STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS: A TOOLKIT FOR WOMEN IN THE JEWISH NONPROFIT WORLD

By

Sarah Craemer

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Approved By:

Advisor, Sarah Benor

Director, SJNM, Richard Siegel

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Abstract

Many of us currently know of a woman who is working as Director, Senior Vice President, or Executive Director for a Jewish nonprofit organization. She is admired, respected, distinguished by her accomplishments, and recognized by many in her community. However, gender inequality within the leadership ranks of the American Jewish community has been evident for many years. Although women represent a majority of the Jewish professional workforce, few rise to top positions. Men continue to serve as the CEOs of the majority of major Jewish organizations across the country.

In an effort to understand how these women succeeded despite this considerable imbalance at the top of their organizations, I conducted a series of eighteen interviews with middle and senior-level female executives. I interviewed women for this study with positions such as Senior Vice President, Chief Executive Officer, Vice President, Director, Dean, and Executive Director. The women I engaged in conversation had from ten to over thirty years of work experience with Jewish nonprofit organizations.

Female professionals can take a number of simple steps to attain more prestigious and lucrative positions within the Jewish nonprofit sector. Women can take action by requesting more exposure to high-profile projects, establishing rewarding relationships with mentors from the onset, balancing work obligations with personal demands on their time, and adopting a more assertive leadership style. These actions will benefit the Jewish

community by increasing institutional access to a wide talent pool of intelligent, driven, and resourceful female candidates.

Acknowledgements

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To the women Jewish professionals who took time out of their schedules to share their stories: please know as I walk forward into the next steps in my career, I will hold on to your words. I hope to be able to take a small step in the direction of the march that you are leading for us everyday.

Continuous encouragement and guidance from my family has been immeasurable. I hope one day to be able to give my children the lifelong gift you have given me, by enabling

me to purse an advanced graduate education. In the many years to come, I know I will never be able to adequately thank you for this incredible gift.

Introduction

On a Wednesday evening about 9:00 p.m., I sat in a business negotiations course at the USC Marshall School of Business. The course was structured so that every class we would receive a case study. Each student had a specific role, such as "store owner" or "acquisitions specialist for large corporation." The first half of class we would split into groups of three to four students and role play. Each person would try to negotiate the best settlement possible. The case for that evening's class had involved a large oil company and a husband and wife who owned a gas station. The husband and wife wanted to retire, and the case involved the negotiation with the oil company to sell their gas station property.

Several students were raising their hands to share their experience role playing the case. One female MBA student proudly raised her hand to share the terms of the deal she had negotiated. She began by explaining to the class that her role had been the gas station owner. She proudly stated, "The deal that I got was that I postponed our retirement by two years, but was able to get double the price for the gas station property." The professor looked confused. He responded, "It mentioned in the case that your wife had been working long hours and was really looking forward to retirement in the next few months. How do you think she will react to this deal?" The female student immediately retorted,

"Oh, she is not very smart, she doesn't even know what is going on anyways." At this point a silence fell over the class, and a few people laughed uncomfortably. The case had mentioned that the husband's wife was having some health problems, but it never stated that the wife was unintelligent. The student continued, "She is having a lot of problems, so I might not even tell her and just keep the money in an account." At this point the class grew louder and a few people were visibly uncomfortable at the female student's description of the wife. The case had actually stated that the gas station was jointly owned and operated by the husband and wife. The professor quickly moved to the next student raising his hand to share the outcome of his negotiation.

Sitting in the row behind the student, I remember feeling shocked and confused. How could such an intelligent, professional young woman so easily say such negative things about women? Aside from any personal biases that she may have, didn't each female student have an obligation to present a positive view of women to their predominately male classmates? Virginia Valian completed some research on this phenomenon among female MBA students, trying to figure out why female MBAs tended to rate other females in a negative light (Valian, 1999, cited by Bronznick, 1999). Through extensive research, she found that if the number of women enrolled was any less than 33 percent of the business school class, the tendency would be for the female students to speak and act like the dominant group of males in order to be accepted.

This study helped me to understand why the female student in the negotiations class had been so negative about her "wife" in front of the whole class. I understood that she may

have been acting in a way that she believed would help her become accepted by our male professor and the majority male students in our class. This made me question how women working in sectors where they are underrepresented are able to make an impact. In my studies in the Jewish nonprofit sector, I saw that there were very few women working at the executive level of Jewish nonprofit organizations. How did these women get to these positions in such a male-dominated environment? How did these women achieve the impact they wanted to achieve when they were clearly a minority? What might I, and others like me, learn about how to advance in our prospective careers as Jewish communal professionals?

The gender gap that exists within the executive level of Jewish organizations is not going away naturally. To make any impact the impasse needs to be addressed from two directions: organizations need to better accommodate women's needs for better work-life balance, in terms of parental leave policies and more flexible working options, and women need to become more assertive in exercising their power, whether in negotiating their compensation packages or vying for more responsible executive positions.

For this research study, I interviewed eighteen female leaders working in Jewish organizations. Throughout the course of the interviews, these pioneering women identified three primary factors as having a significant impact on their ability to attain more lucrative executive-level positions: establishing rewarding relationships with mentors from the onset, balancing work obligations with personal demands on their time, and adopting a more assertive leadership style.

Changing Perceptions of Female Leadership

One of the main barriers to women's professional career advancement is the perception that they make poor leaders. The reality, however, is quite the opposite. Contemporary women today operate in what one scholar calls "an advantaged, disadvantaged state" (Eagly, 2007). Forbes magazine recently published an article entitled, "Why Women Make Better Leaders" (Koltz, 2011). The author asserted that women make better leaders because they are more likely to excel in the critical leadership skills of "communication, empathy, vision, perspective and maturity" (ibid., p.1).

There is some evidence that women make better leaders than men. Joseph Folkman and Jack Zenger of the Harvard Business Review, conducted a study based on performance evaluations of more than 7,280 leaders representing some of the most successful and admired organizations in the world (Folkman & Zenger, 2012). Individuals working for institutions from multiple sectors were surveyed, such as commercial and government, public and private, and domestic and international (ibid.).Through their study, Folkman and Zenger identified sixteen common attributes that were widely shared by individuals considered "great leaders." "Displaying high integrity," "driving for results," and "taking initiative" were a few of the leadership qualities that the researchers identified based on over 30 years of scholarship on the competencies required for overall leadership effectiveness (ibid.).

Women in the study outscored men on twelve of the sixteen core leadership skills. The authors conclude, "In fact at every level, more women were rated by their peers, their bosses, their direct reports, and their other associates as better overall leaders than their male counterparts" (Folkman & Zenger, 2012, p.1). Research publications showcasing the positive potential of women in positions of authority are part of a growing trend that may have been shocking just a few years ago. As Folkman and Zenger continue to observe, "two of the traits where women outscored men to the highest degree—taking initiative and driving for results—have long been thought of as particularly male strengths" (2012, p.2). In fact, the only competency on which men had a more positive score was "developing strategic perspective." After reviewing interviews and test scores of over 7,280 leaders from business, science, and technology, Folkman and Zenger wrote a concise summary of the research study: "Women do it better."

However, the view that women leaders are *worse* than their male counterparts and that women make poor leaders is still prevalent today. According to ForbesWoman, "powerful women are perceived as being icy, tough, weak, emotional, single and lonely, and having a whole lot of other toxic conflicting attributes" (Koltz, 2011, p.1). One does not have to look far to see how these stereotypes still predominate in society. Cultural depictions in movies, books, music, articles and magazines frequently paint successful women as "unsympathetic power-mongers" (Goudreau, 2012, cited by Koltz, 2011, p.1). Public perception of women leaders exists along a bi-polar spectrum with some voices stating that females are terrible leaders, while others proclaim that women make the best leaders.

