, 1995). Most of these companies are male dominated and men occupy the upper positions in management. The women in companies who have changed to this style of management are believed to have an advantage over the men. Helgesen (1990) suggests that this style of management is more natural for women. It is also suggested that women who have used the traditional approach to management were emulating or role modeling men.

By the year 2000 a dramatic change in the makeup of the work force will occur. The Florida Department of Corrections prepared a report (1990) which indicates that

females, older workers, ethnic and racial minorities will be represented as the majority in the work place by the year 2000. Males, particularly white males, will be in the minority. Women who made it into the ranks of management usually had to adjust to supervising staff which consisted primarily of men. For some women this was a tremendous obstacle to overcome. It usually caused a great deal of stress and discomfort for the female manager. With men being in the minority by the year 2000, what effects will this have on relationships and management style of women? The normal obstacles may not be there to contend with. Will women have an advantage due to their unique management style in supervising the new work force? Helgesen (1990) maintains that they will. Women's style of management is said to be more inclusive. It embraces everyone no matter the gender, age or racial/ethnic make up. Helgesen (1990) stated that women managers are seen "as being in the middle of things. Not at the top, but in the center; not reaching down, but reaching out" (p.4546). With the inherent change in the make-up of the work force, this style of leadership may give women more of an advantage in being able to communicate effectively with the diverse work force.

Because women are entering the work force in greater numbers and going up the corporate ladder, this trend is bound to have an effect on the family structure. Many career women delay having children. Aburdene and Naisbitt (1985) maintain that for college educated women, the number of children, if any, are less than those who are not college graduates. Women who marry and have children deal with issues of child care and whether or not to give up their careers for the sake of raising children. In society we see and hear the tragic situations, involving our young people. Juvenile delinquency has become such an escalating problem in the state of Florida that a whole new agency was created last year to deal with it. Governor Lawton Chiles and the Florida legislature created the Department of Juvenile Justice to deal with the increasing rate of juvenile crime in the state. Many educators believe that the number of latch key children has increased over the years.

Aburdene and Naisbitt (1985) commented that "working women are creating the phenomenon of two career couples - the numbers of which doubled during the 1970s. Once a sociological oddity, two career couples are now the norm. There are now some 34 million dual earner couples" (p.209). However, the female manager, unlike her male counterpart realizes, that work isn't everything and that the family structure is important. Aburdene and Naisbitt (1992) stated the following:

People are not about to give up high-powered careers anytime soon, but a new word is entering business talk - balance. Most working women say they do not have enough time to be a CEO, mother, lover, exercise buff and gourmet chef plus a few hours a week at the local recycling center. Nevertheless, many do all that and more. (p.97-98)

As we enter the 21st century, we are witnessing a number of technological and innovative changes to our approach to management. Women in management appear to be ahead of their male counterparts as these changes are evolving. Businesses and organizations are realizing that the old traditional top-down, chain of command approach to managing people is not good for their business or organization. A more caring and nurturing approach has proven to be more effective and good business sense. The female manager has found this style to be more natural and not a difficult

adjustment to make. For some women, it has always been the preferred management style.

In the next century we will find the female manager with a distinct advantage in dealing with the diverse work force. Because of their approach to management, to be more caring and nurturing to people, it is more conducive to dealing with all kinds of people regardless of race, age or ethnic background. This research project examines the management style of women and contrasts it to the style of men. This research project also examines the effectiveness of women's leadership style in supervising diverse work groups. Finally it examines the effect of the demands of leadership on the female manager's family life. Female supervisors and administrators with the Florida department of Corrections were examined in this project. They are representative of the many female managers, who in the next century, will continue to demonstrate that you can in fact have it all. Others will sit back and marvel as they juggle careers, family responsibilities and outside interests.

