



**KICK SOME**

**GLASS**

**10 WAYS  
WOMEN SUCCEED  
AT WORK  
ON THEIR OWN TERMS**

**JENNIFER W. MARTINEAU  
PORTIA R. MOUNT**

**PUBLISHED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEADERSHIP**

PRAISE FOR  
**KICK SOME GLASS**

*Kick Some Glass* is a blueprint for women to learn what we've always known we were capable of: leading authentic, remarkable careers on our own terms.

—Christine Duffy, President,  
Carnival Cruise Line

Not your typical career advice book for women. Jennifer Martineau and Portia Mount give you refreshing, practical advice you can use to define your career and personal success on your terms. The book features hands-on activities and sharp insights from successful leaders that encourage you to explore your talents, beliefs, and experiences that may have remained hidden but are centers of strength. Most important, Martineau and Mount sound a clarion call to women everywhere: step out of the shadows and lead! Now more than ever, we need more women leaders. It's a challenge I hope every woman will accept after reading *Kick Some Glass*.

—Tyra Mariani, Executive Vice President,  
New America

Whether you are looking to change your career or get more out of the one you have, *Kick Some Glass* offers refreshingly practical advice that actually works. The authors draw on their own experiences, along with those of leaders with a wide array of backgrounds, to produce a book that is compelling and useful.

—Jen Gresham, Founder,  
Everyday Bright

Becoming an influential leader isn't a mystery or the result of lucky breaks. In *Kick Some Glass*, leadership experts and practitioners Jennifer Martineau and Portia Mount share research-based, actionable practices to help women build the self-clarity, intention, and agency they require to become the leaders they aspire to be—now.

—Lisa Kay Solomon, Chair, Transformational Practices and Leadership, Singularity University,  
and coauthor of *Moments of Impact*  
and *Design a Better Business*

Developing and retaining leaders is the lifeblood of any successful organization. *Kick Some Glass* delivers valuable insights for women, as well as men who are seeking to support and develop women in leadership roles.

—Cutler Dawson, Vice Admiral, US Navy (Ret.),  
President/CEO, Navy Federal Credit Union

As a technology and women's advocate, I believe *Kick Some Glass* is the new operating system of a singular movement. Jennifer and Portia's book will help us install the code and integrate it into our journey as changemakers, global shapers, and emerging leaders.

—Tsegga S. Medhin, President, North Carolina Chapter, UN Women

This is the book I've been waiting for all my career(s)! Relevant research, insightful interviews with diverse leaders, practical quizzes, and an inclusive online community to cocreate leadership futures.

—Amanda Ellis, Executive Director,  
Hawaii and Asia-Pacific, Julie Ann Wrigley  
Global Institute of Sustainability, Arizona  
State University, and former New Zealand  
Ambassador to the United Nations

This is one of those rare books that successfully engages the reader by sharing the latest research through stories, tips, and questions. It will help all women think more deeply and strategically about what success means to them in the workplace and in life.

—Dr. Susan R. Madsen, Orin R. Woodbury  
Professor of Leadership and Ethics, Woodbury  
School of Business, Utah Valley University

*Kick Some Glass* validates everything I have learned and experienced pursuing my passion to empower women and balance the voice of leadership worldwide. Thank you, Jennifer and Portia, for identifying the barriers and opportunities that women face to become leaders. Leadership is a journey fulfilled when we can live it authentically.

—Andrea Conner, President,  
ATHENA International

A must-read, *Kick Some Glass* provides rich, practical advice for women striving to do more as leaders. Jennifer Martineau and Portia Mount bring deep professional and personal experiences and combine this with CCL expertise to create a powerhouse of advice for women.

—Sara King, Principal, Optimum Insights, Inc.,  
and coauthor of *Discovering the Leader in You*

A powerfully smart and compassionate evidence-based playbook for leadership and life. Whether your glass ceiling is in your job, your industry, your cultural experiences, or your mindset, this book can help you break through with its insightful stories, sound data, actionable advice, and practical exercises.

—Dr. Brenda Wilkins, Cofounder  
and President, SoulPowered

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WOMEN SUCCEED  
AT WORK  
ON THEIR OWN TERMS

JENNIFER W. MARTINEAU  
PORTIA R. MOUNT



New York Chicago San Francisco Athens London Madrid  
Mexico City Milan New Delhi Singapore Sydney Toronto

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*To our mothers,  
Ellen Fleming Wells and Barbara Morrow Williams,  
the women who brought us into this world and  
raised us to be glass-kicking women*

# C H A P T E R

# 7

## Live Your Intention

*Live as if you'll live forever, but live  
each day as if it were your last.*

—Dana Born, Brigadier General, USAF (Ret.),  
and Faculty Member and Director,  
University School of Public Policy,  
Harvard Kennedy School of Government

