

When You Don't Think You're Good Enough for a God-Given Opportunity

Women want to be liked. To that end we may use modesty and self-depreciation as a communication bridge – a connection. Women also tend to overestimate the credentials and experience of others while discounting their own.

I watched this scenario play out with one of my dearest friends. She is dynamic and beautiful, hardworking and extremely talented. For more than 20 years she has run a successful day care, assisted her husband in ministry, and is a freelance writer for a popular parenting magazine. Recently an opportunity was presented to her. Her response is a prime example of how women underestimate themselves and overestimate others.

My friend was asked to consider consulting for a large organization because of the creative, intuitive way she works with her children and teachers. While she does not have a formal degree in this field, she has an amazing God-born talent, countless certifications and licenses, and decades of successful experience. As she investigated the opportunity, she began to question her qualifications.

“I don't have the formal training for this. The people in this company have incredible résumés.” I gently—oK, maybe not so gently—reminded her that her own résumé was nothing short of incredible.

My dear friend did what many of us do. We super-size the value of others, but when it comes to our own value, we think in terms of the kid's meal!

We have all been turned off by people who are walking,

talking, look-at-me billboards. The noise of it does not compel—it repels.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is complete obscurity—a lack of clarity, distinctness, and definition. Perhaps the answer is found somewhere in the middle—a gentle balance of humility and confidence, understanding when and how to communicate a sincere, authentic message that allows us to walk into the opportunities God has for us.

Here are some better ways to appropriately talk about your successes when you are offered a God-opportunity:

1. Instead of talking about what you did, talk about the difference it made.
2. Instead of talking about what you can't do, talk about what you can do and what you are learning to do.
3. Talk about your goals and how you will measure your success.
4. If you are working for an organization, debrief results with your boss candidly and without apology. Listen to the difference between these two approaches: "I think the project went all right. There were some rough spots, but we made it through." Compare that report with this one: "We met our objectives, and we learned a great deal. I am most proud of the way we..."
5. Quantify your results whenever you can. Instead of saying, "I think we will save a lot of money," say, "I estimate a savings of more than \$10,000." This would come in handy with your spouse too, when its time for that new couch.
6. When you fall short of your goals, ask a friend or colleague for feedback, and talk about what you have learned from the experience and how you will apply those insights in the future.

7. Talk about your weaknesses differently. Instead of saying, "I need to be more analytical," say, "I want to strengthen my analytical skills. What projects or assignments would help me do that?"

8. Even your challenges are opportunities to demonstrate creativity and problem-solving skills.

When you aren't getting the results you need, couple the issues with recommendations and solutions. False humility only strengthens the negative internal dialogue you may be working to overcome.

When you are able to speak truthfully and humbly about your gifts, talents, and accomplishments, you begin to reinforce your God-given destiny and purpose. Your positive thoughts about yourself and the positive way you present yourself to others will begin to invite those next-level opportunities.

*Adapted from A Softer Strength (CharismaHouse) by **Dondi Scumaci**. Dondi is an international speaker, author and expert in leadership development, communication, talent management and mentoring.*