

every  
woman  
WORKBOOK

ROLE MODELS:  
FINDING  
THEM,  
BECOMING  
ONE



I think the best  
role models  
for women are  
people who  
are fruitfully  
and confidently  
themselves, who  
bring light into  
the world.”

MERYL STREEP, ACTOR <sup>1</sup>

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# About this workbook

At everywoman, we deliver a range of innovative products and resources that unlock the potential and talent of women in business globally. Whether you're just starting out, looking to progress your career, or even to build and develop your own enterprise, the everywomanNetwork provides a wealth of personal development resources, advice and inspiration to address the challenges you face at key stages in business. We produce workbooks on topics that matter most to our members and we're constantly listening to your views to give you the tools you need to propel you through your life's work, at a time and place that suits you.

Welcome to our new workbook, *Role models: finding them, becoming one*.

Pioneering US judge, Sonia Sotomayor, once said, "A role model in the flesh provides more than inspiration; his or her very existence is confirmation of possibilities one may have every reason to doubt, saying, 'Yes, someone like me can do this'."

People often have multiple role models – parents, teachers, celebrities, colleagues – and they can be crucial to achieving your potential in all areas of life. Research has shown that early role models can be incredibly impactful in a person's development. And, just as having a visionary teacher can prove a defining factor in your educational path, finding the right role model in your business life can make the difference to how you perform and progress within the workplace.

This workbook will give you the tools to understand how identifying and embracing the right career role model can also influence and enhance your out-of-office life. It will also show the impact this can give by bringing a greater perspective and deeper understanding of how the right supportive mindset can be a true professional enabler. And, just as importantly, it will help you understand the benefits of growing into a role model for others, so that you can give back to the wider community.

By undertaking this workbook, you will gain a greater understanding of how role models may have already influenced your behaviour and decisions, the importance of role models to your future ambitions and how you can not only learn from role models, but also inspire others by being a role model yourself.

We'd love to know how you get on – email us at [karenmax@everywoman.com](mailto:karenmax@everywoman.com) or tweet us @everywomanuk.

*Maxine & Karen*

and the everywoman team

# What is a role model?

**A role model is an individual who is revered and looked up to by others. Someone others aspire to emulate because they feel inspired by who they are, what they do and how they do it. They are important for us all as they affect behaviour, choices and our overall career aspirations.**

**T**he term role model was coined by renowned American sociologist Robert K Merton, whose work on social theory and social structure brought him worldwide acclaim.

In effect, a role model can be someone you aspire to be like in any aspect of your life, personal and professional. Increasingly, though, role models are being cited as key factors in workplace development.

## **Role model vs mentor**

Is there a difference? Absolutely there is. A mentor is someone with whom you have a two-way relationship and a recognised structure to your workplace interaction, where their role is to support, nurture and assist you on your career path.

A role model, however, is an individual with whom you may have some contact. Though, often as not, your relationship is likely to be slightly removed, if you have one at all. A role model can just as easily be your CEO, someone you have very little real-time interaction with, or someone you may never meet, such as a high-

profile business leader or even a celebrity, whose public persona and way of working inspires you.

## **The power of subtle influence**

It's often only when you take a step back that you can begin to understand who and what influences your work and career decisions.

If you remove the obvious influencers – money, circumstance, current workplace protocol – your role models are the ones who will influence not just how you work, but your ambition and often your workplace personality.

It might be that you have several role models for different areas of your business life. And, depending on the intensity of your role model's influence, they can impact your behaviour, your choices, your decision-making process and your overall career outlook.

Likewise, you may have different role models for different areas of your life. It's useful to be able to recognise these so that you can exercise some control over who you allow to be your influencer, no matter how subtle their influence may be.



## EXERCISE

### ROLE MODELS IN WORK AND LIFE

Think about three to five role models - both in your business and personal life - who have inspired you.

Business life

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Personal life

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## WHY ARE ROLE MODELS IMPORTANT?

Research by The Glass Hammer and Accenture suggests there is a strong correlation between role models and individual aspirations, with 83 per cent of women with strong ambition saying they had a role model.

It is widely accepted that having role models can instil a true drive to achieve more, to aim higher. They are also crucial for women in being seen as trailblazers who have carved their career path in a way that inspires others and gives us an insight as to who and what we could be.

