

New Research On Why Imposter Syndrome Affects Female Leaders More

Seventy-five percent of executive women report having personally experienced imposter syndrome at certain points in their career.

"Advancing the Future of Women in Business: A KPMG Women's Leadership Summit Report"

If you've ever felt like a fraud despite your successes, you may be suffering from impostor syndrome. This phenomenon was first identified in the late 1970s by psychologists Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes.

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Imposter syndrome is a phenomenon that can have a negative impact on anyone, and women leaders in particular. Left unchecked, imposter syndrome can lead to self-doubt, anxiety, and even depression.

The good news is that imposter syndrome is something that can be overcome with the right mindset and support system.

One of my favorite ways to get rid of imposter syndrome is through identifying and acknowledging your power skills. We'll talk about that below. In the meantime, you can download my the **Top 10 Skills Women Must Master to Get to the C-Suite** now.

Get your copy now:

Top 10 Skills That Get Women to the C-Suite

<https://www.realliferesilience.com/csuite-skills-for-women>



By the way, if we're just meeting, I'm **Resilience Coach Stacy Brookman**. I love working with professional women who want to stop their imposter syndrome and want to truly command their personal power. I get to help them level up their resilience in spite of life's drama.

OK, so back to imposter syndrome.

"I am not a leader": The prevalence of imposter syndrome among female leaders

AMONG FEMALE LEADERS

In recent years, there's been a growing conversation around the topic of imposter syndrome and its effects on women leaders.

While imposter syndrome is not exclusive to women, **research has shown that it is a significant factor in holding women back from achieving leadership positions.** This is due to a number of factors, including the internalized belief that they are not qualified for the job they're in or the promotion they desire.

In recent years, the number of women in leadership positions has increased dramatically (*though, side note, not enough!*). However, many women still feel like imposters in these roles.

Seventy-five percent of executive women report having personally experienced imposter syndrome at certain points in their career. "Advancing the Future of Women in Business: A KPMG Women's Leadership Summit Report"

Imposter syndrome is a condition where people doubt their accomplishments and feel like they're a fraud. This can be especially true for women who've been historically underrepresented in leadership positions.

Imposter syndrome can trigger crippling anxiety and depression, shackling female leaders from confidently asserting themselves.



What's Imposter Syndrome?

It's a feeling of fraudulence or self-doubt that persists despite success. Many people with imposter syndrome feel like they're living a lie and that they're going to be exposed as a fraud. **They may be successful in their field, but they feel like they're not good enough and that they're only fooling everyone else.**

Imposter syndrome can be debilitating. It can make people second-guess themselves and their abilities, and it can hold them back from achieving their potential.

If you have imposter syndrome, you may feel like you're not worthy of your success or that you don't deserve your accomplishments. You may feel like you're an impostor who's about to be found out.

Guess what? Imposter syndrome is common among high achievers.

How Does Imposter Syndrome Affect Female Leaders?

Imposter syndrome is a psychological phenomenon that affects female leaders, who may feel like they have to prove themselves more than their male counterparts.

Female leaders with imposter syndrome often feel like they're not good enough or qualified for their position. They may doubt their ability to lead and make decisions. As a result, they may avoid taking risks or striving for success.

81% of female executives believe they put more pressure on themselves not to fail than men do.

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Let's take a hard look at the consequences of imposter syndrome:

- ✓ It causes us to hold back and underperform despite our abilities and accomplishments
- ✓ It leads to self-doubt and insecurity, which prevents taking action, spurring second-guessing of every decision, no matter how small
- ✓ It causes us to hesitate about our expertise, leading us to seek out external validation instead of trusting our own instincts
- ✓ Reflected through fear of delegating or asking for help, worrying that people will find out that we "don't know"
- ✓ Imposter syndrome leads us to feelings of isolation and loneliness, as women may feel like we're the only ones struggling with these issues
- ✓ It can instigate depression and anxiety
- ✓ If left unchecked, imposter syndrome can sabotage a woman's career and prevent her from reaching her full potential as a leader.

These doubts and fears contribute to lost opportunities, decreased productivity, and decreased satisfaction in both work and life in general.

Fortunately, there are ways to overcome imposter syndrome (more on this below).

Recognizing the symptoms and understanding that it's a common experience can help. With awareness, self-compassion, and support from others, any woman can become the leader she wants to be.

How Does Imposter Syndrome Develop? And What are the Symptoms of Imposter Syndrome?

Imposter syndrome can develop from a variety of experiences, including particularly harsh parents,

comparisons to others as a child, emotional abuse, abandonment (including emotional abandonment), and many more.

It's not always useful to keep going back to the past to find out exactly where. You may never know. It's more important to determine how you want to live in the future and develop that.

