

61259

# MOVING UP!

## A GUIDEBOOK FOR WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

13.05  
W325  
3736

COORDINACION DE HUMANIDADES



PROGRAMA UNIVERSITARIO DE  
ESTUDIOS DE GENERO  
"Centro de Informacion y Documentacion"

*Lorenia Parada-Ampudia*

### Judith Thompson Witmer, Ed.D.

#### HOW TO ORDER THIS BOOK

BY PHONE: 800-233-9936 or 717-291-5609, 8AM-5PM Eastern Time

BY FAX: 717-295-4538

BY MAIL: Order Department

Technomic Publishing Company, Inc.

851 New Holland Avenue, Box 3535

Lancaster, PA 17604, U.S.A.

BY CREDIT CARD: American Express, VISA, MasterCard

#### PERMISSION TO PHOTOCOPY-POLICY STATEMENT

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients, is granted by Technomic Publishing Co., Inc. provided that the base fee of US \$3.00 per copy, plus US \$ .25 per page is paid directly to Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. For those organizations that have been granted a photocopy license by CCC, a separate system of payment has been arranged. The fee code for users of the Transactional Reporting Service is 1-56676/95 \$5.00 + \$ .25



LANCASTER • BASEL

*1. Education's  
2. Administration  
3. Manual, etc.*

"PROGRAMA UNIVERSITARIO DE ESTUDIOS DE GENERO" - U.N.A.M.

With all the talk of cooperative planning, team management, site-based operations, and Total Quality Management, the question may be asked about why we are discussing hierarchy, rungs of ladders, and other such artificial structures? Those who believe that collegial management is the wave of the future might very well contend that the construct of hierarchy should be viewed only in historical perspective.

Traditional views, however, maintain that, as long as there is an organization, there will be tracks, levels, layers, and some kind of strata. Even what is termed a "flat" organization has a structure, a system of who is responsible for what and who is accountable to whom. Organizations of "equal" partners also maintain a structure because, even while the responsibilities of each partner are equal, they are different. For example, if Partner A is responsible for a particular task in the partnership, she is accountable to Partner B for the task being done; conversely, Partner B is accountable to Partner A for the tasks for which he is responsible.

The true pyramid model, in which authority is invested in *the* person at the top, is not as prevalent in today's organizational structure, yet this general pyramid paradigm will change very slowly. Today's administrator must be prepared to operate in various structures as they evolve, keeping an eye on participatory models yet keeping a foot on the rungs of the hierarchy model as used by most educational institutions.

## **Power, Authority, and Influence**

Power, authority, and influence are inherent in a hierarchical structure and are important to its operation. They are, however, three separate and distinct qualities that can come into play either individually or collectively. While with power or authority you can exert influence, and with influence you may be imbued with power or

authority as well, possessing one is no guarantee that the other two will follow. Many influential people prefer not to be powerful in the traditional sense of the word, and there are also many in power or with authority who have very little influence on others.

### Power

Power usually implies the ability to use force—not necessarily *using* the force, but having the *ability* to use the force if one so chooses. Power has also been defined as “the production of intended effects,” “the intended successful control of others” and “A’s control of what is needed and valued by B” (Bass, 1981, pp. 169–170). This control can be one of information, personal affection, prestige, or behavior. While generally viewed as negative, power can also be positive as in “the power of healing.”

Power has been categorized as reward power, coercive power, and legitimate power (Bass, 1981, p. 170). Its sources are said to be two: personal and positional. Those with personal power can grant to others affection, consideration, sympathy, recognition, and secure relationships (Bass, 1981, p. 171). Those with positional power can offer rewards guaranteed by the position of the person holding the power. Power of position implies having the ability to reward or punish others. This power can be wielded crudely and overtly or with great subtlety.

Both personal and positional power are used in work relationships. Personal power can be used in an open door policy and in sharing information with a favored few. The “old boys’ group” that stands together in the hallway or that meets for coffee with the department chairman every Wednesday morning are reflections of personal power. Taken to its extreme, personal power becomes charismatic, in which case there is an emotional bond between the leader and the followers, from going to hunting camp “with the guys” to the extreme of blind, total loyalty (as seen in the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas). Positional power can be used in evaluating personnel and may determine such factors as salary, preferential assignment of classes, and recommendations for promotion. Political favors are another example of positional power.

Power plays a large role in a hierarchy. For example, first line supervisors may have power because of their influence with even more powerful leaders higher up. This friendship and influence with their superiors gives the supervisors a better position with their subordinates because these favored supervisors are able to get rewards (or favors) for the subordinates.

Any position in the hierarchy provides a person with various sources of power—mobility, flex-time, decisions about who may attend conferences, provision of direct information, and, in some cases, protection of subordinates who may be vulnerable to the vagaries of the next higher level. (Anyone who has been an educator has seen examples of this use of power, although, often, we are too naive or too powerless to make an issue of it.)

There have been a number of recent studies on how people use power and what power means. One of the new ways of defining power is to categorize it in three ways:

- (1) *Power over*—the ability to create intended effects on other people through coercion, inducement, or influence over opinion
- (2) *Power within*—the spirit of life in which each person discovers or expands that individual’s own inherent value
- (3) *Power with*—the human interconnectedness in community, such as showing mutual respect, willingness to listen, developing the capacity of people to act and do together, and allowing for infinite differing (Desmond, 1993)

“Power with” is the aim of those with a leadership style of consensus and integration. It is the current “favorite” on the lecture circuit and is the power style most suited to systemic change in the schools.

### Authority

Authority in the traditional sense is thought of as “the right to command.” A person with authority is legitimized by virtue of the position held. Authority provides this legitimate power, which depends on the expectations of the group; for example, those in an academic department know what is expected of them and what is expected of the departmental chairman in their working relationship. Authority also specifies the area of freedom of action and interaction, for example, that of a building principal who has restricted authority within the building. The principal’s authority is clearly defined as being “everything that happens in this building.”

Authority, however, is not power. As part of its definition or understanding, authority does not have the force and coercion that power does. It can, however, be made legitimate through tradition, religion, and law. Authority holds status, but a status that can be revoked either by those who appointed the person invoked with the authority or by subordinates who refuse to obey the commands. Thus, authority, to be effective, depends upon *acknowledgment* by others of that



authority. As an example, an educational leader initially gains authority because of the position held; however, if either subordinates or superordinates ignore the authority, it is lost.

We all have seen examples of this loss of authority in the classroom: once a teacher is no longer viewed by the students as having authority and they observe that this teacher is not receiving the support of the principal, the students can, if they so choose, decide to make the classroom unmanageable. As we have also seen, the teacher whose authority is not supported does not usually remain in education. A principal can also lose authority, either by the teachers ignoring suggestions and directives or, more likely, by a superintendent who begins to deal directly with the teaching staff, reversing decisions of the principal. It doesn't take long before even more authority of the principal erodes, resulting in the staff losing respect for both the position of principal and for the person holding the position.

If you ever find yourself in a position in which you sense your authority is eroding, immediately start looking for the cause. Ask yourself these questions: Are you being inconsistent in your dealings with the staff? Is there someone on staff trying to undermine you? Is there a problem with the union? Is there an underlying problem that you cannot possibly know about?

To get to the root of the cause of your loss of authority, start documenting everything that happens. Don't become obsessive, just be diligent in keeping records. In addition, if there is someone on the staff who is absolutely discreet and whom you totally trust, talk to this person, but listen more than you speak. Don't reveal your fears; just ask if something is troubling the staff. Don't mention that you sense any loss of authority and be very careful what you do say because, unless the person is exceptional (and there are some who are, but not many), what you discuss will be shared with other staff members. If you suspect the superintendent is working against you, either deliberately or unwittingly, make an appointment to discuss your view of what is happening. Do not be confrontational and do not make any accusations. Begin by a review of the building goals and what you have been doing to achieve the goals, and then express that you are sensing roadblocks. Ask for assistance in trying to locate the trouble spots. If, after six months, you are still not getting the superintendent's backing, it might be time to ask her/his help in finding another principalship in another district. Again, do not ask for help in a defensive or accusatory tone. Strive to remain collegial. Say nothing that sounds final. By the close of this conversation, you should know where you stand.

## **Influence**

Influence is the strongest kind of leadership quality because it implies a reciprocal relationship between a leader and the followers, a relationship that is willingly offered by both sides. Bass (1981) defines it as "... the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they come to find desirable" (p. 9).

The administrator who leads by influence usually finds followers who are more loyal to the leader and the ideology and who will remain supporters until that ideology changes to one with which they do not agree. The leader who holds leadership through influence is often termed "transformational" and has the ability to move subordinates toward the acceptance of the goals of the leader so that the goals become the goals of both the leader and the followers. Administrators who lead by influence are usually more open to systemic change in school reform. They see that change occurs not because of edict, but because of belief.

## **Who's In Charge?**

While the question "Who's in charge?" is frequently asked in jest, the intent of the question is quite serious. Most people in any situation want to know who has the last say, who has the power of veto, who is ultimately responsible or accountable, and who will give me the answer I want to hear?

Women in positions of leadership hear the question "Who's in charge?" being asked of them more often than men do, because the questioner usually assumes that a woman in any position is not the person who has the final say. Particularly in instances of student discipline, male parents are more likely not to accept the authority of a female administrator. During my tenure as a high school principal, when a male parent disagreed with a disciplinary action, he would invariably ask, "Who's in charge?" When he wouldn't like my plain and simple response, "I am," he would rephrase the question, "I mean, who's *really* in charge?"

Being in charge implies more than dealing with discipline, although disciplining students is always a major concern of the school board that hires a female principal. Disciplining students may be a nuisance, but it is not difficult if you have an established process of "being in charge." Try to view handling discipline as an opportunity to display your leadership. These daily discipline skills will help prepare you for larger challenges that will present even broader



leadership opportunities. For example, if a situation arises on a building level and you can handle it, do so. Don't look around for help from the athletic director or call in a panic to the district office. Deal with the situation and, if conditions warrant, keep the superintendent informed of what is happening and how you have handled (or are handling) the problem. Stay calm, take charge and keep everyone informed.

I remember clearly when, one morning after I had made the announcements, I was told, "Something is happening in the halls." I headed out and turned the corner to the main corridor only to be faced with a hall full of students sitting in silent protest and refusing to move. I asked adults standing nearby if they knew what the protest was about. They informed me of an alleged incident the night before, following a sports event, in which a teacher was said to have struck a student. As I was being briefed, several teachers were trying unsuccessfully to dislodge the students. This "strong arm" pressure was not effective, so I decided that the most expedient action would be to use the public address system to ask the students to disband. I made an announcement that the students would have ten minutes to clear the halls and return to their classes, after which time they would be charged with class cutting. I also told them that I would meet with those who were directly involved in the incident that had precipitated the sit-in and that these students should report to the auditorium.

Following the announcement, I then called the superintendent and reviewed the events at hand. He concurred with my actions and added that he would be there in a few minutes to join the meeting. We met with the students, the first step of many in the ensuing investigation and due process. After the superintendent left, the media descended with their cameras and microphones. I would not allow them in the building but agreed to be interviewed (1) at noon at the edge of the parking lot and (2) after school in my office. I learned, through this event and others that followed, that discipline events and crises were not all that different, once the process was established: (1) take immediate necessary action, (2) gather facts, (3) treat all involved with respect, (4) keep everyone informed, (5) make a decision, and (6) follow through.

Because school dilemmas are unlike any other because of dealing with children and adults in a protected environment, you must be very careful not to make decisions too hastily, yet you must be perceived as decisive. If you can act quickly in the face of the immediate action without making a final decision that could be compromised by facts and circumstances not yet known to you, you will be known as someone who is "in charge." Above all else, remember to remain (at

least visibly) calm. Do not make rash decisions or reveal by your body language or facial expression that you are not in control of the situation. Very few others will offer advice for fear of being drawn into any wrong action you may take. If there are other administrators in the building and there is time, certainly you should confer with them, but for immediate reaction to a crisis, react at once, with the best judgment you have.

One thing I learned during my first year as an administrator is always to allow for "saving face," whether that of a student or a teacher. Allow for choice, time for response, and for those involved to keep their dignity (even though they may not be acting in a very dignified manner). Note that, during the sit-in, the students were not "ordered immediately to clear the hall." To do so in such a situation, without the resources to enforce the order, would present a challenge to the students. By offering them a choice, you acknowledge the students' concerns. In all dilemma situations, allow time to thoroughly investigate. Remember, you are dealing with people's reputations and futures, as well as with the immediate incident.

Physical size need not be a factor in being in charge. If you take charge calmly and firmly, do not buckle under pressure, and let all sides be heard, both in a public forum and in private, you will definitely be seen as having the situation under control.

### **Subordinates and Superordinates**

Let's say that you're finally in a position of authority. You have the technical skill you need and some experience as a group leader. You've taught, you've chaired, you've organized, and you've presented. Now you are ready to administrate. Regardless of your position and title, you are going to be dealing with people, both as a superordinate and as a subordinate.

#### **Working with Subordinates**

As an administrator in a new position you might want to consider the following suggestions offered by Linda Hill (1992), an associate professor of organizational behavior and human resource management at the Harvard Business School:

- (1) Spend time building trust.
- (2) Demonstrate by example.
- (3) Develop effective relationships by working side by side on projects.

- (4) Be accessible.
- (5) Concentrate on the working relationship, not personal friendship.
- (6) Don't respond defensively to challenges and criticisms.
- (7) Lead by persuasion, not directives.
- (8) Use participative management style.
- (9) Communicate clearly and in a caring way. Remember that communication works two ways.
- (10) Use positive reinforcement.

Many new administrators make the mistake of trying to do everything themselves. They are afraid that, if they delegate, they will be viewed as not being able to do the job themselves. You must remember that, as an administrator, you are not expected to do everything yourself. An administrative position is designed to be one of delegation because the tasks of the position are greater than one single person can possibly do. Thus, you need to assign duties that can be carried out by others in the system but for which you accept ultimate responsibility. In this age of accountability by the public you serve, it is even more important to assign tasks that can be completed by others but that will contribute to the overall whole of administrating the educational institution. For example, you can make the following assignments:

- Something as simple as opening your mail is a task that your secretary can do.
- Special programs should have your supervision through initiating the project, giving general guidance, monitoring, evaluating, and approving the final product; the actual planning and writing should be carried out by the teaching staff, assisted by aides and any specialist needed.
- While you may hold the responsibility for major reports, this is another area in which you can assign others to collect the information and compile it.
- Attending meetings can be delegated if they are not meetings for which your attendance is mandatory. Not only will it take less of your time to hear the report of your subordinate who attends, it also could be a very valuable experience for the person you are sending. It gives her/him exposure and networking opportunities.

Be clear on the job tasks in your subordinates' job areas so that you can delegate any task that falls in her/his area. When you assign the

task, give the person complete authority for the entire task and then step out of the way. Monitor the progress, however, because the accountability for the task may be yours.

There are many advantages to delegating. Not only does it give you time for more valuable tasks that you must do, but it also helps the employees gain added experience in areas to which they might not otherwise be exposed. They also have an opportunity to gain leadership skills and to discover talents they may not know they have.

There are, of course, certain tasks that should not be delegated. These include the following:

- The administrator in charge (of the department, the building, the district, the university) should be the only one to decide what should be delegated. No one else should delegate over another's jurisdiction.
- Performance evaluations should be conducted only by the administrator in charge.
- Administrative action against school employees cannot be delegated from the immediate supervisor to others.
- Planning in the area for which the supervisor is responsible must be done by that person; however, advice and information can be supplied by others.
- Any area of confidentiality cannot and must not be delegated.

According to Jerry Herman (1992), "Delegation is part art and part science. To delegate wisely, use 'science' to determine what, how, and when to delegate. Then employ the 'art' to get your subordinates to commit themselves to the delegated functions or tasks and to accept responsibility for the results" (p. 27).

### **Working with Superordinates**

Even as an administrator, you will have a supervisor or superordinate, someone (or ones) to whom you are responsible. While your relationship to others differs between being a subordinate and a supervisor, do not forget that the basic rules and courtesies are the same, and you should assume a posture of both respect and equality when meeting with your superordinate. The fact that you are both in administrative positions places you in a situation of "we" rather than "you and I." Some deference for your supervisor's role should be shown, but you may also need to remind yourself that you are more alike than different and are working toward the same goals of the educational institution.

When you meet in your supervisor's office, do not sit until you are



invited to. If you are given a choice of a place to sit, choose a chair that places you "at level" with the supervisor. If possible, avoid sitting across from her/him at the desk, if only because you will unconsciously assume a posture of being called to the office. If there are two chairs at right angles, choose that spot, or if there is a small conference table, position yourself beside or at a right angle to your supervisor.

If the meeting is held in your office, make sure you have arranged a comfortable area and do whatever is necessary not to meet across your desk (unless you want to set up a "you vs. me" scenario). Make sure you are ready in advance—desk in order, jacket donned, things generally tidied. Rise to greet your guest and offer her/him the seat you have designated. If she/he chooses to sit elsewhere, follow the lead and don't make an issue of the seating arrangement. After a brief exchange of pleasantries, get to the purpose of the meeting.

Wherever the site of your meeting, be prepared with whatever materials you may need. Have your papers or presentation organized so that no time is wasted. Stay focused on the task at hand. Speak clearly and forthrightly. Keep a log of meetings and document all that you do; not that you need to keep a detailed journal, but it is wise to keep any written communication or records of work. Particularly if the purpose of the meeting is to determine further action or next steps, be sure that you are clear as to the intent of your supervisor, and do not close the meeting until you have written down and reviewed what you have agreed upon.

If you are in a vulnerable or uncertain position, it is a good idea to follow the meeting with a written memo summarizing the points covered and listing agreed-upon action to be followed. Ask for a response if you feel that you may not be completely clear on something. If you think you have it down pat, you could close with a pleasant, "Let me know if this isn't the way you see it." And then read or state the main points as you see them.

Always follow through in a timely fashion. Do what is expected and avoid delays. If something unexpected causes a delay, let your supervisor know in advance the problem(s) you are encountering, and ask for an extension of time. Don't wait until close to the deadline to request or announce a delay. As a female, you don't want to give any opportunity for such comments as, "Women are always late." (We know research does not bear this out, but who among us wants to be placed unnecessarily on the defensive by reminding people of this? Save such a comment for a lighter moment!)

Bear in mind that research shows that, if subordinates have a

positive attitude, their ability is more likely to be noticed early on. According to David Day, assistant professor of psychology at Penn State University,

Supervisors gain a bounty of information about subordinates by noticing how they say things as much as what they say. . . . We studied the association between supervisor and subordinate in the early stages. Contrary to traditional belief, leaders in the workplace quickly establish a different working relationship with each individual subordinate. They don't interact with all subordinates in the same way. (Blaum, 1993, p. 11)

Even if your working relationship is different with each subordinate and, in turn, with your superordinate, you can establish a good working relationship with all of them by being considerate of them and their tasks and by doing the work that is expected of you.

### Gender and Supervision

In the highly successful *Women in Power* (Cantor and Bernay, 1992), Diane Feinstein, U.S. Congresswoman, states, "Power is a synthesis of the desire to make the world a better place and the experience of learning how to make it happen" (p. xvi). This is a much "softer" view of power and one with which most women are comfortable because women tend to want to improve whatever it is they are charged with doing and are willing to learn how to do it better. That is one of the reasons why women are more comfortable than men with supervision and evaluation. First of all, women come from a background of nurturing and caring. This, combined with the desire to make the world a better place, provides a good basis for the role of supervising. Complimenting also comes easily to women and they don't mind beginning a dialogue with an informal kind word or two. Or maybe it is just that women remember the usually stiff and artificial stance of most of the male administrators we have known, and we are determined not to make others as uncomfortable as we remember being.

Gender cannot be separated from supervision because the supervisors and those being supervised are not genderless. There is a certain dynamic between a female supervisor and a female subordinate just as there is between any of the other three gender combinations. Add to that the different personalities of each player, and an individual scenario could be written for each pair. However, there are certain generalities that can be made, based on a fundamental prin-



principle: people tend to like people like themselves. We immediately identify with people like us. We are comfortable with them. We understand them. We approve of them. We hire them . . . and we rate them higher than we do those who are not so much like us. Total objectivity in supervision is a myth; therefore, as administrators, we should acknowledge that we may be treating some very excellent people unfairly and then make a conscious effort to be more objective.

The fact that men and women are different and that they cannot view each other the way they view one of their own gender is probably the main reason why being evaluated by a person of the opposite sex so often is viewed as unfair. When a male supervisor is doing an evaluation of a female, what he sees is that she is not doing things the way he would; as a result, he does not rate her performance as highly as he rates a male who does things the way the supervisor himself does. While there are many exceptions (and no doubt every male administrator could give an example in which he rated a woman higher than he did a comparable man), in general, a man does not look as favorably upon the work of the women he supervises because the style, process, or product are not what he is used to. (The reverse is also true. Women usually rate other women more highly because they better identify with what they see being done.)

Another hurdle a woman administrator faces if she has a male supervisor is that he may feel threatened because she probably had to work harder than a man to get where she is and she is likely to be "of disturbingly high calibre" (Nicholson, 1985, p. 114). Such beliefs, that women must work twice as hard to get half as far and that women must be twice as good as a man even to be considered for any given position, have almost become clichés. The fact that these statements are trite, however, does not lessen their basis in fact or perception.

As a woman administrator, you will find that being a supervisor places you in double jeopardy: (1) The men you supervise won't like being *evaluated* by you, even though they may not mind, and may even like, being supervised by a woman and (2) men are more likely than women to "go over your head" and object to your evaluation. This is particularly prevalent in higher education and in the secondary principalship in public education. As the majority of top echelon positions are still held by men, the woman supervisor (principal, department chair, dean) will find herself in the unenviable position of being squeezed both from above and below. Men aren't as likely to voice "gender bias" but will attack the woman's *ability* to be in a supervisory position. In other words, men who believe they have been unfairly evaluated will not claim that the woman is biased, but

that she is lacking in ability to evaluate. On the other hand, women are more likely to claim "gender bias."

To avoid these situations as much as possible, be consistent in your supervisory process, be frequent in your informal evaluations, and keep good records. You need to make a concerted effort to be fair. Below are some specific points to keep in mind:

- (1) Don't stereotype any person or group, whether by gender, age, culture, or physical appearance.
- (2) Concentrate on specific, *observable* behavior tied to the institutional goals.
- (3) Limit the evaluation to present, not past, performances. Don't let a previous rating, positive or negative, affect the current one.
- (4) Evaluate performance against previously agreed-upon goals for the person being rated.
- (5) Strike a balance in looking at performance since the last evaluation. If past performances have not been good, don't overpraise if a very recent task has been carried out well since this recent one may be an exception. Certainly, give praise, but don't let this rule your rating.
- (6) Give constructive feedback. Make *specific* suggestions for improvement.
- (7) Keep personal feelings out of the evaluation process. Accept the fact that not everyone is fond of everyone else.
- (8) Don't apologize for the evaluation. You can be tactful and even sympathetic to the conditions that resulted in a poor evaluation, or you can express regret that the job performance does not meet expectations, but don't accept the *blame*.
- (9) Prepare for the meeting. Do not assume you will remember what points you want to make. Have your notes ready.
- (10) Conclude the performance review by summarizing what has been discussed and by planning the next steps.

## Politics

Politics is endemic in any organization. Studies of politics in educational institutions, however, are a fairly recent phenomenon and, as such, have not yet been definitively classified (Bacharach and Mundell, 1993). This is not to say that politics is any less a factor in education, but rather that there has not been scientific analysis of the forces of politics in education.

Bacharach and Mundell (1993) cite Dahrendorf who places organizational politics into two groups: (1) utopians who view social organizations as held together by a consensus of values and (2) rationalists who view social organizations as rife with conflict and structural contradiction (p. 425). These researchers' own findings are that political analyses should primarily focus on contests between interest groups, which "emerge when individuals realize that they have common objectives and may be able to collectively exert enough influence to sway a decision that they could not sway individually" (p. 430).

There are also many subgroups and many individual interests or needs at play in the political structure. Most of the real action, Bacharach and Mundell (1993) claim, takes place in groups (or subgroups) because "some individuals have neither political personalities nor access to power . . . ; . . . individuals . . . need the protection [of] groups . . . ; . . . groups provide their members with . . . breadth and depth of information necessary for their own political survival . . ." (pp. 431–432).