Being connected, directly or indirectly, to role models lets us break down some of the barriers that may get in the way of professional aspirations. But for this to happen we have to listen and learn from our role models, and how they made their impact on the business world.

We do this by making sure we know their stories and how they achieved their success, but also how they faced up to challenges and what they learned from the times when they had to overcome obstacles to get to their next step.

“

*PEOPLE SELDOM IMPROVE WHEN THEY HAVE NO OTHER ROLE MODEL BUT THEMSELVES TO COPY.”*

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, WRITER, PLAYWRIGHT, POET <sup>ii</sup>

### The gateway to ambition

One of the great empowering features of role models is that they open the gates to allow us to dream bigger and aim higher.

### Why?

Because the best role models have dreamt big and then followed that dream, and along the way they have shared the insight and strategies they used to get there.

In effect, they offer a short cut to getting to where we want to be. Rather than reinvent the wheel, we can reach our professional destination that little bit quicker by borrowing strategies and learnings from their journeys, then flexing them to accommodate our own.

## The broader network

Using a role model correctly will instantly give access to a wider pool of successful and inspirational people to learn from even further. If you look at the role models your role model has, it gives you extra value from people who wouldn't necessarily be on your radar or in your network.

## The mirror effect

The great advantage of a role model is that we can use their actions, behaviour and workplace decision making to think about the best version of ourselves, ie to reflect on who we are, what we do and don't stand for, what we are really passionate about, what anchors and what energises us.

They should give us inspiration when the going gets tough and we are faced with adversity, career roadblocks or challenging workplaces.

Ultimately, role models can offer a different way of looking at ourselves, rewriting our own narrative so that we are being truly authentic to who we are, what works for us and what we seek to achieve.

— “ —  
*IT'S IMPORTANT  
FOR PEOPLE TO  
SEE THEMSELVES  
REFLECTED IN  
THE PEOPLE WHO  
MAKE DECISIONS.”*

STEVE MORRISON, HEAD TEACHER,  
KINGSDALE FOUNDATION SCHOOL, LONDON <sup>iii</sup>

## WHO MAKES A ROLE MODEL?

Sometimes it's assumed our role models need to be other women or individuals within our own organisation. That's not always the case – the most important aspect of having a role model is that they need to work for you, your career path and your professional ambition.

If you can't find what you're looking for close to you or your company, look elsewhere. Think about likely role models among diverse networks and groups – such as age, ethnicity, gender, thought leadership, expertise, background, education, industry sector, size of business and not-for-profit vs private sector.

Reflect on people you've come across in other areas of life who could fit into a potential role model category for you.





## EXERCISE

### YOUR ROLE MODELS

Look at the list above of role models in your business life. How could you make this list more diverse to truly widen your professional learning and network. Think about what your list could be missing and write down three ways to improve it here:

1.

2.

3.

Ask your current network to introduce you to three possible role models outside your working environment and existing network. As you add them, keep notes below on their traits which could help balance out your network of role models.

ROLE MODEL	TRAITS



### TAKE AWAY

Role models can be useful in both your professional and personal life. Different role models can also illuminate different aspects of both. It is worth having several professional role models, making them as diverse as possible and learning different things from each of them.

# Role models: their impact and influence

Having a role model in your professional life is vital. In fact, ideally you would have more than one, so you can cover leadership values that tick all the aspects of your working life that are key to your professional success and fulfilment.

— “ —  
*WITH EVERY  
WORD WE UTTER,  
WITH EVERY  
ACTION WE  
TAKE, WE KNOW  
OUR KIDS ARE  
WATCHING US.  
WE AS PARENTS  
ARE THEIR MOST  
IMPORTANT  
ROLE MODELS.”*

MICHELLE OBAMA, LAWYER, FORMER  
FIRST LADY OF THE US <sup>iv</sup>

## Internal business influencers vs external influencers

Many businesses talk about the value of role models in the workplace, which may imply these role models need to be internal people. While it's beneficial to have a company staffed with inspirational and motivational leaders, there's a danger it can create a linear thought process within the working structure.

So, looking beyond your immediate work life will give you a better perspective, and not only on your career path, working environment and network. It will improve your thinking and leadership ability and bring new ideas and conversation to your present role.

By broadening professional relationships and connections you develop the means to accelerate career success and increase your visibility beyond your present company.

To do this you will need to get your head up and out of your current day-to-day, and look beyond those horizons to the next challenge, to the game changers in your industry and those people and companies who are really making waves in those industries.