Method

Participants

Forty seven female Supervisors/Administrators with the Department of Corrections were mailed a survey to complete (See Appendix A). The 47 women are presenters for the Department of Corrections' "Women Facing The Future" training program. Of the 47 surveys mailed out, 16 were returned for a 34% return rate. The supervisors receiving the survey hold various management positions within the Department of Corrections. Three hold the position of Assistant Superintendent II and Correctional Probation Supervisor. There were 2 respondents for the positions of Correctional Probation Senior Supervisor, Correctional Officer Major, and Correctional Probation Officer. There was 1 respondent for Assistant Superintendent, Research and Training Specialist, Correctional Programs Administrator, and Director, Legislative Planning, Information, and Communication. Of the respondents, 8 were Black females, 6 White females, and 2 Hispanic females. Their years of experience in a management position ranged from a high of 17 years to a low of 1 year. Collectively these women have an average of over 6.5 years of management experience.

The strength of the data and the sources is that these women have been employed with the Department of Corrections for several years. They have worked for years in a male dominated institution which traditionally was hierarchically structured along the chain of command leadership style. In the past several years the Department of Corrections has just begun to change its management structure and participants. There are more women represented at nearly all levels of management, therefore these respondents were considered to be a reliable and viable data source. The weakness in the data may be in the relatively low return rate of 34% for the survey.

Results

Management Style - Women vs. Men

Eleven of the female supervisors responding to the survey indicated that when they were originally hired with the Department of Corrections their supervisor was a man. They also indicated that these men used the chain of command style of management. These male supervisors were in some instances their only role model for

how to manage and perform supervisory duties. Their style of management was often expected to be used by these women if and when they were promoted into the ranks of management. Ten of the respondents completing the survey indicated that when they were originally promoted to their first management position, their management style was a participatory style of management. This ties into the premise that when these women were given the opportunity to become supervisors they chose a style of management which was more natural for them. Nine of the respondents also indicated that they had been promoted to a different level of management since their first promotion in a supervisory capacity. When asked if their management style had changed since their original appointment, 10 indicated that there had not been a change in their style of management. This could mean that they were comfortable with their preferred style and there was no need for change. For the four who indicated that there had been a change in their management style, they indicated that they still used a participatory style of management however, that it was more objective and more team oriented. They also stressed that it was more quality oriented involving all employees in the decision making process.

Managing A Diverse Work force

When asked to describe their strengths in dealing with the following groups of individuals: older workers, women and racial/ethnic groups different from them, the respondents to the survey indicated the following.

- Older workers. (Over 60) In supervising older workers listening and verbally communicating were listed most often as a strength. The respondents also indicated that recognizing their experience, maturity and changes that have taken place due to growth and diversity was also a plus. They also responded that just acknowledging the age difference and using it as a positive attribute with younger staff was an asset for them.
- Women. Sharing of experiences, mentoring, training, teaching and serving as a role model were listed most often as strengths in supervising women. They also listed that it was easier to communicate and identify problems with women employees and that it was easier to coach and counsel them.
- Racial/ethnic groups different from you. Here again, communication, teaching and training were listed most often as strengths. The ability to encourage, interaction and sharing of experiences was also listed. Some indicated that allowing for differences, and requiring mutual respect, were assets. Finally, being open to being educated by different racial/ethnic groups and having a genuine desire to understand their ways, customs and beliefs were listed as positive attributes.

What is significant about all the strengths listed above is that the focus is on strengthening others through nurturing and empowerment.

When asked to describe their weaknesses in dealing with the following groups of individuals, older workers, women and racial/ethnic groups different from you, the respondents listed the following.

- Older workers. (Over 60) Limited empathy, lack of patience in allowing time to break through narrow mindedness and reluctance to try new ways of doing things were listed. The impatience stemmed from having to continually say the same thing over

and over to the same person or group of people after being told that they understood. Issues dealing with advanced technology (computers) and dealing with rapid change was another concern. Older worker's attitudes in regards to women's roles in the past were also listed as a weakness in dealing with them when the older worker had preconceived ideas about what type of authority a "woman" should have.