### In this chapter, you will learn:

- What it means to live your intention and design a meaningful life at any stage
- How to identify the underlying values that are at the core of your being
- How to make the choices and trade-offs necessary to fulfill your purpose

Career-oriented women typically go to college or university with an idea of what they want to do “when they grow up.” But after several years in the workforce, changes in their role or workplace, or reconsideration of what their ideal role looks like, they may find themselves asking, “What am I doing here?” or “Is this what I want to do?” But not Sue Cole. Sue, retired CEO of a national financial institution, knew what was important to her and went after it—tenaciously—even as her life and values evolved. She began her first “real” job at the age of 16. With her freshly minted driver’s license in hand, she drove to a jewelry store in her small southern US town and asked for a job. When the skeptical manager asked why he should hire someone with no prior work experience, Sue replied, “You’ll be so glad you did! I will do anything you want me to do. I can sell diamonds, and I can wrap gifts.” He hired her on the spot. That job started Sue on a path very different from the one her parents had traveled. Well intentioned and loving, her mother and father worked hard at their teaching and construction jobs, respectively. But at home they didn’t emphasize education nor spend much time with their three children.

Sue feels she was born an entrepreneur, and she wanted to do something different, something more than she saw in the adults who surrounded her. She wanted to be independent and self-sufficient. Before she could legally drive, she had started two businesses: a lawn-mowing service and a babysitting service. Later, she worked at various jobs and lived at home when she started college, paying her own way toward a degree she believed would give her the independence and self-sufficiency that drove her. After marrying and finishing her degree, she began a career in the banking industry. Sue and her husband, the love of her life, had two daughters together while she continued a full-time career. As her life expanded, so did her motives—challenge and flexibility became as important for Sue as independence and self-sufficiency.

At work, Sue made decisions based on the flexibility she needed to live her full life as a career woman, wife, and mother. She ruled out taking roles that limited even one of those important areas.

But she didn't shy away from career challenges, which became even more important to her after her children were grown and the demands of being a mom diminished. She took on greater challenges. Then, when her husband was diagnosed with terminal cancer and given six months to live, Sue left her banking career for a part-time role in investments that would allow her to spend time with her husband. The love of her life fought cancer for 11 years. During this time, Sue realized she wasn't enjoying the part-time role but couldn't figure out why—until she realized she needed a more challenging career! So she started her own consulting firm, providing strategy, leadership development, and corporate governance guidance to her clients. Whether facing the demands of work or of home, Sue's core values (challenge, flexibility, independence, and self-sustainability) helped her make decisions that kept her aim true—always moving toward her own evolving definition of what it meant to have a “successful life.”

## LIVING YOUR INTENTION

Asking themselves how they define a successful life is a luxury that many women live without. When the bills need to be paid, they don't have the opportunity to think about whether what they're doing is what they *really* want to do. If this is true for you, simply asking the question can help you feel more control over your future—even if you aren't able to make a change right now. Asking yourself whether you are doing what you want to be doing can empower you to make small adjustments to your current situation. Those small changes can lead you closer to the future you've always imagined. Life comes fast. Change comes hard. So pause. Give yourself permission to explore the question: What do I really want?

There is both a positive and a negative approach to the question. The negative approach is to say, “I am so far from what I started out doing that I'm on the wrong track—I need to fix it.” Pause. What thoughts and feelings does that statement provoke

in you? Don't dwell on those thoughts, but compare that reaction to what happens when you adopt a positive approach: "The path I've followed so far isn't what I expected, but I've gained skills and knowledge, formed strong connections with colleagues and peers, and had experiences I would not trade for anything—experiences I would have missed if I'd stayed on my original path. What can I take from my history to help me think about where I'd like to go?"

Susana Marin, general manager of a luxury hotel in Spain, knows this: the most important thing she wants people to say about her is that she's honest and fair. This is the value and intent that drives her: she always speaks the truth, even when she knows she can't always tell the full story depending on her audience or the situation. She shares as much as she can without compromising strategic decisions or an individual's privacy. Another intent also inspires Susana: passion. "I cannot be a leader without being passionate about what I do," she says.

Life is a constant series of choices—even if the choice is to do nothing at all. How you got to where you are might seem unclear with the passage of time, but you can pull back your choices like layers to uncover what drove you to make them. You can reveal the messages that have guided your intentions throughout your life and learn how to redirect messages that don't help you move toward your ideal future. That's what this chapter is all about: creating the life you intended to live. It's never too late to design the life you want.

## WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK?

You may not know the answer to the question, What's holding me back? The reasons why so many women don't live their intent or purpose vary widely. In their book *Standing at the Crossroads*, Marian Ruderman and Patty Ohlott share what they learned about how senior-level women leaders reached authenticity—an alignment of their values with their actions.<sup>1</sup> Achieving authenticity required

those women to be fully aware of their intentional choices to trade one part of their life for another. Four key pressures force women to make those choices: personal expectations, others' expectations, organizational practices, and cultural beliefs and practices. Let's see how those play out in the lives of career-minded women.

