



Nancy A. Park
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BEST BEST & KRIEGER
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Education: BS, California State University Sacramento; JD, University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law

Company Name: Best Best & Krieger LLP

Industry: Law

Company CEO: Eric Garner, Managing Partner

Number of Employees: 385

Your Location: Sacramento, California

Words you live by: Be the best you can be and live by the Golden Rule.

Personal Philosophy: Excellence matters; always try to achieve it.

What book are you reading: *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett

What was your first job: Assembling wind chimes for family business

Favorite charity: Girl Scouts

Interests: Reading, sewing, rowing, running, hiking/backpacking, travel, and photography

Family: Husband of 31 years, David Tacherra; daughter Victoria and son Spencer



The Glass Ceiling Can Be Broken

I am often the only woman on a conference call or in the board room, especially in certain industries. This is just one way I can tell women are still bumping against the glass ceiling—due to factors in and out of our control. The main barrier, though, is simply that some industries are underpopulated by qualified women candidates. Employers bear much of the burden of changing the pipeline, but we can control some things from within it.

First, prepare for and take risks. Apply for that plum job. Some women may be reluctant because they feel they are not yet 100 percent competent, while their male counterparts often feel that taking a risk on a new position is worth it, and if someone is willing to put them in such a position, they are qualified enough. Women, in my view, more frequently than men, feel that, even when hired, someone will “find out” they really aren’t as competent as they should

be—that they are imposters. Even highly intelligent and overqualified women feel these insecurities. While an honest assessment of skills needs to be made to evaluate potential opportunities and readiness for them, most jobs involve some learning and challenge.

Second, be an ally. Because of this self-doubt, women may discredit or discourage peers from seeking advancement or scrutinize a female candidate’s credentials more closely than those of her male counterpart. We need to give other women the same credence they give (or should give) themselves. Encouragement, mentorship, and sponsorship help us learn from each other and boost advancement for women who otherwise might be discouraged.

Third, speak up and show up. Women should ask—even tactfully insist—to be in the room or at key meetings where growth opportunities are available. In addition, we should not

shy away from business development “bonding” opportunities, like going out for a beer, golfing, or other traditional “male” activities. Women may decline because they feel they are not competent golfers (men often aren’t!) or fear they will feel uncomfortable in such settings. Learning (or learning to fake) some social skills to talk-the-talk at happy hour is part of conforming to the historic social-business structure. We can also create alternative events and, as more women advance, the universe of bonding and mentoring activities will evolve. In the meantime, golf lessons and learning enough about baseball to join the conversation can help women be perceived as part of the team.

The glass ceiling can be broken, but it takes a combination of boldness, confidence, conformance to current and changing social norms, and the desire to advance. Sharing experiences and advice will help the ceiling shatter sooner.