

# Calling Women Over 40!

## Why You Are Stuck In Your Career And What you Can Do About It

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### The Ultimate 7 Step Plan For Women Over 40, To Get Unstuck And Move Up The Corporate Ladder

Hi we're Claudia Crawley and Ghazala Faizi, we're Executive Coaches with over 25 years' experience guiding, mentoring, coaching and leading women to take control of their lives and move up the corporate ladder.

In the wake of the Lord Davies report, and our own experience of why women over 40 get stuck, our mission is to break down barriers and help get more women into senior management and board positions.

*"Begin somewhere. You cannot build a reputation on what you intend to do."* Liz Smith

**We believe it is time for you, as a 40+ woman, to Take Your Seat At The Table.**

This report delivers a 7 Step Plan to finally get you unstuck and achieve your highest goals.

### Disclaimer

This Plan is NOT for you if:

- You are not prepared to put the work in and take action.
- You think life owes you something and are not prepared to take 100% responsibility for your situation.
- You believe that crossing your fingers and hoping to get noticed will one day get you where you want to be.

# The Reality For Female Executives

**You've seen the statistics about lack of women in senior leadership roles in the UK.**

Despite massive steps forward only 21.6% of FTSE 100 company board positions are taken by women (despite women being 47% of the UK workforce).

**This is a particular problem for women over 40.**

As we get older the disparities in men's and women's opportunities become starker.

At age 40, the pay gap between men and women in the UK is 27%, compared with an overall gap of 15.5% for employees of all ages.

According to Cranfield University's 2010 study, women FTSE 100 executive directors in 2010 were more than two years younger than their male peers, with an average age of 50, compared to 52 for male directors. The difference is more marked for non-executive appointments, where the average male age was 60, and the average female age was just 56.

So that means as we get older, the problem gets worse.

Then of course some of us have made choices about taking time off work to raise our children. A 2009 article in the Guardian sums it up neatly:

***'Motherhood devastates women's pay'***

The article lays out the consequences of the decisions we make – for *every year* she is absent raising a family a woman's wages will reduce by 5%.

But that's not all.

An average woman working full-time from age 18 to 59 would lose £361,000 in gross earnings over her working life compared to an equivalent male.

## Stuck, Bored, Frustrated, Passed Over

As coaches we have met many 40+ women who are STUCK in their careers.

They want to progress but they don't know how.

The words they commonly use to describe how this feels include:

*"The City hires and promotes 25-39 year olds which immediately puts women at a disadvantage. It also believes that after the age of 40 you have nothing to contribute."*

Trevor Philips, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission

- Bored
- Frustrated
- Stuck

**Are you one of these women?**

Have you been knocked back?

Do you worry what people think of you?

Are you beginning to wonder what your future holds?

And is the thought of retirement looming on the horizon beginning to fill you with dread?

Do you want to get promoted but you don't know how?

**Of course you could just cross your fingers and hope things will magically get better.**

You can continue being stuck and getting nowhere, but let's face it time is slipping by.

Maybe the kids are off to university soon.

If you continue doing what you're doing now and what you've been doing in the past you won't move forward.

**And that can be a very unsettling feeling.**

## Why Your Boss Should Care

**How does your organisation reach and sustain high performance? Here's an increasingly well-known way - develop and appoint women to senior management roles.**

The Harvard Business Review found that Women enable better leadership: **'more women were rated by peers, bosses, direct reports and other associates as better overall leaders than male counterparts- the higher the level the wider the gap'**<sup>1</sup>.

According to McKinsey & Co research the more women in senior roles, the better their organisation's health – and performance<sup>2</sup>.

Findings within large UK professional service corporations are that where there are 50% women at senior level, the company's gross revenue was 11% up compared to that of companies with all male senior management teams.<sup>3</sup>

So why does this still happen in 2014?

