



# ANITA BORG INSTITUTE

## FOR WOMEN AND TECHNOLOGY

### TechLeaders

#### Realizing Your Vision Workshop

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#### Gallery Walk Results

##### **Risk Taking**

- Context defines what "risk" is. Redefine your context and change the risk
- Fear is your friend, it will always be there. Use it to find what really matters to you.
- Do risk analysis. Quantify it.
- Share your risks that did not pan out as success. Help others!
- If you are not failing part of the time you are not trying hard enough

##### The Zen of Risk

- "intelligent risk - risk with pragmatism"
- "the times I have taken the biggest risk turned out to have the greatest reward"
- "taking risks brought out my best qualities"
- "playing it safe didn't workout"
- "I only go through the door if my passion takes me there"
- "I have power when I have passion"
- "find a boss (or situation or a company) that values what you have"
- "when I have energy (any type) fear is not debilitating"
- "I'm holding myself back" - once you understand how you are holding yourself back you will have boundless energy.
- "every breath you take has one more molecule of Caesar's last breath"

##### **Overcoming "Imposter Complex"**

- Group was self-aware, but still stuck
- Soft skills versus hard skills
- If it's easy for me it's not available
- Negative messages (self, external via filter)

##### The core of it all is BELIEFS

- Beliefs come from (generalized) experience
- "If you believe you know something, it will come to you"
- "you cannot fake anything you don't have for long"

##### What to do

- Take a radical inventory of your like and assume responsibility
- What belief would someone have if they saw your life evidence?
- Use imagination/visualization and change/correct beliefs (yours, boss, spouse, etc.)

- Identify an objective mentor - external individual - to help see who you actually are versus who you believe you are.
- Put yourself 5 years in the (successful) future, look back at yourself, what beliefs are holding you back? What are you holding on to? How can you adjust the inner picture?
- Remove the language of personal discounting

## **Organizational Savvy Breakout A group 1**

- The challenge of geography: remote offices/working remotely in global companies.
- \*What is a strategy when you are remote?
- get a mentor or a peer to talk to on a regular basis
- Be reciprocal, offer something back: you teach me, I teach you
- Figure out who the go to people are
- Use video conferences rather than audio.
- Meet people in person regularly if it makes a difference to further communication. Personal relationships are easier to maintain in person.
- Promote yourself and your remote team; don't assume other offices know of you and your skills.
- Mergers or Flux and Culture
- Organize change. Sometimes you can change the organization.
- Organizational flux is an opportunity. Give a concrete proposal if you have an opinion, help steer the momentum. "sure those waves".
- If you are not comfortable with the values, it may be time to leave (be willing to leave)
- Be flexible with people, you never know when your paths will cross again.
- Understand what the "bigger" picture is.

### *How do you win support from management?*

- Perseverance, build for the long haul, address concerns when you hear "no", don't complain, offer solutions.
- Have a point of view, put together a program, people will follow someone who is willing to lead.
- Build allies, gather support from others.
- Be flexible. Be willing to go outside your organizational boundary, have a complete plan.
- Adding value to your organization, presenting your idea with supporters (this makes it easier for your manager and makes your manager look good).
- Understand the big picture and what really matters to your business unit and company.

## **Organizational Savvy A Group 2**

1. Managing up and networking with people about you
2. Campaigning for your cause
3. techniques for gaining visibility
  - a. presentations
  - b. brown bag lunches
  - c. don't expect work to speak for itself
4. right reporting structure empowers you - negotiate for it
5. know the organizational roles

- a. who is decision maker
- b. stake holder
- c. who has recourses

#### **Organizational Savvy Cont.**

- 6. knowing when to run for management cover
- 7. importance of formal announcements of your role
- 8. Making changes – knowing if the organization is ready for it.

