



WBA

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Our purpose is to promote the leadership, advancement and interests of women attorneys through professional education, networking and the exchange of ideas between our members, local bar associations, business and the community.

Tips of the Trade Series: “Fake It Till You Make It”



So how do people get ahead? Is “faking it” always a part of the equation for success?

The simplest form of “Fake It Till You Make It”

Most of us know the discomfort of showing up to a situation where we want to add value but do not know how. We secretly acknowledge that we lack experience, training or a set of competencies for a task, and so we try to act confident and look smart. When people have high expectations of themselves and are learning something new to advance their career, impress colleagues or expand their repertoire, they run the risk of over-promising, under-delivering or unintentionally mis-

others are too immersed to see. You may force thinking that rekindles interest or inspires more discussion, and may even shift a business dynamic that might otherwise have become stale.

The worst of “Fake It Till You Make It”

To many people this cliché might imply insincerity, pretending or posturing. It might conjure up images of the person who “gets ahead” at the expense of others, the slacker who tries to cover up for a lack of effort or the tag-along who gets credit for others’ work. This is how win-lose gets played out. The scenario here is that one person wins when someone else loses.

Tip: The consequences of this approach are severe: your professional reputation is at risk of being discredited; the already short supply of goodwill out there

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By Dr. Stacy Feiner

There are two extremes in this popular cliché. The right side of the cliché implies having attained enough power, experience, and authority that you do not have to prove yourself anymore. The left side suggests that being novice, unsure and inexperienced means you must fool people into thinking you are not all of those things.

forming. They may deflect topics for which they know little or play devil’s advocate.

Tip: On the job learning is critical, unavoidable and often uncomfortable. Refocus the attention away from proving yourself and find out the needs, experiences and expectation of others. Often being new on the scene allows you to ask questions or make observations that

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