## **Personal Expectations**

One important reason we decided to write this book was that we wanted to share lessons we'd learned from our careers and personal lives with the hope that doing so could help other women on their own journeys. In our own stories we can see how our intentions influenced the choices we made. My (Jennifer's) story is a case in point:

After taking a general psychology class in high school, I decided I wanted to be a psychologist. Entering college, my only awareness of the roles psychologists played were as clinical or counseling psychologists. I imagined myself listening to patients' problems, empathizing with them, and helping them find solutions. It all made sense until my sophomore year, when I met a graduate student in the university's industrial and organizational (I/O) psychology program and asked her why she was interested in that particular course of study. She said plainly, "I don't want to work with sick people all day." Bang. If epiphany were a rocket, then that moment hit me like an exploding fireworks factory. I had never considered my future patients to be sick—just in need of help. Having been in counseling myself since then, I believe I was correct—my future patients wouldn't have been sick. I have deep respect for counselors and clinicians, as well as for the people who seek their services. But at the same time, this comment opened my eyes to see the extremes experienced by people in these roles. I realized I wasn't sure this profession was for me. I decided to learn more about I/O psychology to give myself some options. After I took a course from that same graduate student, I realized that there was a lot to like about the work I could do in that field.

From that point forward, my goal became a PhD in I/O psychology. I set my sights on top-tier graduate school programs, studied for the entry exams, worked hard in my college classes, and found an internship that gave me practical experience in I/O work within an organization. One of my roommates at the time who remains a very good friend still reminds me about the sticky notes I put around my room in our apartment with “4.0” (a perfect grade point average) and other messages of goals I wanted to reach so that I could achieve my aim of graduate school.

I achieved that PhD in I/O psychology and began working at the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) as an entry-level, part-time, temporary researcher. This was an organization I had hoped to work in at some point in my career, presumably after I’d paid my dues somewhere else. What an opportunity! I loved the applied research I was able to do at CCL and envisioned a long career doing this work. In fact, when my husband, who challenges and supports me like no other, asked me a year or so into my time at CCL about my interest in taking on a management role at some point in my career, I told him that I wasn’t interested in leading—I wanted to do “the work.” My image of the work was applied research that had an impact on leaders and their organizations. Just as research indicates about young girls, I’d never seen myself as a leader. I hadn’t chosen to compete for formal roles such as class or service club president when in school, nor project lead roles in graduate school. I didn’t yet understand the broader nature of leadership—that we lead by our actions as much as (or more than) by title. When I finally realized that, during my early years at CCL, I recognized that I did play leadership roles when I was younger and that people recognized me for these roles. For example, my teammates selecting me as co-captain of our high school’s swim team was one of those indications.

With that realization, I committed myself to leading through whatever role I was playing, regardless of its formal title or position. Indeed, my definition of “the work” has evolved over the years! That change has required me to continuously rediscover my values and intentions and determine how to live them authentically

in my life. I did not foresee myself in my current role when I was in graduate school or early in my career—my path has not been what I'd call intentional and planned (more on that later). At times, my professional life has been confusing, frustrating, and fraught with doubt. But I was intentionally open to new opportunities that promised the chance to have a positive impact on leaders, their organizations, and their communities—and by doing that, having a positive impact on our world. Those values and intentions have continued to guide my choices throughout my career.

My story describes some of what holds women back from living their intentions. I made assumptions about leadership roles that kept me from imagining myself in those positions. My expectations dissuaded me from putting myself forward for consideration for those roles. I am not a special case—far from it. Research tells us that women believe they need to be 100 percent qualified to do a job before they take it on, but men are more likely to put themselves forward for new opportunities even if they haven't proven themselves fully capable of taking on more responsibilities.<sup>2</sup>

Fortunately, some men notice when women don't put themselves forward. CCL's president, retired US Navy Vice Admiral John Ryan, worked with and led men and women throughout his Navy career and later as superintendent of the US Naval Academy and chancellor of the State University of New York (SUNY) system. He recognizes that women don't put their hands up quickly enough when a new opportunity comes along, and he encourages them not to hold back. "You don't know how to fly an actual plane when you first get that assignment. You've only flown in simulators up to that point," he says. "You are never really ready for the next job—you haven't done it yet. You have to be ready to learn on the job." John is right: you don't know all the intricacies of flight before you strap into a cockpit for the first time solo. But you have trained in simulators. You know the controls and the physics of flying. My first simulation was a leadership role as co-captain of the swim team. No, it didn't involve all the intricacies of leading people and projects in a global organization. But, looking back,

I see it was practice. Look back on your life for those times you practiced leadership.

