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THE MOST POWERFUL YOU

7 Bravery-Boosting Paths to Career Bliss

By Career Breakthrough Career Coach Kathy Caprino

What Kathy Caprino shares in this book can be life-changing for you, if you're ready for a brave new path and more powerful and exciting future. – Shawn Achor, New York Times best-selling author of Big Potential and The Happiness Advantage

An invaluable guide for professional women who want to become more confident and impactful - and reach their most exciting goals. –Dorie Clark, author of Reinventing You and Stand Out, and executive education faculty, Duke University Fuqua School of Business

According to recent research, thousands of women want more impact, success and reward in their careers, but are often lacking the bravery they need, and the internal or external power required, to shift their careers and fulfill their highest potential. Yet if women don't take the reins on their careers and make significant changes now, they'll miss out on achieving what they want most.

To help women access more bravery and power today, career breakthrough coach **Kathy Caprino, M.A.** has written **THE MOST POWERFUL YOU: 7 Bravery-Boosting Paths to Career Bliss** (HarperCollins Leadership; July, 2020; Murdoch Books, August 2020). Drawing on findings from over ten years of research, coaching and training thousands of women around the world, Caprino's book will inspire women to take action, "find brave" and connect with greater power -- to reach their fullest potential and make the difference they envision.

In this actionable guide, Caprino reveals the seven most damaging *power gaps* that prevent women from thriving in their careers, and seven *bravery boosting paths* to close these gaps. . . Caprino surveyed nearly 1,000 professional women across the globe and the results were staggering - 98% of professional women studied are experiencing at least one of these gaps, and over 75% are facing three or more at once.

The seven damaging **Power Gaps** are that prevent women from thriving at the highest levels in their work are as follows (the numbers below indicate the percentage of the over 1,000 women studied globally who are experiencing each gap):

Gap #1: Not recognizing your special talents, abilities and accomplishments (63%)

Gap #2: Communicating from fear not strength (70%)

Gap #3: Reluctance to ask for what you deserve (77%)

Gap #4: Isolating from influential support (71%)

Gap #5: Acquiescing instead of saying “STOP!” to mistreatment (48%)

Gap #6: Losing sight of your thrilling dream for your life (76%)

Gap #7: Allowing past trauma to define you (62%)

To close these gaps, Caprino recommends embarking on 7 *Bravery Boosting Paths*: Brave Sight, Speak, Ask, Connection, Challenge, Service, and Healing. When we take these paths, we increase our self-confidence, and dramatically improve our communication, relationships, recognition, leadership impact, and access to influential support, which in turn, transforms our futures and those of other women.

Offering proven career growth strategies from Kathy’s coaching work and advice from over 30 of the nation’s top experts in fields essential to women’s success, and sharing real-life stories of women who’ve overcome these gaps, **THE MOST POWERFUL YOU** explains how women can successfully pursue their passions, ask for and earn what they deserve, land plum roles, lead with impact, launch new ventures, network powerfully, become recognized thought leaders, and more.

About the Book:

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About the Author:

Kathy Caprino, M.A. is a career and leadership coach, a *Forbes* senior contributor, TEDx speaker, LinkedIn influencer, and host of the *Finding Brave* podcast (which has ranked in Top 100 Apple Career Podcasts in the U.S. and beyond). Her mission is to support the advancement of women in business around the globe. Kathy is a speaker on topics spanning women’s empowerment, overcoming workplace adversity, effective communication, entrepreneurship, personal growth, and navigating change.

Prior to founding her executive coaching and consulting firm, she achieved 18-year corporate career in publishing, direct marketing, and membership services, serving in director and VP roles in marketing, product development, research, and product management, Kathy earned an M.A. in Marriage and Family Therapy from Fairfield University, a B.A. in English Literature from Boston University, and educational certifications and other training from New York University, , University of London, and the Institute for Life Coaching Training.

Based in Stamford, CT, Kathy has been featured by top national publications including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Washington Times*, *SELF*, *Glamour*, Oprah Magazine, and national television and radio outlets. Visit www.kathycaprino.com and <https://findingbrave.org>, and connect via Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube.

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What People Are Saying About *THE MOST POWERFUL YOU*

"*The Most Powerful You* delves into the gaps that women experience in realizing their full potential, including undervaluing yourself, communicating fear, cutting yourself off from high-level support, and putting up with disrespectful treatment from others. We can all learn so much from Kathy!"

– **Alexandra Levit**, author of *Humanity Works: Merging Technologies and People for the Workforce of the Future*

"If you've ever asked yourself 'Why can't I get what I want in my career?' this is THE book for you. *The Most Powerful You* answers all your questions about why you've been stuck and struggling to experience the happiness you want! This is the book to help you get more of what you want and deserve and teaches you how to get it!"