The reality of politics is that various interest groups must be accommodated in order to avoid irresolvable conflicts. The issues may change, but the struggles are ongoing because politics is based on concern over issues. Politics is very closely tied to power, authority, and influence and is, in fact, the process that occurs when the person or group who has power, authority, or influence takes action to achieve a goal or effect a result.

As an administrator, you are political to the extent that you are in a position of authority and influence. The skill comes in learning how to use that authority and how not to be taken advantage of by those who want to make use of your political power.

It would be unrealistic to advise new administrators not to become involved in politics. You cannot be apolitical in an organization. This does not mean that you choose sides but that you learn, as quickly as possible, the intermingling of the politics of the board, the community, and of the organization itself. Study the players, the issues, the background of the organization, and its culture, and document your findings. Read articles and books on the subject of organizational politics and the power of politics; there are any number to be found in the business management and political science sections of the library. You'll be surprised at how much you'll learn and how naive you have been. As always, your best move is to be prepared, and, while there is no substitute for experience, you need to be constantly alert as to what is happening around you.

## Promotion: "Up from the Ranks" or "Outsider"?

The issue of how to prepare yourself for advancement has been addressed in Chapter 1. Heed the suggestions given there, whether you are seeking a promotion from within the system or are free to relocate. While your chances for promotion are statistically higher if you are free to move, studies have shown that, when women change administrative positions, they are more likely to move within their present institution, whereas men are more likely to be recruited from outside the institution. Further, these studies show that most administrators tend to have a lifetime involvement in one occupation, and many expect progress in that career to continue—within one institution (L. Johnson, n.d.). While Johnson's research focused on higher education, the same results appear to hold for public education, with the possible exception of the position of school superintendent. Department chairs, district supervisors, and principals tend to remain in the school districts in which they began their administrative career; assistant principals are most likely to become principals in the school district if they are in a building in which the principal is promoted or retires. Usually, if the principal plans to be in the position for at least ten (more) years, the assistant, after three to five years, will search elsewhere for "a school of her/his own."

Recently, much has been written criticizing educational institutions for not providing opportunities and career paths for "prospective candidates," particularly for women faculty who appear to have qualities for administrative leadership. Obviously, more also needs to be done on the state level, and, to that purpose, some states have established recruitment programs called LEAD. As of 1993, eighteen states had various programs in place to encourage women to prepare for administrative positions: Arizona, California, Connecticut, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, and Vermont.

Most people will advise you to begin your administrative career anywhere but in the district in which you are a member of the faculty, because the adjustment is too difficult. You personally may adjust very well, but it is often difficult for the other faculty members in your own institution to adjust to you in another role. No doubt, nearly every person who has ever considered an administrative position has been given that same advice, yet very few heed it. The few who do are "long-range wise." They are viewing their *next* move, fully aware that their chances to move beyond the first administrative post will in-



crease greatly outside their own institution. The old adages that "A prophet goes unsung in his own country" and "You're only considered an expert if you're from out of town" didn't become part of folklore without having some substance in truth.

### **Up Through the Ranks**

If you do come up through the ranks, there will be an initial "honeymoon phase" in which you will be surrounded by well-wishers, more than half of whom are very sincere in offering their good wishes. For a while, you are the symbol that there can be life after the classroom, and there may even be a flurry of activity as a few faculty also decide to pursue credentials for an administrative post. Your supporters will count on you for (their) "truth and justice," and they will believe in their hearts that things (at least for them) will become better under your guidance. And, indeed, things may improve for them. (This is one of those basic examples of politics with a dash of the fundamental truth that people support people like themselves.) Soon, a coterie of "your people" will begin to form and, as your authority, power, and influence increase, so will theirs. Those who consider themselves your people will believe that they do not have to ask for favors because they know you will do things the right (and their) way. Those who do not particularly like you personally will lie low for awhile and just do their jobs, waiting for you to make a mistake.

Before too long, something controversial will occur. It might be as simple as a classroom observation or a student disciplinary problem, or it could be something as major as a curriculum change or even school restructuring. The battle lines will be drawn. Everything anyone ever knew (or thinks he knows) about you or any grudge anyone holds will be thrown out as a criticism of whatever action you are taking on the issue. You no doubt will survive this skirmish, and, if the result is a positive one (especially if you can negotiate a "win-win" result), you will be accepted by more of the staff. However, if you should lose, the defeat will be more difficult for you to cope with if you have lost in front of your long-term colleagues. Don't look for sympathy. Pick up the pieces and learn from the experience. You can rise above losing a skirmish or two, but, if you sense a real battle is at stake, you need to rethink your leadership style and/or look for a position elsewhere.

### **The Outsider**

If, on the other hand, you are new to the district, you arrive with a

clean slate. Because you are an unknown, the staff will initially be wary. You will be watched closely and every decision you make will be debated, weighed, and judged in the faculty room. You have an advantage because you know more about yourself than they do, and they cannot know what your moves will be. At the same time, you are also at a disadvantage because you have to "prove" yourself anew every day. You are not riding at all on your past proven excellence because nobody knows about it. Unless you make a real blunder, however, the general assumption will be that, because you are credentialed, you are qualified.

### **Female, New Kid, or Old Hand**

Now, if we throw into this equation the fact that you are female, the "burden of proof" that you can do the job will occur daily. People will wait not for you to make a decision, but for you to make a mistake. Trust in and loyalty to you will come very slowly, and you cannot let your guard down, ever. Be pleasant, even make occasional jokes at your own expense, but never stop looking over your shoulder. If you find yourself in a dilemma, solve it yourself. Do not go running to *your* superordinate or to the top person (unless it is only short of a catastrophe and has ramifications for the entire operation). Do not ask for favors. If you can't reach the light fixture, in a manner of speaking, get a ladder. If you have a problem with a parent, deal with it. If you have a defiant student, don't lose your temper and don't raise your voice. In all cases, react calmly and be decisive. Use good judgment and you'll earn the respect of your faculty. Above all, be honest and be fair. With honesty and fairness, you will make your mark.

Following is a list, adapted from a collection compiled by Edwin H. Schiller (*Strengthening Support*, 1992) of important things for any entry-level administrator to know, whether new to the building or just new to administration:

- (1) Become familiar with policy manuals, regulations, terms, and conditions of negotiated agreements.
- (2) Know the availability of student support programs and the personnel responsible.
- (3) Be aware of the legal processes related to student and staff personnel issues, especially that of due process and discipline procedures.
- (4) Know effective staff evaluation procedures, both in general terms and in relation to your institution's practices.
- (5) Understand the relationships between administrators and students, parents, and staff.



- (6) Be alert to ways of involving the professional staff.
- (7) Strive to develop general organizational skills.
- (8) Most importantly, know when it is time for the next advancement.
- (9) Be prepared to move.

### **So You Still Think You Want to Stay?**

The days of moving from the mailroom to the boardroom are long gone. Your chances of moving from faculty member to CEO are just as slim. Do not have any illusions about this. No matter how good you are—and perhaps even because you are good—you will not be viewed as having the right experience, credentials, or personality to do the “big” job. This is especially true if you are a woman. You will always be perceived as a teacher, even if you have performed outstandingly as an administrator. Most people cannot readjust their perceptions well enough to see you as a credible candidate, regardless of the honors you have garnered, the books you have written, the programs you have implemented or the improvements you have made in the institution. In your home school, you will always be “Mrs. Johnson, the home economics teacher” or “Oh, that Ms. (Mzzzzz) Stanton who always had a lot of kids hanging around.” There are cases where “home boys” (and a few girls) ended their careers at their first educational institutions, but, almost without exception, they had left and were then invited to return. It seems that a rite of passage must occur, that you must go somewhere else to prove your worth, before you can return as the conquering hero(ine).

If you are aspiring to the top administrative position, be ready to move because you are too well known to be considered CEO material on your home turf. Regardless how pure your reputation, there will be people on the search committee who erroneously remember (1) a piece of gossip, (2) the poor grade you “gave” their child, (3) something you wore, or (4) something you were thought to have said. You will not be able to defend yourself because the doubts these issues raise will not be openly discussed with you.

Don’t discount jealousy. Some of those who were pleased to see you in a middle management position will resent your ascent to anything higher. You are a reminder of what they have not achieved. You are a symbol of what they have not accomplished (whether or not they ever wanted to is beside the point when envy is involved). And they think everything came to you so easily! They would rather not acknowledge the sacrifices you made in your personal life to prepare yourself for

promotion. No matter how hard you may have tried to be fair and just, you have angered some people along the way.

I am reminded of the teacher assigned to me for classroom observation and evaluation several years ago. He was a “long timer” and quite secure in his position. His classroom performance that particular day was less than mediocre. He barely went through the motions. What disturbed me was that he made no effort to do a “good” lesson, even with an observer in the room. Not that I wanted a “canned” lesson to do when the principal visits, but his classroom performance wasn’t even close to being satisfactory. The dilemma lay in the fact that he was a school board member in a neighboring district, a district in which I was an applicant for the position of superintendent. Thus, I found myself in a situation made for a case study but not a comfortable real-life situation. I gave what I thought was an objective evaluation, complete with one or two areas marked “unsatisfactory.” Need I relate the conclusion? I use this example to illustrate what can happen in your own district because any person you supervise or whose child you once taught can create an unfavorable situation for you when you apply for another position, in your home district or elsewhere.

Another source of enmity can come from a fellow administrator. For example, if you are a faculty member whose immediate supervisor would become your subordinate if you attained a certain administrative position, you probably cannot count on that person’s support. More likely, she/he would work behind the scenes against your candidacy, particularly if you had had any disagreements when she/he was your supervisor. She/he will not forget *any* problem you may have caused, and she/he will discount, if not discredit, your achievements.

If you are hoping to be promoted from within, probably the worst position you can be in is that of assistant superintendent or vice-president. Unless the CEO is (truly and not just tokenly) your mentor and is sincerely grooming you for her/his position, you should actively pursue (run to) a position at another institution. If the current chief senses, in any way, that you are hungry for her/his position, she/he may take perverse delight in pretending to take you into her/his confidence, only to be setting you up for failure. If, in addition, you are good in your position and she/he resents the “good press” you are getting, watch yourself. You are in a most precarious position. Your only chance of survival is to find a position elsewhere. If the jealousy has turned to animosity (either overt or covert), you may even want to think twice before you ask for support. Weigh your moves very carefully. You may need to decide which is riskier—to apply for other positions without telling your present chief and risk her/his anger or

hurt, which might lead to vindictive action against your candidacy, or to tell her/him and risk her/his sabotaging you by making some well-placed phone calls to the search consultant.

These frightening possibilities are mentioned here not to discourage you, but to urge you to use caution. You, as a woman, are in a vulnerable position and even if you have the courage to confront your superordinate with your concerns, you risk being labeled "a paranoid female" or, worse, being subjected to gender-biased crude epithets.

### Letting Go

Changing positions will affect more than the work you do, the title you hold, and the office in which you are placed. When you move from one position to another, there will be significant changes in tasks, behaviors, norms, and values, and even though you want the change in role, the fact that it is a change will create at least minimal stress and varying degrees of strain, termed by Bredeson (1993) *role strain* (pp. 45–46). This role strain is distinguished from general stress in that it is the individual's *subjective* responses to the causes of stress (anxiety, discomfort, uneasiness, perplexity, and/or general distress). The role strain might manifest itself in many ways, such as feelings of having lost control, fear of failure, self-doubts about personal competence and ability to be successful, impatience and frustration, concerns about loss of professional identity, and increased feelings of uncertainty brought about by significant changes in professional worklife. Letting go of one set of professional functions and identities while learning others can be risky, wearisome, and frustrating, so don't be surprised when you feel let down.

These anxiety expectations may come as a surprise because the excitement of a promotion to a new position is a very positive experience. It is almost always a move by choice and usually a move that has been a long-range goal, a goal well-planned for and painstakingly prepared for. You are not expecting stress or strain, so its appearance is disturbing. While the strain will be less noticeable by those who are eager for an administrative position and who feel confident in their abilities, there is still a lurking fear of the unknown.

Every change incurs risk. You are leaving a position over which you had control. You no doubt devoted a great deal of time and energy, dedication and talent, skills and expertise to building the perfect college preparatory math program, achieving a drug-free school, or

writing foolproof grants. You enjoy the relationships you have established with your colleagues and with the students. Nobody questions you because you are a proven quality. You have control of your area, and you know no one can coach the softball team better than you can. This is an example of "loss of control" role strain.

Fear of failure is another example of role strain resulting from role transitions. This fear of failure (and its cousin, fear of success) is tied to self-doubt. "Will this new position be what I expect it to be?" and "Will I be able to meet the expectations of the institution?" are the two main questions of fear of failure. These self-doubts are not an indication that you do not have the skills, but rather are nagging thoughts that lead to second-guessing your decision to make a change in your life. Again, you know you have been successful in the past. Read your list of accomplishments and then match that list to the job description of the new position. This should help ease your anxiety. You know you have the skills to do the job. (See Chapter 7 for more on "fear of failure.")

Loss of identity is the third role strain. This process is usually more pronounced and longer lasting than either fear of control or fear of failure. "Dis-identification," as loss of identity is termed, is the process of ceasing to think of yourself in a former role. Most professionals very closely identify their "personal" selves to the "professional" selves, and these identities have been built layer woven into layer. Self-identities are built up gradually over the years by internalizing the meanings and expectations of many roles played, and the greater the centrality of a previous role to individual self-identity, the higher is the amount of role strain experienced. In other words, for those who most closely identify their personal selves with their professional roles, the greater is the strain of leaving that role.

To help avoid the role strain, begin to project yourself into the position you are next seeking, rather than continue to portray your present role. Start by dressing for the position you expect to attain. You will sense some of this change of view on your role as you shift your focus while taking administrative courses in your preparatory program, but additional shifting needs to be consciously made through your own initiative.

For example, my graduate students tell me that, as they progress through the certification program, they find themselves thinking less and less like a classroom teacher and more and more like their principal. One student in particular smiled as he related his once strong ties to and leadership in the powerful teachers' union in his district. He was the strident voice in negotiations and in faculty meetings. Now, his colleagues wonder why he is silent and only smiles



when controversial issues are raised and criticism of the principal occurs in the faculty room. He said that, even though he is not interested in seeking an administrative post for several years yet, he is thinking more like an administrator. The same is true for those who are already administrators and who are seeking deanships or superintendencies. As you prepare for your change of career, many of you will also change your perspective and find that your interests change as well.

### **Separation Pangs**

For some, it is wrenching to reconcile the management and leadership skills being learned in university classrooms with the still engrained attitudes of current positions. You may find yourself philosophically torn between what you now do and what you expect you will have to do as an administrator or in another administrative position with different responsibilities. It may be that you have found a "comfort level" or a "commitment to a belief" in what you are doing, or you may truly love the tasks and functions of your present position, not being able to imagine yourself doing anything else. Transitions are particularly difficult for those who are not emotionally ready for a role change.

Some in role transitions find it very hard to shift gears on an interpersonal level. Simply stated, they find it very awkward and emotionally stressful to restructure relationships that must change, at least to some degree. This is a problem you will encounter if you are promoted from within. To go from classroom teacher to principal can place a strain on friendships, particularly if the friendships are close and longstanding. When your friend becomes your evaluator, this adds a whole new dimension to the relationship. As mature, educated, understanding adults, friends should be able to work this out. Some can, but be prepared to lose the friendships of those who cannot.

This separation will have an effect on you as well. There may be a distinct sense of loss as you separate from your peers—the friends and colleagues who over the years became your clique, your lunch partners, and your confidantes. In many cases, these are people with whom you "grew up together."

As an administrator, you find yourself separated. You have lost your support group and a strong familial bond. Your world has shifted, and you have left "us" and joined "them." The professional and personal intimacy is gone. Do not make the mistake of taking your lunch to the faculty lounge. Conversation will cease, or at least

become guarded. Remember what you talked about in the faculty room? That is still the main topic of conversation, only now it is about *you*.

Career experts say that separation pangs are among the hidden costs of taking a career turn. You have changed. Your colleagues have not. Whether out of jealousy or fear (of your supervisory position "over" them), those still vested in the previously shared system may "belittle your break into greener pastures, consciously or unconsciously seeing themselves as stuck in a rut by contrast" (Farmanfarmaian, 1993, p. 36). If you were, like the graduate student cited above, an activist in the teachers' organization or an outspoken critic of the administration, you may also find your old peer group to be judgmental of your change of allegiance. You and they may both feel betrayed. They may think you are selling out, and you may feel that they are being cold and unsupportive.

Overcoming dependency on your old peer group is one of the most important thresholds to cross professionally and emotionally as you launch your own career track. According to psychologist Carole Kanchier,

Ambivalent feelings naturally arise from the interplay between external and internal factors. You have to look upon career growth not by benchmarks set by others, but by asking yourself, "What do I really want?" (Farmanfarmaian, 1993, p. 38)

While it may not be easy, you need to admit that you have changed. Your actions say that you no longer identify with "the old gang," so do not try to verbally deny your change of focus. You are the one who chose to let go of the comfort and close friendship of the clique.

### **New Support Groups and Very Special Friendships**

Once you have made your career move, you should broaden your sphere of professional friends. You may be fortunate enough to have established reliable and warm friendships with classmates in your professional degree program. These colleagues share the kind of goals you are pursuing and "talk the same talk." They also provide you with the confirmation that you are not alone. Nothing is more comforting or reassuring as to be able to talk freely with a colleague, either about a particular current problem that is bothering you or to have a philosophical discussion on a broad educational issue. If you are what is termed a "mid-career" professional, it may be good to seek a peer group that is occupationally diverse, so that you have a support system that is not competitive in your own field.



There are rare and very special instances in which a friendship is so secure that a career advancement will have no effect on the relationship. In fact, that rock-solid friendship can be your link to reality, if your friend is as wise and unerring in judgment as my best friend, Patricia Lanshe, has been for over three decades. If you have such a relationship, treasure it. Such friends are irreplaceable and do not occur more than once in a lifetime. Maintain that friendship at all costs. Chances are that relationship will be your ballast.

If you work at it, you can still remain friends with people you supervise. After all, if you have worked closely with colleagues for many years, you share many memories, and you can't simply shut the door. To do so could mean you close off the value of what you all have shared. You just must accept the fact, however, that the relationship has changed and go on to build a new one of mutual professional respect for and personal consideration of all staff. Then, when your peers retire or you change careers again, throw a party and celebrate the friendships, the joint commitment, and, most of all, the shared memories.

### **Saying Good-bye**

Speaking of celebrations and farewells, know when it is time to say good-bye. Whether you leave to take a new position, retirement, or because of a financial incentive, depart with dignity:

- Accept that you are setting aside an identity you have had for some time and that you are leaving something familiar and secure.
- Seek professional counseling if you are having difficulty making decisions regarding what to do with the rest of your life.
- Involve your family to discuss the impact your leaving a public institution will have on them and you. Some people go through a light initial depression until they readjust, while others bounce right into some other career.
- If you leave a position under stress, give yourself some time and space to regroup. Reevaluate your skills. You'll be surprised how marketable you are.
- Throw a party so that friends and colleagues can bid you an honorable and fitting farewell. You need to do this to officially close this chapter of your life.
- Organize your day. Keep an appointment calendar and, if you aren't starting another position immediately, schedule other

activities. Now may be a good time to do the writing you've not had time for before.

- Leave while you're ahead. Consider your position in the organization and your projected status. For example, if you are in a vulnerable position such as the arrival of a new president when you are the vice-president, you may end up with a new assignment. Be aware of these signals and make it your choice to leave if you sense you will be transferred to a position that means nothing to you. It is time to let go.

## 5 Leadership: The New “Right Stuff”

It is helpful to the educational institution that *leader* and *leadership* are genderless words, unencumbered by the brouhaha surrounding words such as *chairman*, *chairwoman*, and *chair*.<sup>9</sup> Leadership as a concept has become a trend of its own because everyone who writes in any area of work feels compelled to redefine leadership from the viewpoint of a specialized area. Everyone tries to put a spin on the word, with the result that leadership can mean almost anything anyone wants it to mean. As it has become expected for courses on leadership to be offered with every business or professional program, there are probably enough various definitions, or adaptations of definitions, of leadership to fill an entire book. Even colleges and some high schools are now including a leadership component in the program of study. The negative prospect resulting from all of this is that everyone who completes work for a degree or certificate may feel entitled to a job that guarantees a position of leadership. The positive result should be that more people will have an understanding of the need for leadership in any endeavor involving more than one person.

There has been a plethora of studies conducted over the past fifty years on the essence of leadership, the qualities of leadership, the tasks of leadership, and any other way in which leadership can be analyzed. Workshops and seminars abound, and books dealing with the subject of leadership could fill a small library, yet we still have not exhausted the subject. Every year, more ideas on leadership are generated as our society goes through changes and problems and as priorities ebb and flow. In addition, as women more and more frequently take on the mantle of leadership, we will find the definition and understanding of leadership further refined to reflect, with even more precision, the qualities that comprise feminine leadership.

<sup>9</sup>The derivation of *chairman* shows that the second syllable comes not from *man* the person, but from *mano*, meaning *hand* or *craft*.

## Leadership—A Brief Historical Overview

The earliest major theory of leadership is the “great man” theory, which is the belief that, in every group or tribe or country, there is one person who becomes the leader because of certain leadership qualities. Leadership was thought to be determined by destiny. Such luminaries in the “great man” category would include Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Julius Caesar, Benjamin Franklin, Napoleon, and Winston Churchill. Major events in history were thought to revolve around these great leaders, and it was further believed that history could best be understood by studying the traits and qualities of its leaders. It was also thought that such people were born with these outstanding traits or qualities and that they would be leaders regardless of the time or place in which they lived.

The other side of the debate regarding whether history makes the man or the man makes history is the “environmental” theory, which believes that a great leader emerges as a result of time, place, and circumstance and that the leader is directed and controlled by historical environment. The ones who became the leaders were those who possessed the abilities and skills needed to solve the existing social problems at their particular time in history.

What these two general theories overlook, however, is the interactive effects of the individual and the situation. More recent views now see leadership as (1) a function of the situation, (2) the type of task, (3) the characteristics and competencies of those being “led,” (4) the traits of the leader, and (5) the specific conditions of the situation (Dimock, 1987). Stogdill (Bass, 1981) concluded that the leaders’ traits must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristics of the followers. (Here, again, we are reminded that people are drawn to people like themselves and with whom they can identify.)

### The Ohio State Studies

Studies conducted at The Ohio State University in the 1940s and 1950s resulted in clearly shaping our understanding of leadership, and these studies are still the basis for the most widely accepted leadership theories. The results of these studies showed four factors that appeared consistently to describe leadership behavior: (1) showing consideration, (2) initiating structure, (3) production emphasis, and (4) social sensitivity. According to the studies, showing consideration for other group members accounted for 50 percent of the leadership functions and initiating structure, thirty percent. The findings concluded that there are two basic leadership functions: (1) helping

the group to achieve a specific goal and (2) helping to maintain or build the group itself. The Ohio State Leadership Studies, as they became known, concurred and called these two leadership functions (1) consideration and (2) initiation of structure:

- *Consideration* refers to the extent to which a leader exhibits concern for the welfare of other members of the group. Examples of this include showing appreciation, stressing importance of job satisfaction, maintaining the self-esteem of the group members, being accessible and approachable, and using the input of subordinates.
- *Initiation of structure* refers to the extent to which a leader initiates activity in the group, organizes it, and defines the way work is to be done. Examples include maintaining standards, meeting deadlines, and deciding in detail what will be done and how it should be done. Initiation of structure also emphasizes defining and structuring the leader’s own role and those of the subordinates toward goal attainment (Bass, 1981, pp. 358–359).

These studies resulted in the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), which measures leadership behavior. The LBDQ has been used in areas as diverse as industry, the military, education, medical (hospitals), and government. A variety of investigations using LBDQ has taken place to measure the leadership behavior of college administrators and public school administrators. These results showed that, in higher education at the level of department chairman, the administrative competence correlated .36 with consideration and .48 with initiation of structure. In public education, superintendents who were rated as effective leaders by both staff and school board members were described as being high in both consideration and initiation of structure. While numerous studies (from 1950 to 1976) were conducted with school principals, results from those studies varied. As might be expected, consideration and initiation of structure were not solely concerned with internal leadership, but were determined by the “stratification, control, homogeneity, viscosity, hedonic tone and participation of the staff” (Bass, 1981, pp. 379–381).