## Positive and negative role models

Role models can be both positive and negative and it's worth understanding how and why so that you can identify both.

## 5 TRAITS OF A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

1

### **Collaboration**

They bring the right people together and embrace difference both inside and outside the organisation.

When problems arise their response will usually be “how might we solve this together?”

2

### **Resilience**

They will embrace challenges, work through them and sustain resilience when the going gets tough.

3

### **Authentic**

They are clear about who they are and who they are not, and they stand up for it. Their beliefs are apparent in their day-to-day behaviour. They don't seek to fit in: rather they are true to themselves even when this may mean they are seen as being outside the 'norm' and risk not being part of the accepted group.

4

### **Learner-led growth mindset**

They will embrace challenge and see failure as a springboard to learn. They will seek out critical feedback in order to improve performance, both of themselves and their team.

5

### **Mental agility**

They possess the ability to look at different scenarios and options simultaneously, so that they can think about short, medium and long-term situations and manage the tensions and ambiguities in each.

## TRAITS OF A NEGATIVE ROLE MODEL

Of course, you would imagine you'd never choose to have a negative role model in your life. But that's because you don't recognise them as such – it's only when you

take a step back and assess their behaviour, and the influence they have had, that you figure out that their impact on your working life has actually been a negative one.



## EXERCISE

Using these examples, think about the role models in your business life and whether these traits are familiar to you in their behaviour.

### Lack of respect for the wider workforce

Eg derogatory comments and inappropriate humour

---

### Lack of empathy

Regardless of their status

---

### Emotional

Often expresses anger or frustration

---

### Bitterness

Expresses this freely to others

---

### Cynical and critical

And offers these opinions often and unnecessarily

---

### Works in isolation

Feels threatened by collaboration

---

### Glory-hunter

Rarely passes praise to the wider team

## POSITIVE VS NEGATIVE ROLE MODELS

Many of us have both in our lives, and a key factor for professional clarity and happiness is identifying them. You may think knowing which is which should be easy enough to, but that isn't always the case.



Positive role models raise our level of ambition and improve our education as we learn not just from what they do, but from how they do it. This in turn gives us inspiration to improve our own self-belief and professional achievements. The right role model at the right time can also inspire us to action or encourage us, albeit subtly and from a distance, to take a new path.



Negative role models can be just as impactful and can be highly damaging in the professional space. They may create roadblocks, inspire changes for the worse in career paths and cause indecision as they make us question our motives and choices, suck career energy and effectively take us to a place of feeling small and playing even smaller.



## EXERCISE

**Think back on your life, both personal and professional: who were your positive and negative role models and why? Use people from areas of your life such as teachers, friends, family members, mentors, advisers, coaches, bosses, peers and team members.**

### STEP 1

List six role models below.

### STEP 2

For each, think about their positive and negative aspects. Think about what they displayed to you, what they value, what they stand for, their aspirations and what they won't tolerate in others.

### STEP 3

Then think about how they impacted on you, your life choices and work path? How did they make you think, feel and act? How did they affect your decisions?

## ROLE MODEL 1

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

IMPACT ON LIFE CHOICES AND WORK PATH



## ROLE MODEL 2

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

IMPACT ON LIFE CHOICES AND WORK PATH

## ROLE MODEL 3

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

IMPACT ON LIFE CHOICES AND WORK PATH



## ROLE MODEL 4

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

IMPACT ON LIFE CHOICES AND WORK PATH

## ROLE MODEL 5

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

IMPACT ON LIFE CHOICES AND WORK PATH





## ROLE MODEL 6

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

IMPACT ON LIFE CHOICES AND WORK PATH

**Now list here the impact these might have had on your current behaviour, personality and decisions today?**



### TAKE AWAY

Role models can be negative as well as positive – and often we don't notice the negative until it's too late. Try to distinguish the ways in which each role model has an impact on you.

## Which role model is right for you?

It's not always easy to figure out the kind of role model you need in your life. There are probably many successful and inspirational people in your wider circle, and others who are high profile and can be accessed in a variety of ways. To avoid overwhelming yourself with inspiration (yes, this can happen!), first try working out what you need.

