



**Play Like a Man Win Like a Woman
What Men Know about Success that Women Need to Learn**

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Author: Gale Evans
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Author's bio and credits: As executive vice president of the CNN newsgroup, Gail Evans oversees the domestic network's program and talent development. Additionally she is responsible for CNN's talk show programs and the booking and research departments. Her programs have received numerous awards, including a Commendation Award from American Women in Radio and Television and the Breakthrough Award for Women, Men and Media, as well as several Emmy nominations.

Author's big thought: Women don't approach business the same way that men do. Business for men is a game, and there are rules to winning. This is a provocative book for women at all levels of the organization. Gail Evans reveals the secrets to the playbook of success that have helped hundreds of thousands of women around the world move up the corporate ladder. In this book Evans clues women in to the behaviors they may be exhibiting that stop forward movement. She provides pointers to help create a personal direction manual for success. To become a player in the world of business, you have to know the prevailing rules that men play by – not because you must follow them, but because you need to understand the playing field even if you eventually choose to make up your own game.

Supporting ideas:

When it comes to business, most women are at a disadvantage. As business culture developed men wrote the rules, as women weren't there to help. Although women have made great strides in the business environment, they are still pretty scarce at the top. The reality in today's business landscape: A woman is most likely to occupy a position of power when she starts or inherits her own business.

The Object of the game

For men the object is to win. For women, the object is to feel great about what you do, because when you feel fulfilled you win. For men, loving the game is synonymous for material success. Women don't compartmentalize the same way – they want to love their whole life.



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Four Ground Rules

These four rules underlie the strategies you need to understand in order to play:

- 1. You are who you say you are** – if you want to take charge of your own business life, begin by sending out a message about yourself – pick your goal and convince yourself that you can be successful. Don't complain or accept the role of victim.
- 2. One prize doesn't fit all.** Today women are learning to pay attention to their own needs, as well as everyone else's. Our jobs are not about husbands or children or parents – ideally they are about us. Men reconcile doing work they don't like by getting high profile rewards. Women are more likely to find work they like and stay there. When we choose to fulfill ourselves by what we do, instead of what we make, we're not playing the game the way the guys are playing it. If you opt not to play by men's rules, you have to be aware of the consequences.
- 3. Work isn't a sorority.** Women enter the job arena with a stronger urge to form and maintain relationships than men do. In this new age of business, where maintaining and servicing clients is so important, a woman's disposition to form strong relationships will work to her advantage. The hazard to having a relationship orientation is that women interpret basic information in personal terms.
- 4. You're always a mother, daughter, wife or mistress.** Daughter role – you can profit, but will never be considered an equal. It's important to maintain support so convince him that he made it possible for you to move on and ask for support. The Wife role is the hardest. You can be accepted as an equal but just one wrong phrase and you can be shut out. You create ways to make it work to your advantage unless it becomes oppressive, and then you get a divorce. Mother is a traditional role. No boss can fire his mother, but they have covert power only. As Mistress you get to be a risk taker but you walk the tightrope of sexual tension.

Preparing to Play

- **Learn the playing field.** Women think in terms of relationship circles whereas usually the hierarchy resembles a pyramid. Check out the team culture. Men can compartmentalize and separate work from their lives, but women care about the totality of the package. The company's culture is more important than the position itself. Your relationship with your workplace is one of the most important in your life. Make sure you check out the environment.
- **Get picked for the team.** Women don't grow up learning how to sell themselves the way men do, when women act in a way that confirms stereotypes, we get slammed. Find a way to exude self-assurance and physical presence. Every move matters, including your handshake. Make eye contact.





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- **Wear the right uniform.** Men wear a suit. A woman's wardrobe is a vital part of our presentation. The primary message your clothes convey: I am suited up and ready to play. A woman can also use her wardrobe as strategy. Dress for the team but do it with confidence, creativity, and within the range of your own personal comfort. Don't wear jewelry that is distracting.
- **Set the right goal.** Inflexible goals impede new possibilities. The mark of a good player is the ability to improvise: sticking to a specific plan leading to a specific goal limits your ability to do so. Combine good strategic plan with vision. Goals stop possibility; vision creates them. Having a vision also means taking advantage of an opportunity that can make it real.