Another man we interviewed, Chris, has observed from his diverse leadership roles—in philanthropy, the tech sector, and at a nonprofit organization—a phenomenon in which his female teammates are less likely to step into an opportunity than men are. He attributes it to a system that tells men to “grab the opportunity, you’ve got a green light, go for it, *carpe diem*” and says to women, “don’t go too fast, are you sure you want to take that step, do you have support from this person or that person?” So how does Chris support his female colleagues with this challenge? He has learned from many years of experience that the best way for him to support his colleagues is to listen to them. “I believe that solving problems is part of my male hardwiring,” he says. “But I discovered that the way I could support my teammates best is really to understand their situation, not to solve it.” John and Chris both reflect research that shows that women may be hesitant to advocate for themselves.<sup>3</sup> That hesitation can prevent them from living their intention.

## **Others’ Expectations**

When we’re not hesitating to put ourselves forward, many times we make career decisions based on the expectations that others have of us. One example we see often is based on tension between a women’s desire for a professional career and the expectation that women will care for the children. The strength of that expectation can vary among cultures, as we see in attorney Joan Tao’s story.

Joan’s parents came to the United States from their native Taiwan in the mid-1960s to attend graduate school before Joan was born, which makes Joan a first-generation US citizen. Joan’s mother is highly educated for a woman of her generation. Joan’s grandmother trained as a pharmacist in Japan, and her grandfather was a doctor. Because both of her grandparents were deeply involved in their family’s medical practice, Joan’s mother grew

up without much involvement from either of them. As a result, she decided to spend more time with her own children when she became a mother. After completing her graduate degree, Joan's mother became a homemaker and was very present in Joan's life.

Joan learned as a young adult that she was expected to “marry up”—to marry someone whose career goals were equal to or higher than hers. When she did meet someone who fit that bill in her parents' eyes, she learned that his parents saw her as too strong—she would not fit their expectations as a future daughter-in-law. Joan felt like she had to downplay her own success to meet the expectations of others, which made her angry.

That relationship didn't work out, and the man Joan eventually met and married didn't define success through others' approval. He supported Joan throughout her career, in law firms and then as corporate counsel. Her mother encouraged her as well but sent mixed messages. She would ask Joan, “Why aren't you home with your kids?” and “Why didn't you marry a man who could facilitate your life as a stay-at-home mother?” Joan's husband, a college professor, took a more active role in parenting than Joan's father (and most fathers in his generation) had. So there was no question in either of their minds whether their children had parental guidance. Sometimes it came from Joan, sometimes from her husband. Their arrangement enabled Joan to pursue her career in law, despite its long hours and frequent travel. But it was certainly not traditional in the way her parents' parenting had been. Nor was it the same choice her mother had made.

Joan's story shows how we can feel pressure to make some of our choices based on the expectations of others (or others can make choices for us)—parents and potential in-laws, for example. Joan's mother's expectation was that Joan must be present for her children in order to be a good mother, and Joan felt burdened by that perception of what parenting looked like. Joan went against her mother's expectations, but they were never far from her mind, and she sometimes felt guilt when she thought she might not be living up to them.

## Organizational Practices

To understand what lay behind the shrinking number of women in leadership globally, CCL and the Network of Executive Women (NEW) surveyed over 900 women to learn about the barriers they encounter in the workplace.<sup>4</sup> CCL's researchers Emily Hoole, Jean Brittain Leslie, Shannon Bendixen, Robert Solomon, and Regina Eckert found that conflicting work-life demands are the number one barrier, but the second and third are based on organizational practices. The first of these was *being overlooked and undervalued*, and the second was *being undermined*. We'll explore each separately.

In terms of being overlooked and undervalued, women in the study reported that they are not groomed for leadership positions to the same extent as their male colleagues. They are often excluded from important business conversations, are told they aren't ready for additional responsibility, and do not feel properly acknowledged for their work and contributions.

Leslie Joyce knows how it feels. Self-motivated, confident, and competent, she had risen to the C-suite, having served as chief HR officer of a large global manufacturing company and chief learning officer of a consumer goods company. However, this track record of success was not sufficient to overcome the organizational practices inherent in one company. The prior two companies had strong cultures committed to leadership, diversity, and the advancement of women. This company was different. Here Leslie experienced the perfect storm of bias: she was a woman, leading a staff function, in a struggling company. Though she was well-liked as a person, she was not part of the "in-group" of men who shared a common interest in sports. She led a functional area (a cost center) rather than a business unit (a revenue center). When she wasn't invited to strategic meetings, she showed up anyway and found she was accepted and her input was appreciated. Why wasn't she included? The explanation was that they just hadn't "thought" to include her; they didn't think of her, or her perspective, as "relevant" to the topic. As the person responsible for the

people strategy, she believed her perspective was always relevant. Leslie eventually left the company. Her contributions were overlooked and undervalued.