– **Dr. Cindy McGovern**, author of the *Wall Street Journal* bestseller *Every Job Is a Sales Job: How to Use the Art of Selling to Win at Work*

"Using her own story and those of the inspiring women she's coached--along with strategies from some of the nation's top thought leaders, Kathy Caprino writes with heart and deep experience to reveal what holding so many women back from building the careers they long for. *The Most Powerful You* is a much-needed guide to reaching your highest potential."

– **Terry Real**, Author, *The New Rules of Marriage* and Founder of The Relational Life Institute

"So much advice we hear for women about how to build a more rewarding career just isn't practical and misses the real-life picture of what holds women back in today's business world. *The Most Powerful You* gives you research-based guidance and straight talk about how women can thrive at the highest level and offers a 7-step power-boosting guide that addressing these blocks at both an individual and societal level.

– **Judy M. Robinett**, author, *How to Be a Power Connector, the 5 + 50+ 150 Rule for Turning Your Business Network into Profits* (McGraw-Hill), and *Crack the Funding Code, What How Investors Think and What They Need to Hear to Fund Your Startup* (HarperCollins)

"If you've ever felt stuck in your career, you need this book now! Kathy Caprino's insight, experience, and heartfelt advice will make you feel like you have your own personal career coach guiding you to break out of your rut and achieve ultimate success."

– **Gay Hendricks, Ph.D.**, author of *The Big Leap* and *Conscious Luck*

"In this book, Kathy Caprino brings together empowerment, compassion, and actionable advice—plus riveting real-life stories—to show you how to unlock your full potential and finally thrive in your work. It is career advice with an emotional impact that's sure to resonate and help long after you've turned the last page."

– **Michael Stallard**, author of *Connection Culture: The Competitive Advantage of Shared Identity, Empathy, and Understanding at Work*, and co-Founder/ President of Connection Culture Group and E Pluribus Partners

A Conversation with KATHY CAPRINO

Author of *The Most Powerful You*

1. Why do some women shun power?

Assertive women are still perceived negatively in our society, as too “forceful” or confident, and even “brash” and “braggarts.” In fact, research has found that when people deem a woman forceful, her perceived value and competency drop precipitously, and significantly more than men who are perceived as assertive. In short, forceful women are still punished or penalized in the workplace.

Women have learned and observed from an early age that wielding power is not “safe” and many also believe that power is an inherently abusive, destructive weapon, and want no part of it. But without access to greater internal and external power, we can’t achieve our highest and greatest visions, goals or impact in our work.

2. Why is accessing internal and external power harder for women?

Research has shown that young girls who were once just as confident and self-assured as boys, start going “underground” at the age of 12 or 13. Then, they become more reluctant to be vocal, assert themselves, seek leadership roles, put forth their ideas, pursue STEM studies, and more. And girls become more concerned with their body image and are more impacted by social media pressure than boys. As they mature and grow, the idea of becoming powerful is not one that is encouraged for girls and women.

3. Why is this power or bravery urgent not just for career advancement but for survival in today’s tight labor market?

Bravery and power are two distinct and essential elements we need for self-actualization and authentic success. Bravery is the courage to recognize and face head on what isn’t working in our lives and careers, and take proactive steps and make the necessary changes.

Power, to me, is the ability to act on one’s own behalf, to advocate for ourselves and others in an effective way – becoming the true author of our lives and strengthening ourselves and our ability to see ourselves powerfully and to bravely speak, ask, connect, challenge, serve and heal, with confidence, strength and positive impact. All of these behaviors are essential if we’re to thrive at work and stay competitive in a challenging labor market.

4. What is a power gap?

My research has revealed that there are [7 specific and damaging "power gaps"](#) professional women face that prevent them from succeeding, thriving and reaching their

highest goals and potential in their careers. Remarkably common among women of all education levels, industries, fields and professions around the world, these power gaps are prevalent among corporate professionals, consultants, private practitioners, entrepreneurs and other working roles.

5. You talk about 7 bravery-boosting paths. How do they help women experience more power and the ability to take the reins on their careers and futures?

We build happier lives and careers through consistent, committed and intentional bravery that leads us to become the true authors of our lives. It takes courage, strength and well-formed boundaries to embrace new, confidence-building opportunities—to see ourselves as we really are, and to speak, ask, connect, serve and heal courageously so we can become who we long to be in the world of work. These 7 brave paths help us get on—and remain on—the journey of self-empowerment and growth, and not be detoured when we face serious obstacles that have the potential to derail us.