How to keep score

To a guy, everything counts: the size of his office, the size of his staff, the size of his salary, the size of anything that can be measured. And they're always keeping score. Women don't think of things the same way and so are perceived by men in a lesser way.

Playing the Game: Fourteen Basic Rules for Success

In order to play the game a man's way:

- ✓ Understand the difference between how he plays the game and how you play it.
 - ✓ Recognize that for the time being, his way of playing is the accepted way.
 - ✓ Decide if you want to change the way you play.
1. **Make a request.** Asking is the only way to get what you want. Even when men suspect they're going to get an unfavorable answer, they still charge ahead and ask the question. They won't personalize the "no" and they'll keep trying. Women personalize situations, we hear no as a comment on our abilities, a sign that the relationship between our superiors and us have failed. The woman's definition of the word *no*: *Absolutely not, how could you even ask?*
 2. **Speak Out.** Men speak out a lot, and women are concerned about making a mistake or losing face. If you don't talk no one will know you are there.
 3. **Speak Up.** When a guy is playing a competitive game he will say what he must as forcefully as the situation warrants. Men will tell you that women are too timid, or too evasive, or too circuitous, or too unsure of themselves. Don't ask for permission to speak – when you do you're putting conditionality instead of strength around a statement. Conditional talk doesn't have much power. Learn to use your voice effectively. Take a course in presentation skills because with training most voices can become more powerful, more effective in business situations.
 4. **Toot your own horn.** Part of getting ahead is getting noticed. The woman who gets ahead is getting noticed. Taking credit for your accomplishments is part and parcel of job performance. Learn to be your own PR person in a way that's comfortable for you. Women are champions of small talk. Use your intuition. Learn to bluff as men do.
 5. **Don't expect to make friends.** Work is no more about friendship than a tough competitive sport is. Men are clear that business is business, and personal is personal. When they disagree about job-related matters, they don't see each other as unsupportive or uncaring or disloyal.

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6. **Accept uncertainty.** Unlike men who owe their success to a lot of factors, women assume we get ahead because we're better at our job than anyone else. As a result, over the years we've adopted a perfectionist model. We don't say we know something unless we are completely confident that we do. Men start the game confident and so have a much better chance of triumphing. Most difficult situations that arise at work have no precedent. Learn to make it up as you go.
7. **Take a risk.** From the get go, men are encouraged to take chances. Women are brought up to avoid situations that are potentially dangerous. But you can't get ahead without making risky moves. No one who's afraid to stretch the boundaries ever becomes a CEO. The things we think of as risks are often not risks at all.
8. **Be an imposter.** Women enter the workplace convinced that the only way to advance is to master our subject backwards and forward. We collect information, we accumulate anecdotes, and we do whatever it takes to get the job done. When we make a presentation, we make sure there is nothing missed – thoroughly over prepared and overeducated. The problem is that eventually you can't know everything. Everyone is an imposter. Business is no different from life. Men know that. They fake it whenever and wherever they have to. They rely on improvisation, self-confidence and the generalized ability to draw on past experience rather than book knowledge. In business, when you're doing something new, there is no safety net. That is how creative business ideas are advanced. Replace your imposter scenario with a self-confident one. Confidence is half the game.
9. **Think small.** Women tend to multi-task and get overwhelmed. Men take on one thing, concentrate on it, finish it, and then move on to the next thing. Men can work like this because the larger picture doesn't distract them. Men compartmentalize.
10. **Don't anguish.** Guys wear their game face. Even when the odds are against them, they still try to look as if they're going to win. Girls are brought up to be nice. In turn, they want everybody and everything to be nice too. We anguish openly. Women are more apt to show their vulnerability. Anguish in private.
11. **Follow the team leader.** Women have little practice following the team leader because of the orientation of our games. Our social circles, being democratic, make everyone equal.
 - ✓ Play with the big picture in mind.
 - ✓ You don't have to like your teammates, but you do have to stay loyal to them.
 - ✓ You don't have to think of yourself as an automaton. Each team member brings his or her unique talents to the playing field: you can improve yours by taking advantage of all the talents around you.
 - ✓ Don't second-guess the team.
 - ✓ Examine your internal conversation.
 - ✓ Let the team help you.
 - ✓ Don't torpedo the team





