



## Legacy By Impact

### 10 things I've Learned Being a Woman In a Male-Dominated Industry



The workplace can be difficult. Climbing and traversing the corporate ladder can also be difficult. Names that come to mind are:

- Marissa Mayer- Yahoo
- Meg Whitman- Hewlett Packard
- Amy Abernathy- Flatiron
- Judith Faulkner- Epic Systems

Add this one to your list, Tessa Vike with Varian (previously Mobius).

She has traversed and climbed the ladder with the utmost character, poise and professionalism with proven results.

How did and does she do it. Below are some of her thoughts:

1. Don't take things personal. You must have thick skin in this kind of business. You will hear way more NO's than YES's. You should swallow your pride in the immediate moment. Then circle back to figure out how to turn that NO into a YES. Hearing "No" is not a pass to quit it is an opportunity for a challenge.
2. Be authentically you. People like to be treated like people! Not a number. Build relationships with clients that males tend to shy away from. Women have a unique compassion and connection, don't move away from you.
3. Always adapt. Each situation you end up in, you must be prepared for things to go the opposite direction than you had anticipated. Be a chameleon. Adaptability to people in situations is a critical skill that must be developed and perfected.
4. Learn how to work with your male counterparts to create a win-win working relationship. This can be tricky and individual dependent. One of my favorite colleagues ever was a male, who at

first was intimidating, but then once we established a team selling environment and were both open to learn from one another, we morphed into a kickass sales team!

5. Never settle. Whether that be for a role or pay. Always fight for yourself, because we must fight harder to get our well-earned cut, reputation, etc.

6. Don't wait for an opportunity to bring up your career goals with your boss, create that opportunity from the beginning. Once it is laid out, you can go about doing you and killing the current role you hold knowing that you've expressed your career goals and made your 3 or 5 year plan with your boss. Expose yourself and show what you are capable of within the organization. That way, when the role you've had your eye on becomes available, you can grab it up.

7. Set aside "me time" every single day. For me it's the gym grind. For others, it could be reading a book, meditating, making art, baking or strolling through the park. Just find that thing that helps you recharge schedule that time daily. You can run a marathon like a sprint but you must be conditioned. Time for reflection is a big part of this and inhibits the tendency for burnout.

8. Be humble and never stop asking questions or learning. I love learning something new every single day. It could be learning from a counterpart, a boss, or even a client. Ask questions as it shows you are actively listening, which is a trait to never lose. People like to be heard. Setting learning goals is also imperative, often more important than performance goals. Many wait to have someone hand them opportunity. For me, it has been about taking initiative and investing in myself.

9. Be a sounding board for others. When people look to you for ideas or inspiration be that person for them to bounce those ideas off. Teamwork makes the dream work, am I right? Simply put, you can't do life alone. Seek out your own advisory, accountability and mentorship team. More importantly you need to be that for others too.

10. Have fun! We spend most of our waking hours working. You better enjoy what you do, otherwise you are just riding that bus into retirement and wondering what the hell happened with your life when you turn 63. I have made lifelong friendships with the people I work with and I love the variety of friends who've entered my life through my career thus far.