Female Leadership in a Team

There is relevant research that indicates women are as well qualified as men to be leaders and assume leadership roles. In an article published in the Harvard Business Review, researchers Woolley and Malone made the bold claim that "there is little correlation between a group's collective intelligence and the IQ of its individual members. But if a group includes more women, its collective intelligence rises" (Woolley & Malone, 2011, p.1).

Their article is based on a study conducted on a group of people between the ages of 18 and 60. These individuals were randomly assigned to teams, totaling 192 groups. "Each team was asked to complete several tasks—including brainstorming, decision making, and visual puzzles—and to solve one complex problem" (Woolley & Malone, 2011, p.1). After completing the tasks, the researchers assigned each group an intelligence score based on their performance on all of the different tasks. The results were surprising—teams with members who had high IQs did not earn significantly higher intelligence scores. However, teams that had a greater number of women on them *did* exhibit higher intelligence scores (Woolley & Malone, 2011).

While their findings may be controversial, when questioned about this study, Professor Malone stated that part of the evidence can "be explained by differences in social sensitivity, which we found is also important to group performance" (Woolley & Malone, 2011, p.2). Malone continues: "What is really important is to have people who are high in

social sensitivity, whether they are men or women" (Woolley & Malone, 2011, p.2). Women tend to score higher on social sensitivity than men, which may help explain the findings of this research study.

In addition, there is significant published research that correlates a high level of diversity with high achieving teams. When researcher Woolley was asked about the overall qualities that high performing groups share, she stated, "The members... listen to each other. They share criticism constructively. They have open minds. They're not autocratic" (Woolley & Malone, 2011, p.2). She continued to note that, "...in our study we saw pretty clearly that groups that had smart people dominating the conversation were not very intelligent groups" (Woolley & Malone, 2011, p.2). Consequently, an elevated level of diversity in a group can also be a contributing factor underlying the positive correlation between the number of females in a group and higher cumulative group intelligence scores. However, the results of this study, as well as the previous study cited, seem to imply that female leaders may have some distinct and beneficial qualities.

Status of Women as Leaders in the Jewish Nonprofit Sector

Female Jewish professionals are subject to the same negative stereotypes and gendered norms about their leadership capabilities as women at large. Additionally, a portion of these women also share the same executive leadership qualities which predispose them to becoming successful professional leaders within the Jewish community if given access to the interview and recruitment process.

Gender inequality within the leadership ranks of the American Jewish community has been evident for many years. Female representation at the executive level of Jewish organizations has been severely unbalanced, even though some sectors show a slight improvement in recent years. The gender inequality is also reflected in compensation. In 2010, the Jewish Communal Service Association (JCSA) conducted a research study of 2,435 Jewish community professionals working throughout the United States and Canada (Cohen, 2010, cited by eJewish Philanthropy, 2010). This survey confirmed that in the Jewish nonprofit sector "women significantly trail men in compensation, with an overall gap of $28,000. Holding constant age, years in the field, level of responsibility, hours worked, and degrees earned, women's salaries still trail men's by about $20,000" (ibid., p.2).

Some leaders of Jewish organizations believe that gender inequality is insignificant or will likely resolve itself on its own. Leading gender equality advocate, Shifra Bronznick, references a study conducted by researchers at City University of New York (CUNY) (Horowitz, Beck, and Kadushin, 1997, cited by Bronznick, 1999) that involved interviews with board members of 45 national Jewish organizations. Subjects were asked if they disagree or agree with the statement: "Women are adequately represented on the boards of most Jewish organizations." Responses differed significantly according to the gender of the board member. The results of the study referenced above indicate "48% of women disagreed strongly [with the statement], but only l6% of men disagreed strongly" (ibid., p. 3).

If the men and women on Jewish organizational boards do not perceive that there is a problem, they are not going to be motivated to address it. Rather, as Horowitz, Beck, and Kadushin explain, "Responses suggest an underlying assumption that as women continue to advance in other arenas, including the religious and professional spheres, inequities in the leadership of national Jewish organizations will gradually correct themselves" (Horowitz, Beck, and Kadushin, 1997, p. 3). The reality, however, is that any type of persistent inequality will not diminish naturally. As Bronzick observes, "...there are specific obstacles confronting women who seek to participate in national Jewish communal leadership" (Bronznick, 1999, p.6). Existing leadership needs to take specific actions to lessen the impact of these roadblocks because they will not diminish with time.

The "status quo" in the Jewish community remains unmovable due to real and perceived obstacles that are blocking women's advancement. In her piece "Positioning Women for National Leadership," Bronznick describes in detail several of these barriers. One key obstacle that prevents women from moving up within Jewish organizations is how women, "...are often alienated by the conventions of national Jewish organizations, most notably the "boys' club" environment" (Bronznick, 1999, p.6). This environment can make women feel unwelcome and frustrated. Another clear impediment women face to advancing is that "Women... are commonly reported by organizational executives and lay leaders as being too often unwilling or unable to give major leadership gifts" (ibid.). Many women feel uncomfortable with the quid-pro-quo fundraising method that is still widely used in traditional fundraising campaigns. And finally, one additional barrier that

women face is that "There is a serious gap between the men and women in their self-perceived expertise in areas of finance, budget and accounting" (ibid.). Leadership training in the areas of budget analysis and finance can help women surmount this roadblock, which is preventing many women from moving up to higher positions of authority within the Jewish community.

Why Gender Equality is Central to Jewish Organizations

There are two main reasons why gender equality should be a priority within the American Jewish community. First, there is a large body of opinion that argues women leaders tend to be more creative, innovative and inclusive (Bronznick, 2003). These advocates argue that women leaders tend to be more collaborative and rely on a multitude of diverse opinions in decision making. For example, according to Shifra Bronznick, women leaders have a tendency to be more collaborative, inclusive and creative, not because of innate instincts, but as a result of "their experiences en route to the top, they will have seen the mounting evidence that our most venerable organizations need to embrace diversity, flexibility and innovation" (Bronznick, 2003, p.4).

The second main reason why gender equality should be a higher priority is because the Jewish community needs to attract the best talent available in the industry. The American Jewish community is facing many unprecedented challenges that will require new and creative solutions to address. The bedrock institutions of Reform and Conservative Judaism, as well as secular organizations like B'nai B'rith, the Jewish Federation, the

Jewish Community Center, and even the Jewish Family Service, have been around for a hundred years or more, and after a hundred years, these organizations are finding that the old ways of organizing the community and creating Jewish identity are no longer working. The new generation of young American Jews is remarkably different from their Jewish parents and grandparents (Beinart, 2010). The younger generation of Jews needs new ways to connect with each other, new ways to communicate, and new means to establish their own Jewish identity.

So far, however, the traditional Jewish organizations have had limited success at attracting and retaining this new generation of younger American Jews. If these organizations are going to stay in business, they need to access the best ideas and the most creative, educated, and talented individuals in the workplace. And as the above research indicates, a large proportion of these individuals are going to be women. Statistics reveal that Jewish women are some of the most highly educated individuals in the United States (Kosmin et al. 1991, cited by Bronznick, 1999). Many of these women have diverse educational backgrounds and experience working in many different fields. For the long-term success and vitality of the Jewish community, Jewish organizations need to make gender equality a priority.

Lack of Sustained Effort to Address the Problem

Even when actions are taken to address gender inequality in the Jewish community, they are often partial or not sustained. In the 1990s, after the ground-breaking research report

produced by the organization Ma'yan, entitled, "Power and Parity: Women on the Boards of Major American Jewish Organizations" (Horowitz, Beck, and Kadushin, 1997), there was widespread discussion about the problem of gender inequality within the Jewish nonprofit sector. A related report was released by the Council of Jewish Federations in 1993, entitled, "The Council of Jewish Federation's Survey on the Status of Women in the Leadership and Professional Positions of Federations." This nation-wide, large scale investigation of gender inequality within the Federation system (Kosmin et al. 1991) similarly stimulated both acknowledgement and active discussion about the issue of gender discrimination within the Jewish nonprofit sector.

