

HEIDI VS. HERSELF: GENDER AND LEADERSHIP TRAITS

Leading Question

Is it more important for a leader to be liked or respected?

Watch the video

<https://youtu.be/3XG4MZFcYnE>

Our culture expects men to lead but is less comfortable with women's leadership. This is demonstrated by the low numbers of women in executive positions in business and their low representation in government.

1. Women in business were often given the advice to "act like a man" in the 1970s and 1980s. Heidi Roizen says that she has always tried to be herself. What do you think it meant to "act like a man" at that time? Has it changed? In today's world, which method do you think works best?
2. Do you agree with Heidi that leaders who are respected are more effective than leaders who are liked? Does it have to be one or the other?
3. Do you agree with Heidi that women in particular want to be liked? Do you know men who value being liked? Is Heidi playing into a stereotype?
4. List the traits that you associate with an effective boss or leader. Ask a friend to note whether each characteristic seems stereotypically "male" or "female" or "either." Try to come up with a list of names of people you know who demonstrate each trait. Do they fit the stereotype or challenge it? What about a list of famous people? Do they fit the stereotype?
5. Imagine a scenario in which "Howard" is viewed more negatively than "Heidi." What type of job or industry might that occur in? What stereotypes would be involved?
6. Some companies have resorted to "blind" hiring practices where the sex of the applicant is not known. Is this a good solution to the problem of bias? Why or why not?

START SOMETHING

Think about the bosses or leaders you have experienced in your life. What were their styles? How did you feel about them? Can you identify any evidence of stereotyping or bias on your part? What can you do about it?

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BIOGRAPHY

Heidi Roizen

Heidi Roizen graduated from Stanford University with what she calls the "coveted creative writing major" before getting her MBA, also at Stanford. From 1983 to 1996 she was the CEO of the company T/Maker which she cofounded with her brother. After leaving T/Maker, Roizen worked as Vice President of Worldwide Developer Relations for Apple before becoming a venture capitalist with Draper, Fisher, Jurvetson (DFJ) where she is operating partner today.

RESOURCES

Watch all nine videos of Women's Work: Perspectives on Gender in Tech
<http://www.computerhistory.org/exponential/women-swork/>

Pioneers of the Possible:
 Women Entrepreneurs on Innovation and Impact
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xE2rRBb9FI&t=>

Hillary vs. Howard:
 Are Successful Women Less Likeable?
<https://wheatandtares.org/2016/07/12/hillary-vs-howard-are-successful-women-less-likeable/>

Experiment Results (2003), Slides 12-15
<https://www.slideshare.net/NCWIT/women-in-16121350>

Experiment (2013) — Anderson Cooper 360
<http://ac360.blogs.cnn.com/2013/03/12/how-are-powerful-women-perceived/>

About

This discussion guide is part of the series Women's Work: Perspectives on Gender in Tech, nine videos produced by the Exponential Center at the Computer History Museum. The center is dedicated to capturing the legacy and advancing the future of entrepreneurship and innovation in Silicon Valley and around the world.

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