Symptoms of imposter syndrome include the things mentioned above in this article. It shows up in so many ways, it's tough to list all of them. For instance, feeling like you're the only one who doesn't know what's going on, or that you're not as smart as everyone else, or feeling like you don't measure up.

Imposter syndrome is often seen in high-achieving individuals who have been successful in their field. However, it can also affect anyone who doesn't feel like they fit in or belong in some way.

Assess for yourself how imposter syndrome shows up in your life and in your work. There are a few key indications that contribute to or trigger the development of imposter syndrome.

First, people who tend to doubt themselves or their abilities are more likely to experience imposter syndrome.

Second, perfectionists often put unrealistic pressure on themselves, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy.

Finally, comparing oneself to others is a surefire way to create insecurity and self-doubt.

The first step to managing imposter syndrome is understanding the symptoms.

Symptoms of imposter syndrome include:

- Feeling like a fraud or imposter or not good enough
- Doubting your accomplishments
- Attributing your success to luck or timing
- Feeling like you are not good enough
- Having difficulty accepting compliments
- Second-guessing your decisions
- Procrastinating out of fear of failure
- Controlling everything around you and being a micromanager
- Imagining you're constantly being evaluated and any failure will be exposed



➤ Avoid taking risks or trying new things

Recognize yourself in any of those?

If you're plagued by feelings of inadequacy or self-doubt, it is essential to seek guidance from a qualified professional who can provide you with the necessary support to move through this challenging period. **With expert coaching and guidance, you can acquire the skills to overcome your imposter syndrome for good and live an enriching life.**

So...Exactly Why is it More Common for Women to Experience Imposter Syndrome?

It's no secret that women have long been underrepresented in leadership positions across industries. And although progress has been made in recent years to close the gender gap, research shows that **imposter syndrome is more common among women than men.**

74% of executive women believe that their male counterparts don't experience feelings of self-doubt as much as female leaders do.

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There are a number of reasons why this might be the case. For one, women are often socialized to downplay their successes and achievements. They're also more likely to be perfectionists and set higher standards for themselves than men.

Whatever the cause, imposter syndrome can take a toll on your mental health and career progression.

For example, women are often expected to be perfect mothers, wives, and employees. They're also expected to look perfect and have an ideal body type.

With all of these expectations, it's no wonder that women feel like they can't live up to the standards set for them.

Gender roles also play a role in imposter syndrome. Women are typically seen as the caretakers and nurturers, while men are seen as the breadwinners and leaders. This can lead to women feeling like they're not good enough or that they don't deserve their success.

Due to a variety of external factors, 56% of executive women have been afraid that they won't live up to expectations or that people around them will not believe they are as capable as expected.

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Imposter Syndrome When Applying For Jobs or Starting a New Job

Studies have found that many women feel unable to take risks in the workplace because they're afraid they'll fail or not measure up to the expectations set by their peers bosses. This fear often leads women to avoid applying for job opportunities or promotions due to a false belief that they're not qualified enough or capable of success.

JOB SEARCHING

For many job seekers, the hardest part of the application process is not writing the perfect resume or acing the interview, but conquering their imposter syndrome because they don't feel like they fit the mold of the "ideal" candidate.

This is particularly evident if individuals feel inadequate or lacking in the requisite skills for the role. This can be a self-destructive belief that can hinder your job search and prevent you from getting hired.

Here's the thing, it's powerful to understand that you're not alone. Many people feel like they aren't qualified for the jobs they apply for. The key is to push through these feelings and believe in yourself.

STARTING A NEW JOB

A new job can be an exciting and overwhelming experience. It can be especially difficult if you're struggling with imposter syndrome.

If you're struggling with imposter syndrome at your new job, there are a few things you can do to cope:

- ✓ Acknowledge your feelings and remind yourself that they're normal.
- ✓ Talk to someone you trust about your experiences and doubts.
- ✓ Seek out opportunities to learn and grow in your new role. Have a beginner's mindset. This is the most appropriate time to do so!
- ✓ Be patient with yourself and give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings.

Most people feel some degree of imposter syndrome at a new job. It's normal to feel like you're not good enough or that you don't deserve the job.

It's no secret that women often have to work a little harder than men to be taken seriously in the professional world. And while achieving success in spite of this hurdle is an accomplishment in itself, it can come at a cost.

Many high-achieving women suffering from imposter syndrome have the constant feeling that they're not good enough or that they're somehow fraudulently masquerading as a competent professional.

Of course, you may feel varying degrees of intensity, it's never a good feeling to have. **Effective leaders equip themselves by having the right tools to overcome imposter syndrome when it does show up.**

Female leaders often face unique challenges that can contribute to imposter syndrome. For example, they may be less likely to be taken seriously or be given credit for their accomplishments. They may also have to deal with gender-based discrimination or even sexual harassment (yes, still!).