Recently, many Jewish organizations have largely stopped discussing the issue of gender equality even though the problem still persists. A brief discussion occurred in 2010 surrounding the JCSA study (Cohen, 2010). However, after a flurry of discussion, the issue has subsided and largely slipped off of the communal agenda.

Recent Positive Developments

In response, a number of new Jewish organizations have come into existence in the last couple of years solely to focus their energies and resources on advancing the position of women in the Jewish nonprofit sector. One example is the Advancing Women Professionals and the Jewish Community (AWP), a national nonprofit organization founded by Shifra Bronznick, a leading expert and advocate for gender equality. AWP exists to "Advance women into leadership positions in Jewish life, stimulate

organizations to become more equitable...and promote policies that promote work-life integration" (Advancing Women Professionals and the Jewish Community, n.d.). Since its founding year in 2001, AWP has initiated several successful pilot projects with major Jewish institutions to create more conducive work environments for women professionals.

Another example is the Jewish Women's Foundation of New York, an organization with a mission of "Advancing the status and well-being of women and girls in the Jewish community in New York, Israel and around the world" (EJewish Philanthropy, 2012). In 2013, the foundation announced that it was awarding grants of totaling around $500,000 to several distinct Jewish nonprofit organizations that also serve to empower women within the Jewish community and abroad (EJewish Philanthropy, 2012).

Several of the organizations that received grants were: Sharsheret, PresentTense, National Association for Jewish Chaplains, Jewish Child Care Association, and AVODAH (EJewish Philanthropy, 2012). These organizations are developing programs to help women take control of their financial well-being, begin new business ventures, and enable independent working women to access affordable family day care programs. In addition, a number of Jewish publications continue to report on gender inequities in the Jewish community. The Forward and E-Jewish Philanthropy, among others, have continued to spotlight the issue with articles like "Mind the (Gender) Gap" (Jewish Daily Forward, The 2012).

Methodology

While it is reasonable to believe that the cause of gender equity will continue to advance slowly due to changes in organizational culture, there also need to be changes in how women approach the issue when confronted by it in the workplace. In an effort to understand how women in the Jewish community are dealing with existing gender imbalance—and rising to the top of their organizations despite the obstacles—I conducted in-depth interviews with eighteen female mid and senior- level executives who work at Jewish nonprofit organizations. For the purposes of this study, the term "executive" applies to a person with senior managerial responsibilities within an organization. The average interview lasted 45 minutes, and in total, 768 minutes of interviews were recorded. All the names included in this paper are pseudonyms, as the women interviewed were assured anonymity.

A few main questions guided the interviews. The women were asked to discuss the early stages of their career and to share their experiences with mentorship. In addition, they were asked to share stories about one or more influential people who had an impact on their career progression, whether a formal mentor, informal role model or friend. They were asked about their experience with salary negotiations, and to share their own success and frustrations about compensation. I asked them to share rewarding experiences that they have gained over the years, as well as frustrations about working within a system that is at times slow to embrace change and new ideas. Finally, executives were asked to share if and how they made the decision to have children, along

with the impact it had on their career development.

The female executives interviewed for this research study had a range of titles, including Senior Vice President, Chief Executive Officer, Vice President, Director, Dean and Executive Director. The age of interviewees ranged from mid-thirties to late-sixties. All were currently working for a Jewish nonprofit organization and had between ten and over thirty years of work experience in the field. A few interviewees also had experience working outside the Jewish nonprofit sector, in the larger nonprofit sector.

Female executives in this study supervise anywhere from three employees to over one hundred. For example, one executive is responsible for overseeing about one hundred employees at a large nonprofit organization, while another female professional works in a small organization where there are only twelve employees. A high level of organizational diversity was also central to the development of the sample. This is because individuals working at small organizations may face different obstacles for promotion and advancement than individuals working for larger, national organizations. The Jewish organizations represented cover a wide range of institutions, including educational, advocacy, religious, social service delivery, museums and cultural centers, and federations. Some organizations have a strict hierarchy system in place with formal organizational charts that are closely followed. Other organizations are more flat, with no clear divisions of responsibility between staff members.

Although this research project provides a snapshot into the lives of a diverse group of

female executives working at Jewish nonprofits, there are some limitations to the sample which should be recognized. First, the sample size is small. Second, a majority of the women selected for the study live and work in large metropolitan areas with large Jewish populations, including Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York. While these large cities have a wide range of diverse institutions that differ in terms of size, mission, and organizational structure, the experiences of the interviewees may differ from their counterparts in small communities with smaller Jewish populations.

Results: Mentorship, Work-Life Balance, and Assertive Leadership

Professional women interviewed for this study identified three primary factors as having a significant impact on their ability to attain more lucrative executive-level positions. These influential factors were: establishing rewarding relationships with mentors from the onset, balancing work obligations with personal demands on their time, and adopting a more assertive leadership style.

FINDINGS

SECTION I: The Power of Mentors & Sponsors

The majority of women interviewed described situations where they would turn to a mentor to overcome a roadblock or for ongoing support and coaching. Almost all the women interviewed spoke about a mentor or influential person who was instrumental in the early stages of their career. However, the form of the mentoring relationship varied

dramatically and included *reciprocal mentoring, group mentoring, peer mentoring, invisible mentoring,* and *traditional mentoring.*

Mentoring Relationships: A Model

There are significant benefits of establishing a mentoring relationship in any form. EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit organization that focuses on education and technology, provides a simple classification that organizes the different forms of mentorship into seven "styles" (EDUCAUSE, n.d.). Below, the seven forms of mentorship are defined as: Traditional, Network, Group, Minute, Circle, Invisible, and Reverse (EDUCAUSE, n.d.).

	Mentor Type	***Role of Mentor(s)***
Traditional	Individual	Expert passing on knowledge to an individual
Network	Group	Co-learners sharing knowledge
Group	One / two individuals	Expert(s) passing on knowledge to a group
Minute	Individual/many	Expert passing on knowledge
Circle	Group	Co-learners sharing knowledge
Invisible	Individual/ Non-interactive	Observed at a distance
Reverse	Individual	New staff and/or from different generation passing on knowledge

(EDUCAUSE, n.d.)

When most people think of the term "mentor," they typically think of only one type of mentorship: "traditional mentors." As identified in the chart above, "traditional

mentorship [is] a relationship between two individuals that involves an expert passing on knowledge to an individual" (EDUCAUSE, n.d.). Although this concept of mentorship is the most common, it is not the only form that these relationships can take. A mentorship relationship can also take the form of a "network mentorship," where "co-learners share knowledge" with each other. A third type of mentorship is "invisible mentorship." This type of relationship is non-interactive and involves one person, "observing at a distance" another person, such as an excellent manager or high-level person within the same company. However, "invisible mentorship" can also arise through reading or studying an important historical figure or business leader and emulating their style of leadership. It is clear that mentorship does not only mean a one-on-one relationship between two people.