“

*I DON'T HAVE JUST ONE ROLE MODEL - RATHER, PIECES OF INSPIRATION FROM MANY DIFFERENT ENTREPRENEURS. ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS ABOUT BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR IS THAT IT NATURALLY ENABLES YOU TO BUILD A VILLAGE OF ADVISERS AND ROLE MODELS.”*

JULIA HARTZ, ENTREPRENEUR, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, EVENTBRITE



## EXERCISE

**Consider all the areas of your work life, such as project management, talent development, problem solving, team leadership, working with colleagues. Think about the areas where you feel you would benefit from some added wisdom and inspiration. List those areas here:**

## HOW TO FIND YOUR ROLE MODELS

There are different ways of working out who might be a great role model for you and knowing that you might have a number of role models for different things at the same time.

Remember, these people can be internal and external. Below are some thought starters to help you think of the kinds of work-life areas where a role model could help.

Look for the people who achieved similar results to the ones you want.

Research people who struggled with the same problems in the past and have succeeded since.

Find someone whose life story is so fascinating, that it simply uplifts and motivates you.

Sometimes we have trouble staying motivated or inspired, so look for someone who, by their own actions, inspires you in a specific way.

If you are lacking discipline, look for good role models who have plenty of it, and teach others how to mimic their discipline and dedication.

“

*ROLE MODELS REALLY MATTER.  
IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE YOURSELF  
AS SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE.”*

CHELSEA CLINTON, DAUGHTER OF BILL AND HILLARY CLINTON <sup>vi</sup>



## EXERCISE

### FINDING THE RIGHT ROLE MODEL

**Work out some ways to understand the role models who will bring the most benefit to your career and working life.**

What kind of person do I want to be?

What do I want to achieve? Has someone been on a similar journey?

Have they shared their approach, philosophy, successes and learnings?  
If so, where?

Whose work and life story do I find empowering and who inspires me with their words, vision and different qualities? These should be people you have come into contact with.



## EXERCISE

Now, identify six people you feel would be beneficial to your work-life path and career decision making:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

## VIRTUAL ROLE MODELS

An external role model is someone outside your company, but perhaps within your business circles. A virtual role model, however, is someone you will only know through their public persona and life stories, but with whom you feel a connection or some sense of engagement. They could be global business leaders, politicians, thought-leaders, celebrities. If none comes to mind immediately, read articles and books and watch some TED talks to find the right people.



*THE IDEA OF POSSIBILITY, THE IDEA THAT I GET TO LIVE MY DREAMS OUT IN PUBLIC, HOPEFULLY, WILL SHOW TO OTHER FOLKS THAT IT'S POSSIBLE."*

LAVERNE COX, ACTOR <sup>vii</sup>



## EXERCISE

List five virtual/external role models here:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Can you observe a pattern in the different sets of role models you have selected? If so, think about why this might be.

Does it help you understand areas of your working life where you feel unfulfilled or unskilled? If so, write those down here.

# REQUIREMENTS OF A ROLE MODEL

There are three questions to ask yourself about who you choose as role models and why:

1

## Likeability

Often you will find a role model you connect with because you like them, because they seem to share similar values or have similar expertise. But you don't need to like someone to be inspired by what they do. In fact, it is helpful to include people outside your comfort zone as a role model. Ask yourself: 'Can I grow from what this person can teach me?' If the answer is yes, then they are suitable.

2

## Inspiration

I don't have anything in common with you, but you inspire me, there is something that I still admire about you and I can learn from you because you are so different from me.

3

## Trust

Do I trust you, your leadership and your beliefs? If the answer is yes, then this is the real anchoring point. Self-disclosure is a key part of creating trust and if you feel you can trust someone, you're more likely to be open to their voice, their challenges and their learnings.



## RECOGNISING BIAS AND HOW IT NARROWS YOUR CAREER LENS

Do you feel you can be biased in your working relationships, choice of mentors and role models or sponsors? No?

It's highly likely that you are. Most of us are drawn to those with whom we feel a sense of shared values. Of course values are important, but to truly get the benefit for a role model or mentor, you should widen your lens, as, by doing so, you will widen your career circle.

Ask yourself if your role models are in that position because they inspire you or because they create instinctive trust?

If you only have instinctive trust,

these role models will keep you in your career comfort zone – they will never inspire you to challenge, push boundaries or change course. And they need to.

Who else could you have access to if you challenged your bias and didn't let it cloud your decision making or limit your range of choices?