Marta Grau also encountered this barrier when she became responsible for a restructuring at her publishing company. The senior team didn't know exactly where to put the production department, and, sensing an opportunity for growth, Marta asked for the assignment. Marta already had HR responsibilities and had spent her career at that organization in HR. When her boss told her she had no clue about production, Marta said, "You are right—I don't have a clue about production. But no one else on the team does either, and I will learn. I can assure you that I will help the leader of that group and resource it like no one else can because I understand people more than anybody else!" Marta got that assignment, and in two years the group had improved upon all of its success measures—in time, quality, and production. Marta turned a moment when she was undervalued into a high point in her career.

Another set of women in this study—those at middle manager levels—reported being overlooked and undervalued more than women at other career levels. This is *exactly* why we are writing this book! If women at the middle management levels are overlooked and undervalued more than women at other levels, that is a crucial moment in their careers when they need to understand why this is happening and what can be done about it—by them or by others.

The second barrier identified was *being undermined*. Women in the study described having their qualifications routinely questioned, having information withheld from them, and having a boss or superior refuse to support them in their career advancement.

Women in general report these barriers, and women of color report them even more strongly. Women of color also report lower career satisfaction than other women. Interestingly, women of color in this study perceive fewer negative trade-offs to being a senior leader versus white women. For us, these findings raise

questions about why women of color report being undermined more and being less satisfied than white women, yet perceive fewer negative trade-offs to being a senior leader. If you are a woman of color, does this sound familiar to you?

This research from CCL and NEW also reveals that women may encounter barriers in organizations that are the result of second-generation or unconscious bias—social stereotypes that people form about groups that are unlike them but about which they are unaware. Common sources of unconscious bias in organizations for women include:

- Traditional images of leadership are associated with qualities that are viewed as male qualities. Thus when people are asked to think about someone with good leadership qualities, they often envision a man rather than a woman.
- Women have few female role models at high levels of leadership. Thus women are less likely to “see” themselves as leaders because they don’t see anyone who looks like them in most leadership roles.
- Career paths and work are often defined by or associated with gender. For example, multinational corporations often require expat assignments of their leaders before promoting them. Fewer women than men relocate their families for rotational assignments. Thus fewer women are ascending to senior leadership roles.
- Women are held to higher standards and offered fewer rewards. Almost regardless of the industry, country, or age group, women earn less than men in the same roles. For example, US data reflects that women earn approximately 80 percent of men’s earnings on an annual basis.<sup>5</sup> The outlook is even worse for black and Hispanic women, where their earnings fall to 63 percent and 54 percent of men’s, respectively.<sup>6</sup> In order to achieve pay on par with a man, a woman would need to work at a higher level of capability

than the man. In other words, *doing more and better* for the same pay as a man *doing less and average*.

- Women are not part of the networks that supply information and support to men. When jobs are open, “who you know” is often important. If women are in fewer networks than men and are not in networks that link them to opportunities, they are less likely to be put forward as possible candidates for advancement.
- Women face a double bind of being competent or being liked—but not both. Research bears this out.<sup>7</sup> When men and women are perceived as competent, women are liked less than men. When men and women are liked by others, the women are perceived as being less competent than men.
- The combination of work and home responsibilities is a greater burden for women than for men. Women are typically expected to hold more of the home-care role (whether with regard to aging parents, sick partners, or children), and because organizations and work are often structured on the assumption that there is a partner at home to perform the home-care role, working women face the tension of managing home responsibilities without letting work responsibilities suffer.

You may not be able to influence any or all of these sources of bias in organizations. We share them to help you understand some of what you may be experiencing and to let you know you aren’t alone! Later in the chapter, we’ll ask you to think about the influence you *do* have—if not to help yourself, then to help other women coming up behind you.

We encountered several examples of unconscious bias when we interviewed senior women leaders. In Joan’s case, she planned to work her way up to partner in a law firm, but she realized early in her career that she knew very few women partners. One female partner read her daughter’s bedtime stories to her over the phone

most nights because she was at the office. Another had made partner with a one-year-old child. Joan asked her how she'd done that, and she answered that she hadn't given birth—her partner had. A third woman at the firm had become partner much later in life. Joan had a hard time imagining herself as a partner in a firm when she saw few women—especially women with children—in those roles.

Jan Capps is a retired CEO of a health foundation and previously the head of HR for a global agribusiness company. Although her own company was supportive of her, she has encountered the challenges of innate bias in organizations that force women—more so than men—to carry the dual burden of career and home-care roles. She told us, “I am struggling with the notion of how women manage families and work. . . . I never felt like there was work-life balance. One of them won each day, and they never balanced on any one day. You have to look at it over a year or 20 years. I struggle with the idea that women take time out from career and can still expect to make it to the top. I don't think that this is very likely. I coach women that, as a leader, you have to depend on people below you to meet deadlines.” Observing the work and home tension that many organizations ignore, Jan relies on a metaphor from her agribusiness days. “Hybrid corn is stronger than a single strain for a reason—so is society,” she says. In other words, leaders (men or women) are stronger when they build strength in the workplace *and* on the personal front. In the same way, organizations and society are stronger when people build strength in multiple parts of their lives.