Another classification of mentorship relationships was developed at the University of Melbourne. In the introduction to their study, the authors offer a concise summary: "Mentoring can be a one-time intervention or a lifelong relationship. It can be carried out informally by anyone, at any time, in almost any place or as part of a formal structured program" (University of Melbourne, n.d.). This description illustrates that types of mentors can vary based on the *length of time* of the relationship and also by the *structured or informal* nature of the relationship. The authors of this study divided mentorship into four types:

Mentor Type	*Role of Mentor(s)*
Reciprocal	Reciprocal Mentoring is a relationship where neither party is Designated "mentor." Each is a confidant and resource to the other. They share goals and encourage personal accountability.
Peer	Peer to Peer Mentoring is usually initiated by management. It occurs when individuals with similar levels of responsibility partner to improve the effectiveness of one or the other.
Group	Group Mentoring is the classic mastermind concept of tapping into collective wisdom and obtaining mutual support. Collective wisdom is available to each individual, and shared ideas and information trigger additional possibilities that may never have been generated were each person working alone.
Reverse	In the reverse mentoring situation, the mentee has more overall experience (in terms of age, position or experience) than the mentor, but the mentor has more knowledge in a particular area. The relationship is reciprocal in nature.

(University of Melbourne, n.d.)

There is no question that mentorship is valuable in many of its different forms. But one step above mentorship has recently been recognized as critical to the career advancement of women: sponsorship. A recent publication by Catalyst titled, "Mentoring: Necessary But Insufficient for Advancement" describes the difference between mentors and sponsors (Carter & Christine, 2010). A sponsor is someone inside your company that "goes beyond simply providing feedback and advice to actually advocating for high potentials' promotion in deliberation meetings" (Carter & Christine, 2010, p.2). These individuals are harder to find, but the time and energy spent establishing a relationship with a high-level individual who will actively advocate on your behalf will be invaluable.

A research study by the nonprofit organization Catalyst surveyed more than 4,000 women with high potential and found that despite having large numbers of mentors, women were not getting promoted as much as men. They proposed a new relationship: sponsorship (Carter & Christine, 2010). This research study received attention in a Harvard Business

Review article titled, "Why Men Still Get More Promotions than Women" (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010). In this article, the authors explained, "Although women are being mentored, they are not being promoted...that's because they are not actively sponsored the way men are" (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010, p.1). According to the authors, "There is a special kind of relationship—called sponsorship—in which the mentor goes beyond giving feedback and advice and uses his or her influence with senior executives to advocate for the mentee" (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010, p.2).

The authors continued to describe how several organizations, such as Deutsche Bank, Unilever, Sodexo, and IBM Europe, have taken this new research seriously and have implemented "sponsorship programs." What makes these programs different from more typical mentorship programs is that the company trains sponsors and actually holds these sponsors accountable for the career advancement of their mentees (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010).

Using Mentors for Support: Interview Findings

In the interviews for this thesis, the women executives described a number of mentoring relationships in their careers and identified them as important factors in their success.

Traditional Mentoring

"I am very lucky because I have had several mentors for sure. But my cousin is a very

well known... [incredibly successful] woman...she is a very, very powerful woman." (Stephanie)

"So pretty much every time we get together she and I ...think about my career....And every time I wanted to make a career transition, or make more money, or consult or whatever it is, she has been very great at helping me be focused." (Stephanie)

An Executive Director, Stephanie described how her cousin had always been her mentor. During the interview, Stephanie spoke about her cousin's extensive experience in highly respected positions of authority within several organizations. It became clear that Stephanie looked up to her cousin as a role model and an inspiration for what one woman could accomplish if she took the right steps to advance her own career.

It may be rare that young women are fortunate enough to have powerful female role models who are also family members. However, there may well be powerful female role models in many extended family units that a woman may reach out to as a resource. Women might not automatically turn to an aunt or a cousin because they still view these women primarily as family members, as they did when they were children. But Stephanie was able to make the adjustment in seeing her cousin from an adult perspective, as a valuable mentoring resource.

Reciprocal Mentoring

"We have developed a very special and strong appreciation for each other...we have a reciprocal mentoring relationship... I never would have made it through this position if she hadn't been there counseling me all throughout." (Michelle)

"We strategize on a very regular basis about how to navigate organizational behavior, how to work within a system that you are not the head of...how do you navigate the people that are above you...how do you supervise the people below you..." (Katherine)

The above two women, Michelle and Katherine, describe the reciprocal mentoring relationship that they developed to support each other and to help them strategize ways to overcome resistance to their leadership or ideas. In order to deal with her lack of professional guidance, Michelle began a partnership with another woman who had the same title in the organization but was nineteen years her senior, both in age and years of experience. She describes their relationship as "very special" with a "strong appreciation with each other." The two women began meeting on a daily basis to consult with each other and strategize effective solutions to issues they were currently confronting or obstacles they encountered on specific projects. During the interview, Katherine described her relationship with Michelle in a similar fashion of admiration and respect. Katherine also described their daily meetings as a way to "strategize" with another person on how to be more effective.

One characteristic to note within this relationship is the topics that Michelle and Katherine discuss during their one-on-meetings. Katherine mentioned many times when she was describing their relationship the word "strategize." Although it is evident that both women spent some of the time expressing their frustrations, the conversation moved beyond the level of "venting." It became a "strategy session," where Katherine and Michelle could brainstorm ideas about the best way to complete a project, or who would be the best person to approach on an issue, or how to cultivate outside supporters for a cause. Their discussions contained an element of releasing stress and supporting each other, but were also active brainstorming sessions to help each woman move forward effectively on the projects and overcome resistance to their ideas.

Reverse Mentoring

"This person mentored...over the past ten years. We had this special time on a regular basis to evolve...taught me the powerful capacity to grow that a mentorship afforded me." (Sharon)

"[The relationship] was a credit to this particular individual...she would say it was a credit to my being able to be vulnerable and recognize my weaknesses and areas that I wanted to grow." (Sharon)

Above, a Chief Executive Officer describes a unique reverse mentoring relationship that she had with a member of her staff, who was under her own supervision. On a regular

basis over a period of ten years, the staff member would come into Sharon's office and sit down for one-on-one meetings. She would offer her observations of Sharon over the recent weeks acting as the CEO of the organization. Than the staff member would offer coaching and reflections on the areas that Sharon could improve.

When asked if having a mentoring relationship with a staff member under her own supervision was ever awkward or uncomfortable, Sharon said:

> There is something very sacred about a coaching relationship, or mentoring relationship...like there is client attorney privilege in a legal conversation...in a mentoring relationship with an established level of trust it exists within its own right.

Sharon was speaking about a substantial level of trust that existed between her and her staff member during these coaching sessions. And it was obvious when she spoke about her how she had a deep level of respect and admiration for her.

In sum, women interviewed for this study shared stories about personal, developmental, and emotional support that they received from many different types of mentoring relationships. One woman described the benefits of having a reciprocal mentor as an invaluable emotional support that at times enabled them to survive an unfriendly work environment. Another woman expressed how being in a reverse mentoring relationship gave her access to coaching that deeply shaped her ability to perform as an Executive

Director of her organization.

In fact, the evidence illustrates that "Women with a mentor increased their odds of being placed at mid-manager or above by 56% over women without a mentor" (Carter & Christine, 2010, p.3). Many women may not be aware that the simple act of having a mentor can dramatically improve the likelihood that they will gain access to a higher level within organizations. Additionally, the benefits of creating and cultivating a mentoring relationship can actually be quantified in real currency – additional dollars earned. According to a study conducted by nonprofit Catalyst, "...women who had active mentors in 2008 had achieved 27% higher salary growth than pipeline women without current mentors" (Carter & Christine, 2010, p.3). The message is clear- mentoring relationships are incredibly valuable in many different forms.

SECTION II: Work and Life: Finding the Right Balance

Jack Welch, former CEO of GE, says, "There is no such thing as work-life balance. There are work-life choices, you make them and they have consequences" (Christensen, DeGroot & Friedman, 1998, p.1). The question of work-life balance is a pressing and complicated issue confronting organizations and companies. This also applies to Jewish community organizations, many of which are conscious of the pressures of work-life balance for their employees and are attempting to address this issue.