**There is a pervasive, pernicious myth that age 40+ is a period of decline, that we should all just settle back quietly and manage the decline into old age.**

**When the reality of the matter is that experienced midlife women often have much to contribute.**

Their experience of life and workplace crises have made them more self-aware and have highlighted their strengths, making them better able to put emerging problems into perspective.

Are these barriers a feature of your company?

How can your organisation get more from diverse midlife women?

**Does your company have a pipeline for women's continuing achievement?**

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<sup>1</sup> Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman's survey of 7,800 leaders in high performing companies worldwide

<sup>2</sup> Women Matter (2007)

<sup>3</sup> Coaching Women to Lead (Leimon, Moscovici and Goodier 2011)

## The 7 Step Plan For Getting Unstuck

So if you are 40+ and looking to get unstuck in your career and move forward what can be done?

Well, over the years we have worked with, mentored, helped and led hundreds of women to do exactly that.

And here is our 7 Step Plan For Getting Unstuck.

### Step One: Be Brave, Be Decisive

Step one is often the hardest for women who are used to giving in to others' will. Make decisions and stick to them. It often doesn't matter whether you're right or not – people like certainty. Don't doubt or second-guess yourself.

Sometimes you need to be brave. If you are offered an opportunity TAKE IT. Even if you aren't sure you can do it, figure that bit out later.

**"If you're offered a seat on a rocket ship, don't ask what seat! Just get on."**

— Sheryl Sandberg

Remember: The things that scare you are the ones worth pursuing. If it's within your comfort zone it won't move you forwards.

### Step Two: Do The Work Others Don't Want

*"I determine to render more and better service, each day, than I am being paid to render. Those that reach the top are the ones who are not content with doing only what is required of them."*  
Og Mandino, The Greatest Salesman In The World

Advice from female CEOs who've made the grade is that often the jobs that no-one wants to do will bring rewards.

You'll get noticed, you'll stand out from the crowd and you'll make your boss' life easier.

That's not to say you should take on any rubbish task no one else wants. Evaluate bigger projects that no one wants because they are a pain and assess what you could gain by delivering on them.

*"What people hate the most is indecision. Even if I'm completely unsure, I'll pretend I know exactly what I'm talking about and make a decision."* Anna Wintour, Editor US Vogue

## Step Three: Stop Hiding Your Light Under A Bushel and Cultivate Confidence

This is no time to be a shrinking violet.

Put your big girl pants on and ask for what you want.

When you have a success – let other people (especially the bosses) know about it. Don't wait to get noticed.

Ruth Malloy<sup>4</sup> stressed that 'Many women felt uncomfortable with self-promotion and "asking for a job"'. When women don't 'brag', they're likely to get passed over when critical opportunities arise.

People who comfortably self-promote "are more successful in landing a job from an interview, build stronger networks....and are more successful in business and throughout their careers."<sup>5</sup>

We aren't born with a finite amount of confidence. Confidence is a skill that can be learnt (see any Tony Robbins video on Youtube about getting into a Peak State).

*"I believe that one of life's greatest risks is never daring to risk". Oprah Winfrey*

*"There isn't a single path to success- there are many". Deborah Meaden*

## Step Four: Have a Career Plan

According to Penny Valk CEO of Cedar, nearly 50% of women don't plan their career goals as compared to 33% of men.

And Ruth Malloy says, '..... women are less deliberate than men in their career progressions, thinking, "I will learn, grow, and build my capabilities," rather than, "I will create opportunities to learn X and gain experience in Y to get to position Z."

You need to make a plan and review it regularly.

Look at career decisions in the context of their implication over 5 years – this may mean taking a step backwards to be able to go forwards.

Look down the road 10 or 15 years, and say to yourself, 'Do I really still want to be doing this?'

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<sup>4</sup> Harvard Business Review (September 2013)

<sup>5</sup> Forbes - Margie Warrell, (29 April13)

## Step Five: Invest in Yourself and Keep Learning

You are an important person and you must decide that you are worth taking the time, energy and money to invest in. No-one else can do this for you.