## **Cultural Beliefs and Practices**

Cultures have a powerful effect on both an individual's aspirations and limitations. Especially telling is how a particular society envisions a woman's role: Is it mainly family oriented and supportive of the male or husband? Or is it egalitarian, not only allowing but promoting a woman's career in any and every field

of work, whether blue collar, white collar, entrepreneurial, or artistic?

Despite her training as a nuclear physicist in Saudi Arabia, Abeer Alharbi knows firsthand the power of cultural limitations. Abeer, who teaches at a university in Riyadh, was born the fifth of 14 children and was the only girl in the home for many years. Abeer's father was an educator and authored a number of books on geography. Abeer helped her father in his work, analyzing his data at the age of 10 and reading his books. Her father discussed the content of those books with her. She admired him and one of her brothers who was working on his PhD. By the time she reached fifth grade, Abeer was already planning for her own PhD. "That was not so common then," she says. She wanted to prove that "women can do stuff." Medical school was her original goal, but her conservative family stopped her from pursuing a career as a physician. Working in a mixed-gender environment was out of the question. While in medical school, Abeer would have to work in hospitals and late at night—conditions deemed inappropriate for a young woman in Riyadh. So although her dream was medicine, Abeer obeyed her family's wishes and chose to go into physics instead.

While the immediate message of limitations came from Abeer's family, it was grounded in much more than that. The limitations she faced came from the cultural beliefs and practices in Saudi Arabia that kept women from participating alongside men in most spaces of life outside of the home. And though Abeer is an example of the small percentage of women who have successfully pursued graduate degrees and professional roles in Saudi Arabia, her ability to practice in her field has not been wide open. After Abeer earned her PhD and completed a Fulbright Fellowship in the United States, she returned to Riyadh and became a professor of nuclear physics at the largest women's university in the world, where students are taught almost exclusively by women faculty. She also served as the dean of development and skills enhancement, responsible for establishing and leading professional

development for the faculty and staff at the university. Although she has been challenged and has learned in the roles she's played, Abeer is confident that Saudi Arabia isn't getting the best out of her, yet she is driven to deliver it.

Saudi Arabia began to allow women to drive in 2017, but the beliefs and practices that have long held women from participating fully in the workforce, should they choose, will take years and perhaps generations to evolve. Yet Saudi Arabia is not the only country whose culture presents these types of challenges for women. Based on a 2016 study by Grant Thornton,<sup>8</sup> no country in the world can say that half of its business leadership roles are held by women. Russia came closest with 45 percent of senior management roles held by women; the Philippines and Lithuania each had 39 percent. The United States ranked below 22 of the 36 countries studied, with 23 percent of senior leadership roles held by women, while Japan had the least at 9 percent. So consider the impact of cultural beliefs and practices on your ability to live your intention.

Susana, the luxury hotel general manager we told you about earlier, wanted to be in a luxury hotel GM role from early in her career. To prepare, she worked in all of the hotel's departments to get exposure to everything it takes to run a high-end hotel. She got a job in the sales department at one point, but gave it up to take an operations training opportunity at a large global hotel chain. People told her she was crazy to give up her sales role that would put her on a fast track for growth in that area, but she wanted to be a GM. She knew she would need to learn what it was like to work on the operations teams so that she could lead them. More than once she learned the value of going the extra mile, such as the times she put her shoes back on her swollen feet after a very long day so that she could help her team members who were being asked to clean and change a room very late in the day. Susana put her intentions and values above the expectations of others in achieving her role.

We also told you about Jan, retired health foundation CEO. She was driven by values to solve interesting problems. Jan was a single mother of two for a number of years in her early to

mid career and needed to be sure that any opportunity she took would provide the financial support her family needed and enable her children to live a stable life. When Jan was asked if she'd be interested in a new role that would give her a new challenge and more exposure at the corporate level, she saw a problem right away: company headquarters was a 12-hour drive from her family's home. So she solved it. Jan presented a proposal for how she could manage the job by spending three days a week in the headquarters office and two in her hometown office. She gave evidence that showed how her plan would save the organization money—it was cheaper to cover her commuting expenses than to relocate a family of three. Her children stayed with their father most of the nights she was in the headquarters office and remained in their schools, which enabled them to continue their routine. As any frequent traveler can attest, a weekly commute of this distance (even by plane or train) can be draining, on top of an already full and complex life. Yet for Jan, the trade-off was worth it. She could take on a new challenge and meet her family's needs. Jan put her problem-solving skills to work to find space for her values and intentions while fulfilling the needs of the company. In due course, she opened the organization's eyes to new ways of working that benefited both women and men.

