

## **Be a Brazen Gal: Self Promote**

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*Take the basket off your head so we can see your light shine.*

Self promotion is the ability to let others know about your strengths, capabilities and accomplishments. A study by a consulting company, ISR, found that "For women, it's all about what's good for the company. For men, it's more about strategies for advancement." Women tend to feel awkward even when it is appropriate to present themselves in the best possible light. "Silly, little me," is often easier for women to say than "My strengths include . . ."

As a therapist and a woman, my attention was well focused on acknowledging others. When I made a career shift into professional speaking I felt uncomfortable when told I needed to promote and sell myself. If you're like me your initial reaction might be to judge this whole idea as crass. But we're not talking about in-your-face pushiness or arrogance.

We're talking about informing others, often to our advantage, but also to theirs. Every day we sell or promote our ideas, proposed actions or positions. I began to think of self promotion as a way to inform others about the solutions I could provide to their challenges. Let's say you had the cure for cancer. Wouldn't you promote your solution? You have experience, information and answers that others don't. By announcing your offerings the world, let alone your organization, can become a better place.

Self promotion when done in the service of others takes away from the possibility of arrogant and aggressive pitching. It is true that aggressive promotion can be offensive. Just remember the last time you cleverly escaped a pushy sales representative. However, there are ways to blow your own horn in a casual and pleasant manner.

### **Tips for Blowing Your Own Horn**

"I have exciting news!"

1. Shift from talking about your responsibilities to telling stories about your accomplishments. From "I have responsibility for my department's data inputting," to "Last week my manager had a rush job. I was working on another project but I managed to accurately input 5,000 plus words and format the annual report. Wait until you see it!"

2. Use numbers when possible. “I felt surprised to realize I averaged \$10,000 of sales per month for the company last year.”
3. Talk with passion about what you have read or learned. “The university class on Positive Inquiry gave me many tools that I now use to improve my staff’s morale.”
4. Offer help to others. “I will gladly forward you my article that shows how do to that.”
5. Speak up and volunteer when you hear opportunities to use your strengths. “I can do that! It’s similar to a project I did last year.”
6. Think of yourself as a helpful sales representative. You are selling your ideas and worth.
7. Find a colleague who will promote you and do likewise in return.
8. Make a list of all your major accomplishments.
9. Journal your daily accomplishments.
10. Bring celebrative treats for everyone when you complete a major task or project.

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