### Contingency Theory

In the 1970s, a concept identified as “contingency theory” began to be used as a tool to facilitate understanding of the effect of “situations” on leadership behavior. Linked with the theory of open



systems (Chapter 3), contingency theory stresses that variability in environmental needs and demands requires variability in organizational responses. In other words, contingency theory postulates that the typical way of doing things is not always appropriate or feasible in all kinds of decisions (Hanson, 1985). For example, if a student brandishes a gun somewhere on campus, the staff and students must shift from their usual mode of going to classes to a different operational mode. Those who need to deal with the situation can consider several contingency plans: (1) they can ignore the student with the gun; (2) they can try to "rush" him and overpower him; (3) they can try to talk to him; (4) they can divert his attention; (5) they can call for help; or (6) they can get a gun and shoot the gunman. All risks should be weighed, and information should be gathered before continuing with the daily routine or choosing another (contingency) plan of action.

The leadership necessary to solve the campus problem is one of contingency, depending on the force, the target, and the source of the situation. In using the contingency theory, questions to be asked and answered are the following:

- (1) Is the "force" (the intensity of the situation) changed if the weapon is a baseball bat rather than a gun? Is the force changed if there is the arrival of additional students carrying guns or other weapons?
- (2) Is the "target" (the part of the system that is the focus of the intent) a school policy or the college president or even another student? In other words, what is the target of the student with the gun?
- (3) Is the "source" (the perpetrator) a student with a history of emotional problems or a student previously perceived as stable and strong?

Dealing with uncertainty in a manner to reduce risks through intelligent forethought and preparation is at the core of contingency theory. Proponents of the theory believe that even a leader who scores equally well in both task and consideration cannot be prepared for every eventuality; therefore, that leader needs to be prepared to accept that separate components of the system can respond as the situation requires.

As with any emerging theory, there are a number of varieties of the contingency theory. However, there has been enough underlying support to maintain interest in the theory, and most of these researchers believe that developing a contingency theory of leadership that ap-

plies specifically to the educational organization is an important step that should be taken.

### **Leadership According to Warren Bennis: The Plea for Liberal Arts**

The leadership studies of Warren Bennis in 1989 come closest to what will probably be honored as the foundation for feminine leadership. Bennis speaks to the "liberal arts" philosophy as he describes leadership as "in part, the process of fully becoming oneself" (Godfrey, 1992). (This concept of becoming one's self has the imprint of Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own," as well as Maslow's Theory of Self-actualization.) Bennis also celebrates rather than denigrates feelings, and he urges that feelings be used creatively (p. 117). He speaks of leaders with empathy and says that persons with empathy inspire others more than leaders who do not have empathy (p. 156). Bennis also acknowledges and cites Barbara Corday, who says that women are caretakers and that it is only natural for this caretaking to continue in the workplace. Both Nel Noddings (who identified and named the "ethic of caring") and Carol Gilligan (*In a Different Voice*) would, I believe, agree with Bennis' view of leadership as being not only more humanistic, but certainly more balanced as it includes leadership that is guided by "persons," rather than directed by either "men" or "women."

Being viewed as persons seems to be a prerequisite for advancement even in newer industries such as computer software design and marketing in which there is a higher percentage of younger employees. In a way, this is surprising because we would like to think that, as the younger-than-yuppies generation advances, there would be more tolerance for competent women and that persons could be specified as men or women. Not so, according to Mark Ursino, who worked for Bill Gates for nine years at Microsoft. According to Ursino, "If you're a woman around there [Microsoft], then you have a hard time. If you become a 'person,' then you can get something done" (Illingworth, 1994, p. 96).

Sally Helgesen (1990) continues the thought advanced by Carol Gilligan that women have their own (different) voice. She also says that the need to express one's own values within a management style is an essential element in developing one's true voice (p. 228). Helgesen enhances this idea by citing many successful leaders, including Nancy Badore, "[To] be fully me is the only way I can be creative and

spark creativity in others" (p. 150). Cantor and Bernay (1992) pick up on this idea of individuality in their popular *Women in Power*, in which they profile a number of women in leadership positions. The authors quote Congresswoman Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland) on leadership, "[A] leader must first have a clear state of mind, her own vision, which energizes her, motivates others, then creates that state of mind in others" (p. 188). Cantor and Bernay further supply their own definition of leadership: Competent Self + Creative Aggression + Woman Power = Leadership (p. 17).

Returning to his own liberal arts motif, Bennis joins John Gardner in the belief that the best leaders have intuitive and conceptual skills, as well as logical and analytical talents. Bennis (1989) calls these leaders "whole brained" (pp. 102–103). Gardner (1987), in writings that predate the findings of Bennis, states,

At the college level, the best preparation is a liberal arts education. It is essential to broaden and deepen the understanding of those individuals who will have in their hands the future of our communities and our society. That means covering the whole range of the liberal arts, from science to literature, from mathematics to history. (p. 11)

Bennis (1989) reinforces this idea of a broad-based education by quoting Jamie Raskin, a Boston prosecutor, "Leadership is based on the ability to see how all humanity is related, how all parts of society are related, and how things move in the same direction" (pp. 91–92). Corday [in Bennis (1989)] connects leadership to success by saying, "People who go to plays, read books, know the classics, have open minds and enjoy experiences are more apt to be successful" (p. 86).

When Bennis, in a different study with Burt Nanus, interviewed ninety of the top leaders at the corporate and university levels, these leaders talked about persistence and self-knowledge; willingness to take risks and accept losses; commitment, consistency, and challenge; and learning. According to these interviews, leaders have a very strong commitment to learning. Some are voracious readers, and others surround themselves with bright people (Dyer, 1991). [This is one of the reasons Harry Truman was such an unexpectedly successful leader. He surrounded himself with the best advisors of the time and was not afraid to take their advice. He was also a man who was not afraid to make decisions (based on the sought advice of others) and fully accepted the responsibility of the office. As he said, "The buck stops here." And he meant it. Truman was a man of the people, yet a man who respected history and honored those who knew history, respected it, and learned from it.] Bennis confirms that learning is viewed as "the source of high-octane energy that keeps up the

momentum by continually sparking new understanding, new ideas, and new challenges. It is absolutely indispensable under today's conditions of rapid change and complexity" (Dyer, 1991, p. 2).

John Gardner has always been a very strong advocate of studying the liberal arts as the best preparation for leadership. One of the main points in his treatise "Leadership Development" (1987b) is that, because today's leaders live in a world that changes more quickly than its leaders can relearn, *the leaders must understand the larger framework in which change occurs*. The only way to know this larger framework is for leaders to understand their own culture and history, so that they can draw on paths already traveled. In addition, Gardner believes, leaders are constantly in situations that require the weighing of values. It is only by

absorbing, through religion, literature, psychology, sociology, drama, and the like, the hopes, fears, aspirations and dilemmas of their people and of the species, by coming to understand what our ancestors valued and fought for, by coming to know through history and biography the extraordinary outlines of the human story, they may hope to discharge their leadership duties with wisdom.

. . . Leaders must understand the culture. But much of the culture is latent. It exists in the minds of its members, in their dreams, in their unconscious. It can be discerned in their legends, in the art and drama of the day, in religious themes, in their history as a people, in the seminal documents, in the stories of their heroes. (pp. 12–13)

### Personal Prerequisites for Leadership

Even with the many leadership theories, an individual still must ask, "What makes a leader?" How can you, as an aspiring administrator, develop personal prerequisites for leadership? How can you prepare for the role of leader? Hearing Gardner's reply that "there are no traits that will guarantee successful leadership in all situations" (Gardner, 1987, p. 3) is not very comforting. Even if you do accept that there are no characteristics that guarantee successful leadership, at least you want to know what characteristics and skills you should try to develop.

Even if you agree that what produces a leader in one situation may make her/him a failure in another and if you accept that situational factors, group determinants, and contingency implications all contribute to successful leadership, there still comes a time to expect an answer to the question: What are the characteristics of a successful leader?



Ralph Stogdill, in 1974, summarized over fifty studies of leadership conducted during a thirty-year period. His findings and summary, while completed two decades ago, still provide the best comprehensive list for today's aspiring leaders on every level. The following are Stogdill's "Functions of an Effective Leader," as listed in Dimock (1987, p. 6):

#### *Goal Achievement*

- technical skills
- administrative skills
- task motivation and application
- leadership achievement
- maintaining standards of performance

#### *Group Maintenance*

- social and interpersonal skills
- social nearness, friendliness
- group task supportiveness
- maintaining cohesive work group
- facilitating coordination and teamwork
- intellectual and communication skills

John Gardner (1987a) also devised a list of leadership traits, found in his *Leadership Papers*, prepared for the Leadership Studies Program sponsored by the Independent Sector. Gardner terms these leadership traits *attributes* and qualifies his list with the reminder that not all attributes are present in every leader and that the importance of the attribute to effective leadership will vary with the situation:

- physical vitality and stamina
- intelligence and judgment-in-action
- willingness (eagerness) to accept responsibility
- task competence
- understanding of followers/constituents and the needs
- skill in dealing with people
- need to achieve
- capacity to motivate
- courage, resolution, steadiness
- capacity to win and hold trust
- capacity to manage, decide, set priorities
- confidence:
  - (1) Ascendancy, dominance, assertiveness
  - (2) Adaptability, flexibility of approach (Gardner, 1987a, pp. 12–17)

Traits, characteristics, and attributes of educational administrators do not differ from the general leadership traits. However, studies conducted by educators of educators are somewhat more specific to the field of educational administration and are offered here for that reason:

- being a good problem solver
- having strong organizational skills
- developing excellent people skills
- understanding the nuts and bolts of the school business
- demonstrating integrity and honesty
- remaining nonjudgmental—both of people and ideas
- having the ability to listen to other people
- being committed to the education of all children
- recognizing people for good work
- being able to work long hours
- being a good communicator
- being able to take risks and take a stand when necessary
- being able to separate what is important from what is not (Mahoney, 1990, p. 26)

Taking a page from her own practical guidebook for women entrepreneurs, Joline Godfrey (1992, p. 6) says that the following leadership traits are what are needed to be a successful woman in today's "way of doing business":

- ease in relationships and a drive for connection
- whole people—head, heart, and hands
- appreciation of complexity and process
- desire for balance and self-awareness
- sense of artistry, imagination, and playfulness
- integrated vision of business and ethics
- courage

### **Styles of Leadership**

There are various ways to categorize leadership styles, but most researchers and writers agree on two major divisions, with several subdivisions designated according to the specific interest of the individual studies. For the purposes of this book, we take a look at the two major divisions and a brief view of several of the more common styles. Most readers will be able to identify their leadership styles based on the ones reviewed here.

### **Autocratic and Democratic**

The two major divisions of leadership styles are autocratic and democratic. All other styles follow from these two clusters. Both are the result of an attempt to answer the question, prevalent throughout history: "How shall people be governed or guided or led?" The answer has always been based on the belief of the prevailing culture. If the belief of a particular historical culture was the prevalence of *evil*, it followed in belief that the populace had to be controlled and directed, even "improved," by some kind of authority; this situation calls for autocratic leadership. If the prevailing belief was that humankind was essentially *good*, then persons would be given the freedom in which to choose, to learn, to grow, and to govern for themselves; in this situation, the required leadership style would be democratic.

The major difference between autocratic and democratic leadership style is that the autocratic leader dictates what is to be done, and the democratic leader shares the decision making with subordinates. The autocratic leader is not concerned about group member needs for their own autonomy and development. The democratic leader shows concern for the needs of subordinates to contribute to the operation and development of the organization. The autocratic leader is personal in praise, but aloof in attitude; the democratic leader is factual in praise and "shortens" the social distance from the leader to members of the group.

These styles, moreover, are not always absolute. A "benevolent" autocrat might be dictatorial, yet paternalistic, while the participative, democratic leader may encourage group decision making, yet place emphasis more on getting the job done than on the needs of the group. So bear in mind that labels are general, and give only a point of reference.

Autocratic leadership can be based on power or persuasion. A leader with power can successfully coerce others because of that power. Democratic leadership can mean various things but is usually found in leaders who have embraced democratic principles through experience as (1) a follower of a successful democratic leader, (2) an active participant in committees practicing consensus, (3) an instructor using cooperative learning, or (4) the product of a professional preparation program that provided training or a strong philosophical grounding in the benefits of democratic leadership.

An authoritarian leadership style is most successful (1) when the leader has more accurate information about the subject and/or controls the resources to support the results and (2) when speed and accuracy are held to be important. Conversely, a democratic leader-

ship style is effective in (1) reducing personnel turnover and absenteeism and (2) achieving higher productivity.

Studies conducted specifically in school systems show that democratic leadership leads to better communication, cooperation, and coordination. The leaders are considered to be more flexible and innovative, as well as more effective overall. Their personnel feel a greater sense of self-actualization and satisfaction from their work, and they achieve superior educational results. Likewise, studies in higher education institutions concluded that, with democratic leadership, more favorable outcomes are experienced and faculty are more satisfied with the administrative decision making (Bass, 1981).

### **Laissez-Faire**

Laissez-faire leaders usually come under criticism and are said to hide behind paperwork in their offices, to give subordinates too much responsibility, to avoid setting clear goals, and generally to let things drift along in the status quo. Usually, employees feel insecure. Left free to their own devices, those under laissez-faire who are involved in problem solving or decision making find their results to be lower quality, less effective, and less satisfying. Laissez-faire leadership also can lead to less cohesiveness among members of the group because there is little motivation (unless there is an emerging leader from the group itself).

As a new administrator, you should be cautioned that a laissez-faire leadership style can occur in the process of trying to be a democratic manager. There is a danger in believing that, if you give subordinates "freedom," they will do what they are supposed to do. You need to establish structured follower expectations and a process for achieving these expectations. As a democratic leader, you must take an active part in helping to define both the expectations and the direction of the group or institution. These processes will not happen without specific leadership.

### **Situational**

As noted in Chapter 3, systems theory suggests that what happens outside the organization is likely to affect what takes place inside it and will, in turn, determine what kind of leader would be most effective in a particular organization at any given time. Task requirements also affect what kind of leader is needed and what kind of leadership behavior will result in greater productivity and follower satisfaction in the institution.



Not to complicate things for an aspiring administrator who is already trying to match herself/himself to a leadership style or to hone skills that will result in the desired leadership style, but there is also the path-goal theory, which posits that the leadership style of an individual varies as situations within an organization change. Path-goal theory believes that, as a leader faces different problems or circumstances in the organization, the individual adjusts the leadership style accordingly.

The field of education has been receptive to expanding the view of leadership, and, while research in leadership was prevalent in the 1950s and early 1960s, there have since been so many educational issues (teacher militancy, student activism, multiculturalism, literacy, dropout prevention, and, most recently, violence in the schools) demanding the attention of both the researchers and the public that the study of leadership was quite overshadowed by overriding social issues.

At present, there appears to be a trend toward finding leaders who can help solve these social problems, in addition to serving as the institution's educational leader. Thus, we add to the mix the need for leaders who (1) have the personal characteristics to be a social leader *or* are capable of shifting styles according to the situation *and* (2) know the field so well as to be the leader of educational programs as well.

As has been emphasized throughout this book, the tactics of leadership are all important. Unfortunately, social scientists have not yet produced a comprehensive theory of leadership. Thus, an individual can do only the best she/he can to prepare all of the skills that are required, in order to be confident in her/his prevailing style and to be ready to adjust to changing situations.

### Group

In essence, all leadership is group leadership because there is no point in being a leader if there is no one to lead. Group leadership as a separate category of style, however, evolved because the word *group* implies that, in every group, there is a leader and that a different style of leadership is needed for each separate group. Thus, group leadership is closest to situational leadership, which, according to Dimock (1987), "assumes that leaders may have certain traits or skills that will increase the probability of their becoming a leader, but these characteristics may be important only in that situation" (p. 4). Dimock also mentions characteristics of emerging group leaders,

which echo various suggestions offered to aspiring administrators (with additional comments by this author):

- (1) The person who does the most talking is most likely to be a strong influence. (Promote yourself through presentations, publications, and the media, i.e., anywhere you can be "heard.")
- (2) Those who become leaders are usually more vocal and dominant. (Volunteer to chair a committee or represent your institution on a panel and be prepared with a position on the subject. Be decisive, particularly in a crisis situation. Be in charge. Become active in organizations, both in your field and out.)
- (3) The person who is the usual channel of communication, who has special access to people in power or influence related to the group's goals, or who controls communication in any way is more likely to be a leader. (Write the minutes for a meeting. Publish a newsletter. Author articles for publication. Be active in organizations. Network!)
- (4) Leaders of effective groups have greater social distance from their followers than the leaders of ineffective groups. (Know when to let go. While members can respect a leader with whom they are friendly and familiar, a leader who is too close to the members may make decisions based on personal feelings.)
- (5) Those who can recognize and identify the unique attributes of others gain considerable respect and often leadership status. (Compliment your colleagues. Volunteer to share your experience with them. You'll learn what they are doing and can praise them to others. Send notes of congratulation. In staff meetings, make positive comments about the work of your colleagues.)

As a group leader, you should bear in mind that the leader derives the position of leadership from the followers, who see the leader as being able to help them achieve their goal and also to maintain themselves as a group. (Remember the axiom: people look to people who are like them.) Even if you are appointed from outside the group, your status and acceptability will depend on the group's perspective of your ability to meet their needs. Again, referring to the "people like us" concept, you will be most effective if you become part of the group (for the task) and model the norms of the group. In this way, you will become a follower, as well as the leader.

To gain status, you should also conform to the standards of the group; do not try to make any procedural changes right away in an already established group. Once you have accepted the group's

norms, then make your contributions to the group's achieving the goals but in the confines of their norms. Once your input is viewed as a contribution and not as an "outside imposed change," your place in the group will be assured. It is only after reaching this stage that you can then move toward changing traditional practices and eventually establish new norms. This process is necessary for all new group leaders and is *essential* if you are the new kid on the block.

### **Status, Esteem, and Charisma**

Status, esteem, and charisma are by-products of leadership, as well as possible precursors of leadership. Having these three characteristics is not mutually exclusive to being a leader because a person can be a leader without having status, esteem, or charisma; conversely, there are many persons who hold status, esteem, or charisma who neither desire nor ever attain a position of leadership.

*Status* is defined as a position in a social system dependent upon the importance of the roles and not upon the person. A school superintendency or college presidency is a position of status, regardless of the individual who holds the office. A person of status ranks high in the pecking order, and other persons defer to the person holding status. If the person of status also is in a position to have direct control over others, she/he is imbued by others with superior personal ability even if the person's actual abilities are more imagined than real.

Status is so powerful that even women administrators in the highest ranking positions are accorded it despite their gender. This is not to say that the status of men and women in the same position is equal, for the perception of others also enters into the "degree" of status awarded to the position. For example, a male superintendent may hold more status in the community than a female superintendent; among her colleagues, the female administrator is likely to maintain equal status; and among other women administrators of lesser rank, her status will be even higher.

A further example can be shown through an incident with the United States Congress. The position of U.S. Representative is one of status and brings with it certain privileges, yet because there are now women holding Congressional seats, there have been strong status issues raised regarding such privileged amenities as use of the swimming pool and executive washrooms.

*Esteem* is the "value" members place upon the person holding a position. Esteem is based on personal ability to lead the group in achieving goals. Esteem is not bestowed upon the holder by virtue of

her/his position but by what the person can do with the position. The esteem can be associated with the power of the position and/or personal power, but it must be generated from within the group. Leaders cannot award themselves esteem. Only the group can instill esteem, which usually, but not always, is the result of years of service to a group.

Esteem cannot, like status or position, be mandated or legislated away from the person receiving the esteem, and the holder may retain esteem even after she/he has vacated the position that originally led to the position and its inherent status. As might be expected, esteem often leads to status achievement because promotions depend, to some degree, on merit ratings of one's worth to the organization.

In interaction with the group, the esteemed member will be listened to by being given as much time as she/he wants to present the information and by initiating or terminating activities. Most leaders who are esteemed have a strong motivational commitment to the group and are more valued if they support member independence, identification, and social closeness. They are also looked upon as experts. And, if they live long enough, the esteem may become veneration!

*Charisma*, like status and esteem, is not limited to holding office or a position of power. Charismatic leaders are said to have extraordinary influence over their followers and "tend to exude confidence, dominance, a sense of purpose, and the ability to articulate the goals and ideas for which followers are already prepared psychologically" (Bass, 1981, p. 152).

Charisma is more than "being at the right place at the right time," although, very often, charismatic leaders emerge in times of crisis. With charismatic leaders, followers often become leaders in seeking more converts for their leader. Charisma is a very personal relationship established between the follower and the leader. Charismatic leadership is rare and places almost impossible responsibility on the participants.

Status, esteem, and charisma are all important factors in leadership, and, although none is essential, all are enhancing.

### **The Leader's Role in School Reform**

To be a successful leader in today's educational system, you need to consider all persons who are involved in the school community. Everyone needs to have an understanding of *what* is worth doing in the school or university and to determine *why* it is important to do it.



There will be no meaningful reform in education unless and until all educational institutions at all levels utilize what we have learned through research about organizations, as well as about teaching and learning.

Reform is not about change for change's sake nor is its purpose conformity in all institutions, as many resisters charge. What educational reform is asking is that each institution study itself, determine its real mission, and then gear all processes and resources toward achieving that mission. This will involve questioning fundamental beliefs, as well as daily operations, and it will require rethinking sports programs, as well as classroom goals.

Many of these issues are already being debated in the media, such as criticism of the graduation rate of football players at colleges and universities. Even major universities that have billed themselves as viewing their athletes as "college students first, football players second" are being found to be less than truthful about the percentage of those on athletic scholarships who finish a degree program. Many state-sponsored colleges and universities are also being admonished for lowering standards just to keep the classrooms (and the dormitories) filled. There are complaints that students can't schedule the classes they need in order to complete their undergraduate degrees in the typical four years, and there is pressure on college professors to give good grades. Some say we have created a culture in which students believe they have a *right* to an "A" unless the professor can *prove* otherwise. Is this what we want? Do we want coaches to have more authority than college presidents? Do we want all students to be equal in grades "earned"? Do we want a grading system at all? Do we need more or less stringent policies on student harassment or intimidation? What do we want from our universities? Who should decide? And who will lead in the decision making?

In public education, there is an added dimension of legislative control, as well as more direct parent involvement. Public schools must answer to both the state government and the local policymakers in the form of school boards. Yet the fundamental question remains, "What is it that every student should know and be able to do?" Once that question is answered, we need to develop the process to achieve the ultimate outcome: an educated citizenry. Even that decision is fraught with difficulties because the school is not a separate entity as it once was. Community and state agencies are much more a part of the place called school than they were a generation ago.

How do we interact with social agencies? Whose responsibility is it for the welfare of the child? Should the school provide breakfast? Where does your role as the educational leader begin (and end)? It is

DOONESBURY



BY GARRY TRUDEAU

DOONESBURY copyright © 1993 G. B. Trudeau. Reprinted with permission of UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE. All rights reserved.

by asking such questions that we begin to understand the enormity of the task of an educational administrator and the impossibility of single-handedly fulfilling all of the expectations. What should also be very clear, however, is the absolute necessity of good leadership.

As an effective leader, you will want to include all of the stakeholders and to marshal the creative resources of every member of the group to search for the best direction for the institution to follow. Based on everything you have read thus far on becoming a good educational administrative leader, you should have a general idea of your own style and realize that, if you are to get the job done, you need to take the best of your own natural leadership style and adapt it to a kind of participatory approach to planning.

### **Collaborative Teamwork**

Collaborative teamwork is the key to the success of any organization, so the conscientious administrator will use the creative resources and the collective wisdom of the staff and all other stakeholders to build the best possible organization and the best educational institution that will answer the needs of the constituents. Collaborative teamwork holds the following advantages:

- (1) All stakeholders who become participants will more clearly identify with the goals of the institution and its success.
- (2) The stakeholders (staff, students, community) will gain a feeling of control and begin to lose the sense of being controlled.
- (3) The stakeholders, by participating in the process, will learn the complexities of the situation.
- (4) The stakeholders, by getting to know the leader better, will begin to feel a part of the solution.
- (5) The resulting decisions will be more acceptable to a wider group of constituents.
- (6) In addition to becoming key communicators to the community, the stakeholders very often will become the promoters of a program being considered.
- (7) If we subscribe to the concept of "collective wisdom," higher quality decisions should be the result of a collaborative effort.

### **Successful Teamwork**

The success of the team effort will depend on the skill of the leader in being open and *honest* in all communications. Remember, there is

nothing wrong in your saying, "I don't know. I'll see what I can find out for our next meeting." You can also use this opportunity to call on the expertise of another member for information that you, as the leader, may not have. Never be less than honest with everyone—always.