A Harvard Business Review article, "Work and Life: The End of the Zero Sum Game,"

took a closer look at several managers who are approaching this issue of work-life balance from a very different lens, the idea that "work and life are not competing priorities, but complementary ones" (Christensen, DeGroot & Friedman, 1998, p.1). The authors identified several managers who were achieving benefits for their companies as well as employees by adopting this "win-win philosophy" (Christensen, DeGroot & Friedman, 1998, p.1). For example, a manager spotlighted in the article described how he noticed one of his employees was very connected to her alma mater. Instead of discouraging this interest as a potential distraction from work, the manager actually encouraged his employee to take on a "liaison" role for the university in alumni relations. This new position took up additional time the employee could have spent working. But, the relationship proved to be incredibly valuable for the employee and the company because it ended up creating additional client referrals. Adopting this unique perspective for thinking about "work" and "life" as complementary can produce tangible results for managers when working with their employees (Christensen, DeGroot & Friedman, 1998).

In this article, findings about effective managers were based on over one hundred interviews with high-level managers in several U.S.-based companies that varied in terms of size and industry (Christensen, DeGroot and Friedman, 1998). This study was summarized in a series of case studies spotlighting effective managers all over the country who are approaching work-life issues from a nontraditional perspective. Each of these managers "continually experiment[s] with the way work is done" (Christensen, DeGroot and Friedman, 1998, p.1). The authors acknowledge that it is often incredibly "daunting, if not threatening" for managers to experiment with new ways for employees

to work in the office setting. However, several of the managers included in the study "see experimenting with work processes as an exciting opportunity to improve the organization's performance and the lives of its people at the same time" (Christensen, DeGroot and Friedman, 1998, p.1). In a globalized economy, the pressure on managers to innovate and find new ways to cut costs and increase employee productivity is constant. Evaluating the way that work is done can be one more tool, instead of a burden or something relegated to the HR department that managers use to maintain the organization's competitive advantage.

Experimenting with Getting the Work Done: The Flexible Workplace Model

As explained above, successful managers are accomplishing more than ever before by continually testing and experimenting with the way work gets done in their office. One way to experiment is to use a flexible workplace model. But what does it mean when companies use the terms "flexibility," "flex-career," or "flex-time"? Author Dana Friedman, in article titled, "Workplace Flexibility: A Guide for Companies," argues that "Flexibility is a way to define how and when work gets done and how careers are organized" (Friedman, n.d., p.1). Workplace flexibility can be divided into several common options or structures. In the chart below, Friedman explains options utilized by managers to align with employees' needs for flexible work arrangements: flex-time, reduced time, and flex-career (Friedman, n.d.).

	Flex-Time	*Reduced Time*	*Flex-Career*
Workplace Flexibility	**Traditional flex-time** allows employees to select their starting and quitting times within a range of hours surrounding core-operating hours. **Compressed work week** enables employees to work their allotted hours over fewer days— such as 10 hours per day over 4 days, or 80 hours over 9 days, rather than 8 hours per day over 5 days.	**Part-time work** means working part days, five days per week or working full days, but fewer than five days per week. Job sharing, where two employees share one full-time job with its pro-rated salary and benefits, is also a form of part-time work. **Part-year work** means working reduced hours on an annual basis, rather than a daily or weekly basis—for example, working full-time during the school year and then taking a block of time off during the summer.	**Flex-Careers** include multiple points for entry, exit, and re-entry over the course of one career or working life, including formal leaves and sabbaticals, as well as taking time out of the paid labor market, with the ability to re-enter. **Flex-Place** is defined as working some or most of one's regularly scheduled hours at a location other than the main location of one's employer. It includes primary and occasional arrangements.

(Friedman, n.d.)

Balancing Work and Life in the Jewish Nonprofit Sector

Many Jewish organizations can benefit dramatically from becoming a more flexible institution. In an article called, "Making the Case for A Jewish Flexible Workplace," Didi Goldenhar cites research by Catalyst about the benefits of adopting a flexible workplace (Goldenhar, 2003). The benefits that an organization can achieve when adopting a more flexible workplace can be divided into six main categories: recruitment, retention, dollars saved, reduced absenteeism, increased effectiveness and productivity, enhanced job satisfaction and commitment (Goldenhar, 2003).

Recruitment and retention of top talent is a major concern for all nonprofits today. According the research conducted by Catalyst, "a comprehensive flexibility policy gives

organizations an edge when competing for desirable employees" (Goldenhar, 2003, p.1).When it comes to retaining women professionals, research has shown that "companies that offer reduced hours, flexible job design, on-off career ramps... reported greater success at retaining women professionals" (Goldenhar, 2003, p.1). It may be easy to understand why a flexible workplace would increase the ability of an organization to retain key employees, especially female employees. However, it can be easily overlooked that a workplace with benefits such as 'flexible job design' and 'on-off ramps' would also have an advantage over other organizations in recruiting top talent.

Increased effectiveness, productivity, and dollars saved appear to be unlikely results of creating a flexible workplace environment for employees. However, Goldenhar explains the connection clearly as she states, "the main benefit of flexibility is a fundamental shift between counting hours to measuring results" (Goldenhar, 2003, p.2). This fundamental shift in an employee's thinking about the time that he/she spends at work should not be underestimated. Goldenhar observes that "by promoting results-oriented performance, organizations move away from reactive, crisis-driven work practices to a more efficient, pro-active model (Goldenhar, 2003, p.2). Increasingly many organizations understand the connection between workplace flexibility and the bottom-line. Turnover can cost an organization "up to 150% of a single annual salary, in terms of decreased productivity by the former employee and the expense involved in recruitment and training of the new employee" (Goldenhar, 2003, p.2). These costs are significant and not easy for an organization to ignore. Understanding the cost savings that can be generated from having

a long-term, stable workforce is another way for organizations to realize the benefits of a flexible workplace environment.

Work-Life Balance: Three Approaches

One of the executives interviewed for this thesis had not taken a vacation longer than two weeks in almost twenty years. Several other executives had barely taken the full maternity leave allotted to them because they were anxious to get back to work. The ability to take a long-term leave from work was a rare exception among the women interviewed and was dependent on additional income from a spouse or other source. One female executive spoke about how she brought her baby, a baby sitter, and a crib into work because she could not stand to be away from the office. Another executive told a similar story about how she barely took two weeks of maternity leave before she had to return to the office to make important decision regarding layoffs and downsizing.

The decision to take a long-term leave from work is a choice that is hotly contested, with prominent, high-ranking women weighing in on both sides of the issue. Sometimes it appears the debate has a generational component. Many older women of the Baby Boom generation tend to identify with the Feminist Revolution and advocate strongly for staying involved in the workforce full-time while simultaneously raising a family. Leslie Bennetts, the author of *The Feminine Mistake: Are We Giving Up Too Much?* argues that it is a mistake for women to completely step out of the workforce in order to devote their time completely to raising a family. Bennetts argues that women have a lot to gain from

maintaining their financial independence in terms of protecting themselves from divorce, as well as from the consequences of illness, death, or unemployment of their breadwinner husbands (Bennetts, 2007). Bennetts's viewpoint is shared by many prominent business and professional women who believe that women are making a mistake if they chose to take an extended leave of absence from their professional career.

In contrast, there is an increasing number of professional women passionately defend their choice to take an extended leave from work in order to raise their family as a choice that is consistent with their feminist values. One such author is Iris Krasnow, bestselling author of *Surrendering to Motherhood: Losing Your Mind, Finding Your Soul.* In her book, Krasnow defends her decision to leave her demanding career as a traveling journalist in order to raise her children full-time. Krasnow describes how she was criticized by other feminists for her decision to leave her job. However, she believes that the decision to leave her high-profile career was as much a feminist decision as her choice to work full-time as a journalist (Krasnow, 1998). There is an increasingly large group of professional women who agree with Krasnow and passionately defend their decision to prioritize raising children over their career.