#### **Organizational Savvy: Session B group 1**

- Structure
- Relationships
- Respect (or lack of)
- Surprises (in organizational structure)
- Learning company culture

#### Questions for discussion:

1. How do you bring structure to an organization or team lacking structure?
2. How do you leverage relationships across business units?
3. How do you work with someone that is not respected throughout the company?
4. How do you deal with surprises in the company scheme? (ex: the director resigns)
5. How do you learn the culture of an organization when you are new to the company?

#### Group discussion:

- Network: establish support groups, ask questions, find a mentor, ask questions, rely on peer feedback
- Take initiative: address organizational shortcomings proactively and positively
- Ask questions: maximize your resources.
- Prioritize: establish yourself and gain credibility, know and focus on company, team and personal goals.
- Be wise: avoid complaining, provide factual and useful feedback instead.

#### Session B/group 2

#### Organizational Savvy

##### Recognizing and using power centers

- Discovery: - Incrementally by following contact
- Internal web searches on topics of interest
- initiative leader drives next steps

##### Using

- One on one lobbying, prepare your case
- Who else benefits? What's in it for them?
- Pick and choose your battles. Don't waste peoples time, propose alternatives

#### Organizational Flux

- Threat or Opportunity?
- You can chose to hunker down or seize the opportunity
- Find a point of stability at the top of the change
- Consciously figure out what you want the outcome to be (awareness)
- Don't be afraid to ask for what you want

#### Turning into cultural norms

- Recognizing your audiences style

- Talk in their terms (\$, customer satisfaction, feasibility)
- Reciprocity, win - win, provide value for them.

#### Visibility

- Grab extracurricular assignments that you are passionate about or that builds your resume or causes business impact.

#### **Managing time and Priorities:**

##### Challenges:

- work on strategic rather than tactical items
- optimize available hours (rather than extending hours) to work on the right things (family, career, self-care)

##### Thoughts:

- Think about your goal/vision. You will tend to ignore things that don't contribute toward realizing your vision
- Start your day thinking about your day's goals ( what do you want to get done today). Stay focused on this list and de-prioritize items not on the list.

##### Tools:

- Outsource! Delegations, housecleaning, gardening, cooling, sys admin
- Block out uninterrupted time – start work earlier, work outside your cube, block out time in outlook to set up a meeting for yourself.
- Actively prioritize your values and see how well a typical day/week aligns with your list. De-prioritize that don't align.
- Set up processes. Email guidelines (how often should you check your email, should you only respond to urgent emails, make the turn around 24 hours rather than right away, own your own availability.
- If you decide to take on additional work, decide which of your other tasks won't get done. Negotiate with your manager if necessary

#### **Influencing without authority**

##### Challenge: manager versus Leader

- Management and leadership are different skills
- Sometimes managers are leaders
- Those with authority may not be the ones with the influence

##### Challenge: A plan can be agreed upon by a group only to be killed by someone about or someone in a different group

- Must get buy-in beyond immediate group; sell about laterally
- Find out why plan was killed so you can address problems and concerns immediately and avoid same problem in future
- Sometimes it's just politics
- Sell to the risk-takers

##### Challenge: How do I work at next level if I'm not at the next level?

- Take on additional responsibilities
- Don't step on toes, understand how your actions impact those around you
- Get buy-in vertically and horizontally
- Find out the "no-win" jobs and avoid them

Challenge: How do I bring together the people that don't get along at work to work on a common goal?

- Speak with people individually to understand their needs and concerns
- Sell your ideas individually
- Build trust
- Show mutual benefit to working together
- If all else fails, work up the chain – seek help from those above you

Other tips:

- It's about influencing those with influence
- Stamp your name on your ideas/work
- Connect yourself with those that know the path and have the power – they can shield you and advocate for you
- Look at career paths – who has moved around? Who has moved up?
- It's all about building trust
- Understand the “big” picture, it will help you sell your idea in a better context
- The people with influence are not always the most visible
- It may not be a good idea to take your managers word – she/he may not really know
- Become the person people look to