Another essential ingredient to building a good team is *trust*. There must be belief in the leadership, in the integrity of all participants, in the shared vision, and in the goals. Although there will be a modicum of trust given to the leader because of her/his position and status, long-term trust must be developed slowly and consistently:

- First, the team must feel confident that you hold a commitment to the district and that you bring a clear vision, which you are able to communicate to the others.
- Respect is an important element of trust. The members of your team have various talents and must be made to feel that they are "safe" in venturing to offer their opinions.
- Hand-in-hand with respect is for the leader to be willing to relinquish responsibility and to allow others to take charge. (Remember, however, as noted earlier, you must still be ultimately accountable for the results, especially if the result is negative. *Never* say, "I tried to tell the committee that it wouldn't work.")
- The leader must be consistent and dependable. When you say you'll do something, do it. Your actions may speak more loudly than your words so your behavior cannot be erratic or inconsistent. As leader, everything you do becomes symbolic.
- Trust will begin to build when people see that goals are being met, so make sure you set some short-range, achievable goals.
- Trust is mutual, so you also need to show that you trust others by taking time to listen to what they have to say.

To be a successful leader, you must become a part of the group you are leading. You must also encourage the other group members to feel free to speak out and to perform needed functions. Group members need to view you as a member like themselves so that they are free to assess your comments on the merit of their contribution and not because of the person who made the statement.

As leader, you must also try to reduce the status differential while serving as a member of the group. This is sometimes difficult because there may be some members of the group who overstep their bounds and think they are now your "best buddies." Try to anticipate this possibility and alert, in advance, a member of your staff who can be counted on to help set the tone. For example, if you are uncomfortable



being addressed by your first name, then keep formality of everyone's name by addressing them as Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ or whatever their designation is. You know best your community's culture and need to take that into consideration. (I, for one, am not at all comfortable addressing persons I do not know well by their first names and would tend to set a more formal, yet collegial, tone.) To avoid any anticipated awkwardness, you can prepare name cards to be placed on the conference table in front of each person's seat. If you choose to use first names, please always ask the person's preference as to how he wishes to be addressed. Not every "Robert" is "Bob."

Don't forget to allow for some levity and some informal time. Providing coffee and/or soft drinks is a way to show your consideration, as is a time scheduled for a "seventh inning stretch." These breaks, while designed for a bit of relaxation, often result in the participants' talking and exchanging ideas that may be helpful once the group is back on task. If the meetings are scheduled in the evenings, you are also more likely to encounter all kinds of attire. You, as the institutional leader, need to decide just how "casual" you yourself want to be. (My advice is not to be too casual. Some of your contemporaries from the business community will be coming directly from their offices and will be dressed accordingly. A woman administrator should not wear slacks. A neat skirt and a jacket would be in order.) Again, follow community protocol, but be a bit more conservative.

Remember that, as the group leader, you do not need to solve the problems; rather, you should serve as the facilitator. Problem solving is a process and, as such, has separate and distinct steps. There are various models in problem solving and decision making. If you want a "crash course" in the decision-making process, one of the best is *How to Make Decisions That Stay Made* (Saphier, Bigda-Peyton, and Pierson, 1989).<sup>10</sup> This twelve-step plan can easily be adapted to a team decision-making process by following the guidelines reviewed earlier in this section and also by considering the suggestions in the following section.

### The Importance of Planning

Planning is a process, not a product; however, the planning process should produce a result—the plan itself. Whether you are developing a five-year plan or a plan to implement a new program for the coming

<sup>10</sup>Available from ASCD, it is a quick, concise reference of forty pages.

year, you need a clear, direct process. This process can be followed whether the plan involves only a leader or if it has many teams working on the various parts of the plan.

Peter Drucker defines planning as "the management function that includes decisions and actions to insure future results" (Fray, 1987, p. 1). According to Fray himself, planning activities today go beyond simply the determination of strategy and are now being integrated into the total management system of the organization. Most businesses have an established formal planning system, many of which are termed "The Strategic Plan." The time covered can range from one to ten years; five years, however, is the average, for to plan for less than a year isn't worth the time involved, and to plan for more than five years is risky because so many factors change within that period of time.

While businesses have used planning strategies for years, educational institutions have traditionally only paid lip service to whatever written reports and documents were necessary, as required by the various state departments of education. Until the past decade or so, public schools, more so than colleges and universities, relied on the status quo, with some changes as the need arose. Educational institutions relied on employee loyalty and managerial intuition to take care of any changes they might face. Today, educational institutions have become so complex, issues have so exploded, resources have so shrunk, and the public has raised such a cry for accountability, that public schools and colleges dependent upon public funds have had to turn to business practices in order to gain some semblance of credibility.

An educational leader is now expected to know how to run a business every bit as much as, if not more than, how to provide curriculum and instruction. Preparatory programs for educational administrators, already bulging with requirements, are also feeling the pressure to focus more on management courses. To note just how far the superintendency is falling from that of expert teacher, there is a small but growing trend toward hiring persons with a background in business rather than in education for the top job in public schools. Higher education institutions have been looking to business persons for their top spot for an even longer period. Good advice, then, to aspiring CEOs in educational institutions is to earn an MBA along with the requisite Ph.D. or Ed.D.

Knowledge of strategic planning is necessary for any effective leader in business or education. Strategic planning provides a direction for the institution and focuses attention on current accomplishments, as well as on future goals. Planning sets priorities and

determines the action to meet the goals of those priorities. A good plan can increase motivation and lend credence to the organization. It can also reduce costs by avoiding the expense involved in reacting to events not planned for. A well-run planning process allows for interaction on all levels and should involve all interested constituents. Planning encourages looking at the organization in full bright light and leads to the question, "Where do we want to go and how do we get there in the best way possible?" Best of all, strategic planning provides another opportunity for you to show your own administrative ability.

Whether you are the superintendent or president, a principal or a dean, your understanding of and ability to design a formal plan will be an advantage to you. To be prepared for this endeavor, take as many courses in business as you can schedule and accept any opportunity to participate in any planning process. Familiarize yourself with the terminology and the concepts of management. This will give you leverage, regardless of your role in the planning process. (I'll never forget the expression on a superordinate's face when I presented a new organizational plan based on Likert's System 4 Organization, complete with the triangles and their designated linchpins!)

A final note of caution in your strategic planning process: if the members of the group you are working with are not familiar with the terminology, the process of planning, or the system of organizations, use terms with which they will feel comfortable. For example, you can always ease into a planning process with the words, "Here's the game plan!"

## 6 Men and Women, More Different Than Alike: "As the Twig Is Bent, the Tree's Inclined"

While women have made numerous attempts and have initiated various movements to call attention to the unequal situation of men and women, widespread acknowledgment of that fact is a modern phenomenon. This recent awareness is due, in large part, to the feminist movement of the past thirty years. The women of this movement have made their mark by being the generation that has led society to finally and openly admit what women have always known but seldom voiced: women are not valued.

Mothers have been venerated, daughters have been loved, wives have been respected, women have been admired, and a few female national leaders have been revered, but females—half the population in any human culture—have not been valued. Various services that females have provided have been valued to a lesser or greater degree, but even these services have had their value placed on them by males. Women and women's work have been a convenience for men, and women have been enculturated to feel privileged that they could serve.

This undervaluing of women in our society is not an easy fact to admit. It may even be difficult for some women to recognize this undervaluing because most women in the workplace today were reared to believe that they could be anything they wanted to be. What they didn't see, however, was that they were being misled. We were encouraged to become educated, to be employed or not as we chose, to have children or not as we chose, and to reach the heights of our chosen careers. What someone forgot to tell us, however, was that, whatever we decided to do, it would not be valued and that there would be insurmountable barriers and a built-in system for failure.

### Barriers and Bias

The barriers to success are sometimes obvious, or they may be subtle; in either case, the barriers are real. Often, women don't see



particular situations as barriers. We are so accustomed to viewing paths taken by men as being the norm that we view men's paths as being the only way to reach a given goal. For example, women grow up learning that the female characteristic of displaying emotions is not valued and, in fact, is often viewed as "proof" of women's inferiority. Women are still sometimes unaware that emotional expressiveness and interpersonal sensitivity are considered by researchers as keys to building and maintaining affiliations and relationships, leaderships traits that are now gaining high regard. On the other hand, high-status endeavors that require aggressive behaviors were, and still are, viewed as appropriate only for men. When women display assertiveness, they are wrongly viewed as exhibiting proof of their desire to destroy men, the family, and society (Eby, 1990).

In addition to being charged with being "too emotional," there are a myriad other ways, direct and indirect, that women are disparaged, discounted, and denied. There are assumptions and attitudes, both open and hidden, that precede every woman into a room. There are generalizations made that categorize women before they can identify, let alone differentiate, themselves. There is even a pejorative indication when any term is prefixed by *woman*: "woman's work" implies housekeeping, "women's intuition" suggests a guess based on sorcery, "women's logic" conjures irrationality, and "a woman's place" is always followed by "is in the home." There are still those who say, "Keep 'em barefoot and pregnant," and who associate the term *uppity* only with *woman*. Comparable negative terms to use with *man* are not to be found.

Gender bias is endemic in our homes, schools, religious centers, workplaces, and (fraternal!) organizations. In fairness to some service organizations, however, there have been some well-intentioned moves to include women in the general membership of the organization and not in women's auxiliaries. "Ki-wives," "Lionettes," and "Rotary Anns" (wives of Kiwanians, Lions Club Members, and Rotarians) are almost a thing of the past now that women have been admitted to "real" membership; nevertheless, remnants of tradition remain. In a recent weekly newspaper article, which reported the previous week's meeting of a local Rotary Club, was this sentence: "The women had 100% attendance." The writer meant this as a compliment, but he has never reported the percentage of men present.

Even public libraries are bias-bound. Biological sciences are usually well represented on the shelves, but "hard" sciences are not. "Male" disciplines are viewed by many librarians as appealing to a highly specialized and very narrow audience, while "female" subjects are seen as "things everybody wants to know about." Because there

is a preponderance of women library users, the library holdings reflect what is thought to be of interest to women. As a strange contrast, some libraries, in an all-out effort to place an emphasis on "information services," inadvertently perpetuate the sexist stereotype, which defines *male* interests as information and *female* interests as fiction; these libraries have failed, according to Carole Hole (1992), "to see that fiction is also 'information.' . . . Women constantly seek information about relationships because we are programmed for it . . . for even those of us who also read professional . . . books, fiction *is* information. It analyzes human relationships and, in so doing, provides training for the job of being a successful female" (p. 23). Thus, even libraries that *strive* to serve all populations are sometimes misguided.

### Basic Differences

Research studies have confirmed that there are many basic differences between men and women. These findings are not surprising, but rather substantiate what has been observed for generations. A highly publicized study by Moir and Jessel (1991), with the provocative title of *Brain Sex*, offers a series of interesting conclusions:

- Men can read maps better. Women can read character better.
- Women have a greater imagination and a keener intuition.
- Men are naturally and innately aggressive.
- Women are better at language skills. (This has been disputed; see Fausto-Sterling below.)
- Women can "store" more seemingly unrelated information than men can, yet men can do so when the information is organized into a coherent form relative to them.
- Girls are better with social, aesthetic, and religious values and boys with economic, political, and theoretical values.
- Women like "being of service" to society.
- Men like power, profit, and independence.
- Men prefer competition, scientific toys, and principles.
- Women seek personal relationships and security.

In areas of interaction,

- Women pick up better on social cues and can infer nuances of meaning from a speaker's tone of voice and intensity of expression. This may be attributed to the fact that they also hear better and are more fluent in their own speech.
- Women are also better than men in judging a person's

character. This skill may result from their ability to extract social cues from body language and their keen memory for faces and character. All in all, women have a better understanding of what a woman or man means, even when s/he is saying nothing.

- Women are also more sensitive; they are alert to touch, smell, and sound. A woman sees more, remembers more, and attaches more importance to personal and interpersonal aspects of life. She also reacts more quickly and more acutely to pain.
- Men are more single-minded, not noticing distractions. This may be a result of their mild tunnel vision and its accompanying higher sense of perspective. A man is involved in the world of *things*, what they are, how they work, and the space they occupy. He tackles problems in a practical, overall self-interested way. In choosing between any two events, a man will select the one of most benefit to himself personally.
- Women are better at social interplay and association. Even when they are not happy, women smile more than men do. Women are nice to people they may not like, and they have closer, longer, and more regular links with friends.
- In dilemma situations, women tend to experience other people's distress as their own, while men respond by searching for a practical solution.

Other researchers confirm Moir and Jessel's findings with the following supporting results:

- (1) Mary Belenky et al. (1986) speak of the doubt women have of their intellectual competence as they "speak so frequently of problems and gaps in their learning" (p. 4). Women also often feel that in their professional life they are unheard even when they have something important to say. In their book, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, the authors also speak to the issue of values when they state that it is generally presumed (in the world of the male norm) that intuitive knowledge is more "primitive" (i.e., less valuable) than cognitive knowledge. In other words, what is not a male skill is not important.
- (2) In his book *Men and Women: How Different Are They?* John Nicholson (1985) reports from a 1980 study of television programs, "TV males are more likely to solve their own problems, while females, though proficient at dealing with other people's troubles, usually require assistance to handle their own" (p. 21). Later in the book

he reiterates, "When there is a job to be done, men are more confident than women that they will be able to do it and much more satisfied with their actual performance" (p. 107).

- (3) Sally Helgesen (1990), in *The Female Advantage (Women's Ways of Leadership)*, stresses women's connectedness to others and their view that "all of life is interconnected, with the knower being part of the known" (pp. 222–223), while men stand outside and observe. Helgesen confirms Carol Gilligan's views that men are more objective and women more subjective. This is the same way in which the two genders view truth. Men see "truth" as abstract and objective. Women see truth as contextual, affected by and emerging from human circumstance (p. 223). Helgesen also reports that women value "listening"; they see it as making "others feel comfortable and important" (p. 244). She cites Gilligan who believes that listening is "in the substance of their [women's] moral concern" (p. 244).

### Biology Is Destiny

Moir and Jessel (1991) spent a great deal of time and effort studying the differences between men and women in spatial ability and mathematical skills in order to show (1) that there is an experimentally demonstrable difference between the average male and female brain and (2) that the worlds of mathematics, vision, and space are a part of daily life. Their findings demonstrate that testosterone gives men an advantage in focusing a brain already (by its structure) more focused than the female brain. By comparison, it is the high levels of estrogen in women that enhance their coordination skills.

An important contribution of this study is its affirmation that differences in the brains of girls and boys are a determinant of their behavior, emotions, ambition, aggression, skill, and aptitude just as much as social/cultural influences are. When Cyndi Lauper sings, "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," she is closer to scientific truth than she may realize. School-age boys want dominance, and girls want popularity more than success or achievement. With puberty, boys begin to define their life aims in terms of occupation—and their prestige—while girls are worried about what others think of them. Social conditioning reinforces this, yet deliberate efforts to reverse this effect do not seem to succeed. Moir and Jessel tell of an instance in which girls were given specific lessons in leadership; their aspirations to lead did not increase, except in cases where the leadership function could be linked to some form of social responsibility and acceptability.



There are those who would say that since girls are predisposed to choose careers that involve human interaction of some kind, girls are, accordingly, destined to go into "second-class" jobs. Moir and Jessel won't accept that kind of attitude. They believe that because of male dominance (societally influenced, as well as biologically determined), aggression, and a sense of hierarchy, women's jobs come to be regarded as second class. In other words, women have been relegated to second-class jobs, not because they are predisposed to seeking jobs involving human action, but rather because men's dominance has prevailed in making everyone think that what men do is first rate and, consequently, what women do is second-rate.

Motivation is also different in men and women, say Moir and Jessel (1991). Girls/women are preoccupied with their own identity and their relationships with others, and boys/men are focused on competition and achievement. Moir and Jessel cite studies of college males, which "show that a majority of them do not choose fields in which conventional success is assured; they choose fields in which there is a *risk* of failure, but the *chance of much greater success*. Females in the study usually had different priorities: for them, the nature of the occupation was much more important than formal achievement or financial success" (pp. 160–161). In conjunction with the male issue of motivation and priority is the issue of money. Success, ambition, and money are all bound together in the thinking of males. Females, on the other hand, see level of salary as not as important as the position. This may be part of the reason why women are paid less for the same work, especially in careers such as educational administration, in which salary often is negotiated.

When (and if) the traditional male positions of college president and school superintendent are supplanted by females, those positions will likely lose their status in the eyes of men, and the result will be even more women having opportunities to fill the openings vacated by men rushing off to conquer something else. The other possibility is that the observations made by Margaret Mead will hold true. Many years ago, Mead said, "Men may cook, or weave, or dress dolls, or hunt hummingbirds, but if such activities are appropriate occupations of men, then the whole society, men and women alike, votes them as important. When the same occupations are performed by women, they are regarded as less important" (Moir and Jessel, 1991, pp. 162–163).

### Brain or Brawn?

The findings of Marie-Christine de Lacoste, who studied the physiology of brains, closely ally with those of Moir and Jessel. de

Lacoste's research was the first study of the human corpus callosum to show a possible anatomical basis for sexual differences in intellect, skills, and behavior. One of the points in contention in her research is the assumption by the general public that boys excel in math and computational skills, whereas girls are superior in verbal skills. de Lacoste's findings, however, support a prominent theory of Nobel Laureate Roger Sperry, whose work is still considered by many to be definitive. Sperry, de Lacoste, and many others believe that male brains are more lateralized than those of females and, as such, allow for greater right-brain performance, which are the visuospatial skills; women, with their theoretically increased bilateralization, excel at verbal skills because, with more cross-communication, they have decreased focus on the right hemisphere (Phillips, c. 1990).

While de Lacoste's findings were exciting, they were not without challenge, particularly by Anne Fausto-Sterling (1985), author of *Myths of Gender* and a well-known Brown University biologist. Fausto-Sterling strongly disagrees with both de Lacoste and Sperry. Supported by the work of Dr. Janet Hyde and Drs. Robert Plomen and Terry Foch, among others, Fausto-Sterling says that newer ways of analyzing data, through meta-analysis, show that the conclusions of the most cited psychologists (Maccoby and Jacklin) in the field of the sex differences of the brain are far from conclusive. As Fausto-Sterling (1985) says, "Maccoby and Jacklin's 'well-established sex difference' in verbal ability . . . teeters on the brink of oblivion" (p. 30).

The actual sex difference in aggression has been found to be characteristic only in certain types of situations. Studies reported by Towson and Zanna, as well as Frodi, Macaulay, and Thome, and cited in Powell (1988), show that males and females are equally likely to engage in aggression when they are provoked, but males are more likely to initiate aggression. Men reported that they were angered most by physical aggression, whereas women are most angered by unfair treatment (p. 47).

There are very few studies that attempt to measure aggressive or hostile behavior in humans, while, at the same time, correlating such behavior with testosterone levels in the blood. The weight of the evidence, while not conclusive, suggests no reliable correlations. At the date of publication of Fausto-Sterling's *Myths of Gender* in 1985, only one previously published study had examined testosterone levels in women in different occupations (p. 129). The unexpected conclusion pointed to this now well-established observation: stress lowers testosterone, and there is good reason to argue that the social situation (the type of work) changes the biological condition (hormonal level), rather than the other way around (p. 130).

The controversy continues as to the differences between women

and men. "On average, women and men perform differently. But when it comes to trying to assign causes or reasons, that is where [the scientists] get into trouble," says Ruth Hubbard, a retired Harvard biologist who has written extensively about women and biology (Phillips, c. 1990, p. 68). Melissa Hines, a neuroscientist, remains concerned that neurobiology may be twisted to justify discrimination. Most researchers do, however, agree that women and men are different and that there are certain things each sex does better.

### Female Psychology

Because of increased research studies on women over the past twenty years, we can say both intuitively and scientifically that *women experience life differently than men do*; consequently, they think differently. As Carol Gilligan, a pivotal researcher and Harvard psychologist, said in her book of the same title, "Women speak in a different voice" (1982). Soft-spoken herself, she exemplifies the "ethic of care" she professes in all of her writing.

I remember the first time I met Carol Gilligan. The year was 1986, and she was in a scheduled debate with Lawrence Kohlberg the final summer of his life. Gilligan was not feeling well (and Kohlberg himself had been in ill health for some time), but she kept her promise to Kohlberg to address what would turn out to be his final Summer Institute on School Governance. Mutual respect was evident, and kindness abounded. Gilligan spoke that evening of the voice of women and their need for human connection, not in a dependent sense, but rather as a link to all humankind.

In her work, Gilligan emphasizes the dilemma experienced by girls in early adolescence. They are faced with a choice between remaining responsive to themselves (thus resisting the conventions of feminine goodness) and remaining responsive to others (thus resisting the values placed on self-sufficiency and independence). Unable to choose between selfishness or selflessness, many girls at around age eleven "silence" their voices. It is at this age that girls become less confident and more tentative in offering their opinions. As Gilligan (Toufexis, 1990) says, "We start to hear the breathy voice [of the girls]. After a while, the girls speak in a way that's disconnected from how they are really feeling" (p. 65). Girls begin to bury their knowledge (more on this below). A Carnegie Foundation report of a study published in 1987 supports Gilligan's findings, "Even the brightest woman often remains silent" (Keever, 1991, p. D1). In 1985, Gilligan began trying to find answers to the question, What can we do to strengthen girls'

resistance to the loss of their confidence? Fearing that speaking up will anger others, adolescent girls silence their voices and "settle for idealized relationships in which, on the surface, everyone is 'nice'" (Winkler, 1990, p. A8).

What these various studies are finding is that human connection is of paramount importance. "Women's sense of self and of worth is grounded in the ability to make and maintain relationships," according to Jean Baker Miller, author of *Toward a New Psychology of Women* and psychiatrist at Wellesley College's Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies (Toufexis, 1990, p. 64). Women use conversation to expand and understand relationships; men use talk to convey solutions, thereby ending conversation. Women tend to see people as mutually dependent; men view them as self-reliant. Women emphasize caring; men value freedom. Women consider actions within a context, linking one to the next; men tend to regard events as isolated and discrete.

### Family Influences

There are few who would disagree that family influence of whatever variety is very strong on both girls and boys. Cynthia Fuchs Epstein (1971), who studied the options and limits women faced in their professional careers in the 1960s, speaks to the importance of that influence, "From their culture, children derive a set of expectations about themselves that become a crucial part of their self-image. This early conditioning is nearly always crucial to later occupational decisions" (p. 19). Two decades later, Cantor and Bernay (1992) stated this influence of family even more strongly, "Whatever it was that they received from their families when they were growing up enabled them to become the *leaders* [author's emphasis] they are today" (p. 95).

When prevalent traits in females are devalued, girls learn very early that they need to deny these traits if they themselves wish to be valued. When boys' self-esteem is based on achievement and girls' self-esteem depends on acceptance by others, and when society does not place a very high value on "feelings between self and others," there is little wonder that girls have difficulty becoming motivated to succeed.

Boys are encouraged to explore areas, space, and things. Their parents admire their daring, even while warning their sons of danger. Boys are always projecting what they are going to be when they grow up, and men project what they are going to achieve in the next five



years. Cantor and Bernay (1992), as well as others, believe that "Women seldom dream of what is possible for them to be in life . . . because to do so requires building on images observed in the culture [role models], taken inside [internally], and embroidered with personal meaning" (pp. 127, 132).

President Clinton boasts that he set his sights on the presidency at an early age and that he confirmed that dream after meeting President Kennedy. We might ask, What comparable dream did his junior high school female classmates have? Who influences women in their dreams to become educational administrators? Not likely other women! On the other hand, I'll bet every woman can name those who inspired her to become a teacher. Was it Mrs. Briggs or Miss Mallon, with maybe a bit of Mrs. Muir, Mrs. McCloskey, or Miss Dickey as well? Most of your role models are women, aren't they? It probably doesn't matter so much what subjects they taught; you just knew you wanted to be like them. You no doubt respected your (male) principal, but it is not likely that it is he you are emulating. You wanted to be your (female) teacher.

Perhaps your childhood role model was Wonder Woman, a comic book character of fantasy. How many of you raided your mothers' jewelry drawers or made cardboard wristbands, the closest you could come to copying the costume? Yet even this fantasy role model was destroyed by the 1980s denigration of the word and the heroic connotation of "Wonder Woman" by the use of the phrase *wonder women of the '80s*. Women who tried to have it all—home, family, and a career—especially those who were said to be striving to be perfect mothers, perfect wives, and successful professional women, were dubbed "wonder women." And, if that was not enough, society made *superman of the '80s* a positive phrase, admiring men who were successful in their careers, spent time with the children, and played great racquetball. Society made jokes about women who played the role of "wonder woman." Why are there no jokes about "supermen?"