- Women. The women who responded indicated that the only time they have problems in dealing with other women is when they "play dumb, act stupid or pull one of those poor little me acts." Patience in dealing with envy and jealousy was also listed along with dealing with women who tend to be so emotional that it stifled productive counseling sessions. These women commented that they felt female leaders today have to be a good example for other women. "I have a hard time accepting a female staff who cannot act professional or look professional" one of them remarked. They also indicated that they tended to push women to perform at a higher level of competency.
- Racial/ethnic groups different from you. Patience in dealing with people who feel they should be treated differently strictly because of their race or ethnic origin and dealing with language barriers were the only items of weakness listed for this group of people.

Women in Management: The Effects On Their Families

The female supervisors who participated in the survey, when asked to describe the negative effects (if any) on their family, indicated the following. Depriving their families of undivided attention, spending quality time with children and spouse, not accepting some career opportunities because of the amount of time it would require out of town away from home, conflicts with household responsibilities, latch key children, looking after bed-ridden parents, limiting the number or choosing not to have children, putting off having children until later and strain on relationship with spouse when they earn a higher income were all listed as negative effects. This was one of the areas in the survey where you could actually feel some of the pain these women felt from having achieved a degree of success in their careers. Some of the notable comments were, "During my 23 years with the Department I have experienced a divorce, raised two children and now I am looking after my bed-ridden mother." "My child was a latch-key kid, but I feel I was able to compensate with God's help." "It is hard to be a professional woman in today's world and also maintain a household." "I feel guilty when I have to leave the kids and my household responsibilities are neglected." These respondents voiced a common concern of many female managers who must balance their careers with family responsibilities.

Discussion

Management Style - Women vs. Men

Survey results indicate that when most of these women were promoted to a supervisory level position, their preferred style of management was not chain of command, but participatory. These women indicated that they involved people in the decision making process. The that comes to mind to describe their management technique is "empowerment." For example, when working with diverse members of the workforce, they listed as a strength empowering their employees to be confident and to

be able to act on their own authority. Mistakes were looked upon as opportunities to teach and enhance learning and not as an opportunity to humiliate and embarrass someone.

As women have reached the ranks of management in the work place, we have witnessed that their style of management is vastly different than that of their male counterparts. Many businesses and corporations are changing the leadership practices in their organizations. What we are noticing is that the new preferred style of management in most organizations, is a management style that most women were already using in one form or another. It appears that the paradigm shift in most organizations from the old hierarchy chain of command to a more inclusive style of management was a leadership style that most women were already comfortable with.

Most of the respondents to the survey indicated that when they were originally hired with the Department of Corrections, their supervisor was a man. For them, these male supervisors served as their first role model of a manager. These men served as their first example of how to be and do a supervisor's job. During the time these women were being hired by the Department of Corrections, like many books written on how to be a successful manager, they were encouraged to emulate the behavior of male supervisors. They were being groomed from the perspective that in order to be a successful manager they had to be tough, show little or no emotion and to crack the whip hard when dealing with employees. Most of the respondents also indicated that their male supervisors used the traditional chain of command style of management. Employees were expected to do as they were told and not challenge instructions. Employees were not included in the decision making process but were expected to carry out the decisions made by the bosses. These men supervised from the top down creating a pyramid type of management structure. Aburdene and Naisbitt (1992) stated that men see job performance as a series of transactions - rewards for services rendered or punishment for inadequate performance.

Businesses and organizations are realizing that when we shifted from an industrial society to an information society and women entered the work force in increasingly large numbers, management styles began to change over the years. Some women were advised to imitate the male style of management, however, these women realized that this style did not work for them. They began to supervise employees in a manner that was more supportive and nurturing. This approach began to be labeled as "women's ways of leadership." What was it about this style of management that was different from the men? The qualities listed were openness, trust, training, compassion and understanding. Managers both male and female noticed that if you gave employees support and encouragement they worked hard and really blossomed. Helgesen (1990) stated that one of the women in her study commented that "in her position as manager, she liked to think of herself as a gardener-watering the flowers, helping them flourish and grow" (p.xiv). Helgesen (1990) stated, "People do not work well when they do not feel valued, trusted, and respected" (p.xv). Aburdene and Naisbitt (1992) compiled the attached chart (Chart A) which contrasts the traditional male leadership qualities and the qualities associated with women's ways of leadership. They later put all the qualities together to determine if a particular pattern emerged attributing certain qualities under one main trait. The attached chart (Chart B) shows what they believed to be the six central traits of women leaders.