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12. **Don't assume responsibility without authority.** This is one of the prime issues women face in business. Offer your services only when you are certain that the task is a career opportunity. Be clear that you are making a trade-off.
13. **Sit at the table.** It's time to realize that if we want to be considered loyal and productive team players we have to sit at the table with the Big Guys. Too often women will come into a board room and sit in chairs peripheral to the table indicating that the table is for the boss and key people. Early on guys learn that they belong at the table, and they are comfortable fighting to be there. Being visible is half the battle. You can't play if you can't be seen. Make your presence felt and be fully present.
14. **Laugh.** Guys learned long ago that humor could cut the tension in any situation. Women's humor is much different from men's. It leans more toward the observational, the situational.

Six Things Men Can Do at Work That Women Can't

1. They can **cry**, you can't
2. They can **have sex**, you can't
3. They can **fidget**, you can't
4. They can **yell**. You can't
5. They can **have bad manners**, you can't
6. They can **be ugly**. You can't

He Hears She Hears: Ten Gender-Bender Vocabulary Words

1. **Yes** (exactly what it means)
2. **No** (not what it means)
3. **Hope** (the worst word in the game) Hope is one of the most un-empowering words.
4. **Guilt** (it means trouble)
5. **Sorry** (it's a sorry word).
6. **Aggressive** (it's not assertive) For women, aggressive implies hostility, meanness, ruthlessness. Men reserve the positive connotations for themselves and the negative ones to us.
7. **Fight** (It's not a pretty word) if you get into a fight at the office a woman thinks of it as all-out warfare, he only thinks of it as a skirmish.
8. **Game** (a.k.a. Fun) Guys have turned business into a game. It helps them devise new plays, invent new tactics, create new strategies to trounce their opponents. It allows them to have fun while they work.
9. **Glass ceiling** (their phrase, not ours). The glass ceiling, a transparent barrier at the top of each corporation through which women can't pass, isn't possible. It is purely a male invention (like the Forbidden Zone). It gives men an excuse for their failure to treat women as equals. It's true that many of us get stopped on the way up, but we can't just blame the ceiling. Many complex factors are involved:
 - a. We have a desire for life balance.
 - b. We don't tend to take the positions that lead to the top.
 - c. A lack of self-confidence.
10. **Future** (Then and Now). Women think of the future in terms of years, men in far shorter tie frames.





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The Final Two Rules:

- 1. Be a woman.** Use every one of your natural traits. Use your win-win attitude about life to make everyone you meet feel like a valued member of the team. Use your social skills. Most of all use your intuition it is one of the most powerful tools women have in the marketplace.
- 2. Be yourself.** Find a comfortable fit between who you are and the environment in which you work.

Reviewer's recommendation:

This book was enlightening for me. I never had to struggle up the corporate ladder as my history in business has always been as a founding entrepreneur. My discovery was relative to how little I behaved like a woman in business and how much I can share with aspiring entrepreneurs and corporate executives.

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Frumi Rachel Barr MBA, Ph.D. is an Executive Coach at Break Through Consulting. Frumi has had a distinguished twenty-eight year career history as an entrepreneur and financial executive. Her experience and expertise as both a CEO and a CFO provides responsive and collaborative support to executives in a wide array of companies and industries. It is this unique blend of practical, theoretical, strategic and communications skills that makes the work Frumi does unique among business advisors and coaches.