Nearly half (47%) of executive women say that their feelings of self-doubt result from never expecting to reach the level of success they have achieved.

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It's useful to understand that imposter syndrome is not a personal failing, but rather a result of cultural and societal messages that tell us that women are not as capable as men.

One avenue you might not think about is using boundaries. Boundaries powerfully impact your behavior, limiting the effects of imposter syndrome. If you'd like to know more about how boundaries don't make you selfish, but instead make you smart, [check out this article](#).

With these steps, you can start to overcome imposter syndrome and become the confident leader you are meant to be.

Fifty-four percent of executive women agreed that the more successful they become, the lonelier it gets at the top because they enter new peer groups.

However, 32% of women identified with imposter syndrome because they did not know others in a similar place to them either personally or professionally.

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Psst! One thing I know to be true....you do NOT need someone just like you in higher positions to feel confident that you will get there. You don't need someone else's approval, or to overwork or be in overwhelm. [If this feels familiar to you, let's talk!](#) I can help you speed your trip to executive levels without those things.

There are a few things that female leaders can do to get over imposter syndrome:

1. **Acknowledge** that it exists and that you may be susceptible to it. This is the first step to **overcoming** any problem.

2. Build a **support network** of peers at or just above/below your level in other organizations. That network will likely help you gain **perspective** and **new ideas**.

3. Focus on your **accomplishments and successes**, rather than your failures or doubts. This will help you to build up your self-confidence and remind yourself that **you are capable of great things**.

4. Practice **self-compassion**. Accept that you're not perfect...and you're not supposed to be. **Don't compare** yourself to others. It's rarely useful.

5. Take a solid look at your **power skills**. Be honest with yourself about **where you excel** and what you need to work on.

6. **Challenge** your negative self-talk and perfectionism. Like seriously write down the evidence both for the critical thing you're telling yourself AND evidence against it. **Spend equal time** on the evidence against it.

7. **Reframe** your thinking. Instead of thinking "I'm not good enough," try "**I'm doing the best I can.**"

Note: This isn't about chanting positive affirmations (*these don't actually work unless you truly believe them, message me and I'll tell you more about this*)

8. Seek out **supportive coaches**, and mentors. Talking about your feelings of imposter syndrome with someone **you trust** helps you to identify the root causes of your insecurity and start to work on addressing them.

To overcome imposter syndrome, 72% of executive women looked to the advice of a mentor or trusted advisor when doubting their abilities to take on new roles.

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If you're ready to identify the root causes of your insecurity and get them out of your head for good, [click here and let's talk!](#)

The Benefits of Overcoming Imposter Syndrome for Female Leaders

For female leaders, this insecurity can be magnified by the fact that they are often still in the minority in leadership positions.

Despite the challenge, women leaders who conquer imposter syndrome can reap a myriad of rewards.

- ✓ **Gain confidence:** Once you start to see yourself as capable and competent, your self-confidence will increase. This newfound confidence will spill over into other areas of your life, both personal and professional.
- ✓ **Improved mental health:** when people doubt their accomplishments, it takes a toll on their mental health. Overcoming imposter syndrome can improve mental health by boosting self-confidence and reducing stress. You'll be happier too.
- ✓ **Better performance:** when leaders feel like they're not good enough, it affects their work performance. Overcoming imposter syndrome can lead to better work performance by increasing motivation and focus.
- ✓ **More productive:** When you're bogged down by self-doubt, it's difficult to be productive. Once you start to believe in yourself, you'll find it easier to get things done and meet your goals without stewing over how that report will be perceived by other people.
- ✓ **Improved relationships:** people with imposter syndrome often have difficulty in maintaining relationships because of their low self-esteem. Overcoming imposter syndrome can improve relationships by making people more confident and outgoing.

YOU ARE WORTH IT!

It's estimated that 70% of people will experience imposter syndrome at some point in their lives. For many, it's a constant battle when they feel like they're not good enough, despite evidence to the contrary. It's time to overcome your imposter syndrome.

Even though you may have moments of self-doubt, don't let them hold you back from achieving your goals. Overcome your imposter syndrome and show the world what you're capable of!

You are deserving of success.

If you haven't yet done it, download my the **Top 10 Skills Women Must Master to Get to the C-Suite**. That will get you started by helping you determine which power skills you DO have, and which ones you'll want to create a strategy to boost.

Now you know all about getting rid of imposter syndrome. But what about going further and raising your adversity quotient? I've got you! Below are some amazing reads to keep you leveling up.



Set Your Resilient Boundaries

Setting Boundaries Doesn't Make You Selfish, It Makes You Smart

Being able to set boundaries is one of the smartest skills you can implement. And setting resilient boundaries is entirely possible...even if they've been trampled before, or if you've "failed" in enforcing them.