[I must confess that Wonder Woman is still my heroine, and I have a framed poster of an early Wonder Woman comic book displayed in the powder room (the irony of that poster in the "powder" room just struck me) and a cut-out of the character propped on a book shelf in the library. Such reminders may be only childhood nostalgia, but I think there is also some kind of loyalty, inspiration, or defiance in all of this.]

In addition to comic book heroes, most childhood games (Wonder Woman and Superman notwithstanding) also help shape what and who girls and boys become. In game playing, boys' interest in others is purely functional: "Do you know how to build a tree house?" Girls

seek more intimate, personal relationships by forming social clubs. Both boys and men form teams for purposes of winning, while girls and women form groups on the basis of emotional attachments (Levin, 1987). Males view winning as more important than personal relationships or growth; girls value cooperation and relationships. Boys insist on boundaries, rules, and procedures; girls look disdainfully upon complex rules and authoritarian structure. Boys submerge their individuality for the greater goal of the game itself; girls disregard a quest for victory if it threatens the harmony of the group.

To confuse matters even further, parents unwittingly send mixed messages to girls, particularly in adolescence. They encourage their daughters to do well yet send signals not to excel by saying, "You want the boys to like you, don't you?" When the daughters head off to college, they are told, "You can do anything you want to do if you apply yourself;" yet daughters also hear suggestions that they are going to college to "make a good marriage," i.e., "marry someone from a good (wealthy) family who is going into a professional field, preferably law or medicine."

## Extrapolations

By extrapolating this behavior to its logical sequence into the adult workplace, you can better understand similar situations occurring there. If, for example, most of the administrators in an educational institution are male, you can expect the "play" activities of boyhood to be manifest in the working style of the management team. If the management team is close to being equally divided between men and women, a conflict situation could result, in which the members of the team are, at best, uncomfortable and, at worst, confrontational. This happens because women and men do not know how to play together. They have learned different game rules and strategies, and neither gender understands the "dumb games" played by the other. In such conflict situations, you, as the leader, should give serious thought to management staff development, perhaps in the form of a retreat led by an experienced facilitator or trainer.

In the unlikely event that your management team is comprised completely, or almost completely, of females, you can expect more decision making by cooperation and consensus. That situation may appear to be a positive, but it may not be entirely ideal because the studies of Moir and Jessel (1991) show that, in situations of conflict, females have a tendency to remove themselves from the situation or to cope by unassertive means. In such a case, you may find yourself

wishing for some of the assertiveness and risk-taking propensities of males! Of course, it cannot be assumed that all women and all men work in gender absolutes. Nevertheless, knowing the generalities of the way men and women operate should help you in any administrative position.

It may also be an advantage to have (on your management team) women who grew up with siblings. As Cantor and Bernay (1992) point out, families with siblings provide opportunities for girls to learn how to negotiate among their contemporaries and with the older generation. They further show that siblings learn to pick their battles and to take calculated risks and that competition among siblings sharpens a lifetime skill. [If we are to believe Cantor and Bernay's statement that "families with siblings may be the only safe arena for girls to develop Creative Aggressive behaviors" (1992, p. 118), we may need to advocate against single-child families!]

### School Influence

It should be a lasting embarrassment to educators that it was not they who were the first to call attention to the impact of sexism on the schools, but rather members of the women's movement (Greene, 1978). Greene believes that the reason educators could not see this unequal treatment is that they followed the same assumptions as the general public: (1) There are separate spheres for men and women; (2) there are insuperable biological differences between them; and (3) there are further differences in temperament and physique (p. 247). Even worse than all of this, says Greene, there are many educators who are not convinced that these assumptions even present a problem. Greene speaks for those who have been advocating freedom for all—both girls and boys—to choose among a range of alternatives and not according to long-held assumptions. In her *Landscapes of Learning*, Greene (1978) addresses the way educators have ignorantly perpetuated the constraints of sexism; she calls for the creation of social conditions that "allow for the expression of . . . [and] preference for . . . individual freedom [to choose]" (p. 252).

### The AAUW Report

While Greene's plea is very clear, it is a report by the American Association of University Women that will very likely be regarded as the seminal report on the crisis in the American schooling of its females. The report poses this question: When girls and boys enter school nearly equal in measured ability, why, at the end of twelve

years, have girls fallen behind the boys in the key areas of higher level mathematics and measurable self-esteem? *The AAUW Report* then echoes Greene by decrying the use of such general terms as *students* or *high schoolers*, terms that are typically associated with males and that tend to camouflage girls. We carelessly use terms that place everyone into the same category, with the frame of reference being male.

In reviewing thirty-five educational reports conducted prior to 1989, the AAUW notes that few women held leadership positions on the thirty-five commissions that produced those reports. In addition, only two groups had at least 50 percent female representation, even though women were members of all the groups except one. This is the very kind of discrimination that has been prevalent and accepted for years. Educators talk about the "problems in education" and don't even have equity on the commissions studying the problems.

*The AAUW Report* has been widely read and frequently cited. Because the report is so clear and because the timing is right, its impact has been strong. Whether the results will show that the educational community (all of us who have a stake in the future of public and private education) has taken this to heart enough to make changes remains to be seen, but the first step has been reached, in that the report has generated much discussion and some action, most in connection with attempts at implementing the National Education Goals. Not all of the information in *The AAUW Report* is new, but the presentation of the content has hit a nerve in many readers. Much of the information on the issue of gender confirms what has already been cited in this chapter. The following listing summarizes *The AAUW Report* (1992, pp. 10–11) in emphasizing the stages at which gender differences are most evident:

- (1) By age four, children begin to think of girls and "girls' things" as the opposite of boys and "boys' things."
- (2) By age six or seven, children have clear ideas of gender, and both sexes strive for conformity to role and prefer sex-segregated play groups.
- (3) By age eight to ten, children are more flexible regarding occupational roles for women and men, and there is some reduction of sex-segregated behavior.
- (4) In early adolescence, girls become more unwilling to admit that they ever act like boys. Boys are never very willing to admit acting like girls.

What is of major concern to the AAUW study is the silencing of girls



as they move from the elementary grades into junior high and high school. The AAUW Report asks,

If young women of relative privilege, studying in environments designed to foster their education and development, exhibit increasingly conflicted views of themselves and their responsibilities and opportunities in the world, what does this reveal about the cultural norms these schools, and perhaps all schools, are reinforcing for young women? (*The AAUW Report*, 1992, p. 12)

Most research, including that reported by the AAUW, shows that early adolescence is a particularly difficult time for girls because they are facing the idealization, as well as the exploitation, of their sexuality, while also being assigned roles that are less valued than those of males. In addition to wanting the attention of their male classmates, being liked by others of their own sex is especially crucial for adolescent girls.

The area of *The AAUW Report* that caused the greatest stir is the finding that gender differences in self-confidence are strongly correlated with continuation in math and science classes. Elizabeth Fennema and Julia Sherman, in their classic study, found a strong correlation between math achievement and confidence. Their research revealed a drop in both confidence and math achievement in the middle school years and further noted that the drop in confidence occurred first. The implications here are that, even though a good grounding in math is a prerequisite for math or science college majors, girls are opting out of advanced math (and science) courses. Girls are thereby (although perhaps unwittingly) limiting their career choices, the very choices Greene and others have said are necessary. Fausto-Sterling (1985), as well as *The AAUW Report* and others, argues that more attention must be paid to girls succeeding in math and science:

If math and science were required for four years of high school, if girls were actively counseled to consider careers in science and warned about the ways in which dropping out of math limits their future choices, if teachers were made aware of the different ways they treat boys and girls in the classroom, and if there were many more women teaching math and science to our youngsters, the "problem" of women in math would lessen dramatically, and in all likelihood would disappear. (p. 59)

### **Retaining College Women in Math and Science Studies**

Colleges and universities are faced with the same math-science dilemma. A report recently released by the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women says that "the key to retaining women in

science and mathematics is to make the undergraduate experience more interesting" ("Notebook," p. A41). This longitudinal study, "Pathways for Women in the Sciences," was based on more than 1,000 responses from women in Wellesley's class of 1995, alumnae in the classes of 1983 through 1991, and students at two other institutions. The co-author of the report and director of the Center, Paula Rayman, says colleges should improve undergraduate research opportunities for freshmen and sophomores to make the courses more interesting and to give the students a chance to apply what they've already learned. Rayman also calls for colleges to provide mentors to give young women hands-on encouragement at the undergraduate level. In addition, she says that those efforts alone will not increase the number of women in science and mathematics if colleges *themselves* don't change the perception that these fields are not open to women. Ms. Rayman adds, "When you look at the top 10 research universities and there are only five tenured women in mathematics, it's disheartening. But it's not impossible to move against that reality" ("Notebook," 1994, p. A41). She suggests the colleges make sure that course materials include examples of research by women.

### **Girls and Extracurricular Programs**

In addition to inequity in academics, *The AAUW Report* also concerns itself with the lack of girls' participation in athletic programs. It appears that no one is telling the girls about the very real benefits that playing sports can have in preparing for leadership roles in the workplace. In fact, all extracurricular activities and sports provide important opportunities for leadership, teamwork, and the development of citizenship. Activities provide a chance to explore new areas and to develop a skill in an area of particular interest. Of equal importance, and cogent to the premise of this book, is that extracurricular activities provide opportunities for personal contacts with adult role models who can, in turn, provide guidance and support (mentoring). Even more important is the early groundwork that training in networking sports and other extracurricular activities provide. Anyone who has participated in activities or who has played a role as a coach or advisor has seen this in action. Friendships formed on a team are lasting ones, and these friendships often become the basis for career networking. Even if teammates follow different career paths, the skills and confidence they have learned on the stage or on the playing field are transferable to the world of work. Those girls and boys who have mentors in their specialty or who are proficient enough to attend district chorus or state track have the opportunity for even more rudimentary networking. They also have the

hance to watch successful female role models if the coach or advisor is female; if the coach happens to be male, at least the girls can see fundamental leadership in action. If we do not encourage more girls to participate in more activities, we are limiting their lifelong possibilities.

### Gender and Scholastic Achievement

Well-known researchers David and Myra Sadker found that the teachers they studied interacted more often with the boys in their classrooms than they did with the girls. The Sadkers noted that part of the reason is that boys "demand" more attention than girls do, but, more often, the attention is just another unconscious sex bias on the part of the teachers. Other studies support these findings and add their conclusions that boys receive more specific comments and evaluations from their teachers than do girls in the same classes. Because girls are given less attention, some female students lack the qualities of perseverance and self-confidence. Some researchers term this phenomenon "learned helplessness" (*The AAUW Report*, p. 69). This lack of confidence in their own abilities is also one reason why girls sometimes abandon academic challenges. Another theory regarding why girls avoid striving hard and achieving much is the idea of the "fear of success" (Greene, 1978, p. 249). (Also see Chapter 1 in this book.)

Based on the (1) widely held belief that women's colleges are "twice as likely as comparable coed schools to produce achievers" (Cantor and Bernay, 1992, p. 204) and (2) research studies that indicate that girls often learn and perform better in same-sex work groups than they do in mixed-sex groupings, there is a small, but growing, trend at high schools to offer single-sex (female) math classes. However, because single-sex classes are illegal under Title IX, there have been some challenges filed against holding these classes. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that the news media report the girls in these "all-girl" math classes wholeheartedly agree that they learn more than they did in mixed-gender classes. The girls explain that they do better because they are not distracted by having boys in their classes and because they are more comfortable asking questions and responding to the teacher's questions in single-sex classes.

### Implications

The extent to which you, as an aspiring woman administrator, identify with the "typical historical scenario" of growing up female

will vary from individual to individual. Moreover, your own recollections may either enhance or diminish your ability to relate to these typical schooling experiences. You may even find yourself surprised at your reaction, because, perhaps, you have not thought about the influence your early schooling experiences have had on your own life choices. If this is the case, now is the time to recall those experiences. The recollection will help you understand yourself better, and, while it may not make you any more pleased with the work style of some of those with whom you work, reflecting upon early influences may help you to deal with present experiences in a more enlightened way.

As the leader of an educational institution, you will have a strong voice in determining the direction to be taken by that institution. You will have the opportunity to effect change in both direct and subtle ways. For example, the following changes can be made just in the normal course of operations:

- In addition to conforming to the law (Title IX), establishing committees at every level to spearhead or monitor programs that promote opportunities for girls and women would be a giant stride.
- Placing an equal number of men and women faculty and/or administrators on every committee would be a positive step.
- Encouraging the library to exercise more discretion in increasing their holdings to include more women authors would also have an impact on the reading and research selections of your student body.
- Seminars and special speakers, convocations and school assembly programs, field experience and field trips, and visiting lecturers on both the college and the high school level could go a long way in raising the awareness of the contributions of women.

In addition, try some creative ways to enhance the involvement of the female population in the institution. Once your faculty, board, and students see that you are serious in promoting equality, many more ideas will flow from all quarters. A little publicity wouldn't hurt, either. For example, as your contribution to the Spring Festival, instead of doing something silly such as participating in the dunking booth, why not offer something fun, yet dignified, such as a debate or a series of male-female contests, both academic and extracurricular? A student-faculty committee could, no doubt, come up with some very interesting and creative ways to highlight the skills and contributions of your female students and faculty. Why not have a gender day, in which the historical contributions of each sex are featured, or a



special event, demonstrating the ways in which each gender approaches particular tasks? This would require research and much planning and coordination, but think of the potential for positive results!

### Speaking a Different Language

No one will argue the importance of communication with all constituents—teachers, parents, “tax watch” groups, students, and community. Just as important, however, is the communication of everyday conversation between or among individuals. As most of the day-to-day operations of a business or institution depend on the spoken word, it is necessary to understand that what is being said and how it is being said impacts on the listener.

All of us are all familiar with the cliché, “My wife doesn’t understand me.” We also all have heard such comments as, “You’re not listening,” or “Why don’t you hear what I’m saying?” While the first remark is obviously one made by males, it is probably just as apparent to both men and women that the latter two expressions are likely to be made by females. Rather than continuing to blame the men we work with (and/or live with), we should perhaps look at the differences between the way women and men speak. Accepting that there *are* differences can be the first step in reconciling those dissimilarities.

#### *As the Twig Is Bent . . .*

Communication disparities between the sexes begin almost from the time children begin to speak in sentences. In a study of conversational patterns of preschoolers and elementary school children, Julia Evans, a sociolinguistic researcher, found that four-year-old girls volunteered a great deal of information, but four-year-old boys responded with only brief facts:

When asked by the interviewer to talk about her family, one girl answered, “Well, the first thing we do in the nighttime is we watch some TV, and then we read a book, and then we go to bed, except my mother stays up to read.”

A boy, when asked the same question, responded, “My dad is on a trip.”

When the interviewer asked the girl to talk about day care, she answered: “Well, I have a friend named Sally. Sometimes we play in the tunnels, but sometimes we don’t play there because it’s muddy and there are worms.” With a little prompting, she continued, “And we have

snacks. Sometimes we have oranges, and sometimes we have apples, and sometimes we have cheese and crackers.”

When the interviewer asked the boy the same question, he answered, “We play with blocks.” Hoping to get a bit more information, the interviewer repeated, “You play with blocks?” To which the boy responded, “Yeah.” (Wolcott, 1991, p. 22)

Evans says these responses are typical, but more important, she believes that the differences in the way boys and girls talk may perpetuate unequal status.

In conversation, girls (and women) use elaborations, which are words and phrases adding to the flow of the conversation; females use these elaborations to add new information, maintain the topic, and form a more definite link with the person to whom they are speaking. Boys (and men), on the other hand, add little or no information in their responses. This allows males (intentionally or unintentionally) to control the interaction, placing females in the awkward position of seeming to flounder and to “fill in the gaps” (left by the males) of the conversation.

Reflect for a moment on how many times you have been in a situation of feeling pressure (from within yourself or from the conversational partner) to ask questions and to keep a conversation going. Particularly in social conversations, a woman keeps introducing topics until she finds a topic that interests the man. Even in professional settings when speaking to a man of equal status, a woman still maintains more than her share of the conversation. This is one more way in which women are held in less regard, even though their professional positions are equal to the man’s. According to Evans, “Women do the majority of conversational ‘work,’ while men maintain conversational control; and most of the topics sustained in a conversation are the topics introduced by men” (p. 22).

#### *. . . The Tree’s Inclined*

Janet Surrey (1985), in her studies of women’s development, defines relationship as knowing oneself and others through mutual relational interaction. In Surrey’s model, communication becomes interaction and dialogue, rather than debate. Working with a particular couple using this model, Surrey (1985) relates her surprise at the description the man and woman gave of their communication process:

When she spoke of her own needs and perceptions, she wanted him to listen actively, playing a part in the developing movement of ideas to a

stage of increased focus and clarity. He was ready for *debate*. "When I argue and debate with her, it is because I treat her like an equal who knows what she feels and can argue effectively on her own position." She found that his position created confusion, disorganization and a feeling of disconnection, rather than fostering her idea of *communication*. She was asking from him what she feels she does for him—going "with him" on his line of thinking at that time, temporarily taking herself "out of the picture." Each had much difficulty understanding the other's model of relationship. (p. 10)

We see by this example just how entrenched conversational patterns are, to the point that, even when engaged in a *conscious process*, the ingrained differences between men's and women's conversational styles come through.

Knowing that men and women follow a different conversational pattern can work to your advantage not only in helping you to understand that even "simple conversation" is sex biased, but also in aiding you to use this knowledge to your advantage. Make it a practice to reflect on your conversations even while you are engaged in them. In other words, act as an objective observer even while being an active participant. By being cognizant of gender conversational patterns as they are occurring, you will raise your awareness and increase your chances of conversing on an "equal" footing.

### **Myths and Truths**

Contrary to popular myth, studies show that men interrupt women more often than women interrupt men. Evans (Wolcott, 1991) notes this behavior pattern even in boys. In taped conversations, eight-year-old boys kept interrupting the female interviewer. The girls did not. Evans says one of the reasons boys interrupt and girls do not challenge the interruptions is that they've grown up with this pattern. Studies show that both mothers and fathers interrupt daughters more than they do sons. Contrary to the endless jokes made at the expense of women, men are the sex that dominates conversations. This behavior reflects lower status for women, as we "buy into the sexist stereotype which defines male interests as more important than female ones" (Hole, 1992, p. 23). Women who, as children, were told, "Don't interrupt!" learn not to interrupt. The unfortunate consequence is that this admonition not to interrupt reinforces a style of docility, humbleness, and powerlessness in the behavior of women.

Research of sociologists and anthropologists, such as Janet Lever, Marjorie Harness Goodwin, and Donna Eder, shows that girls and boys learn to use language differently in their sex-separate peer

groups (Tannen, 1991). Girls *talk* and share secrets, becoming best friends in the process. Boys' best friends are the ones with whom they *do* things. Activities become central. Even what boys and men read about is *things*. What happens, be it machines or weaponry, is all important to the male (Hole, 1992, p. 23). Males' play is hierarchical. High-status boys give orders and push low-status boys around. Girls try to include and equalize everyone. They don't want to hurt anyone's feelings, even though they may tactlessly tell friends, "It's O.K. if you don't have enough money for dues." Girls manage by persuasion: "But we must meet in the Clubhouse even if the temperature inside is 98°. Isn't that why we painted it?" or "Let's all wear matching skirts to the dance."

Girls vie for attention in subtle ways, hoping to be noticed. Boys grab center court by showing off their skill or making challenges. Boys and men speak out in class more than girls and women because they like the public forum. Walter Ong argues in his book *Fighting for Life* that it is our educational system that is fundamentally male, in that the pursuit of knowledge is believed to be achieved by ritual opposition such as public display followed by argument and challenge (Tannen, 1991). Schools encourage the use of debate-like formats as a learning tool. Many male instructors teach in this kind of debate forum. They challenge the comments made by students, playing "devil's advocate" and generally draw out comments and counter-challenges. Boys thrive in this "debate and challenge" forum and have no qualms about speaking out, right or wrong. Girls and women prefer speaking in private to a small group of people they know well. They do not like the challenge of debate as a general classroom technique. Deborah Tannen (1991) explains,

Men who speak frequently in class assume that it is their job to think of contributions and try to get the floor to express them. But many women monitor their participation not only to get the floor but to avoid getting it. Women students in my class tell me that if they have spoken up once or twice, they hold back for the rest of the class because they don't want to dominate. If they have spoken a lot one week, they will remain silent the next. These different ethics of participation are, of course, unstated, so those who speak freely assume that those who remain silent have nothing to say, and those who are reining themselves in assume that the big talkers are selfish and hoggish. (p. B3)

These kinds of preferences carry over to the professional world and can be observed in administrative cabinet meetings. Remember this as you watch the interplay, the challenges, and the debate.

In situations where information is needed by everyone, the person



with the information has a higher status. Because of this, most men resist asking women for information. When they do, women are likely to avoid giving the information "straight." Women put the information they wish to convey in the form of a suggestion rather than direct instructions. Women are cautious about appearing to be more knowledgeable than their colleagues and try conscientiously not to embarrass those who do not have the same knowledge as they do. Women are likely to say things such as, "This may not be the only way to do it," or "There's no guarantee on this," or "What do you think about . . .?" As a result, women are often misinterpreted as not clearly understanding the information they have and are often perceived as being unsure of themselves.

Unless you are and have always been the CEO, you have found yourself, more than once, in a situation during an administrative meeting in which you make a comment that is ignored. No one says anything. It is as if you haven't spoken. Later, the same comment or suggestion is made by one of the men in the meeting. It is acknowledged, discussed, and often approved, with the credit going to the man for having made the suggestion. Most women experience such situations, and most believe that being ignored happens to them because they are women. There is a great deal of truth to this observation. However, having a question ignored may also be the result of the way the information is presented. Women are more likely to phrase their ideas as questions, rush through the presentation without making strong major points, and speak in a lower volume with a higher pitch.

According to Tannen (1990) in her highly successful book, *You Just Don't Understand*, women who attempt to adjust their styles by speaking louder, longer, and with more self-assertion find themselves more effective in presentation but will also find they are modeling the masculine style. Tannen adds, "They [the women who use the masculine style] may command more attention and be more respected, but they may also be disliked and disparaged as aggressive and unfeminine" (p. 239). If women display confidence, they are respected and receive the attention of the meeting attendees but, at the same time, are disliked for having that confidence.

In relating studies of conversations among (1) all-male groups, (2) all-female groups, and (3) groups that are made up of both males and females, Tannen (1990) states that male-female group conversations are more like the conversations heard in all-male groups than like the ones heard in all-female groups. In mixed groups, both genders make adjustments, but women make more. In other words, when the two sexes are conversing together, men continue to converse the way they always do, and women adjust to the style of men. "Women are at a

disadvantage in mixed-sex groups, because they have had less practice in conducting conversation the way it is being conducted in these groups," relates Tannen (p. 237). Also, because the kind of talk that occurs at meetings is more similar to making reports (something men are more comfortable doing), women find it difficult to get the floor at meetings. In addition to not being comfortable with "report talk" style, women won't compete for the floor. Knowing this, when you chair meetings, you should make a concerted effort to make it more comfortable for women to be heard.

Speaking of being heard, women and men are judged differently even if they speak the same way, reports Tannen (1990, p. 228). Women are judged as less intelligent and knowledgeable than men, even when both use disclaimers and "tag questions" ("isn't it?" and other such "tag" endings). Women are said to be less intelligent when they do not give supporting statements to their arguments. Men who present arguments without supporting statements are not judged as harshly. Thus, it appears that, when women talk in ways that are associated with women, they are judged negatively, but when men present in that style, they are not criticized. The conclusion reached is that it is not the way women or men talk that affects attitudes so much as it is people's differing attitudes toward women and men that affect how they are perceived as deliverers of information. No matter how well a woman presents, her information will not be as well received as information presented by a man.

### Reversing the Trend

The best tools for an aspiring administrator are awareness, knowledge, and practice. When you schedule a meeting, make it clear in advance what will be expected. Prepare and distribute an agenda at least a day or two before the meeting. If you want presentations or position statements from your administrative staff, let them know well in advance. This helps to "level" the playing field, and your staff will appreciate your consideration. Then, follow through at the time of the meeting. Allow time for each person to make her/his presentation. If the men are dominating the meeting, call on the women by name. Bring them into the conversation and the discussion. Do the same for any of the males who are reluctant to volunteer.