### **Increasing visibility**

Key issues

- breaking into key decision meetings
- increasing scope in flattened organization – growing in a non-growing company
- visibility when not in charge of products
- promoting behind the scenes work
- visibility for work outside of company – working in small site for multi-site organization
- expectations for ill-defined job function
- finding time/opportunities to learn skills for next level – operational versus strategic
- Finding supporters/ promoters

Solutions

- Find supporters/promoters/mentors
- Leverage what you can offer for their advantage
- advertise great results via emails – ask managers to further promote
- Jump on opportunities outside of current job scope – don't ask for permission
- Knowing when to move on – prioritize what you want
- Lateral moves – synergy (enables)
- Publishing papers (internal;/external) – add name to slides/technical documents
- Websites
- Ask to be in meetings (summarize/volunteer to run as a spokes person)

### **Building a network of support**

Issues:

- Introverted
- Contact in new field
- How to maintain my current network
- Networking is a chore
- Not natural for me

Ideas:

- a company sponsored networking event
- National organizations (SWE, WITI & SYSTERS, compsci mailing list)
- Tap into alumni associations
- Find a mentor
- Organize lunch and parties (4 people lunch bunch)
- Keeps in touch with Nodes or Catalyst people
- Use calendar reminders to remind you to meet on a monthly basis
- Find existing groups of similar interest (WITI, TAI – women, MAITRI)

#### Techniques for expanding professional network

- Volunteer for conferences in your technical area
- Go to conferences
- Shadowing
- Organizing coffee discussion groups
- Volunteer for corporate tasks
- Find a mentor
- Ask for permission when asking for help.
- People are usually happy to help if they can.
- Executives are happy to have lunch with engineers (they learn too!)
- Volunteer (affinity groups)
- Connect to people on a personal level
- Initiate ways to meet people (host a VP hour)
- Pick the people you want to connect with
- You don't have to network with everyone
- Figure out where the power is in the company
- Keep a list
- Practice
- Commit

#### **Asking for what I want and getting it**

##### Issues

- How do I ask for a raise, promotion, new responsibility?
- Why is it an issue for others?
- How do I negotiate, what kind of leverage can I use?
- How can I move to a different type of roll?

##### Ideas/Solutions

- A good way to ask is "what do I need to do to get a promotion?"
- Tell your manager (and other senior people) where you want to be in five years
- Talk about your career goals during 1:1 time
- If your manager cannot give you what you want she may be able to give you something else (training, days off, etc>0)
- Leverage: another offer, you are the only one for the job
- The first one to ask for an experience/responsibility gets it
- There is more wiggle room than you think
- Sometimes you can change who you negotiate with
- Don't ask "can I?" ask "when can I?" Instead of asking if you can be a part of something, talk about which part you are going to work on.
- Ask for more than you want and leave the real ask for last
- Build a network in the area you want to go

### **Increasing Visibility and Promo-ability**

- Advertise which door you want
- Be aware of everything = even the little things you do
- Communicate honestly
- Know that timing is important
- Identify primary, secondary and tertiary influences
- Work at the next level before you expect the promotion
- Learn the rules/game!

Challenge: getting credit where credit is due

- insist on presenting your work
- Set up technical meeting at work where many people can present including yourself
- Desire to create a fair workplace is admirable but the world isn't fair
- Managers looking to move up may take credit for your work but you get to move up with them.

Challenge: "I" versus "we"

- When should I take credit and when should I share it?
- Understand company culture and what is valued
- Create a brown bag to present your ideas and give others a chance to share theirs

Challenge: How to get promoted

- Work with your manager to create a plan
- Make it known you want a promotion
- Ask manager how you can assist her/him in promoting yourself
- The higher up you climb the more vague/softer the job recognition you get
- You need to make yourself visible to your manager's manager
- You may need to make a lateral move before you can make a vertical move
- At higher levels you need to know finances
- Sell yourself!
- Know what your company values
- Become buddies with your VP's right hand woman/man