### Connecting beyond your career circle

It may be more difficult to connect with people you feel are outside of your natural career circle, but it can be incredibly beneficial.

— “ —

*IMAGINE FOR YOURSELF  
A CHARACTER, A MODEL  
PERSONALITY, WHOSE EXAMPLE YOU  
DETERMINE TO FOLLOW, IN PRIVATE  
AS WELL AS IN PUBLIC.”*

EPICTETUS, GREEK PHILOSOPHER <sup>viii</sup>



## EXERCISE

**Identify some potential role models outside your natural zone.  
Use these questions to help you define your list.**

**How do they inspire me?**

**What do they provoke in me?**

**How do they help me remove fear and insecurities?**

**Do they give hope?**

**Do they embody persistence?**

**Do they propel me to take action?**

**Do they inspire me to be courageous and work with my fear?**

**How do they create instinctive trust?**

**To solidify a connection you will need to feel they are  
relatable in some way. So also ask:**

**What vulnerabilities do they share?**

**What do they disclose about themselves and their  
narrative beyond their success to create genuine trust?**



## EXERCISE

List three role models who sit outside your natural career circle here and make a plan, including timescale, of how to access their knowledge and learnings.

### ROLE MODEL 1

PLAN

### ROLE MODEL 2

PLAN

### ROLE MODEL 3

PLAN

## THE LIMITATIONS OF ROLE MODELS AND CAREER PROGRESSION

While a role model might give you inspiration, belief, hope and positive outlook for a way forward, that might not be enough on its own to propel your career.

Try to combine role models with mentors and sponsors, as having different support and inspirational platforms will enable you to move your career forward, which is your ultimate goal.

A mentor can share their wisdom and experience, and give practical advice on how to emulate and access what you find appealing in a role model. Unlike a role model, however, a mentor can also have a

direct influence in making things happen for your career.

Use the inspiration you get from a role model to think about the impact you want to make, the value you'd like to bring to your business and clients or customers and the legacy you would like to leave behind. Who are the career sponsors who really believe in you, who are willing to take a risk on you? (They could be clients, peers, management, mentors, and stakeholders). They manage your reputation and they open doors behind the scenes by recommending and referring you.



*LEADERS ARE MORE POWERFUL  
ROLE MODELS WHEN THEY LEARN  
THAN WHEN THEY TEACH"*

ROSABETH MOSS KANTER, PROFESSOR, HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL ix



### TAKE AWAY

A true role model should challenge you, not simply confirm your existing beliefs. Ask yourself what qualities you are looking for in a role model, and be sure to take yourself outside your comfort zone.

# Paying it forward: how to BE a role model

Not only is it great to have role models, it is also very important to pay it forward and be a good role model yourself for other women.

————— “ —————  
*EACH PERSON  
MUST LIVE  
THEIR LIFE AS  
A MODEL FOR  
OTHERS.”*

ROSA PARKS, CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST x

## Why be a role model?

Why not? Role modelling is a useful means to provide continuity and maintain high standards to be passed on to others. Explicit role modelling can be thought provoking for the role model, because it helps to develop a guide to one's own business behaviour.

Some have the simplistic view that being a role model simply means observing and copying a role model. In fact, a role model should not require someone to mirror every aspect of themselves; there is genuine scope, and need, for individuality.

For example, to create a customer-centric organisation, powerful role models help people to see how they personally should take time for the customer in lots of day-to-day ways. Customer-friendly role models can be observed empathising with the customer, taking personal responsibility and going the extra mile.

Leaders who are good role models not only pay attention to their individual acts, they encourage teamwork and co-operation, support others in their growth and development, and recognise the positive behaviours and attitudes they display.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF PAYING IT FORWARD

Paying it forward to others works on two levels. First, it enhances your business life by keeping you open to different ways of working and can make you more aware of your own business behaviour. Second, it raises your profile and keeps you relevant to your sector. Ask yourself: are you making it easy for people to connect with you? Whether it's having a dialogue or simply people learning from your experiences, your successes and your failures, are you visible to others on social media or at events?

## **A good role model will continually disrupt themselves by:**

1

Being curious about what is going on within themselves, others, their business, their clients, their industry and the outside world.

2

**Examining models and patterns that are either enhancing their future success or leading to potential failure.**

3

Finding the courage to break the patterns that no longer work in their business and with their clients.