Make sure you have established ground rules, that everyone's ideas are to be given consideration, and that all persons are to be respected. (On occasion, I attend meetings in a boardroom of a large corporation where the "rules of order" are mounted on acrylic stands

placed on the boardroom table. These placards serve as reminders to all participants, and those at the table are constantly aware of the protocol of the meetings.)

Most administrative preparation programs do not include such basics as "How to Conduct a Meeting"—under the false assumption that everyone, i.e., men, knows how to run a meeting. If you are inexperienced in facilitating meetings, find a book to help you. There are many such self-help books available in the management or business sections of your nearest bookstore. Don't hesitate to fill your bookshelves with any books addressing management issues; they are well worth your time to read. The successful administrator is she/he who prepares and turns every situation into a new opportunity to learn.

You will set the tone and the expectations for meetings you conduct by the way you ask questions and engage in discussions. In general, the delivery style of men will be direct, and that of women will be indirect. Nonetheless, don't categorize anyone too quickly! Each person is an individual, and not all persons will fit the profiles drawn here. In addition, some of the persons will be very conscientious in trying not to be the expected stereotype. The best approach in any meeting is to treat everyone as having something worthwhile to contribute. Make it your responsibility to elicit that contribution.

## 7 Leadership Styles of Women: "Isn't That Just What You'd Expect from a Woman?"

Gender differences influence every aspect of organizational life. Until recently, the research conducted in the field has looked at the world, including organizational structure, and has shaped its reality a male lens (Shakeshaft, 1989). Thus, most research results do not show a culture of women in educational leadership roles. Women have had to glean and deduce, extrapolating what they could from the "general" (read "male") studies. The unfortunate result is that women are left without a clear understanding of important issues (from their own perspective) and men have been prevented from understanding how their own "cultural identity as males interacts with women's cultural identity as females" (p. 335).

### Rewriting the Rules

This time in our educational history is providing opportunities not heretofore available for rewriting the rules of educational administration. Just as school restructuring allows for "tearing down the walls and beginning again," so can women now begin to redesign career paths and establish leadership styles, patterns, and practices that best suit their gender, as well as the times in which we live.

The fact that educational institutions are usually steeped in tradition and very reluctant to change can be an advantage to a woman new to a position. Particularly if you are the first woman in your position, there will be an expectation that things *will* change. What an opportunity for women administrators to meet those expectations! You no doubt already assume that it is possible to find better ways to operate the business of education, ways that are "human," rather than "institutional," and ways that can meet the needs of clients (students and parents), employees, community, and self. Now, you may have the chance to implement what you believe.

In less than two decades, women have moved from the standard



advice for women to learn to play the game the way men play it to the realization that the warrior model is no longer adequate for the work that must be carried out. Successful women, according to Sally Helgesen (1990), have mastered the (warrior) skills of discipline, the will, and the struggle, and they “have moved beyond them to provide models of what leadership can become when guided by feminine principles” (p. 258). These “feminine principles” are not limited to women but are termed feminine skills because they are grounded in what researchers have found to be the general way in which women do things. Business and industry are already widening their focus, fostering creativity and nurturing new ideas based on the values by which women have been reared. This evolutionary process reflects what corporations need now, and what they are retooling themselves for is exactly those qualities that women and “women’s ways” are able to provide. Thus, for the first time in modern history, businesses are patterning their way of doing business—both with their clients and with their employees—on the principles by which women live.

Joline Godfrey (1992) calls this management metamorphosis “the (new) right stuff.” This new management approach combines good work with good lives and provides a list of the qualities that help to make up this new right stuff:

- ease in relationships and a drive for connection
- whole people—head, heart, hands
- appreciation of complexity and process
- desire for balance and self-awareness
- sense of artistry, imagination, playfulness
- integrated vision of business and ethics
- courage (p. 4)

If you look closely, you will see that these qualities are not gender specific. Some men possess some of these traits, even though these are specifically qualities that are found in most women leaders.

One of the major differences, and the one that will frame the others between the “old” and the “new” way of doing business, is the structure of the organization. Helgesen (1990) describes an alternative model to the traditional pyramidal hierarchy. The web (Figure 7.1), as Helgesen calls it, is a design in which women position themselves in the center of the organization connected to all those around them as if by invisible threads constructed around a center point. Frances Hesselbein, former national executive director of the Girl Scouts, found this webbing effective because it is inclusive and allows for flow and movement and connection with any other point: “The great thing about the circle is that it does not box you in. . . . As the circles extend

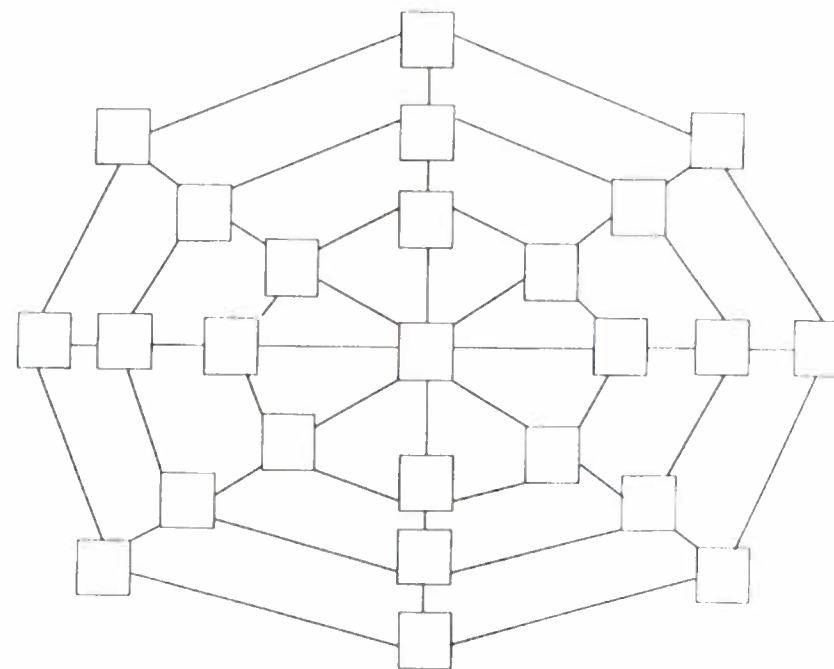


FIGURE 7.1. Design of web.

outward, the fabric becomes more interwoven” (Helgesen, 1990, p. 44). A variation of this web formation was used by Hesselbein who calls her management system circular. Nancy Badore of Ford Motor Company also uses a variety of this web style. Her management chart places her in the center with the team members branching out like the arms of a tree (Figure 7.2). Badore prefers to serve as facilitator during management meetings and finds this design allows for that (p. 47). This web imagery, in whatever design form it takes, always includes some kind of orb or center with radial lines, binding the whole together. At every point of contact there is a point of connection. The administrative authority, according to Helgesen (1990), “comes from this connection to the people . . . rather than distance from those below” (p. 55).

Women find this webbing structure comfortable because it is non-threatening and familiar. Their whole lives are integrated much like a web because their home and professional tasks have always “overlapped.” Women have no wives to pick up their dry cleaning or shield them from household problems; they learn early on to integrate tasks. Many more women than men plan their itinerary when they



FIGURE 7.2. Design of tree chart.

have a series of errands to run; they map out the route according to right-hand turns, distances to travel, and the times certain businesses are less busy. Men just go, then become annoyed when a store is closed or their car isn't ready at the garage; women check ahead as they do not (or cannot afford to) waste a minute.

### Leadership Styles

Leadership styles vary among women every bit as much as among men. Most researchers would agree that feminine leadership qualities are not exclusively female and that, in many areas of leadership, the differences among women are even greater than the differences between women and men. It could be said that "the masculine style uses structural power, which is based on authority

associated with position, title, and the ability to reward and punish, while the *feminine* style relies on charisma, work record, and contacts" [Rosener, in Wilson (1993), p. 27].

### The Major Difference

It is generally agreed that women are caring and nurturing. Translated to a leadership quality, women listen to others and show respect for the views of each individual. Thus, females are viewed to be more democratic and participative. One example of the support for this view can be found specifically in a survey of successful managers conducted in 1990 by Rosener (Griffin, 1992). Since the participatory style is currently being encouraged as a part of management trends that stress quality and excellence (Peters and Waterman, 1982), it is important that those striving to be educational leaders understand that style and be prepared to use it.

Most management studies are leaning toward the promotion of the following qualities, attributes that are a part of the leadership style of most women:

- integrative decision making
- group problem solving
- nonassertiveness
- democratic approach
- cooperative planning
- use of meetings as a forum for discussion.

Moir and Jessel (1991) speak of "the fundamental difference between the sexes in terms of one crucial dimension—the importance attached to personal relationships" (p. 166). They expand by saying that a woman's sense of career is "to some extent bound up in, qualified by, or in conflict with, the importance of personal relationships" (p. 167). Women manage people, not things; they consider the human dimension in both work and personal lives—their own and their employees—as intertwined. Women try very hard to like the people they work with, to understand their needs, and to break down the barriers of status. A woman is likely to introduce or speak of her secretary as, "Betty works with me," or "Betty and I work together," whereas a male would say, "Betty is my secretary." Ironically, however, women find it more difficult to form friendships at work. This is partly due to the fact that, in administration, there are fewer women with whom to form relationships, but the larger reason is that women prefer genuine relationships of feeling and not



the relationships of function, which are favored by men and typically found in the workplace.

As you move to a position of authority, you will notice that the first persons to visit you in your office will be the men who see relationships as a game; they want to make sure they are on your team. Women working for you will be more reserved and will wait to be included in your group. Their initial overture will be through a memo, a telephone call, a written report, or a copy of an article with a note: "Thought you might find this interesting," or "I think you might enjoy this."

A case study conducted by O'Rourke and Papalewis (1989) describes the life experiences of nine women administrators who shared values, perceptions, and feelings. This study confirmed earlier studies, validating that typical characteristics of women are conducive to effective schooling. One interviewer was quoted on the importance of recognizing intuition, long thought to be the province of women:

I think that we have to trust our sensitivities and our intuitions. I think that's the strongest thing that women have to offer - their intuition. Women are sensitive; they're perceptive. (p. 11)

Successful women leaders, much like men, are law-abiding and play by the rules, yet women, unlike most men, retain personal interest in the individual. They practice the social sense of the law, that which benefits human beings. When there is a conflict between the priorities of the law and the individual, women are most likely to champion the individual. Again, this is not "hard and fast" in every case and with every woman, but "siding with the person" is not an unusual action for women to take. The value of "gentle management" is highly desirable, and a woman's leadership style is far more likely than a man's to display the quality of mercy in seasoning justice.

### **Profiling Feminine Leadership**

Interaction, access, flow, conduit, involvement, network, reach—these are the attitudinal words of women administrators. They are "process" words, all of which emphasize relationships. They are interactive words that are favored by women and that reflect women's style of leadership. These qualities specifically include encouraging participation, sharing power and information, and enhancing other people's self-worth. Women who make it into the top executive spot,

according to Rosener ("Men vs. Women," n.d.), report that they "work to make their subordinates own self-interest work for the good of the entire operation" (p. 6).

Successful women executives of the 1990s are likely to ascribe their achievements to personal characteristics, rather than to their official position. They also believe that because they had to "scramble" to find the human and financial resources to get their work done when they were in staff positions, they learned the skills that, today, allow them to flourish. Such women serve as an affirmation to those who are just beginning to pursue administrative posts, since, far too often, women hesitate to leave the safety of a staff position because they fear they have not "mastered the secrets of the universe" (or at least of the institution). They settle into a lesser position and often remain "present-oriented" in their work, neglecting to plan adequately for their future careers (Edson, 1988).

What many women have failed to realize is that the skills and experiences gained in a staff position are very valuable in a line position as well. They have not understood that they can successfully transfer these skills to a position that would, at least, allow them the flexibility and latitude to work toward the required certification for a line position. What should be emphasized here is that the qualities of female leadership have deep roots and are only enhanced and honed by preparation programs and experiences. Women do not need to remake themselves because the leadership skills and perspectives they bring to the workplace are precisely the ones organizations most need.

In businesses of today, it is very often the women who are being held up as the model leaders. Paul Hawken (of *Smith and Hawken* success) describes this new leadership force in a much touted article he wrote for *Inc.* magazine. Said Hawken,

We lead by being human. We do not lead by being corporate, by being professional, or by being institutional. We lead when we admit our frailty, our imperfections, and our uncertainty. And we will lead not only when we remove the glass ceiling in corporate America, but [also] when women permeate and suffuse the world of business and make us whole again. (Austin, 1992, p. 48)

Others echo Hawken by lauding the feminine management style of being honest and up front, of sharing information, using what is called common sense, being respectful of all persons, involving all stakeholders, listening, and caring.

The ideal management profile, which was originally designed with

male managers in mind, has recently been found to be more closely in line with the qualities actually held by female managers. In viewing women in leadership roles, various studies show that women

- spend more time in unscheduled meetings (open-door policy)
- have more contact with those they supervise
- spend less time at their desks during the day
- have more contact with their superiors
- hold meetings and telephone calls of longer duration (indicating more consideration of others' needs)
- engage in more cooperative planning
- work more with new staff
- eat lunch alone in their offices, especially if there are no other women at their job level
- exhibit a more informal style
- associate more with women (the higher the position, the more the association is limited to women)
- operate under more flexible agendas
- institute people-oriented projects
- are involved in affirmative action
- demonstrate an interest in health issues

### **Breaking the Mold**

There is a delicate balance between following established practices and following one's own drummer. Few successful leaders have both the confidence and the circumstance to completely break rank. However, as the corporate world is showing, women have been successful in establishing new "break the mold" styles of leadership. Educational leaders are cautiously moving toward this "bold" new direction, as they take their cue from business practices and as they gain the confidence of their boards and constituents.

The way women moved up the corporate ladder beginning in the 1960s was to be aggressive and to think and act like a man. Many of those women still pride themselves that they accepted the terms "took it like a man," and rarely turned to other women for professional support or advice. Fortunately that attitude has changed. Today's female leaders are talking more openly with their staffs, as well as fellow administrators, sharing information and keeping the office door open. In a special issue of *Time* magazine, Barbara Rudolph (1990) interviewed a number of successful women managers. Juanita Kreps, a former Secretary of Commerce and a board member

of several Fortune 500 companies, observed, "Women bring a problem-solving attitude that embraces coordination more than the masculine drive to have power" (p. 53). ASK Computer Systems founder and president Sandra Kurtzig explained her style as "walking around and stroking people. Whenever possible, I try to compliment them in front of their peers and go up and hug them. A woman can show the warmth that a man often can't" (p. 53). These kinds of human responses, emotional and empathetic, were once scorned but are now highly valued in both men and women.

While this more personal approach of women is still less successful in such industries as utilities, insurance firms, and commercial banks, in which promotions are often based less on individual worth than on seniority and status, the feminine qualities of consensus building can be very successful in what Jeffrey Sonnenfeld of the Emory Business School calls "merit-driven industries, such as entertainment, biotechnology research and computer software" (Rudolph, 1990, p. 53). Education is also merit-driven and lends itself very well to this "softer" style. Of even more importance, however, is that educational institutions are fertile ground for this flexible, mediating approach, especially because these institutions take responsibility for an increasing number of societal issues. An open, warm sensitivity to many publics and to the wide diversity within those publics should be the most effective management style in educational institutions. Such is the style that women find most palatable.

### **Androgyny: The Best of Both?**

The fundamental tasks of administering schools have no gender identification. Reviewing the list of administrative tasks clearly shows that they are not geared specifically to women or to men. They are simply tasks. There is nothing inherent in the tasks themselves that would demand either a strictly feminine or exclusively masculine practice. It is in the "carrying out" of these tasks that puts a gender perspective to them.

Newer studies in sex role characteristics have resulted in the concept of psychological androgyny.<sup>11</sup> In research conducted by Sandra Bem, an androgynous sex role identity was found to be associated with higher self-esteem, a more flexible response to situations that usually call for either feminine or masculine behaviors, as well as many other positive factors. An androgynous individual is seen to be

<sup>11</sup>This term means having both masculine and feminine characteristics.



more psychologically flexible and more ready to meet the complex demands of society. In other words, androgyny is said to be the ideal (Powell, 1988).

On the surface, the concept of androgyny may appear to be the answer to all the controversy as to who makes the best administrator. Androgyny promises to eliminate all that gender "stuff" that gets in the way. In addition, androgynous management is suitable to the current work climate. As employees increasingly seek fulfillment in addition to a salary and as organizations must increasingly find way to focus on their human resources to improve their efficiency and work output, an androgynous management style holds much appeal.

On the other hand, can an individual train herself or himself to an androgynous style, or would that be as farfetched as training men to manage like women and vice versa? Also needed, before promoting this style, are answers to even larger questions: What are we sacrificing if we now begin to promote yet a third stereotype? Who is to say that the androgynous balance of masculine- and feminine-typed characteristics would use the appropriate responses in any given situation? And perhaps the strongest concern is whether either men or women want to be labeled androgynous, even if that style were shown to be the ideal.

### ***Effects of Hierarchical Structure and Power***

Studies found in Kahn-Hut, Daniels, and Colvard (1982) and reported by Kanter (1977) reveal that people well-placed in the hierarchy are already poised for the next position and are constantly playing that position; their task and structure leadership style is a result of their scramble for power. It is, therefore, important to understand how women and men become distributed across these structural positions, because their position placement affects their behavior and future placements. As women are more likely to be found at the bottom of power hierarchies, their position there leads them to tend to limit their aspirations. They then create social peer groups in which interpersonal relationships take precedence over other aspects of work (Kahn-Hut, Daniels, and Colvard, 1982, p. 236). These peer relationships of women reinforce the patterns of girlhood for the need to be part of a group. Thus, women often turn their attention to their peer relationships on a low-level placement, find themselves comfortable, and then self-limit their opportunities for advancement (p. 239).

If leadership style is influenced by the hierarchical structure of organizations, it might be said that the leadership style of women is

impeded by the hierarchical structure of most organizations. Also, if the opportunity for leadership is determined by one's place in the hierarchy, then it is very important to be placed in the best possible position. To be in the best position possible, the female administrator must find a niche that will give entry into the circles of management. As suggested in Chapter 1, this niche should be a specialty, something you know or can do better than others in the same position. Your aim is to be noticed and to have your eye on (and your foot ready for) the next position on the rung of the hierarchy.

### **Decision Making**

Women are perceived as being more democratic and participatory than men in their leadership styles, and, in planning groups, women are preferred as decision makers. Shakeshaft (1987) summarizes the work of a number of research studies that confirm that women use more cooperative planning strategies, are less committed to the formal hierarchy, and are more willing to submerge displays of personal power in order to get others to participate in the decision-making process. She concludes that the participatory style of women enhances, rather than threatens, their power base and is more inclusive than exclusive. In addition, women think about and evaluate their decisions more often than do men, are more likely to use strategies that include long-range planning and evaluative data in making decisions, and are rated as better planners (pp. 187–188).

Moir and Jessel (1991) point out differences in men's and women's approaches to decision making:

For the female, it is a more complex business, because she is taking in more information and taking account of more factors than a male. A woman's strength, and her weakness, is capacity to perceive, for example, the human dimension of a business decision. Her mind, with its greater sensitivity to personal and moral aspects, and the greater facility with it which connects the elements to be considered, makes the decision altogether more complex than it is for the man, who relies more on calculated, formulaic, deductive processes. (p. 168)

In other words, the masculine approach to decision making is blunt and quick and the feminine more complex because the female decision making utilizes more data—factual as well as emotional.

As a female administrator, you should not feel inadequate if you are not comfortable making a snap decision. As a woman, it is natural for you to weigh the facts, consider different dimensions, and seek alter-

natives if the choice is not what you believe it should be. You may not be as adept in zeroing in on a solution, but you will be better at understanding all of the issues. Give yourself the time you need to make the best decision possible. Once a decision is reached, you are also more likely to second-guess whatever decision you do make because you are clearly aware that very few things are absolute. In addition, as a female, you will be likely to worry about the impact of this decision on others, even though that concern was already a part of your decision-making process. Once the decision is made, you need to let it stand (unless, of course, there is new information which compels a revisit). Remember, you did the best you could do with the information you had at the time. Do not continue to revisit the decision.

### **A Profile of Principals**

A 1992 meta-analysis by Eagly, Karau, and Johnson (1992) of gender and leadership style among school principals reviewed fifty studies conducted since 1970, all of which reflected the researchers' desire to understand why relatively few women occupy major administrative roles in schools. The review of Eagly, Karau, and Johnson provides a systematic, quantitative integration of the available information (to 1992) comparing the leadership styles of male and female principals. They make a point of contrasting their study with prior efforts in order to summarize research in this area. They note that previous studies are "vulnerable to error because of their relatively informal, qualitative methods and their incomplete and unsystematic sampling of the available studies" (Eagly, Karau, and Johnson, 1992, pp. 77-78). Their findings indicate the tendency for female principals to lead in a more democratic and less autocratic style than male principals. What this suggests is that women who are principals are more likely than men principals to treat teachers and other subordinates as equals and to follow a participative decision-making style. Men use a less collaborative style, tending instead to be more dominant and directive. This study is consistent with the conclusions of general leadership research.

Eagly, Karau, and Johnson (1992) further showed (although to a smaller significance) that female principals are more task oriented than male principals; they are more concerned about organizing school activities to carry out necessary tasks and to reach explicit goals. [It can be suggested that, because women are more likely to (1) want to please, (2) do what is expected of them, and (3) make sure they

do not appear to be "different" in a heretofore male role, they may make a concerted effort to be more task oriented.]

As a female principal new to the position or to a particular school district, you should make it a priority to learn the school's environment. Because studies are incomplete as to how, or even if, different styles enhance effectiveness in different environments, it can only be suggested to aspiring principals that you adapt your own style to the conditions of the organization and/or try to find a school district that is a good match for your style. Unfortunately, reality dictates that women have less opportunity to be selective in finding a match because they are less often considered for interviews and also because they are usually more limited geographically; therefore, as a female, you are more likely to find it necessary to adapt to prevailing conditions, sometimes at the sacrifice of suppressing your own style. Once you have demonstrated that you can administrate in the expected mode (i.e., like a man), you can begin gradually to exercise your own leadership style and be even more effective being yourself. In other words, *first give them what they want, and then give them what they need!*

### **A Profile of Superintendents**

There are definite differences between male and female superintendents other than their gender. A study by Schuster and Foote (1990) found that the major disparity in the backgrounds of male and female superintendents was not in the classroom or the boardroom, but rather in the locker room. More than 57 percent of male respondents to the study's survey replied that they had served as coaches or athletic directors before becoming superintendents; only 13 percent of the women could claim such experience. This suggests that the underrepresentation of women may be even more fundamentally grounded in a sports background or locker room camaraderie than was previously thought. The old joke that the road to the boardroom is through the locker room may not be so farfetched after all!

Other differences uncovered in this study reveal that women attain their first superintendency much later in life than do men (36 percent of the women were over the age of forty-six, while only 14 percent of the men were of this age). As might be expected from that finding, women worked in the classroom for more years. Also, more women than men reached the superintendency via a central office position, and relatively fewer of these women were building principals. The women interviewed were more often firstborn and remained single.



They had higher IQs and were more academically successful. More held doctoral degrees, belonged to professional organizations, and read more professional books.

While many of these differences cannot be controlled, some are controllable by those persons who aspire to the position. For example, Schuster and Foote's (1990) findings suggest that, at least for their first superintendencies, aspirants should seek out smaller, higher spending districts that have with several women on the school board; you should also seek districts that are more affluent with more highly educated constituents. The chances of obtaining a superintendency are also increased if you have a doctoral degree and demonstrable experience as a risk taker and strong decision maker.

Boards most fear hiring a female who is not "tough enough." Make sure you have examples, answers, and, if possible, documentation to assure a board that you have what it takes. In addition, remember to emphasize your collaborative style as being the style currently being touted as most effective. School boards are increasingly becoming aware that they need a leader who not only can make hard decisions, but who also can work with all constituencies. That can very well be you.

### **A Profile of Higher Education**

The main explanation for the difficulty faced by women in academe is the continuing power of the "old norms," based on the "ancient exclusion of women from affairs of the mind" (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988, p. 5). Women are unsure of the rules of the game, not foreseeing the full consequences of their not recognizing the importance of politics. Often in graduate school, women become so involved in their studies that they ignore the professional requirements of meeting thesis deadlines and, more particularly, of building professional networks.

