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# Women at Work: New executives must lead change

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Written by Mimi Bacilek

Newly promoted executives quickly face complex challenges and opportunities. Expectations of them are high and, unfortunately, often unknown to the new executive.

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They will be called on to make critical decisions, often in the absence of complete information. For better or worse, their decisions have reverberations throughout the organization.

Hence, leading change quickly becomes an essential focus. Decisions must be translated into strategies that likely will demand new ways of working for many in the organization. And as it is said, wet babies are the only people eager for change.

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Savvy executives engage leaders and staff across the organization, gaining their wisdom, insight, energy and the resources required for success. This process affords the executive opportunities for establishing credibility and trust with new colleagues, former peers, direct reports and staff from a wide range of functions.

Defining new policies or procedures is easy, but sustainable change requires shifting the culture. It is essential that leaders define, communicate, model and reward the culture they want to lead. This single strategy will reap greater rewards than nearly any other

process.

Compounding all the challenges, executives have limited access to honest, truthful and timely feedback. For a variety of reasons, staffs protect their leaders from unwelcome information and too often polish the information they provide.

Long-term leader success requires they find a reliable, unbiased source for feedback on their actions, approaches, ideas and concerns. Without feedback, success potential is rapidly capped.

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