

DISCUSSION GUIDE

LEARN TO LEAD

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

Course Description

Women still face many challenges when it comes to their professional lives, whether they are employed in a traditional workplace or starting a new business. In this course, women will learn ways to face these challenges and confidently navigate in the workplace. This course is not just for women, though—men will also gain an understanding of how to ensure equal opportunity for women.

Lesson Objectives

1. Learn the skills necessary to succeed in leadership, management, and business environments.
2. Learn best practices for countering gender biases and misconceptions, including learning to speak up confidently and with authority.
3. Understand the importance of seeking out positive individuals and creating supportive networks.

Discussion Questions

1. One of the key themes noted in all of the lessons is that whether you're pitching an idea to investors, reaching out to others to join your professional network, managing a project, or leading a team, being able to speak in a strong, confident, informative, and authentic voice is critical to effective communication and public speaking. Can you recall an instance where you had to work extra hard to be heard? What are some of the challenges women leaders and entrepreneurs face when they "speak up"? Who are the women that you admire who are challenging these notions and why?
2. What are some of the ways you've observed gender bias affect women in the workplace? What kinds of attitudes do women encounter when contacting men to join their professional networks? Is there a "boys club" and what are the steps that women have to take to be included? What has to happen in your community for women to be taken seriously as leaders?
3. Some of the first investors in a business are likely to be family and friends. But as noted in *Paving the Way for Women Entrepreneurs*, these can also be those who belittle the efforts of women seeking to become entrepreneurs. How can a woman gain the support of friends and family in investing in a business? What are some of the reasons given for keeping women out of the workplace? What are some of the ways you've observed or used to garner support – both financial and moral – from them?

Developmental Action

1. Take and teach another of the Lead to Learn courses!

Lessons included in this course: *Understanding the Rights of Women and Girls: Paving the Way for Women Entrepreneurs*, *Networking to Get Ahead*, *The Art of Public Speaking*, *Pitching Your Business Ideas for Investment*, *Setting and Achieving Goals*, *Leading People and Change*. Additional recommended learning: *Servant Leadership-The Deciding Difference: Ten Principles of Servant Leadership*