[Now I'm Curious!](#)



A High Adversity Quotient Might Be Just What You Need

Why You Should Raise Your Adversity Quotient

Adversity is a part of life. Everyone experiences it, but some people seem to handle it better than others. Why is that? You might think that some people are just naturally resilient, but science shows...

[Now I'm Curious!](#)



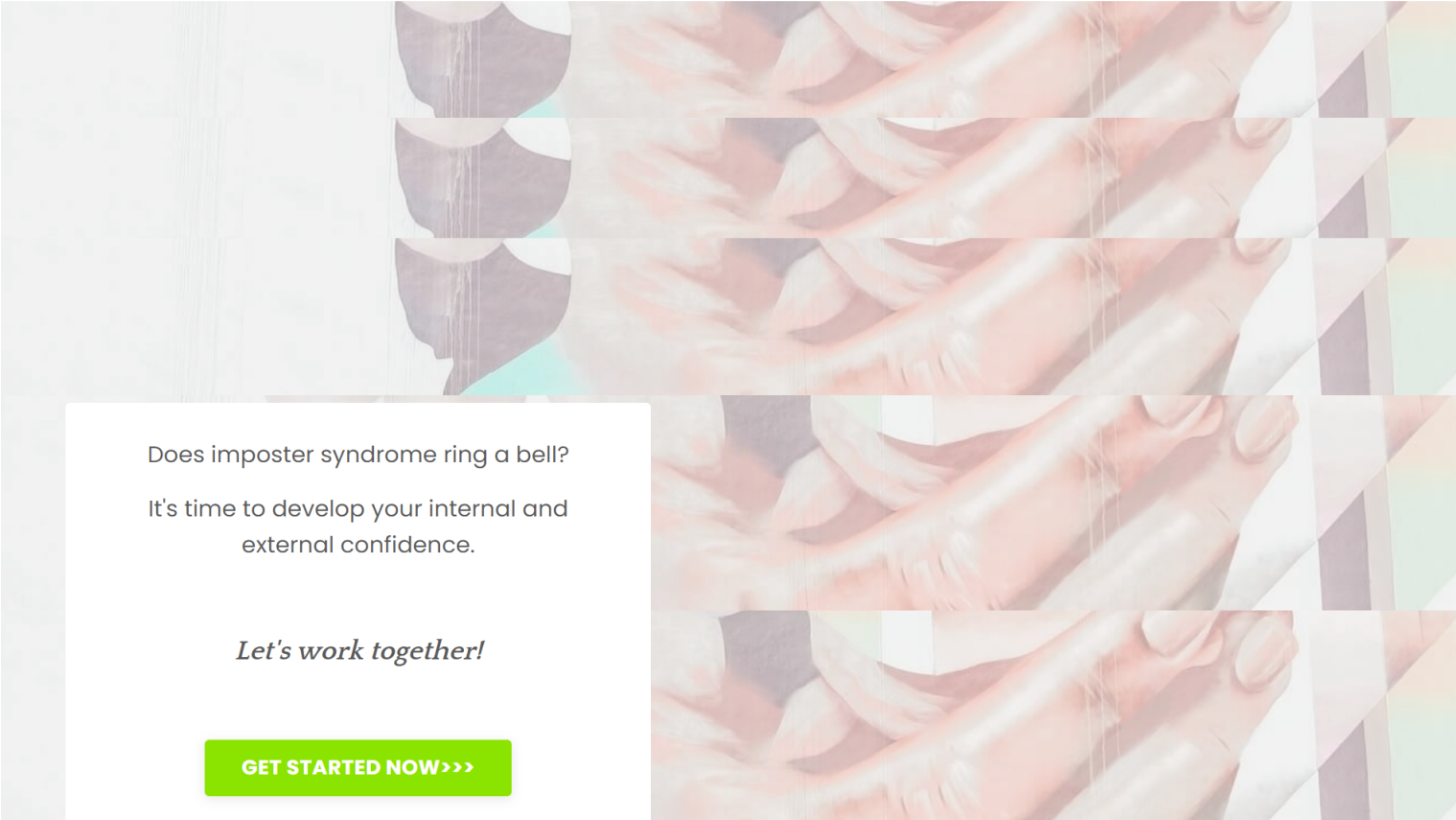
Let Go of the Need for Approval... and Get On With Your Life

Need for Approval Keeps You From Moving Forward in Life

Some social scientists believe that seeking approval evolved from a survival advantage that group acceptance provided. That means...

Seeking approval is downright primitive

[Now I'm Curious!](#)



Does imposter syndrome ring a bell?

It's time to develop your internal and external confidence.

Let's work together!

[GET STARTED NOW>>>](#)