The second reason for the undermining of women's academic efforts is the reluctance of women to convert their educational accomplishments into professional gains, such as publications, financial remuneration, and promotions. This hesitancy results in a "conflict of personal identity" (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988, p. 37) that is reinforced by the tendency in institutions of higher education to allocate and expect of women faculty more teaching than research. Thus, women are assigned assistantships that entail classroom teaching, rather than research, which would be to their personal betterment and advancement.

This teaching concentration is part of the third explanation for the weakening of women's efforts to become professional academics. Because a teaching load takes time away from research and, therefore, recognition, women are not "present" to be able to get to know those who can help them with serious professional advice on how to plan an academic career. Women also find it difficult to promote themselves, to develop a voice of authority, and to "acquire a dignified, empowering identity" (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988, p. 56). Even when they understand that self-promotion and political gamesmanship are necessary, politics of self-promotion is repugnant to most women.

A spate of strategies was developed in the 1970s and 1980s to widen the pool of eligible and creditable women candidates for administrative positions. Primary among those strategies were the establishment of rosters and networks and the implementation of training programs to comply with affirmative action legislation. These efforts resulted in an increase in the hiring of women, but the hiring occurred almost exclusively at the lower level positions of educational administration. Coming on the heels of that movement was the publication of *Women in Academe* by Mariam Chamberlain (1988). In her compelling book, Chamberlain sets out four steps that are needed in order for women to advance in academe: (1) solving the problems of subtle discrimination, (2) focusing on the needs of nontraditional students, (3) increasing data collection, and (4) accelerating the goals of affirmative action.

Advice for the individual aspirant is to begin early with your career path plan. Do not be sidetracked into teaching assistantships without an equal share of research opportunities. Consciously and deliberately seek the friendship of a professional colleague, preferably someone in a similar position to which you aim, who can advise you. Play the political game of self-promotion. Do not be deterred from your goal. And do not believe the public relations ploy of some universities that disport "Data Banks for Women," urging you to apply and implying that this pool of applicants will be given first and every consideration for openings. My own experience in consulting aspiring administrators leads me to believe that, in many universities, such data banks are only window dressing.

### **Fear of Success/Fear of Failure**

Whether myth or truth (the studies are inconclusive), there remains a pervasive perception that many women do not pursue "the fast track" or any managerial position because they are afraid (1)

they might succeed or (2) they might fail. These fears are not the same but, rather, are two sides of the same coin.

Fear of failure is connected to self-respect and embarrassment. While no one wants to fail at anything, women cannot separate failing at a particular task from failing as a person. As has been established, women connect themselves more to their job than men do. Professional women identify themselves by their jobs and find it difficult to leave their professional persona when they leave the workplace. Such a characteristic is most prevalent in the public professions, particularly if the profession is practiced in the community in which the woman lives and is known. Educational administration is one of these public professions. Not only is it public, but it is also an area that is not yet typical for women; therefore, many first-time administrators feel particularly self-conscious and vulnerable. They feel trepidation that their performance is going to have far-reaching consequences not only for themselves and their own career advancement, but also for those female administrators yet to follow. They further view themselves as being role models to both the students and their professional staff. They bear the burden of daring not to fail! They worry about the number of people their failure would hurt. And they worry that "everybody" would know if they failed.

Men, on the other hand, see their jobs as only one part of their lives. A man describes his job or position in terms of "what I do" and not, as a professional woman does, in terms of "who I am." Since a woman administrator defines herself in terms of her position, should she fail, she would never live it down. In contrast, a man just moves on to the next job or the next place, and he rarely looks back.

"Fear of success" may have been coined as a result of studies conducted on distinguishing between women's and men's responses to task-oriented situations. Matina Horner, in the late 1960s, created quite a stir with her suggestions that women have particular anxieties concerning success, because success is incompatible with the feminine gender stereotype and, thereby, may lead to rejection by others. Her study argued that women possess a motive to avoid success. This same motive appears not to manifest itself in men. Women who fear success (which might include all of us, according to Horner), then, either lower their aspirations for success or deny responsibility for their success.

This fear-of-success theory became a convenient way to rationalize that women were not competitive because of their fear of success, a success that would prove that they were unfeminine. In other words, in business and professions, male goals and male methods were viewed as ideal; thus, if a female followed these goals and methods,

she paid a high price by losing her femininity. If a woman did not want to lose her femininity, she then made sure she was not successful.

Later studies refuted Horner, but it is her hypothetical case study of "Ann finds herself at the top of her medical school class" that most people remember clearly.<sup>12</sup> In hindsight, fear of success appears a bit ridiculous; however, as an aspiring administrator, you need to know that there are still people who believe that you will "trip yourself up" because of a deep psychological need not to succeed.

### The Advantages of Being Female

Research evidence strongly suggests that good school administration is more attuned to feminine, rather than masculine, modes of leadership behavior. Again and again, we hear researchers and practitioners say what Marilyn Ferguson puts so well, "Feminine values and behaviors are exactly what is needed to nurture this new era in human history" (Porat, 1991, p. 413). We need to heed the cry of Dr. Christina Banks of the University of California at Berkeley, "Release the passion within you!" (p. 413). We should be guided by our own inner voice, trust our own judgment, and be true to ourselves. It is time to recognize and capitalize on the fact that we are female and that we are different. We have some disadvantages, as do men, but we must acknowledge the female advantages and use them. Women have resources and power, much of which they are unaware. The time to tap these female resources is long overdue.

### Physical Advantages

Throughout the modern world, women outlive men, and, in the United States, they outlive men by about seven years. In the top ten or twelve causes of death in this country, every single one kills more men than women. Women also *endure*. The more a physical competition requires stamina, the better women fare. In diaries kept in wartime are entries noting that, in situations of confinement, women had more endurance (and courage) than the men. Women also are more psychologically resilient. A study of areas of London heavily

<sup>12</sup>The standard test asks participants to complete the story which begins, "Ann finds herself at the top of her medical school class." Most respondents complete the story with having Ann face unpopularity, loneliness, failure, lack of a husband, and loss of femininity. The conclusion reached by the researchers is that both men and women view women who were academically successful as facing unhappiness if they pursued careers.



bombed during WW II, for example, found that 70 percent more men than women became psychiatric casualties (Dolnick, 1991, p. 44).

The dire predictions of the 1960s that, when women began to go into the fray of offices and boardrooms, they would be subject to the same stress factors and the resulting heart attacks just haven't happened. Not that the stress of managing a home and family, along with a job, isn't difficult. It is. However, the tension has not brought the predicted ill health. In fact, surveys have shown that "paid work provides women with feelings of self-esteem, responsibility, and camaraderie that outweigh its drawbacks" (Dolnick, 1991, p. 45).

One of the theories for the endurance and longevity of women is the difference in hormones. Rather than being the brunt of jokes, it would now appear that women may have the last laugh. In battles against heart disease, it seems that estrogen is a positive factor and testosterone a negative. In addition to the low cholesterol healthy-heart advantage estrogen brings, there are now studies showing the effect of estrogen on scholastic performance. Women compensate for their low-level periods by working harder despite physical discomfort. We have learned to live with our physical distress and to rise above it.

Even though, on a day-to-day basis women feel less well than men, make more visits to the doctor, and take more medicines, it is still thought that the result is positive, because women are more in tune to what their bodies are telling them. While women are more vulnerable to everyday illness, they are still less vulnerable to life-threatening ones. Women suffer more from depression but less from schizophrenia. Widows also survive longer than widowers; in addition to general life expectancy, there is also the fact that, for many men, their wives were their sole confidante, where women have a circle of friends in whom to confide.

A common summation is that women bend and men break. As Dolnick (1991) puts it, "Women respond to every dip and bump in the road, like cars with springy suspensions. Men, who are trained to keep stiff upper lips, roar over minor divots like cars with rigid shock absorbers. On good roads men do well, but when they come to speed bumps or potholes, watch out" (p. 48). Thus, (1) female physical and mental endurance, (2) awareness of self, and (3) our former nemesis, estrogen, are all positive factors contributing to the potential for success.

### **Brain Advantages**

While we have acknowledged that girls are at a low intellectual point when their estrogen is at its highest level and that girls with

male character traits such as aggression, independence, self-confidence, and assertion tend to achieve higher academic success than the norm for their sex (Moir and Jessel, 1991, p. 91), high levels of female estrogen seem to enhance coordination skills in women. From early on, girls are superior in tasks requiring rapid, skillful, fine movements, as well as in everything requiring verbal fluency and articulation (p. 96). Girls excel in social interaction and are attracted to life work that involves some kind of human interaction. Women perceive the world in interpersonal terms, and they personalize the objective world (p. 159). Also, according to Moir and Jessel, women perform better in noncompetitive situations and choose occupations according to what they like, rather than what financial rewards or status the position might bring.

As has been noted throughout this book, women are more attuned to nuances of voice and music, are more sensitive to the social and personal context, are more adept at reading peripheral information contained in expression and gesture, and process sensory and verbal information faster. They are also less bound by rules.

These factors all contribute to the leadership style most appropriate to today's needs and are the characteristics most effective in developing a cooperative, participatory management style.

### **Personal Characteristics Advantages**

Word choices in describing feminine characteristics have not always been well chosen. Often, in a somewhat misguided attempt to be kind or even flattering, researchers and writers have been patronizing in tone. For example, the following terms are often used to describe women: affectionate, sympathetic, sensitive to the needs of others, understanding, compassionate, warm, tender, fond of children, gentle, yielding, cheerful, shy, responsive to flattery, loyal, soft-spoken, gullible, and childlike. Epstein (1971) provides the same kind of listing, of which she says, "In most societies there is a core of preferred and imputed feminine attributes. In American society these include, among others, personal warmth and empathy, sensitivity and emotionalism, grace, charm, compliance, dependence, deference" (p. 20). At least two-thirds of these terms are words that imply docility and inferiority, rather than being strictly descriptive. This is why we must be very careful in using lists of female characteristics; so often, they are stereotypical of a perception and not the result of research. Often, too, such lists are used to subtly imply that women do not have the characteristics needed to be leaders.

On the other hand, Helgesen (1990) lists characteristics used in the

role of motherhood, which are all traits that are now valued in the workplace. In fact, she believes that motherhood can be excellent training for an administrative position. If you look carefully, however, you will note that these same skills are primary in the classroom as well and, therefore, may not necessarily be bound by gender; rather, they may, instead, be characteristics of any good educator. We must, then, take care in not falling prey to either flattery or terms that are demeaning, in that they hold implications of subservience. Instead, we need to pay close attention to those researchers who have observed personal characteristics that are enhancements or advantages in the workplace. For example, Helen Regan (1990) speaks of the praxis of administration from a feminine perspective. Her studies show that most women administrators possess the ability to (1) see both the apparent and the hidden; (2) acknowledge both reason and emotions; (3) understand the need for both affect and intellect; (4) legitimize personal experience as an appropriate source of decision making; (5) honor care, concern, and connection; and (6) practice compassion, empathy, gentleness, and collaboration (pp. 566–572). These are the descriptors of personal characteristics that serve as an advantage to women administrators. They are real, not patronizing, and are characteristics that contribute to what Cantor and Bernay (1992) call “the competent self—knowing who you are at all times; not being defined by situations, people or events; not changing only to please people around you; not being threatened when taking risks; and seeing the possibilities, not the obstacles” (pp. 25–26).

### **Skill Advantages**

Despite comments made in jest, the prototypical female skill is listening (Helgesen, 1990). Women are “engaged” when they are listening; they are attentive; they hear what is being said; and they synthesize the information in preparation to meet the needs of those speaking. [This may be attributable to a theory that women have an additional imaging function in the brain during the language process; if this is so, it could be said that, during this language process, a typical woman brings a richer, more expanded, emotional component to this function (Phillips, c. 1990, p. 46).]

In addition to listening, women also have high levels of skill in “communication, problem-solving, organizational savvy, team-building, instruction, and curriculum,” as reported in a study by Gardenswartz and Rowe (McGrath, 1992, p. 64). Women are said to be especially good at a technique called “blending,” which refers to

“doing everything you can to understand the other person’s point of view and to match your motives to theirs” (p. 65).

In a study conducted by Bolman and Deal (1992) on the political, structural, human resource and symbolic frames in educational leadership and management, women were rated higher than men in every frame. Bolman and Deal say that these findings are consistent with other studies showing that “women score slightly higher than men on a variety of measures of leadership and managerial behavior” (p. 326).

A significant study by Neal Gross and Anne Trask [cited in Whitaker and Lane (1990)] identifies the following advantages of women in school administration:

- Women principals have a greater knowledge of concern for instructional supervision.
- Superiors and teachers preferred women over men.
- Students’ academic performance and teachers’ professional performance rated higher under women principals.
- Women were more effective administrators.
- Supervisors and teachers preferred the decision-making and problem-solving behaviors of women.
- Women principals were more concerned with helping deviant pupils.
- Women principals placed more importance on technical skills and organizational responsibility of teachers as a criterion for evaluation (pp. 13–14).

The findings continue (Whitaker and Lane, 1990) by saying that in the arena of instructional leadership, women appear to have an advantage over men. In a 1988 study by Alan Hein measuring attitudinal perceptions toward the capabilities of women in administration, women scored higher in most categories on the instrument: practicality, flexibility, forthrightness, ability to give constructive criticism, ability to exercise strong educational leadership, assuming responsibility, tactfulness, and communication (p. 14).

A nationwide study, conducted by the Executive Development Centers, in association with the American Association of School Administrators and the University of Texas in Austin, rated the skills required of an educational executive. Results show that administrative women tend to possess more expert information than men in the areas of communication, implementation of new instructional systems, curriculum development, and teacher evaluation (McGrath, 1992, p. 65).



### Power Advantages

The classic definition of power includes the use of force and strength, authority, and decisiveness to get things done and to run people's lives. When power is viewed just a bit more broadly, it can be defined as the ability to get things done and to make people's lives *better*. This latter definition is also the power style of women. It is a far cry from the traditional view of the power of women being based on manipulation, helplessness, or personal relationship at a time when societal constrictions perpetuated the idea that power is masculine. Modern corporate or institutional power is derived not from masculine physical strength, but from skills that are used to achieve results, skills that women possess. Today's management trends emphasize greater employer participation and less formal structure. Modern management requires, therefore, power sharing, collaboration, and participation—all skills that have been shown to be particular strengths of women.

Newer ways of getting things done don't require power *over* but, rather, power *with*, a power mode compatible with women's leadership style. Women generally feel uncomfortable with strong-arm tactics and strive to use techniques that don't require a winner and a loser. *Working Woman* magazine ("The Secret Advantage," 1993) quotes Marjorie Aaron, vice-president of an alternative dispute resolution firm, "Women are socialized to solicit information on what drives an individual. They use conversation as a way to reach a conclusion, rather than starting with a conclusion before they begin talking" (p. 146).

Women are also more likely to be what are called "transformational" or "existential" leaders, according to studies conducted at the Center for Values Research in Dallas. These results show that transformational leaders are (1) able to reconcile a concern for bottom-line results with a concern for people, (2) able to focus on both ends and means, (3) good at planning and communicating, (4) reality based, and (5) able to comprehend all important aspects of existence (Helgesen, 1990, p. 31).

Women who demonstrate transformational leadership characteristics focus on getting subordinates to transform their own self-interest into the interest of the group through concern for a broader goal. They also, according to a survey sponsored by the International Women's Forum (Rosener, 1990), credit their power to personal characteristics like charisma, interpersonal skills, hard work, or personal contacts, rather than to organizational stature. These women "actively work to make their interactions with subordinates positive for

everyone involved. More specifically, the women encourage participation, share power and information, enhance other people's self-worth, and get others excited about their work" (p. 120). Transformational leaders, in general, believe that people perform best when they feel good about themselves and their work. Such leaders try to create situations that contribute to that feeling. In addition, women who ascribe to transformational leadership practices give others credit and praise, and they send small signals of recognition, such as notes, public recognition, or praise among their peers. Most importantly, these women refrain from asserting their own superiority.

As it is the usual practice of women to use power to "empower" others, women are particularly effective in school reform/restructuring movements. School change is predicated on the belief that, in order for change to occur, all who will be affected must be empowered, and women are better at sharing power. Thus, we are at an ideal time in education for the leadership style of women to be fully appreciated and utilized.

### Business Advantages

More and more vendors and service providers are going from simply making adjustments for their women clients to designing special services to attract their patronage. Travel agencies are eager to help you plan your business trips to include the amenities you expect. Studies (as well as experience of those in the business) show that cleanliness and security are the two most important considerations of women travelers, and hotels have begun to listen to the needs of female business travelers, says Patrick J. Moreo of Penn State University's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Recreation Management (*Intercom*, March 3, 1994). Women clients are being heavily recruited by investment firms and financial planners, who are offering programs geared especially for women. Banks, insurers, and law firms are clambering to find new ways to tailor their approaches to women.

Much of this flurry has to do with the rapid growth in women-owned businesses, as such enterprises grew 58 percent from 1982 to 1987, and the number of women-owned businesses, including categories not measured by the government, totaled 6.5 million in 1992 (Marsh, c. 1993). Seton Hill College in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, is establishing itself to become a national clearinghouse on research and programs for women entrepreneurs and has held several conferences for service professionals and researchers.

All of this attention being focused on women in positions of impor-

tance can't help but enhance the life of a woman educational administrator and increase her chances for advancement by helping to establish a climate beyond mere acceptance. The more attention that is paid to all professional women, the more it will be thought of as being usual for women to be in top positions in educational institutions, as well as in business.

### The Positive Difference

Don't ever apologize for your difference, your disadvantages, or your advantages. You are who you are, female and competent. Your style of management is your own and no other style will work as well for you. Your power is built upon both your skill and your sense of caring for others. Be confident in your ability and keep in mind that the evidence is overwhelmingly clear that women's ways of leadership are as effective, if not more effective, than those of men. Trust your own judgment and be true to the lessons you have learned and continue to learn. And remember that you possess knowledge, energy, compassion, and power. Make them work for you!

## 8 Leadership Styles of Men: Learning from "The Old Boys"

The pursuit of power is overwhelmingly a male trait, according to Moir and Jessel (1991), who also maintain that men and men's style of leadership will prevail as long as organizations remain structured as power-based and hierarchical (p. 85). Over time, organizations may change, but there is no guarantee that organizational structure will evolve into the management style most practiced by and comfortable to women. Furthermore (and at the risk of sounding disloyal to my own sex), as one who is a proponent for women in educational administration, I am not sure if this possibility of evolution into a female style management system is preferable.

What concerns me and what is being overlooked in this whole new female management style with its move to power with (discussed in Chapters 4 and 7) is that we are assuming that, eventually, everyone will "see the light" and move to a style of power *with*, rather than power *over*. We are banking on a revolution, a way of operating that has not yet proved successful in any major civilization in history, a power style of *empowerment*. We might be moving toward something that has not been fully investigated and tested. We have not asked if the concept of empowerment is ill-conceived. What guarantee is there that the new feminine/androgynous management style really will lead to the best of all possible worlds? What if this empowered management style is only a Hawthorne effect?<sup>13</sup> What if that which we perceive as improvement is only a result of doing something different for the sake of doing something different, or what if this style is only a means by which to include those who, thus far, have been disenfranchised? Is this reason enough to change? Or should we continue to use what has proven successful, adapting it to accommodating a changing world? Before moving too hastily toward a major organizational overhaul, we should consider the overtones of

<sup>13</sup>This is a result of experimentation, which shows that productivity increases when there is a change in environment or in attention paid to those being treated.



moving away from traditional/masculine styles and toward a feminine/androgynous style of leadership.

### Long-Range Implications of Genderless Leadership

In considering the long-range implications of a "gentler" feminine/androgynous leadership style, there are three questions that should be answered:

- (1) Should we wholeheartedly adopt a style that may work for a short time but may be disastrous for the future?
- (2) Is this the kind of leadership style that will be effective for the 21st century, or is its success limited to the 1990s?
- (3) Might this "blending" be the answer only to *problems* specific to this century, a century in which women have entered positions of leadership unprecedented in any other time period in history?

Experts in organizational management once thought the factory model of Frederick Taylor was the panacea for work production. No one can deny that this management process was the best way to complete a task in the shortest time, as it was efficient and well engineered. Building upon Taylor's framework, Henri Fayol suggested a method of process management in which administration was based on process through five administrative functions. Luther Gulick expanded Fayol's process management theory to a theory of organization by hierarchy, with each worker reporting to a supervisor and each supervisor being responsible for a certain number of workers. In its own time, Gulick's model worked very well, especially when enhanced by the bureaucratic model of Max Weber. Weber's hierarchy of authority, division of labor, control by rules, supervision by a bureau or department, and orientation toward viewing work as a career offered a systematic way for the organization to accomplish its objectives with minimum expenditure of human and fiscal resources.

During the 1930s, traditional management theory lost favor when Mary Follett developed her human relations management theory as a response to the perceived defects of the traditional theory. Follett's hypothesis was based on the increasingly popular movement known as the behavioral sciences, and her proposed management style held as its main concern the motivation and satisfaction of employees. An integral part of Follett's theme of human relations was the interest in group dynamics and interpersonal relations in small groups. Follett's

human relations management style served as a transition and laid the groundwork for current management styles of showing consideration for the motivation and satisfaction of employees.

This capsule review of the evolution of 20th century management theory serves as a reminder that management styles change to reflect society and are based on what is needed at any particular time. We must be careful not to presume that we now have found the perfect management style in the feminine/androgynous model. We should be wary of giving total and unquestioning credence to the theories that tell us to throw out the way men have been operating and institute a (new) feminine leadership style.

I am also concerned that we have paid little attention to the downside of participatory management, cooperative planning, and site-based management. I share the uncertainty of the administrators and classroom teachers in the graduate classes I teach. These students express their fears that, under this trend of involving and empowering everyone, no one will be well served. I hear the frustration and impatience in their voices echoing my own trepidation. These teachers/aspiring administrators are weary of sitting on committees. They are disturbed by their sense that "nothing is happening." They are tired of talking and talking, making suggestions, arguing, and trying to come to consensus agreement. And they are angry because "the system" doesn't seem to allow for either action or closure. These administrative aspirants are willing to accept the axiom that change is slow, but I see their increasing annoyance with the whole idea of participatory management. Those who are the next generation of administrators feel ignored and overruled by their immediate supervisors, principals, central office, and the board. Many are walking away from voluntary participation, while others are "sitting with their arms folded" where participation is mandatory. Such reactions are troublesome.

Of greater concern, however, is the possibility that the participatory leadership style is overrated. The studies that report its effectiveness are not yet definitive, and some reports are barely substantiated. For that reason and because both practitioners and aspirants are weary of participatory involvement, we should not completely turn our backs on what is called men's style of leadership. Let us not malign what has been working just because we are also learning more about effective ways of women's leadership styles. Let us not call for complete change with such oversimplifying statements as "the world would be a better place if it were run by women." To make such generalizations is harmful and self-defeating. Finally, we need to guard against becoming too "soft" in leadership style be-

cause, if everything is predicated on emotions and “how we *all* feel about this,” we may never advance.

These are serious drawbacks to “feminizing” leadership, and we need to heed them and discuss them openly. Rather than taking sides, let us, instead, look at what has worked well for men and build upon that. Let us learn from both men and women who have been successful leaders. Let us ask what it is that men have learned through their centuries of leadership experience while we think about what women can do with that information.

### **Typical Leadership Styles of Men**

The leadership styles of men are the typical leadership styles. They range from authoritarian (autocratic) to participative (democratic) and touch every point between. While it is obvious that not all men have the same leadership style, there are generalizations that can be made on the typical styles and their effects. The usual characteristics associated with a successful manager have been shown to be more similar to the stereotype of men than of women (Griffin, 1992). In other words, men are expected to act in a certain way, and their performance is evaluated according to that expectation. For example, men are rated more positively when they are authoritarian than when they are democratic; this has much to do with expectation and the fact that people are most comfortable with situations that are predictable and that meet their own expectations.

Men’s traditional leadership style is hierarchical, action-oriented and, sometimes, quasi-military. The ideal leader, from this traditional viewpoint, is independent, tough, decisive, and individualistic. Men are direct and forthright and are very good at building enthusiasm in employees through short-term crises, according to James Autry, president of a magazine group (Nelton, 1991). This type of management is thought to be a result of their sports training and their play as children; men seem to thrive in a “clutch” situation, thrilling to the full-court press with ten seconds to the final buzzer. To most boys, the game is all. As with games, they learn to play with their enemies and compete with their friends.