Proponents of the decision to step out of the workforce argue that there are easy ways to stay connected while not physically working on a job. Many other women pursue opportunities such as volunteering that enable them to take on additional responsibilities and continue to exercise their talents and gain new skills. This was the choice of one of the women included in the interview for this study, Lauren. During her time off, Lauren

and a few other mothers came to the conclusion that they needed a new Jewish Day School in their area. According to Lauren, "In the early years, many of the founders had young children, and what they called play dates, we called planning board meetings." Lauren became actively involved in the planning, creation and running of a brand new organization. During the course of her interview, she shared how she listed specific skills on her resume that she gained while serving in a volunteer position as founder of a new institution. She described how she was able to reference her experiences founding the school during interviews and how the skills she developed were applicable to her new position when she returned to work after an extended absence.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach that works for everyone who is trying to balance their personal lives and a demanding career. Each person and couple is different and will have their own practices and methods that work for them. During the course of this research study, I asked several of the women, "What is your opinion about taking a permanent leave from work to raise a family full-time?" In response, they shared some of their stories about how they made their own personal decision to balance their family life with their career demands. Each professional woman interviewed for this study had a unique answer to the question. The following excerpts illustrate three different approaches to the decision about balancing competing priorities.

Profile 1

Making the decision to scale back and reduce one's work hours from full-time to part-

time may seem like a blessing, but it can often be a challenging and frustrating experience for many professional women. At one point in the conversation, Rachel said, "You have to understand that by making the decision to work fewer hours, your career will slow down." This is not something that is easy to accept. Many professional women may be in high-performing, high-ranking roles before they decide to have a family. A professional woman may be accustomed to a being a person of influence, to having a "seat at the table" and being consulted when it comes to making important decisions at the organization. However, Rachel believes that this role will change, and it will not be easy. It was her sense that this changing role was something that was deeply frustrating for her friends and colleagues when they made the decision to reduce their hours to part-time at an existing job where they had been previously working full-time.

When Rachel stated, "You may decide, I don't need to move as fast along in this career--but I do believe in keeping a foot in the door. I think it is a real mistake to step out of the workforce." When Rachel talks about "stepping out of the workforce," she is not talking about adopting a flexible schedule or scaling back one's hours from full-time to part-time. Rachel herself mentioned that as she was raising her young children, she was working part-time for a number of years. She also has experience with telecommuting. Rachel believes having a career path is essential, and stepping out completely may make it more difficult to return to the workplace at a later time.

Many women assume that securing a flexible arrangement at work was something that had to be planned months and even years in advance. However, Rachel said,

> One of the things I have found, if you prove yourself as a strong employee to people.... People will do things for you -- I never had a problem stepping in and out, getting someone to agree to telecommute, and getting someone to agree to three days, because they trusted me. I had already proven myself.

When pressed further on her opposition to women leaving the workplace full-time, she stated, "I think we see how fast the work environment changes, and if you are not part of it...I think that you lose an awful lot of ground." The concern for falling behind is an issue that has been raised by many women. Often the pace of change in the workplace environment is characterized by the rate of change of technology. Several years ago the fax machine was considered innovative technology. In a period of just a few years, the fax machine has become outdated and been replaced by the computer and email. This technological change has lead to a complete transformation in the 'way that work is done' on a daily basis.

Profile 2

Another of the women interviewed was Rebecca, an Executive Director at a Hillel. Rebecca has two very young kids at home. She and her husband are actively trying to balance working full-time with taking care of young children. Many women in the United States are reaching a similar conclusion to Rebecca and choosing to purse a full-time career at the same time as raising a family. When asked about whether she had considered

the option of leaving work when her first son was born, she said, "I love my children, but if I ever had to be a stay at home mom, I would go insane. I love my work… And I love being a mom, but I feel like I can do both." For Rebecca, her career is deeply rewarding. She sees working as a part of her identity and enjoys the challenges that she faces on a daily basis.

It is often assumed that women will always prefer to take time off from work to spend time with their child during their first few years. However, this is not always the case, and not all women have the same preferences when it comes to the child-raising years. At one point in the conversation Rebecca shared,

> Everyone is different. I'm not really a fan of babies from the age of 0 to 3 months. I'm just not. They are much more fun later, and I would much rather get to spend more time with them later than in the very beginning.

Hearing Rebecca describe her preference for children above a certain age illustrates that there are a lot of assumptions and misconceptions about parenting and children. All women are not alike. Some women, such as Rebecca, may enjoy their children as toddlers more than the newborn stage. Others may feel they can better connect with their children as adults, and prefer to work more during the entire early childhood stage. And still some women may not enjoy the demands of motherhood at all, and prefer not to have children. Accounting for these differences, each professional woman may require a unique approach to structuring her career in the long-term.

At one point Rebecca told me how people always ask her how she manages being an Executive Director and raising small children. She shared two factors: commuting time and shared parenting duties. Her home is a three-minute drive from her office, which enables her to spend additional time with her kids that she would otherwise spend commuting. Unfortunately, as traffic congestion has increasingly become a way of life in many cities, the likelihood of a short commute to work has become more of a luxury than a commonplace occurrence.

Rebecca also credits her ability to juggle a demanding Executive Director role with her family obligations to her husband's flexible schedule. At the conclusion of the interview Rebecca stated:

> People look at me as an example and say 'Wow, she can do it. Why can't you?' But a large part of the reason that I can do it is because of my husband and because of the amazing partnership that we have. A lot of your success is not going to be you alone, it is a family endeavor.

In American society, the individualist culture is so pervasive that success and failure is assumed to be the efforts of one unique individual. However, Rebecca highlights the critical role of partnership in any one individual's success and accomplishments.

Profile 3

Lauren worked for a period of ten years and then took an almost ten-year absence from work to be a stay-at-home mom. Through the course of the interview, it became clear that three main factors that contributed to Lauren's decision: a new manager at work, a financial analysis, and a personal desire to spend more time with her young children.

Perhaps the factor that played the largest role in Lauren's decision to leave the workplace was her personal financial situation:

> My husband and I looked at what I was paying for childcare versus what I was making, and the difference wasn't that great. It was going to be a net loss of $500 dollars a month. For $500 dollars a month…there wasn't even a strong financial incentive to work at the time.

One of Lauren's main sources of income during this time was her husband's salary, and this financial support gave Lauren an option to consider staying home with the children. It is important to acknowledge the role that Lauren's husband's salary plays in her decision because many times a professional woman's decision to take an extended leave from the workforce is a financial decision rather than a purely emotional decision.

Another main factor that influenced her decision to leave the workforce was her uncertain job environment. Lauren describes how,

> At that time there [were] a lot of changes happening in my office. My supervisor was going to be leaving. There were a lot of things that the head of the agency was going to be changing. A new person coming in… I wasn't thrilled about the direction that some things were [going].

There was extensive turnover in Lauren's workplace environment. Workplace turnover always causes stress. As soon as a new person comes on board, existing staff are immediately put under pressure as they try to adjust to the new hire's expectations, communication style, and work-style. This change creates a hectic workplace environment that is in constant adjustment, while existing employees struggle to form new relationships or manage existing relationships with the new hire. It is not surprising that Lauren made the decision to leave work during this transitional period.

Finally, Lauren's desire to spend more time at home with her children was also a factor that helped convince her to leave work:

> Although I really liked the woman who was taking care of my son…she would tell me things like, 'He did this today!' and [I thought]… 'Why is that okay that you know that he did that?' I wanted him to be… doing stuff with me.

Lauren is describing an emotional desire to be closer to her children and not to miss out on important moments of childhood, a feeling that may resonate with many young

mothers today. While an emotional desire to be with her children was not the most important factor that convinced Lauren to leave the workforce, it is still a significant element. However, it was Lauren's financial situation that enabled her to explore the possibility of leaving work in order to take on a larger parenting role.