Managing A Diverse Work Force

In dealing with diverse members of the work force, such as older workers, women and racial/ethnic groups different from them, these women indicated that they are more tolerant and patient with these various groups than their male counterparts. They felt that these members of the diverse work force required support, encouragement, guidance and understanding from their supervisor. These types of leadership qualities are what will be needed in managing a diverse work force that will be seen in even greater numbers by the year 2000. Workers in the above categories tend to feel alienated and not connected to those different from them. However, it is the female leaders who often possess the qualities and styles of leadership which address this type of alienation. They are often times more able to bridge the gap of differences between the diverse members of the work force than their male counterparts. Managers today both male and female are realizing that today's employees and those in the twenty first century are less likely to put up with a work place that is more concerned with productivity and efficiency than their human needs.

Women in Management: The Effects On Their Families

I often make reference to a line in Helen Reddy's "I am Woman" song in which she sings, "Yes I am wise but its wisdom born of pain, yes I've paid the price but look how much I've gained, if I have to I can do anything, I am strong, I am invincible, I am woman." For if you are a female leader, unlike most men, you are expected to and normally you must juggle a number of family responsibilities in addition to your normal "eight to five". You do not get to the top without paying a price. Often times it is family responsibilities where corners are cut.

Women today who work lead completely different lives than their mothers did thirty to forty years ago. Mothers from years past either did not work at all or they worked briefly and then quit to have and raise their children. Years later once their children left home for college or work, they went back to work. Some, as you might

CHART A

Traditional Management vs. Leadership/Women's Leadership

Objective: control	Objective: change
Relies on order-giving	Facilitating/teaching
Rank	Connections
Knows all the answers	Asks the right questions
Limits and defines	Empowers
Issues orders	Acts as a role model
Imposes discipline	Values creativity
Hierarchy	Networking/web
Demands "respect"	Wants people to "speak up, act up"
Performance review	Mutual contract for specific results
Automatic annual raises	Pay for performance
Military archetype	Teaching archetype
Keeps people on their toes	Nourishing environment for growth
Punishment	Reward
Reach up/down	Reach out
Here's what we are going to do!	How can I serve you/ bring out the best in you?
Bottom line	Vision
Closed:information = power	Openness
Drill sergeant	Master motivator
Command and control	Empowerment
Little time for people	Infinite time for people
Rigid	Flexible
At the top	In the center
Mechanistic	Wholistic
Impersonal/objective	Personal

CHART B

Characteristics of Women's Leadership

Empower

Management	Leadership
Punishment	Reward
Demands "respect"	Invites speaking out
Drill sergeant	Motivator
Limits and defines	Empowers
Imposes discipline	Values creativity
Here's what we are going to do!	How can I serve you?
Bottom line	Vision

Restructure

Control	Change
Rank	Connection
Hierarchy	Network
Rigid	Flexible
Automatic annual raises	Pay for performance
Performance review	Mutual contract for results
Mechanistic	Wholistic
Compartmental	Systemic

Teaching

Order-giving	Facilitating
Military archetype	Teaching archetype

Role Model

Keeping people on their toes	Nourishing environment for growth
Reach up/down	Reach out
Information control	Information availability

Questioner

Knows all the answers	Asks the right questions
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Women who are able to have their careers and experience a degree of success with raising their children and handling other household responsibilities are the ones who have been able to put everything in perspective. They leave work at 5:00 pm, do not work on weekends, and find time for personal leisure and relaxation. These female managers also encourage their employees to do the same. Auburdene and Naisbitt (1992) stated, "Women leaders are better at balancing than their male counterparts."