As you've seen so far, many times women are making choices about how closely to live their intentions and values. Sometimes there is no question about making choices when values are non-negotiable. Kecia Thomas, a professor of psychology and senior associate dean at a large university, removed herself from consideration for an attractive position after finishing graduate school because the organization recruiting her was one whose products targeted the minority community and played a role in its generally poor health. To work for such a company conflicted with Kecia's social justice values. She rejected an attractive opportunity rather than compromise her beliefs.

Now that you've learned about the many ways that barriers may stand in the way of living your values and intentions, and

you've heard from senior women who have struggled through what you may be experiencing, let's start helping you live your intention.

## HOW CAN YOU LIVE YOUR INTENTION?

First of all, realize that your purpose and intention may change multiple times during your lifetime. Think about that. Are you doing the very thing you identified as your direction early in life? When you were in your twenties? Even if you are, does that mean it's the right direction for the remainder of your career? We all learn and grow and have the capacity to change. The world around us is ever shifting. And that provides ample opportunities for you to recraft your purpose and intent over and over again. We set out to help you with these three foundational steps in this chapter:

- What it means to live your intention and design a meaningful life at any stage
- How to identify the underlying values that are at the core of your being
- How to make the choices and trade-offs you need to make to fulfill your purpose

To live your intention, you need to know what your intention is. If you're like us, you might not have realized that you need to identify (and re-identify) your purpose many times during your career. We don't know about you, but we certainly didn't know how to do that. We learned pretty quickly that it's not enough to just point yourself in a certain direction. Our advice to you? Don't get anxious. Get started.

## Values Explorer Exercise

Values have four key characteristics:

- **They define who you are.** Your values are often what others would say best describes the way you behave and what others can expect from you.
- **Values are rooted in your past.** We often hold similar values to our parents and grandparents, or hold values we formed as children.
- **Values can conflict with one another.** Some of your values may cause tension with other values. Sometimes one of your values trumps another. In that tension is where we learn about what is most important to us.
- **Values are aspirational.** They often inspire us to be more than we are and suggest what we might be. In our best moments we embody our core values.

CCL developed the following Values Explorer exercise to help you explore and understand values in the workplace and in your personal life. It was designed to help you understand who you are deep down—what core values drive your decisions and actions. It can be used by a single individual, a coaching pair, and in small and large groups. It is also available to you on [www.valuableleaderproject.com](http://www.valuableleaderproject.com) or through the ValueAble Leader Project link on [www.kicksomeglass.com](http://www.kicksomeglass.com).

### Instructions

1. Photocopy the values list that follows. Cut on the dotted lines and tape or glue each value and its description to a separate index card to make a set of 44 values cards.

*(continued)*

## VALUES LIST

**ACHIEVEMENT**

A sense of accomplishment, mastery.

**LOYALTY**

Faithfulness. Duty. Dedication.

**FRIENDSHIP**

Close personal relationships with others.

**COMMUNITY**

To serve and support a purpose that supersedes personal desires. To make a difference.

**ADVENTURE**

New and challenging opportunities. Excitement. Risk.

**PHYSICAL FITNESS**

Staying in shape through exercise and physical activity.

**HUMOR**

The ability to laugh at oneself and life.

**COMPASSION**

A deep awareness and sympathy for another's suffering.

**AFFLUENCE**

High income, financial success, prosperity.

**TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Responsibility. Dependability, reliability, accountability for results.

**CHANGE/VARIETY/ABSENCE OF ROUTINE**

Work responsibilities, daily activities, or settings that change frequently. Unpredictability.

**ACTIVITY**

High-pace conditions where work is done rapidly.

**ORDER**

Respectful of authority, rules, and regulations. A sense of stability, routine, predictability.

**HAPPINESS**

Finding satisfaction, joy, or pleasure.

**COMPETENCE**

Demonstrating a high degree of proficiency and knowledge. Showing above-average effectiveness and efficiency at tasks.

**AESTHETICS**

Appreciation of the beauty of things, ideas, surroundings, personal space, etc.

**RECOGNITION**

Positive feedback and public credit for work well done. Respect and admiration.

**INFLUENCE**

Having an impact or effect on the attitudes or opinions of other people. The power of persuasion.

**COURAGE**

Willingness to stand up for one's beliefs.

**AUTHORITY**

Position and the power to control events and activities of others.

**JUSTICE**

Fairness, equality, doing the "right" thing.

**ECONOMIC SECURITY**

Steady and secure employment. Adequate financial reward. Low risk.

**SELF-RESPECT**

Pride, self-esteem, sense of personal identity.

**KNOWLEDGE**

The pursuit of understanding, skill, and expertise. Continuous learning.

**FAMILY**

Time spent with spouse, children, parents, relatives.

**COLLABORATION**

Close, cooperative working relationships with group.

**ADVANCEMENT**

Growth, seniority, and promotion resulting from work well done.

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Dedication to maximizing one's potential.

**HELP OTHERS**

Helping other people attain their goals. Providing care and support.

**COMPETITION**

Rivalry, with winning as the goal.

