Understanding the Gender Dominated Fields

1) Lessons/Topic Covered: Understanding that gender dominance exists in the workplace and that there are techniques and resources to build confidence for success to overcome adversity.

2) Mentee Objective covered:
   a) Assist mentee in achieving a healthier and more accurate understanding of femininity and masculinity in professional setting to allow them to be confident in voicing their thoughts.

3) Goals/Objectives of this Lesson:
   a) Accept there is not one kind of leadership style and be aware of how leadership styles between men and women differ.
   b) Understanding that both men and women can and do embody both types of qualities in different measures.
   c) Understand that as a minority in a gender dominated space, it is of utmost importance to participate.
   d) Seek a work environment which appreciates and rewards both male and feminine leadership qualities equally.

4) Sources

5) Read Ahead/Homework Assignment
   • Utilize the sources above to increase topic conversation between mentor and mentee.

6) Lesson Notes
   a) Discussion of Femininity and Masculinity
      i) Provide insight into workplace cultures in male (ex. IT) or female (ex. Nursing) dominant fields in which were built to serve their gender and not particularly observant of the other.
ii) Develop an understanding about the ways in which the mentee understands femininity and masculinity.

iii) Provide insight into why and how gender differences in leadership improve communication and productivity.

b) Discussion of differences in the way men and women discuss items in the workplace to make sure awareness is there.

i) Talking about success.
   (1) Men tend to talk about success in credit to themselves and their skills
   (2) Women tend to credit external factors like hard work and others who helped get them to their position

ii) Talking about failure
   (1) When a man fails he tends to talk about “not studying enough” or being “uninterested in subject material”
   (2) When a woman fails she is more likely to attribute it to lack of ability

iii) Being a part of the conversation
   (1) Men are likely to speak up even if it is not their area of expertise
   (2) Women are less likely to raise their hand in the first place, let alone keep their hand up, especially if it is out of their area of expertise
   (3) Encourage equality in perspectives in meetings

iv) The Heidi/Howard Study
   (1) Heidi is viewed as less likeable – female stereotype is caregivers, sensitive, communal
   (2) Howard – is viewed as more likeable – male stereotype is driven, provider, decisive
   (3) Violation of stereotypes makes people uncomfortable (Expectancy Violations Theory)
   (4) Success and likeability are positively correlated for men and negatively correlated for women

c) Share stories of individuals that work in gender dominate fields and what they have done to achieve success despite the adversity. (Ex. Sheryl Sandberg* and/or Men in Nursing)

i) Open discussion about these stories with mentor and mentee.

ii) At the end of the day, every business will need a masculine and feminine approach for success.

7) Post Lesson Assignments

a) Based on your experiences in your field so far, reflect and decide if it is gender dominated. Let’s pinpoint good or bad practices.

b) Based on our discussions, try to think of 2-3 experiences you have had that have been stereotypical to gender norms. Reflect on how you handled the situation.
   i) How could you have handled it differently to make sure you were creating an environment where male and female leadership are both considered.

b) Based on your reflecting, let’s pinpoint different podcasts, books or other resources to make you more socially aware and able to ensure you’re making a positive impact in any dominated workplace you enter. Being aware is the key to making a difference.

8) Lesson(s) Learned Feedback

a) Include any lessons learned from this module. Can be transferred to bi-monthly report.