4

**Being willing to test and fail in order to learn.**

5

Surrounding themselves with different thinking in and outside the employment organisation.

6

**Being a player rather than a bystander in their development, career and business. Rather than watching things happen, they are the change they want to see to create the culture they are after, which means calling things out, redefining the status quo and establishing new norms.**

# HOW TO ENSURE YOU ARE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

## Self-reflection

This is the first stage: what is it that you are modelling? How sound is it? Consider public behaviour but also behaviour outside the public gaze. Assess the current impact that role modelling is having.

## Clarity of business vision

**What sort of role model could you be for different individuals, organisations, clients and external contacts?**

## Discuss and agree

If you want to foster a certain climate in your organisation, discuss and agree the place of role models to promote defined skills, attitudes and behaviours – to drive a particular culture and help promote inclusivity.

## Variety of role models

**Look out for the variety of role models that exists and whether they exist at all levels in all places – it is not just about seniority and positional power.**

## Inspire by difference

If role modelling is at least in part about identifying with individuals, not everyone in a diverse workforce will identify with a stereotypical role model. Consider diversity at all times.

## Communicate expectations

**Communicate with others the standards you expect, ensuring you consistently apply those standards. For example, praise behaviours you want to encourage, notice how consistent you are. Write some examples here of where you could do this in your current role.**

## Walk the talk

Be mindful of how you represent yourself and your team to others; be consistent and talk positively about your team. Give three opportunities where you can do this in the coming quarter.

## People skills

**Be aware of people skills and seek to develop them so that leaders are best able to use the opportunities for role modelling to coach, nurture and motivate others. Note here five members of your team who would benefit from development. If you don't run a team: note down three areas within your own career path for career development.**



## EXERCISE

**Note five members of your team who would benefit from development:**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**If you don't run a team: note down three areas  
within your own career path for career development:**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.





## EXERCISE

### VISIBILITY OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE

**There are levels of difference when it comes to access - there is face-to-face access and access via social media, as well as access points outside of your organisation. Think about how accessible you are. How would others come across you and your working practices?**

Where are you visible and to whom?

What do you lead or get involved in? What do you present and where?

Where do you speak and share?

What do you collaborate in, whether across or outside the organisation?  
Who are you a mentor for? Who are you a sponsor to?

**If you are not able to answer the above with positive statements about your accessibility, make a plan for change below, with a timeline for implementation that should be no longer than six weeks.**

## HOW TO BECOME A VIRTUAL ROLE MODEL

Even if you feel time-stretched you can still make yourself available as a role model by being present in those channels where people are seeking business inspiration.

LinkedIn is a fantastic pool of talent, inspiration and aspiration but it can feel daunting to start showcasing yourself in that arena.

Make a plan for raising your accessibility as a virtual role model by ensuring you are active on these business-focused social channels and not just a bystander.

Ensure you comment on articles that you find interesting and share

them. It doesn't always have to be within your company or your own sector – in fact, it is often better if it isn't, as it shows you as a diverse person and gives people a sense of knowing what drives your mind.

It's the articles you share and the comments you make that will create interest in you, your thinking and your potential as a virtual role model.

“

*BEING A ROLE MODEL IS  
THE MOST POWERFUL  
FORM OF EDUCATING.”*

JOHN WOODEN, PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL  
PLAYER AND HEAD COACH <sup>xi</sup>



### TAKE AWAY

Having benefited from role models, becoming one yourself is a rewarding thing to do. Not just as a way of paying it forward, but also as a means to promote your brand and leadership ethos. Think about how people beyond your team can access you and consider ways to promote yourself more widely.

# Your personal action plan



1

Who are your role models? Think about who you look up to and why.

2

Do you have any negative role models in your life? If so, detail the ways in which they have a negative impact.

3

What kind of impact do your role models have on your career? Think about how they may have influenced your own decisions.

4

How can you pay it forward? Take inspiration from the role models in your life and consider how you might become one yourself.

# Your 4 questions

Answer the questions below for the workbook to be CPD certified.



Corporate Member

The CPD Certification Service

To apply for your CPD hours, points or units from this resource, click this link and answer the questions.



1 Which of the below is one of the five traits of a positive role model?

- |                |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Steady         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hard working   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mental agility | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Patience       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2 What are the requirements you should look for when choosing a role model?