Male leaders tend to lead from the front, attempting to have all the answers for their subordinates. They have an urgency to be in charge because, when they are running the meeting, they become the dispensers of information and the determiners of what will be placed on the table for discussion. This ability to control is important because it prevents the possibility of being vulnerable to questions raised and topics introduced for which the leader may be unprepared.

Men view and use communication as a tool for acquisition and maintenance of power. They prefer majority rule (possibly because men are usually in the majority at meetings and will generally vote along the same lines). They are goal-, rather than process-, oriented. This is another reason why they prefer the “majority rule” process; it more quickly gets them to the end and takes less time than going through a long discussion. Because they thrive on expediency, men operate on the principle of justice, rather than on the principle of care, which is usually followed by women (see Chapter 13). Issues are viewed as black-white and either-or.

These characteristics are generalities, of course, just as are the statements made on the leadership styles of women. Not every man’s style fits the male stereotype, even though many studies in education, business management, psychology, physiology, and behavioral science point to characteristics that are predominantly male and that we can say are men’s leadership styles. The styles of men have also been the measure for general leadership styles. In fact, most of the studies on leadership have been conducted with only men, or, if women were included in the study, there was no factor established for that variance. The assumption was that leadership = male leadership. Therefore, saying “men’s leadership style” was redundant. Now that newer studies have concentrated on the differences between men and women in leadership, a clearer profile for each is emerging.

### **Advantages of Being Male**

Based on the premise that there is much to be learned from the predominant male leadership style, the aspiring administrator needs to review the advantages that male educational administrators possess. Male or female, the aspirant can learn by understanding what it is specifically that continues to give men the advantage in educational institutions.

#### ***People Like Us***

The first advantage to be acknowledged is that people are attracted to other people who are like themselves. Men are likely to want to work with other men because they are familiar with the way men think and work. Men generally do not want to work with women because they do not understand them. In addition, whatever a person does not understand, that person does not like. Simply put, men don’t understand women; therefore, they do not like them very much in the workplace. For example, there are many people who still will have



nothing to do with computers. They do not understand how they work, and so they act like they don't exist. Thus it is with many men who have not yet worked on an equal footing with women. They don't know how women leaders operate, so they decide they don't like them. There is much truth in the words of Jessie Bernard (1981): "Among human beings, there is clear evidence that although individual men may love individual women with great depth and devotion, the male world as a whole does not" (p. 11). There have been countless situations in which women have had better credentials than men vying for the same position. These women make it to the "finals," and then the hiring body selects the person most like themselves, a man. This practice of people hiring those like themselves is a distinct advantage for men.

There are two major lessons that aspiring women administrators can learn from this primary male advantage: (1) Be as qualified as you possibly can be and (2) package or prepare yourself to fit the expectations of the institution. Without compromising your principles, you still can find things you have in common with the institution, the board members, the interviewing committee, and the goals. Is golf important in the community? Then learn to play. Is football the pride of the town? Learn about the game, or at least be conversant in its proud tradition in that town. Is it a working-class community? Make sure you know the key members of the community and find ways to identify yourself with the goals of that community. If community members are accustomed to a male, give them reasons to accept "you" as one of "them" for reasons other than gender.

### **Assumptions of Male Success**

Men have a societal expectation advantage in their leadership. They have been conditioned to achieve. They have the male sports attitude that "my team is better than your team." All of this adds to their confidence and sense of superiority. Men have an inherent attitude to win and, therefore, are not hampered by self-doubts to the extent women are.

Unless they are an ethnic minority, men do not face discrimination the way women do. In any position in which men are placed, it is assumed that they will succeed. Every step of the way, from an entry-level position to the presidency of a college, men are accepted for who they are and what they do. Faculties will approve male leadership without demonstrating a "show me" attitude. If their policies and leadership are not particularly liked by those in the educational institution, it is the policies and practices that are

criticized and not the person. (In the case of women leaders, the criticism is almost always levied against the person.) If men are not successful in a given position, the blame does not fall on them personally. Some other circumstance is blamed for the failure, and men are left unscathed. Men simply seek, and usually find, another position.

Men are reared expecting to be served. This, too, is a generalization, but still true for the most part. Their mothers served them their meals, their girlfriends typed their papers, and secretaries doted on them, even when they were classroom teachers. Men can always find someone to help them. (It was not until the personal computer age and the world of word processors that the "image" of doing your own typing became a positive, rather than a negative. "Typing" has a feminine connotation, but "computer entry" and "management information system" connote being in charge of your own knowledge and information; thus using a computer is an acceptable task for a male.) The expectation of having someone to do the "bothersome" clerical work is used by men as an advantage because it gives them a power posture. In addition, of course, they have fewer annoying chores to do themselves and more time to devote to "the big picture" and to their own careers.

The use of language is also biased in favor of men and is, therefore, an advantage to them. Sexist terminology, whether intentional or unintentional, gives a positive edge to men because many synonyms reserve the negative connotation for women. For example, a man is called forceful, whereas a woman demonstrating the same characteristics is said to be feisty. Women faint, but men pass out. Men are aggressive, women pushy. Women are bitchy, but men lodge complaints. The list is endless, the result the same. The terms and implications in almost every example are more dignified for men.

### **Physical Advantage**

Men usually have a physical advantage in their appearance by their build, their size, and their overall countenance. Height suggests authority, so a tall person is listened to more quickly than a person of shorter stature. Most people have a stereotypical image of a leader: tall, broad-shouldered, and wearing a suit or a military uniform; this image most often is of men. The body language of men is also an advantage since it is more definite, more forceful, and more directed. Women are reared to show deference, men to stand their ground. Women are more likely to avert their gaze, while men assume a posture of command, staring down anyone, if necessary. Men's cloth-

ing is also less of a hindrance than that worn by women. For women, there is always the problem of the skirt, the stockings, the high heels, the purse; men have none of these with which to contend. Men can enter a room unencumbered. They can sit without worrying about (1) what to do with a handbag, (2) how to sit gracefully, (3) how to avoid snagging stockings, (4) how not to turn an ankle. Just moving around is simpler for men and gives them an advantage.

### **Setting-the-Rules Advantage**

Another advantage men share is that they play the game by rules that ascribe to the belief that "the best defense is a good offense." Women have a tendency to respond to an "offensive move" by becoming defensive and to explain, sometimes at great length, why they have taken a particular action. When men are challenged on anything, regardless of the circumstances, they are very skilled at bringing up every other issue upon which there has ever been a disagreement. They will respond to a challenge by attacking on a totally unrelated issue. Women do not like to be put on the defensive in response to men's offensive defense. Such tactics unnerve women, who prefer to stick with the issue at hand and who wish to resolve that issue.

The best way for women to deal with this strategy is not to become angry or, at least, not to show the anger. If you find yourself in an argument, stick to the point of discussion and do not be led into arguing about an unrelated matter. Do not respond to challenges and references to other issues. Staying on the subject at hand is the only way to resolve the issue at hand.

The maneuver of keeping people off balance is learned early by boys as they interact in sports and games. Use of this tactic gives men a distinct advantage when there is an issue at stake. Men enjoy the sparring and the constant competition, and the "excitement of the contest" serves them well. When women are taken off guard, they become resentful, start procrastinating, and don't feel free to make suggestions. To avoid having this happen to you, you must realize that this method *is* a tactic.

Do not take personally this attempt to "throw you off your guard." If you are placed in a position of being put off balance, take time to gain your equilibrium. Take a deep breath, think about what has been said, and carefully weigh your response. If you can muster a humorous comeback, that will throw your attacker off guard, so it is well worth preparing in advance for these situations.

Men talk more than women. Communication will be discussed

more fully in the next chapter but is mentioned here as another advantage men have over women. Women will allow themselves to be interrupted and will wait their turn to speak. As a result, men gain the floor and use the attention to their advantage and to advance their programs. Men rarely volunteer to take notes for the group or to keep the minutes of a meeting. They can concentrate on the meeting at hand and not miss an opportunity to speak. Also, they appear to be more attentive because their heads are not down with their eyes on a pen and notebook.

### **Job Expectation and Security Advantage**

Men are paid higher salaries than women are for the same position. This is not universal, but the higher the level of the position, the more likely men's administrative salaries will be higher. Their chances for promotion are also much greater, and they have more options from which to choose because many institutions are still not comfortable with women in every kind of position.

In times of retrenchment or downsizing, women are usually the first to be reassigned. In many instances, the women are the ones most recently hired; therefore, they are also the first to be let go from an administrative post. These reassignments are always couched in terms such as, "We need you back at the building level," or "The math department has not been the same since you left; we would like you to return to the position of departmental supervisor and get things back into shape," or "The kids really miss you, and the parents would love to have you back as the teacher of the gifted!" You may even be offered the inducement of retaining your present administrative salary. However, you should beware of this incentive because your salary most likely will be frozen until the salaries of the other teaching staff catch up.

### **Hearth and Home Advantage**

A very helpful advantage most men have is a wife. Wives shield their husbands from problems, not to mention the fact that wives also often cook and clean, take care of the children, and do the shopping (just to mention only a few things). Professional women joke about needing a wife, but, in most cases, they really mean it. The easiest years I lived were the three years following my husband's retirement, before he entered a second career. It was wonderful to come home to a prepared dinner. Of course, the fact that the children were grown also helped, but this experience gave me a great appreciation of the ad-



vantage most men hold, in that they are rarely bogged down with the minutiae of running a household. Since it is unlikely that, as a female administrator, you will have a wife, your recourse is to (1) accept that your household will not operate as smoothly as it did before you entered administration or (2) hire as much household help as you can afford, whether it be a live-in housekeeper, a biweekly cleaning service, a window-cleaning service, laundry service, childcare provider, a shopping service, car detailing, and maintenance contracts—whatever will best relieve you. Whatever choices you make, do not feel guilty.

Men are usually more free to relocate than women because the woman's job is usually not considered that of primary breadwinner. A wife who wishes to advance will, more often than her husband, be the one to take a small apartment in the community that she serves. (This is presuming her children are grown, which they often are, since women do not usually attain the top administrative posts until they are in their late forties or fifties.) In the corporate world, it is more acceptable for either the husband or wife to have a *ped a terre*, but, in education, it is expected that the man's family will be with him.

Men rarely consider an interruption in their career for the purpose of childrearing. They can remain focused on their careers. They are usually not the ones who stay home from work with a sick child or an elderly parent. They also can devote more uninterrupted time to their educational pursuits. There is an attitude that it is O.K. for Dad not to attend the children's concerts because he is working on the board report or his dissertation; the same reason is not thought by many to be acceptable for women. And, in interviews, men are never asked such questions as to their plans for a family!

### **Workplace Design and Expectations Advantage**

The environment of the workplace is designed for the comfort of men. Men often understand the rules of business automatically because those rules so closely resemble the rules of boyhood. For example, women in businesses and professions tend to be more honest than men. Men play "closer to the vest" and, as a result, are far less vulnerable. Men are natural infighters, trained to be competitive, enjoying a dog-eat-dog battle. Men "shoot from the hip" more than women do; their male employers have taught them that they can do this, can miss the mark, and will suffer no penalty. Women are not encouraged to react quickly. They are more cautious and, therefore, looked upon as lacking fortitude (Tunick, 1993).

In grievance procedures or litigation, men more often win the

support of the board or the hearing officer than do women. There is a perception of credibility with men that works in their favor in such cases. (The possible exception may be in cases of sexual harassment, but there is not enough evidence yet to come to any conclusion.)

Men have a decided advantage in gaining the interest of experienced administrators to serve as their mentors. Women do not. As has been repeatedly stated throughout this book, the single most important advantage an aspiring administrator can have is a mentor. I have also repeated many times the difficulty women have in finding a mentor, mostly because there are so few women in influential positions. That leaves the men again and again and again promoting the interests of even more men.

### **Testosterone and All That "Stuff"**

There are surprisingly few studies that attempt to measure aggressive behavior in terms of correlating that behavior with testosterone levels in the blood. Even such studies that have been conducted cannot show that testosterone causes aggression; in fact, elevated testosterone levels may *result* from aggressive behavior, rather than cause the behavior. Yet there is an almost universal popular belief that male hormones make men more competitive, better at sports, go-getters in the business world, and ready to fight to prove it. Recent reports confirm this perception and indicate that testosterone levels correlate surprisingly well with behavioral traits such as dominance and power seeking (Phillips, c. 1990, p. 68).

Testosterone has been seen as the villain, as well as the impetus, in male aggression and domination. It may be difficult to separate the myth from the reality because, with the male ego, it is very likely that life imitates art. In the case of male ambition in the workplace, studies have been conducted that link ambition with aggression. Ambition is considered to be a positive social quality; however, since androgens affect aggression and aggression is related to ambition, then, according to some researchers, it is male hormones that account for the male being more ambitious. To perhaps stretch the point, a study published in 1981, which examined testosterone levels in women in different occupations, found that professional or managerial women have somewhat higher concentrations of testosterone than do clerical and service workers and housewives. A too hasty assumption of that study suggested that it was the testosterone level that caused women to pursue professional and managerial positions. Another study, however, showed that stress lowers testosterone

levels (Fausto-Sterling, 1985). No definitive conclusions can thus be drawn concerning the advantage of testosterone.

### Golf and Other Manly Pleasures

Golf is an almost requisite skill for those who wish to succeed in the business or professional world. While not quite as important for those who are looking for a position as a school principal, anyone seeking advancement at the superintendency or higher education level had better know the rudiments of the game. Golf is viewed as the sport of successful business and professional people and affords a great opportunity to network. You do not need to be much more than a duffer, but it is expected that you know the language and the etiquette of the game. Following the advice of Anne Russell (1992) in *Executive Female*, where you stand, when you talk, and where you walk on the green are the *real* essentials of the game.

Russell suggests that you begin your training by watching some pro events on television. She advises that you learn the language and understand the terminology, particularly *at par*, *handicap*, *divot*, and *whiffing*. Don't be the stereotypically slow female player since most men like to complain that women ruin the pace of the game. Be ready at each hole, even if it means carrying two or three clubs with you. You do not want to slow the action by returning to the cart every time you need a club for a particular shot. Don't search for a lost ball for more than one minute, and, if you are having trouble with your game, just say so and move to the next hole. That is more acceptable than holding up the game. It is also advisable that, if you tee up and whiff the ball three or four times, pick up the ball and put it into your pocket. Say that you are a new golfer and are not going to keep score. That is a respectable and acceptable way of avoiding an awkward situation. The main point of the game is for the group to enjoy it; you yourself do not want to be the handicap. Do not spend time constantly apologizing; if there is the need for an apology, say it once and forget it. Do not talk business on the course. Save it for the clubhouse. And find out ahead of time the dress code and the club rules. The suggestion here is no different than any other advice given throughout this book: prepare ahead of time so that you are ready for the play. The most important thing to remember is that golf is regarded as an indicator of the player's ethics and values, as well as the player's personality. Make sure that yours are ready to shine!

There are also those who say that knowing the rules of golf prepare you for the rules of business. The rules of golf do seem to cover the range of "how to's" of business, so get out on that fairway!

### The Male Dilemma

We can say all we want about the advantages of being male in a male-dominated society, but we also need to at least mention some of the dilemmas now faced by the gender beginning to feel their very world crumbling under them:

- 1) From a strictly objective point of view, men now have more people against whom to compete. The professional population has vastly increased with the influx of women into professional fields. In a given field of 501 school districts, as in Pennsylvania, there may be 80–100 openings or turnovers in superintendents in a given year. There are probably 400–500 people who hold the certification for a superintendency and who could conceivably be vying for these relatively few positions. Before the tenfold increase in the number of women completing doctoral programs in educational administration, these premium positions would be expected to attract 90 percent male applicants and a total of perhaps 200 men. Today, however, each man is now competing with twice as many people as he once did. Regardless of how fair-minded he is, he can't help thinking that his chances for obtaining a superintendency have decreased because of the enlarged number of applicants, many of whom are female. (According to findings of the National Association for Female Executives, one of the reasons the "old boy network" is still strong is that men do not want to have to compete with women, as well as with other men [50/50 by 2000, 1993, p. 27]. By maintaining this informal, yet very powerful, network, the men can continue to play politics, making selections and promoting their own kind in both their own districts and in other districts in which they have male colleagues.)
- 2) There are many men who believe that, even disregarding numbers, their chances for any position of choice are threatened by the push to give equal opportunity to women. They believe that, in some cases, women are being given an "edge" just because they are women. The statistics do not bear this out, but the perception on the part of the men who have been interviewed and have "lost" the position to a woman is that they were not selected because the board must have been pressured to select a female. Rarely do men who are not chosen believe that the woman was chosen because of her capability and not because of her sex.
- 3) Younger men who already hold the post of superintendent are concerned that the position of superintendent will be diminished if it becomes a position in which the majority are women. History



has shown that, once a position becomes primarily a "female" job, it loses prestige, not only in the eyes of the men who hold the position, but in the eyes of the public as well.

- (4) Most men are not comfortable with women colleagues who are in the same level position. They would rather attend meetings and conduct business the way they always did. Having women in the group changes the dynamics. Men and women do not communicate in the same way, do not view things from the same perspective, and do not approach problems in the same manner. Their style of leadership is not the same, and, even if leadership styles begin to blend, men will still not be comfortable (at least, not in our present society) with women sharing their status.
- (5) When men lead other men, they lead as equals. Men now face the dilemma of how they are to react when women have the position of leadership, whether in a committee or as a presiding officer of an organization. Women do not lead in the way men are accustomed to. The men now must worry how to respond. They can't always read the signals.

If they try to respond in a favorable, friendly way, will their male peers find this acceptable? Can they return a question with a retort, or will an off-the-cuff, let alone an off-color, remark be frowned upon?

- (6) Men are uneasy regarding the expectations of their women colleagues. Should the men continue to open doors, let the women enter first, help them with their coats, or offer to do the driving? What are the new rules? Will a female in an equal professional position resent the man who is following the good manners he has been taught? Should he compliment a female colleague on her appearance or must his compliments be confined only to an aspect of her job performance? Will this be viewed only as flattery? Or will it be mistaken for an uninvited, personal overture?
- (7) Men wonder if they are being ingratiating to a fault or not respectful enough of the position if it is held by a woman. Many have a difficult time treating a woman in any way other than the stereotypical attitude of daughter, wife, or mother. Even if they are making a very conscientious effort to speak in a neutral tone, how do they know whether or not they sound condescending, paternalistic, or deferential without meaning to?

While these examples have focused on school superintendents, similar plights are faced by male administrators on all levels of educational administration. The passage of time and the increase in

numbers of women in educational administration should see a lessening of many of these predicaments. The new rules of conduct have not yet been written and vary almost from woman to woman, thereby making a consistent response to any given situation almost impossible for any man.

### Men Who Encourage Women

Perhaps this topic belongs with the section on dilemmas faced by men because, certainly, a supportive male can find himself in a dilemma if his own colleagues do not share his enlightened views on women in educational administration. It is only fitting that we acknowledge the countless men who have encouraged women to enter the field of educational administration, who have supported them in their endeavors, who have promoted their candidacy for administrative positions, and who have stood beside them, shoulder to shoulder, as colleagues.

No one makes her or his way alone in this world. Each of us has had help from many sources, not all of which we realize at the time. At the risk of sounding patronizing, yet in the name of fairness, we salute these men who are not afraid of equality of the sexes, who are secure in themselves, and who are willing to reward merit, regardless of the sex of the recipient.

In her book *Pushing the Limits*, Sakre Kennington Edson (1988) reports conversations from female school administrators. The examples of the kinds of encouragement of which these women speak are offered here, along with my own observations. The men who are perceived to be most helpful are the following:

- (1) Those who have made a conscious attempt to change their attitudes toward the women's movement and to recent equity legislation
- (2) Those who earnestly try to change their perceptions about women's management abilities
- (3) Those who recommend capable and credentialed women for promotions
- (4) Those who offer words of encouragement or words of validation
- (5) Those who actively teach female aspirants about the everyday details of school administration
- (6) Those who share the "inside tips," which make life as an administrator easier to cope with

- (7) Those who request that female candidates be included in any group that is screened and interviewed
- (8) Those who are willing to take a risk, not just of hiring women, but of bearing the comments of their male colleagues because of it
- (9) Those who openly compliment the work of *all* administrators, including women
- (10) Those who overtly demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of all persons

The importance of the support and encouragement of men in educational administrative positions cannot be overemphasized. Women are not asking for special favors. All that is wanted and needed is for women in educational administration and for those who are aspiring to positions in that field to be taken seriously and to be accorded the same consideration that would be given to a man in the same position.

### A Meeting of the Twain

Men and women can work comfortably together at the top, and their differing styles of leadership can be complementary, producing a synergy that gives the organization benefits it would not receive if all women or all men held the top posts. The fortunate institutions are those in which differing styles are viewed as complementary, rather than confrontational and those that encourage women to learn from men and men to learn from women. As many studies are showing, women are well suited to leadership, especially in leadership practices that are based on greater openness and interaction with people. Edward Moldt, managing director of the Snider Entrepreneurial Center at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, adds his voice to those who see the positive traits women can bring to the workplace,

[Women's approach is] "one that is right for the times." Today's companies require leaders who not only are risk takers and visionaries but also are "strong enough people that they're capable of hearing the ideas of others and really empowering them to use some of those ideas in changing business and in making themselves successful." (Nelton, 1991, p. 17)

In institutions in which there are both women and men in the top management positions, it is not necessary for the women to handle the "soft" areas and men to deal with the tough stuff. Such a division

of labor only perpetuates stereotypes. Rather, all issues should be considered the concerns of everyone. Not all duties have to be assigned to everyone, but matters that require solving problems or strategic planning will benefit from the various skills and perspectives of both genders. All men and women educational administrators have much they can teach one another—as well as the members of their own sex—about leadership. As they learn from one another, they can bring heightened leadership abilities to their educational institutions. The following suggestions from *Nation's Business* (Nelton, 1991) are offered as ways by which both women and men can learn to work together for the benefit of all:

- (1) If you are a woman, consider being more decisive. According to James Autry, "Women often lack a sense of timing about when to stop building consensus and gathering information and to make a decision" (p. 21).
- (2) Be a good listener. Women are usually better listeners than men. Men need to work on their listening skills and to realize that listening doesn't impose on the listener the obligation to make the decision based on what the speaker says. The obligation of the listener is to take the information seriously and to acknowledge the speaker. Active listening is a key ingredient to team building, particularly from the point of view of women.
- (3) Women need to develop the ability to focus on short-term goals, and men need to develop the patience and the skill to take the time to weigh all of the ramifications of all possible consequences of a long-range goal. Here is where consideration is needed by both sexes. Accept the fact that respectively each is more skilled in planning for each of these kinds of goals. In-servicing programs led by someone outside the institution can assist with this training and the sensitivity needed to respect the advantages each sex brings to goal planning and achievement.
- (4) Be willing to express your emotions, even to cry. This goes for both sexes. Men need to learn to be comfortable in expressing their own emotions, as well as in acknowledging the fact that women more easily and openly express theirs. Men also need to learn that, when women cry, they are not showing weakness, nor are they looking for sympathy, nor are they trying to manipulate. Crying is a natural, human response to both good and bad news. It is as natural to women as back-slapping or "put-downs" are to men. (Studies have shown that men express their grief through joking, while women weep.)  
According to Autry, "I am not talking about management for



and by the wimps. In fact, I am talking about the most difficult management there is, a management without emotional hiding places. If you're going to be on the leading edge of management, you sometimes must be on the emotional edge as well" (Nelton, 1991, p. 22).

- (5) Don't let your ego get in the way. No one person makes an institution successful; it's a team effort and a team attitude. A good bit of advice is to try your best to get to the top, but know that the more people you try to take along with you, the faster you'll get there and the longer you'll stay there.
- (6) Be yourself. Keep to your natural style, but learn from the style of others (Nelton, 1991, pp. 21–22).

Both men and women bring strengths to positions of leadership. The woman who can learn from men to be more decisive and to exude an air of "being in control" and the man who can learn from women's compassion and the absolute necessity of listening to what others are saying and acknowledging their worth will both gain greatly. The best leadership style may, indeed, be a combination of the best that both women and men have to offer, and the person who learns to be both caring and commanding will discover the key to a leadership style to which both genders can relate. To be introspective, yet decisive; caring, yet competent; and one of the team, yet its leader, may be too much to expect from any one individual. Those who come closest to this combination, however, are those willing to learn from others the skills and qualities they may lack. It is they who will make the best leaders for the complicated times in which we live.