6. What did you notice was common to virtually all the women you've coached and counseled?

I found unsettling patterns in what professional women were facing, and then pulled the lens back to uncover a widespread unhappiness, disillusionment and disappointment for so many professional women around the world. I wanted to understand why thousands of working women from all levels and roles are facing the same difficult and debilitating challenges, and why the men I worked with and spoke to didn't seem to face these same challenges. The missing links? **Bravery and power.**

7. What finding most surprised you from your survey of women?

A vast majority of the women whom I heard from or consulted with in the past 10 years seemed to be experiencing these 7 gaps, yet the data revealed a true epidemic of powerlessness - 98% of the almost 1,000 women surveyed were experiencing at least one gap, and over 75% were facing three or more. The three most prevalent were: *Reluctance to Ask for What You Deserve* (77%); *Losing Sight of Dream Future* (76%), and *Isolating from Influential Support* (71%)

8. How can our cultural backgrounds affect our professional lives?

We are all an amalgam of everything we've experienced in our childhoods and early family life, including cultural and spiritual influences, our personal defeats and triumphs, victories, messages and experiences we've received from family and authority figures, the stories of our ancestors that have been embedded in our personal identities, and more.

This rich material shapes who you are and how you see the world and operate in it. To leverage your uniqueness, you need to recognize everything your life has given you up to this point – your special perspective, strengths, and keen abilities, and how you see and relate to the world that makes you special and stand out.

9. Why is it important to see yourself as a change agent?

We cannot lead anything well (including our teams, organizations, staff, projects, etc.) if we're not able to effectively lead our own lives, and this means honoring our authentic beliefs, values and desires, and having the strength to take a stand and speak truth to power. In order to build a rewarding career where you have impact, authority and mastery, you need to be your own change agent, advocate for yourself and others, and shift the course of action with influence, knowledge and self-authority.

10. What can organizational, corporate leaders and managers do today, to support women efforts to reach their highest and most rewarding potential, and serve at the highest levels in their organizations?

For leaders today, essential shifts are needed in every organizational system to support professional women in gaining access to the fulfilling roles, leadership responsibility and influence, and positive impact they want and deserve. And these organizational shifts will help not just women – *all* contributors will grow and thrive at a deeper level.

Leaders need to deeply understand the 7 power gaps women face, and build a new type of work culture that allows all employees to address their power gaps openly, affording them opportunities to see themselves in a more positive light, with new eyes. As a leader, you can facilitate exciting growth opportunities for employees to speak, ask, connect, challenge, serve and heal more bravely and powerfully than ever before.

11. How do you help women ask for and receive the promotions and raises they want and deserve?

We need to understand how to ask for raises, promotions and other dimensions of professional growth and success, and how to claim more leadership, responsibility and influence in our work. As a career coach and trainer, I share with professional women a “power boosting” process that helps them recognize their great talents and accomplishments, understand what they really want in terms of how to leverage their skills more powerfully, and then build a very strong case—with facts and data-- that helps them land the raises, promotions and leadership roles they want and deserve.

12. What examples of bravery did you personally need to channel for your own career path?

I've had to close all seven power gaps I write and teach about, and access much more bravery and power to finally move away from feeling suppressed, mistreated, unheard, chronically ill, and deeply unhappy in my work.

After a brutal layoff in the days following 9/11, I “found brave” to finally go out on my own, launch a successful business, become a coach, writer, teacher, and trainer – and to

do work that generates emotional and financial reward for me. To do this, I've embarked on all 7 of the brave pathways, and continue to pursue these pathways each day.

13. What's the first step anyone can take tomorrow to become a *more powerful you*?

Understand the seven gaps, and assess which you might be facing today, and which one is causing you the most distress and dissatisfaction. I developed a [Power Gap Survey](#) to help people better understand themselves and their situations. Once you're able to recognize any gap(s) you're facing, it's time to DO something concrete about it and to take a different kind of action than you've ever taken before. Insight is great, but it's brave new *action* that shifts your course, action that is taken even amidst fear, doubt and insecurity.

Determine which **brave path** you want to pursue most today:

- 1) Brave Sight – see yourself more powerfully
- 2) Brave Speak – speak from strength not fear
- 3) Brave Ask – ask for help and for what you want and deserve
- 4) Brave Connection – connect with influential sponsors who can help you
- 5) Brave Challenge – say “NO!” to mistreatment to and around you
- 6) Brave Service – leverage your talents and experience to do more meaningful, rewarding work that makes an impact
- 7) Brave Healing – heal from past experiences that hurt or suppress you