


Lift as you rise and realise your worth this #WomensMonth

 By [Tracey Lange](#)

19 Aug 2019

I broke into radio production through perseverance and the drive to succeed. But it was support from my family and friends and encouragement to think differently that proved to be the catalyst in forging my career in the media sphere. This support also helped me to overcome several gender and racial barriers along the way.



Photo by Brianna Santellan on Unsplash.

My mom always said: "If you don't ask, you'll never know and, of course, the answer will always be no!" It was her spirit and confidence that helped inspire me to approach a community radio station in Somerset West to get my foot in the door.



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Primedia Broadcasting 4 May 2018



Push your inhibitions aside

Even though I had no experience at that point, my mom spurred me on. I called the station manager and set up a meeting for some unpaid work experience. The station manager said she liked my voice and asked if I'd like to read the news at 10-minutes' notice!

In these make or break situations, it's important to push your inhibitions aside and take a chance, especially when it's handed to you. Despite some nerves, I saw it through and received encouraging feedback from the station manager. Soon after, she set me up with some training at the station and before I knew it I was earning a salary. Taking that one chance marked the start of my career!

Just like any other career, it wasn't always sunshine and rainbows. My quest for success and my ambition to climb met plenty of speed bumps along the way. Keeping my nose to the grindstone paid off though and, in time, I was promoted to station manager.

Needless to say, not everyone was as excited about the achievement as I was.

Turn prejudice into motivation

A lot of people despised the fact that this young woman of colour was taking over the management of the station – it was an issue of race and gender. No one should have to experience any form of gender or racially-based discrimination by anyone for any reason. It is so demoralising and hurtful but I refused to let it get me down.



To achieve gender equality, we must first tackle our unconscious biases

Beatrice Alba 8 Mar 2018



While it certainly wasn't the most pleasant time in my life, I used other people's negative energy to fuel my initiative to succeed. I dug in my heels and expanded the radio station's listenership and profitability. I had a choice: either succumb to the force and pressure of prejudice or turn it into motivation. This is how we have to deal with bullies in all walks of life – the best revenge is success; there really is nothing better.

Back yourself

Grit, determination and support from amazing colleagues and those closest to me kept me on the path to where I wanted to go. I now host my own self-produced show on KFM, co-host and am the producer of *Tussen Ons* on Kyknet and an ambassador for Relate Bracelets.

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Dis #TussenOns se 1ste Verjaardag! Kom party saam vanaf 20:00 op kanaal 145 @kyknetkie Foto deur @romano_fortuin

A post shared by Tracey Lange (@traceylange) on Jul 4, 2019 at 9:23am PDT

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with that in mind, it's particularly important for those of us who've prospered to encourage the next generation of young women. We have a responsibility to inspire and instil a consistent, resonating message: back yourself, take ownership of your worth and lift as you rise.

I've been lucky enough to interact with schoolchildren and school leavers, as well as with vulnerable women supported by Relate Bracelets. Many of these women continually experience gender-based prejudice in their homes and communities and lack the support of positive reinforcement from friends and family.

Breaking down the barriers

Sadly, there's a whole 'pull her down' psychology that exists in our communities and workplaces, which is often instigated by women as well as men. I'm all about women empowerment and I'm also about the best person for the job. Real empowerment comes from breaking down the barriers to opportunity and levelling the playing fields. Tokenism simply substitutes one glass ceiling for another.



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One of the elements that attracted me to becoming an ambassador for Relate Bracelets is their not-for-profit stance in providing upliftment, access to education and employment opportunities to vulnerable women. If we actually open our hands and share our opportunities, our hands are open to receiving more.

It's vitally important that we, as women, do not inflict hurt on one another, not just during Women's Month but through every day of our lives, in our communities and places of work. We have a responsibility to ourselves to mentor and teach other women, not lock them out for our own supposed gain.

If you start feeling threatened by other women in the workplace, then work at becoming better but don't become yet another obstacle. Create more opportunities in the most harmonious way possible.

ABOUT TRACEY LANGE

Businesswoman and media mogul Tracey Lange has risen through the ranks. From a determined, motivated intern to becoming one of the most well-recognised personalities in South African television and radio.

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