**AFFILIATION**

Interaction with people. Recognition as a member of a particular group. Involvement. Belonging.

**REFLECTION**

Taking time out to think about the past, present, and future.

**INTEGRITY**

Acting in accord with moral and ethical standards. Honesty. Sincerity. Truth.

**CREATIVITY**

Discovering, developing, or designing new ideas, programs, or things using innovation and imagination. Creating unique formats.

**AUTONOMY**

Ability to act independently, with few constraints. Self-sufficiency. Self-reliance. Ability to make choices.

**SPIRITUALITY**

Strong spiritual or religious beliefs. Moral fulfillment.

**LOCATION**

Choice of a place to live (town, geographic area, etc.) that is conducive to one's lifestyle.

**FAME**

To become prominent, famous, well known.

**BALANCE**

Giving proper weight to each area of one's life.

**STATUS**

Impressing or gaining respect of friends, family, and community by the nature and/or level of responsibility of one's job or by association with a prestigious group or organization.

**LOVE**

To be involved in close, affectionate relationships. Intimacy.

**ENJOYMENT**

Fun, joy, and laughter.

**CHALLENGE**

Continually facing complex and demanding tasks and problems.

**WISDOM**

Sound judgment based on knowledge, experience, and understanding.

*(continued)*

2. Sort each of the values into one of five categories, according to how important it is to you: Always, Often, Sometimes, Seldom, and Never Valued. Do your best to distribute them across the five categories, even if you're tempted to put most of them in the Always and Often categories. You will still end up with more in some categories than in others, but push yourself to differentiate the importance each value holds for you. The Never Valued category is particularly important. It holds the values that you would never act upon or demonstrate. You will always make choices to avoid these values.

3. After you finish sorting, look at the values in the Always category. Rank them in order of priority. Rank highest the value you will never compromise. All of the values you retain in the Always category should be nonnegotiable. You ought to align your career choices with them. As you consider whether each of these values is truly nonnegotiable, ask yourself:

- This value has been important to me in the past, but is it still nonnegotiable?
- Did I choose this value because I think other people value it or expect it of me, or is it truly something I treasure?
- What do these values say about the kind of role I want to find or create?
- Have I ever had a role (or roles) where I was truly able to live these values? What did I love about the role? What did I not love?

If there are any values you determine are not as nonnegotiable as you first thought, move them to the Often category.

4. Look at your Never Valued category. The values here should be those that you would never consider acting upon. You would make choices that minimized these values. Consider these values by asking yourself questions such as:

- Would I never want to fulfill these values?
- What do these values say about the kind of role I want to avoid?
- Have I ever had a role (or roles) where these values were prioritized? If so, was there anything I liked about the role (or the organization, or the people I worked with)? What did I dislike?

5. The values you've identified as Always valued and Never valued set parameters for how you might think about opportunities you want to seek or create for yourself. Look for opportunities that align with the

Always valued pile and eliminate opportunities that connect to your  
Never valued pile.

6. As you examine potential opportunities and weigh them against your values, you might spot contradictions. For example, if you placed Family and Status in the Always valued category, you might find it difficult to find opportunities that lead to high status and enable you to devote as much time to your family as you'd like to. There are always choices we must make and trade-offs we must consider.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Throughout *Kick Some Glass*, we recommend that you use a journal to respond to questions intended to help you capture and process your thoughts and feelings and to move you along your development journey. Such a journal can be an invaluable tool for developing insight and for growing as a leader.

To get started, reflect on these questions in your journal:

- What can I take from my personal history to help me think about where I'd like to go?
- How have my intentions and my sense of purpose informed the choices I've made in my life?
- What did I learn about myself from the Values Explorer or ValueAble Leader exercise? What surprised me? How have my values shifted over time?

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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**P**ortia R. Mount is vice president and global leader of strategic marketing at Ingersoll Rand, a global diversified industrial company. She spent over a decade as global marketing leader and member of CCL's executive team. Portia is a sought-after executive coach and speaks and writes frequently on women's leadership issues. As the mother to a son and daughter, she maintains an active social media presence, including her blog where she writes on lifestyle and career issues for working mothers. Portia holds an MA in cultural anthropology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and an MBA in management from Wake Forest University.

# ABOUT THE CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) is a top-ranked, global provider of leadership development. By leveraging the power of leadership to drive results that matter most to clients, CCL transforms individual leaders, teams, organizations, and society. Our array of cutting-edge solutions is steeped in extensive research and experience gained from working with hundreds of thousands of leaders at all levels. Ranked among the world's top five providers of executive education by the *Financial Times* and in the top 10 by *Bloomberg Businessweek*, CCL has offices in Greensboro, North Carolina; Colorado Springs, Colorado; San Diego, California; Brussels, Belgium; Moscow, Russia; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Johannesburg, South Africa; Singapore; Gurgaon, India; and Shanghai, China.

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