The first reason is obviously intense family responsibility, but it does not stop there. Women do not identify exclusively with their careers, as most men traditionally have" (p.99).

Organizations today are fostering a sense of balance by implementing policies that are flexible for working moms. Family leave, part time positions, shared positions, flexible working hours and day care facilities at work are all ways in which employers are making it easier for working moms to stay employed and achieve a sense of balance in their lives.

This research project has examined and contrasted the style of management of women leaders vs. that of men. In examining the leadership style of women, it is felt that most women use a style of leadership that has traits that come more naturally for women than for men, traits such as caring, intuitiveness, teaching and openness. These traits that most women tend to have naturally are traits that entering into the year 2000, businesses and corporations seem to prefer in the management of their organizations. These traits are more nourishing to employees and invite them to be more of a participant in the operational process of their work place.

This paper has also examined how this style of management will impact on the increasingly diverse work force that is expected beyond the year 2000. Workers will continue to enter the work force who are older, more women will be present and people with various ethnic and culturally diverse backgrounds will be present. These type of workers will require managers and supervisors who possess skills of teaching, nurturing and motivating employees to their full potential. It is the female manager who is felt to be the front runner as far as possessing these types of skills.

Lastly, this paper looked at the effects of women's increased representation in the management ranks on their family lives. Women who achieve success up the corporate ladder, often times realize that they are faced with conflicting demands of balancing their career success with the demands of family and household responsibilities. Many women feel that it is their ability to handle many crises at home dealing with children, elderly parents and spouses that gives them an advantage over men at work when there are similar crisis in the work place to contend with. Often times it is the same skills such as organization, teaching, guiding and handling disturbances that are needed at home and in the work place.

Given the outcome of the research data for this project, it is clear that women in management beyond the year 2000 will not only be prepared, but appear to have a distinct advantage over their male counterparts in supervising the changing work force. Given the issues examined in this paper, women not only appear to be different in their approach than men, they also appear to be more naturally equipped with a style of communication and nurturing skills that gives them an edge over the men in managing their employees.

Linda Mills has been with the Florida Department of Corrections since 1979 and is currently a Correctional Probation Senior Supervisor. She is a graduate of the Florida State University with a Bachelor of Science in Criminology. In addition to her duties supervising a large probation and Parole Intake Office in Orange County, Florida, she is a presenter for the DOC "Women Facing the Future" program. In 1994 she was recognized as the Correctional Probation Officer for the 18th Circuit. She received the same award for Probation and Parole Services in Region III. She is considered a leader in quality management in region III, utilizing progressive quality management tools in managing her staff and office.

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Appendix A

WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT - BEYOND THE YEAR 2000

PERSONAL DATA

Name: (Optional) _____

Position Title: _____

Work Location: _____

Race(check one): White Black Hispanic Asian
 Other (specify) _____

MANAGEMENT DATA

When you originally hired on with the Department of Corrections was your supervisor

Male or Female ?

What type of management style would you say that he/she used?

Participatory Chain of Command Other _____

How long have you been in a management position? _____

When you were originally promoted to your first management position what style of management would you say you used?

Participatory Chain of Command Other _____

Have you been promoted to a different level of management since your first promotion in a supervisory capacity? Yes No

Has your style of management changed since your original appointment? Yes No

If yes, Explain which style you now prefer. _____

Describe your strengths in dealing with the following groups of individuals: (communication, teaching/training, other areas etc.)

Older Workers (over 60) _____

Women _____

Racial/Ethnic Groups different from you _____

Describe your weaknesses in dealing with the following groups of individuals: (communication, teaching/training, other areas etc.)

Older Workers (over 60) _____

Women _____

Racial/Ethnic Groups different from you _____

Describe the negative effects (if any) on your family as a female manager? (e.g. competition with spouse/significant other, latch key children, household responsibilities, etc.) _____

Describe any advantages you see as a female manager/supervisor. _____

Describe any disadvantages you see as a female manager/supervisor. _____

Thank you very much for your assistance. Please return by **January 2, 1996**. Mail or Fax to (407) 245-0281.