The decision many women make to reenter the workforce after an extended absence can often be a financial decision. When speaking with Lauren, it became clear that this was the case: "And I knew how much money we had…it just became clear as I started looking at all those things." She describes how her children were receiving financial aid to help cover the costs of a private Jewish day school education. She felt comfortable accepting this financial aid when she was raising her children full-time in addition to helping with the school as a deeply committed volunteer. However, once her son began attending school every day, Lauren describes how she began to feel guilty accepting the financial aid now that she had space in her schedule to begin working again. Lauren, like many mothers, took into account the new opening in her schedule, as well as the additional income that she could receive as major factors which influenced her decision to return to work.

SECTION III: Adopting an Assertive Leadership Style

Many professionals, men and women alike, mistakenly believe that they will be able to significantly increase their salary through promotions and raises once they have accepted their initial offer of employment. Unfortunately, this does not usually hold true in reality.

Since the nonprofit sector is typically very resource constrained, significant raises are increasingly difficult to obtain. In addition to the time-intensive promotion process within many nonprofit organizations, there is often a larger group of stakeholders that need to approve each promotion. It is not uncommon for a new appointee to have to be approved by not only the executive professional leadership, such as the Executive Director and Assistant Director, but also the Board of Directors and lay leadership. Understanding the incredibly time consuming and difficult process for promotions within the nonprofit sector highlights the importance of the initial salary negotiation as a critical tool for future upward mobility.

Author Heather Joslyn, in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, makes a clear case for how important the initial negotiation is for the starting salary. It the article, Joslyn references Ms. Strull, a woman who has 25 years of experience in the nonprofit sector as well as her own recruiting company. Strull makes the point, "Too many employees -- especially women -- make the mistake of accepting a low starting salary with the intent of 'fixing' it later with raises" (Joslyn, 2003, p.1). There is no substitute for being assertive from the onset and negotiating a competitive starting salary.

Not only should women negotiate their initial salary, but they should be very specific and assertive in their demands. According to Strull, "Women have been brainwashed into thinking they have to accept whatever is offered to them" (Joslyn, 2003, p.1). "What we've experienced is that if women are assertive and say, 'No, I need X amount,' they're much more likely to get it" (Joslyn, 2003, p.1). According to her, it is not advisable to

accept an initial compensation offer. Rather, Strull is advocating that young women would do well to persist until they receive a second offer. A subtle point that Strull does not directly state is that the salary figure must be reasonable. This approach requires a significant amount of research in order to arrive at a starting salary that is competitive, and yet reasonable. According to Strull and other supporting research, persistence can be rewarding.

Salary negotiation is a natural part of the job search and ongoing professional environment. According to the author of "10 Negotiation Tips From Women in the Trenches" (CareerWomen, n.d.), the negotiating style of women may be slightly different from that of men—and that is acceptable. The author advocates to "keep your communication style direct by sharing plans, not concepts. Think collaboration not confrontation" (CareerWomen, n.d.). Many women are uncomfortable with the idea of confrontation. Therefore, the act of preparing to engage in a negotiation can be intimidating if women consider the conversation a pure confrontation in the traditional sense. Adopting a slightly different mindset and understanding the negotiation as collaboration may open the door for many women to negotiate in a more comfortable manner.

Given the level of intimidation many women feel at the prospect of negotiation, it can be useful to invest time in practicing negotiating with friends, colleagues, and mentors. As one expert says, "Practice makes perfect, so our advice: Practice, practice, practice" (CareerWomen, n.d.). For many women it can be strange to imagine practicing

negotiating because people often think of negotiating as an innate skill. However, the author of the article is encouraging readers to understand negotiating as a skill just like any other skill. The first step in practicing negotiation is to find a partner. One option that National Business Women's Resource recommends is to "use mentors to help refine your negotiation skills" (CareerWomen, n.d.).

A mentor can be a helpful guide for the negotiation process because traditional mentors are typically more senior in years of experience. A mentor may resemble the people who may be sitting across the table the actual negotiation. However, it is important to practice with different types of individuals. The author continues, "Given that you will be negotiating with both men and women, pick a [male and female] mentor ... to get perspective from both sides of the communication spectrum" (CareerWomen, n.d.). Practicing with both men and women can be advantageous because it helps to prepare a woman for either eventuality she may encounter down the road. In general, taking the time to practice negotiating can be very rewarding to help prepare for the initial salary negotiation.

A final key to a successful negotiation is an adequate level of preparation. Practicing negotiating with a partner is one significant aspect of preparation, but not the only way to prepare. The research component is another important part of negotiation. According to National Women's Resource, "do your research, gather together relevant information and if it's complicated, get outside expertise from a mentor or colleague" (CareerWomen, n.d.). It may be very productive to spend time researching the relevant labor market and

understanding comparable salaries within the field. The goal is to speak calmly and intelligently and bring up researched facts to justify a desired pay level. Understanding the numbers and developing an appropriate salary range takes time and effort but is an important part of the preparation that will lead to a successful negotiation.

Conclusion

Jewish organizations have a pronounced gender disparity. Although significant steps have been taken and improvements made in recent years, this situation is still under-recognized and under-addressed. The Jewish community cannot afford to perpetuate this disparity, because it means losing, alienating, or under-utilizing a large percentage of its most intelligent, effective, and creative professional leadership.

Organizations and individual men and women need to confront this pronounced gender gap. At the organizational level, leadership needs to accommodate better women's needs for healthier work-life balance, in terms of parental leave policies and more flexible working options. Women need to become more assertive in exercising their power, whether in negotiating their compensation packages or vying for higher-level executive positions.

As a tool to help women become more assertive, this guide recommends a number of steps female professionals can implement to take on positions of additional authority within the Jewish nonprofit sector. These recommendations are based on previous research, the interview findings presented above, and the executives' response to the final interview question: "Are there any words of advice that you would like to leave me

with?"

Recommendation 1: Don't Be Afraid to Promote Yourself

There is no one that can promote you better than yourself. There is no mentor, friend, relative, supervisor or colleague that can do a better job of promoting you than you can do for yourself. This initial step is a mental step—which is often the hardest. But realistically, you will not be able to act on any of the other recommendations before you take this mental step. Understanding this involves realizing that taking an active role in promoting your career does not make you a selfish or self-obsessed person. Instead, not being afraid to take an active role in your career progression can increase your happiness and influence, therefore enabling you to help many more people than you ever thought possible. Each of the other recommendations involves a form of you stepping up and taking action that can have remarkable benefits for your career in the future.

Recommendation 2: Get a Mentor/Sponsor and Utilize the Relationship Effectively

Establishing mentoring relationships can create lasting rewards, regardless of the type of mentoring relationship. Women interviewed for this study shared stories about personal, developmental, and emotional support that they received from many different types of mentoring relationships. Many women may not be aware that the simple act of having a mentor can dramatically improve the likelihood that they will gain access to a higher level within organizations. Additionally, the benefits of creating and cultivating a

mentoring relationship can actually be quantified in additional dollars earned.

Although there are benefits to all types of mentoring relationships, there is only one type of mentoring relationship that catapults women into more lucrative, executive-level positions: sponsorship. A sponsor is someone *inside* your company that "goes beyond simply providing feedback and advice to actually advocating for high potentials' promotion in deliberation meetings" (Carter & Christine, 2010, p.1). The best place to begin looking for a sponsor is at the top of your organization. According to several studies conducted by Catalyst, "What mattered was *where* the mentor was placed in the organization" (Carter & Christine, 2010, p.5). The results of the study illustrate that "Women who had mentors at the top got promoted at the same rate as men who had mentors at the top" (ibid., p.5). An individual willing to serve as a "sponsor" is harder to find, but the time and energy spent cultivating a relationship with a high-level individual who will actively advocate on your behalf will be invaluable.