So invest in your growth and development and never stop educating yourself. Challenge and stimulate your mind with new learning; keep it curious and hungry. It will boost your confidence. You'll be better able to participate and contribute more effectively at work and outside it. You'll be more valued by your employer and more likely to get promotion. Whether personal or professional development, specific skills for your industry or interpersonal skills, remember, you are worth the investment and you'll have the edge over your competitors.

*"Often people attempt to live their lives backwards, they try to have more things or more money in order to do more of what they want so that they will be happier. The way it actually works is the reverse. You must first be who you really are then do what you need to do in order to have what you want."*

Margaret Young

## Step Six: Build Your Network

Leverage your communication and interpersonal skills to build a network, both within your company and with key people in your industry.

The more people who know you, your strengths, achievements and your value to the company, the more likely your name will be considered when opportunities come up.

Make a point especially of cultivating the people in charge.

Networking, especially with those in other parts of the organisation, also helps you to learn a lot more about the company and can give you the edge.

## Step Seven: Get a Mentor/Coach or Sponsor

Support, particularly from a sponsor, is crucial in enabling sustained achievement, in accessing the more valuable and powerful organisational networks and in actively grooming you for leadership.

Men tend to have few problems getting mentors and sponsors whilst women often find it more difficult. These 'resources' need to be made as easy for women to access as for men.

No-one can make it alone. Even the most successful people have supporters behind them.

*"We need to understand that there is no formula for how women should lead their lives, that is why we must respect the choices that each woman makes for herself and her family. Every woman deserves the chance"*

Most people are delighted to be asked to be your mentor or sponsor. So make a list of people you know and ask them. Or get yourself a good qualified coach.

## Next Steps

### **Our Programme Can Help You Get Your Seat At The table:**

#### ***Women: Take Your Seat at the Table***

This is a total immersion workshop that will get you sustainable results. It starts with a structured and interactive 2 days that introduce change. The continuing follow-up, on-going group support and a dedicated social media forum are designed to embed the change.

**Who it's for:** Professional women from diverse backgrounds who are

- Experienced but stuck at middle management level OR
- Inexperienced in management and are seeking to progress their career faster
- Able to contribute more but their talents and skills may have been overlooked

**The aim:** To provide participants with a personalised tailor made road-map in the form of an action plan for advancing their pathway up the organisation and finding their seat at the organisational table.

#### **The benefits:**

##### **For organisations**

- Builds a sustainable organisational pipeline to power by helping companies to get more from their 'hidden' resources – women over 40
- Increases organisation's performance by improving women's achievements
- Enables companies to support their women and demonstrate diversity commitment

##### **For individual participants**

- A chance to take pro-active steps to success
- Re-energised and re-motivated
- Boosted confidence
- Their personal road-map to success

## **WOMEN - TAKE YOUR SEAT AT THE TABLE**

**Date:** 20-21 September 2014

**Time:** 9.30am to 4.30pm

**Venue:** London School of Economics

**Contact Claudia (07961 949394) or Ghazala (07563 563254) now for more details.**

Register for your place on the workshop [here](#).

## About Claudia & Ghazala



**Claudia Crawley, CEO of Winning Pathways Coaching**, was stuck for nearly 20 years at middle management level before being further promoted. She has an MBA, a coaching diploma and extensive experience of developing women. Now, as an executive coach and life coach, she specialises in coaching professional women over 40. Co-author of best-seller, *Winning in Life and Work*, she's also a mentor of women entrepreneurs internationally for the Cherie Blair Foundation.



**Ghazala Faizi, CEO of Career Change at 40**, was a middle manager in local government for many years before her promotion to senior manager. She has an MA, a Diploma in Management (Executive level) and is a Prince 2 Practitioner with extensive experience in staff development in the careers arena. As a trained Corporate & Executive Coach, she now specializes in coaching women over 40 seeking career change.

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