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Likeability, compassion, reliable  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Inspiration, passionate, go-getter | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Likeability, inspiration, trust    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trust, likeability, passionate     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3 Which of the following is one method a good role model will continually disrupt themselves?

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Finding courage to break patterns | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Thinking things through           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Discussing things                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Constantly working                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4 Which of the following should you do to ensure you are a good role model?

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Take the lead                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Make decisions                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have a plan                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have clarity of business vision | <input type="checkbox"/> |

# everywoman Experts

everywoman creates resources on topics that matter most to our network members. We draw on member surveys and the latest thinking from the academic and business worlds, as well our own experiences as we navigate our careers. Each workbook offers practical advice, enabling tangible actions for your daily working lives.



MAXINE BENSON, MBE  
& KAREN GILL, MBE

Co-founders of everywoman, Karen and Max have spoken to thousands of women about the challenges they face at work. Through their own experiences of starting a business, they uncovered a real need for a network where female entrepreneurs and businesswomen could interact and share experiences. The everywomanNetwork, which launched in 2013, serves as a truly global tool to enable members the world over to realise their ambitions through online membership.

#### EVERYWOMAN WORKBOOK TEAM

Des Christofi, everywoman expert

Lysanne Currie, editor

Kate Farrow, head of partnerships

Denise McQuaid, commercial and strategy director

Any topics you'd like to see covered on the everywomanNetwork?

We'd love to hear from you: [contact@everywoman.com](mailto:contact@everywoman.com)

# Further reading

## everywoman resources

*On confidence and role models*

<https://www.everywoman.com/my-development/learning-areas/videos/melanie-eusebe-being-confident-female-role-models-managing>

*The secret to career success*

<https://www.everywoman.com/sites/default/files/file/support-networks-secret-of-career-success.pdf>

*Diverse and inclusive leadership: A guide to getting started*

<https://www.everywoman.com/sites/default/files/file/diverse-and-inclusive-leadership-workbook.pdf>

*Taking chances, honesty and role models*

<https://www.everywoman.com/my-development/learning-areas/videos/helen-lamb-taking-chances-honesty-and-role-models>

*Role models are where you find them*

<https://www.everywoman.com/my-development/learning-areas/articles/role-models-are-where-you-find-them>

*The impact of role models*

<https://www.everywoman.com/my-development/learning-areas/videos/impact-role-models-nicola-pattimore>

## External sources

TED Talk: *Who inspires you? Why heroes, role models and mentors matter*, Dyan deNapoli

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZfEFzf4Jec>

TED Talk: *The power of passionate role models*, Janice Byrne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfUWkZWU3tc>

TED Talk: *Picking role models that matter*, Toku McCree

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UuVQ2F\\_kHw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UuVQ2F_kHw)

TED Talk: *Role models and the myth of perfection*, Jim Hill

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhHb-5U9pxg>

## Books

*Geek Girl Rising: Inside the sisterhood shaking up tech*, Heather Cabot & Samantha Walravens (St Martin's)

*Discover Your True North*, Bill George & Peter Sims (John Wiley & Sons)

## Read

"7 Ways to find powerful female role models and mentors", Melinda Garvey, *Time*

<http://time.com/5190589/find-female-role-models-mentors>

"How women (and men) can find role models when none are obvious", Wendy Murphy, *Harvard Business Review*

<https://hbr.org/2016/06/how-women-and-men-can-find-role-models-when-none-are-obvious>

## Endnotes

- i <https://people-equation.com/leadership-and-being-a-role-model-20-ideas>
- ii <https://www.leadershipthoughts.com/leader-are-you-a-role-model>
- iii <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2008/nov/11/school-role-models>
- iv [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/michelle\\_obama\\_754661?src=t\\_role\\_models](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/michelle_obama_754661?src=t_role_models)
- v [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/julia\\_hartz\\_919133?src=t\\_role\\_models](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/julia_hartz_919133?src=t_role_models)
- vi [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/chelsea\\_clinton\\_634876?src=t\\_role\\_models](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/chelsea_clinton_634876?src=t_role_models)
- vii <https://awakenthegreatnesswithin.com/30-inspirational-quotes-on-role-models>
- viii <https://www.ellevatenetwork.com/articles/7900-quotes-about-being-a-role-model>
- ix <https://www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/good-role-models.html>
- x <https://www.ellevatenetwork.com/articles/7900-quotes-about-being-a-role-model>
- xi <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/role-models>

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