Do not limit your understanding of a mentor as just someone who gives helpful advice. Advice can be useful for knowing how to successfully navigate certain situations and move your career forward. Using a mentor as a sponsor involves making specific requests from mentors such as asking them to make an introduction, recommend you for a promotion, or advocate for you for a salary increase. Asking for professional or personal advice is only one of the ways that you can use a mentor—expand your thinking.

It is not a serious deterrent if you do not have a great boss. Several of the women

interviewed in this research study never experienced a positive, encouraging boss or supervisor. These women still turned out to be successful. Your supervisor is out of your control, and relying on this individual for your career promotion or guidance may be ill advised. You need to take an active role in indentifying and developing relationships with other individuals within your organization who can help you when your direct supervisor fails to. To put it another way, a great boss is a bonus, but not an automatic or even a requirement for success.

A mentor is not the same thing as a friend. It is possible for mentoring relationships to develop into lifelong friendships, but it is not a requirement. Either directly or indirectly, many women place a high value on 'being liked' by others and therefore have a tendency to view most relationships as friendships. However, sometimes a successful mentoring relationship can operate more as a business relationship and less like a friendship, and that is acceptable.

Do the work to create a career development plan for yourself to use with your mentor. One executive-level women interviewed for this study said it best, "Don't expect anyone else to be creative about your career." By referring to the need to "be creative," she is explaining how it is important to take the time on your own to plan your career path and brainstorm about the next position you would like to accept. If you take the time to do this work ahead of time, a mentor can make much more of their limited time with you by accomplishing specific tasks that you need to move forward in your career.

Helpful Tips about Mentors & Sponsors

- **Mentors don't want to do the work for you.** A mentor does not want to have to make your career plan, identify positions that are of interest to you, or indentify companies that are of interest to you.
- **Be a giver.** A mentoring relationship is just like any other relationship. If you enter the relationship always thinking 'What can this person do for me?' the relationship may get tiresome for the other person. Instead it is beneficial to have a giver mentality and also think, 'What do I have to offer this person?'
- **You are going to be the pursuer.** Since you will likely be the person who benefits most from the relationship, it is a reasonable expectation that you should be the one putting in extra effort to keep in contact and keep up the relationship. You should be the one who reaches out, makes arrangements to meet, and travels the distance to be where it is convenient for your mentor to meet.
- **Do not get frustrated and give up contacting a person.** Your mentor will typically be extremely busy and difficult to contact. This is not a reflection on their personal relationship with you; it is just a reflection of their schedule.

Recommendation 3: Negotiate Your Initial Salary - No Excuses

Negotiating your salary will increase the level of respect which others show to you. A common misconception among women is that negotiation can make them appear overly aggressive and selfish to an organization. However, the opposite is more often the case.

Many organizational executives report that their respect greatly increases for an individual when that individual engages the organization in a salary negotiation. A person who comes to an organization and negotiates their salary in a calm, professional way and demonstrates that they have spent time doing research can earn the respect of the hiring executives.

Being creative is essential to salary negotiation in the nonprofit sector, which is slightly different from the for-profit sector. Often this sector can have severely limited resources, and sometimes a donor has donated funds for a position at a set amount. Because of this, entry and mid-level positions can often have a set salary, and organizations may not be able to increase that amount during negotiations. However, many nonprofits may have much more flexibility in benefits and other areas. Some common points that can be included in a nonprofit salary negotiation are vacation days, professional development opportunities, and flexible work hours. At many nonprofits, the reality is that entry and mid- level positions can often have a set salary that cannot be changed. The fixed nature of some salaries can be due to the fact that the nonprofit has scarce financial resources, or even because an outside donor has donated funds for a position at a set amount.

Understanding the nuance of salary negotiation in the nonprofit sector does not mean that you should avoid negotiating. You actually may get the salary that you have requested—especially with larger organizations that have more resources and therefore more freedom and ability to adjust salaries to recruit talented individuals. Organizations such as hospitals, universities, or large national or international nonprofit organizations may have

more flexibility in their ability to respond to your request for a higher initial salary. Salary negotiation can be characterized by several simple steps.

1-2-3 Step-by-Step Guide for How to Negotiate as a Woman

1. Get as Many Job Offers as Possible

The more job offers you have the more confident you will be, the more flexible you will be, and the more willing you will be to negotiate hard for what you want.

2. Practice Negotiating

Friends and colleagues can be a great resource as you help each other get comfortable asking for increased salary.

3. Do Research

Doing your research will involve extensive time on the computer as well as speaking to people within the organization and in other similar organizations.

4. Identify "Aspiration Point" and "Reservation Value"

An aspiration point is the highest value that you can reasonably expect to achieve. A reservation value is the lowest offer that you are willing to accept, when comparing to an alternative option (Thompson, 2009).

5. Expand the Pie

What non-salary items/benefits should be included in this conversation, and what items should be left out because they distract from the most important item, salary?

6. Be Persistent - Do Not Accept Initial Offer

There is no substitute for being persistent in terms of getting what you want. Be aware that you will likely not receive your request on the first try, and will have to ask several times in different ways.

Recommendation 4: Showcase Leadership Qualities

In today's society, the average person hears the word "leader" and typically thinks of a man. Whether the leader that comes to mind is a sport's coach, military general, or business icon, they will typically all be men. Figures such Steve Jobs, John Wooden, George Washington, or Jack Welch are some of the first to be mentioned when a group is asked who they think of when they hear the word "leader." Although this reality may be changing, gender bias exists, and it can exist very strongly within the board of directors serving a nonprofit. Because of this, female professionals will not naturally be associated with the leadership required for senior, executive-level positions without extra effort. One way to address this is for female professionals to go out of their way to showcase their leadership qualities within and outside their organizations. Showcasing leadership skills involves helping others see you as a leader.

How can professionals determine which projects are good for showcasing leadership qualities? Female professionals have to define several "leadership skills" in order to select which projects to accept and which to reconsider.

Leadership skills projects:

- Involve working with a team
- Involve working with outside lay leaders
- Require a lot of outside visibility within the community/ projects that will receive advertising or press from other organizations or news agencies
- Involve collaborating with partner organizations within your industry
- Involve collaborating with staff in other departments besides your own
- Require a high level of stress
- Require a significant number of committed hours
- Affect a large number of people within the organization or in the larger community
- Have a strict deadline and a lot of people depending on you
- May be slightly intimidating
- May require certain skills, or a higher level of skill, that you do not think you posses

There are two main approaches female professionals can use to be selected for projects that will showcase their leadership potential. One simple strategy is to raise your hand during presentations or meetings when an upcoming project is being discussed and state, "Yes, I would like to volunteer." This approach is the most simple, but it is often ignored. Female professionals may be afraid to speak up in a group setting. Or they may be

concerned that their present workload is too high to add any additional responsibilities. However, once a female professional understands that she will not automatically be considered for significant promotions until she is able to showcase her leadership skills, it becomes evident how important it is to volunteer for additional responsibilities.

There is one caveat. If a female professional is a new employee, she may not be in the room when people are discussing important projects coming up on the schedule. One approach is to speak with a supervisor ahead of time and state, "I am looking for additional projects and assignments where I can take on additional responsibility. Please consider me if anything comes to your attention." These are two approaches to ensure that female professionals are able to be selected for leadership projects whether they are in the room or absent from these critical discussions. When approached from these two directions, from the organizational and individual level, the gender disparity in Jewish organizations will begin to equalize, benefitting the entire Jewish community by increasing access to the wide talent pool of intelligent, driven, and resourceful female candidates.

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