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Don't Take it Personally: How to Recover from Mistakes and Stay in the Game

September 7, 2016

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What is CompTIA?

- Global, Not for Profit, IT Industry Trade Association
- Headquartered in Chicago Area with Offices Worldwide
- World's largest provider of vendor-neutral IT certifications
- Global membership from 90+ countries
- Premier Member/Open Access Ecosystem





Advancing Women in IT COMMUNITY

- Empowering women to be successful in technology careers
- Inspiring women to choose careers in technology
- Supporting business in creating cultures that support a diverse workforce





Don't Take it Personally: How to Recover from Mistakes and Stay in the Game

Kathryn C. Mayer
www.kcmayer.com



Agenda

- Opening question and story about perfectionism and why comfort with competition matters
- Quick self-assessment
- 3 Tools:
 1. Collaborative Competition Mindset
 2. Resilient Mindset – self-compassion and optimism
 3. Pacing Partners – get support from one
- Q & A

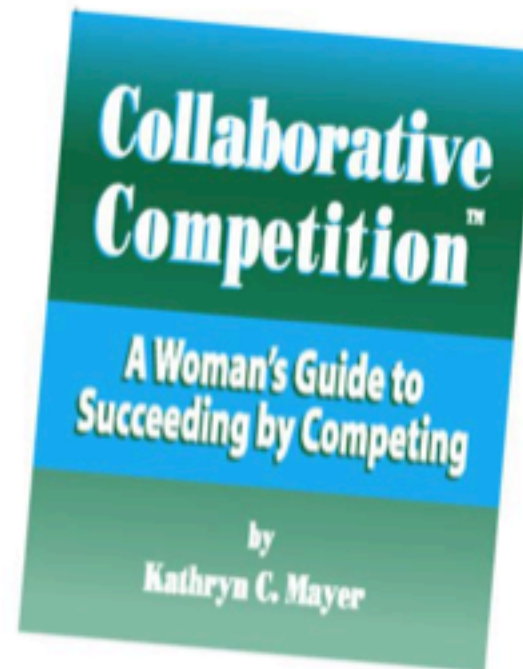
Taking it Personally Question

*"To succeed in work—
and life in general—
women must realize
that becoming an
effective competitor is
essential to becoming
an effective leader."*

How important is being comfortable with competition – winning and losing - to your career success and why?

- A. It is critical, can't succeed without it
- B. It is somewhat important – need to play the game at times
- C. Not that important. I can succeed through hard work & smarts without playing the game

My Challenge with Competition



WHY PERFECTIONISM HOLDS YOU BACK

Perfectionists seek self-affirmation, and often:

- Avoid taking risks
- Take losses personally
- Need to be in control, i.e. be involved in every step
- Believe that anything less than perfect is mediocrity
- Try to do everything oneself, can't say "no" and/or delegate
- Are unable to see the big picture, stuck in the details
- Do not enjoy the latest victory out of fear you may not be able to live up to it

Perfectionism as an identity can limit your ability to perform as an effective competitor, take on leadership roles, or even enjoy life and its challenges.





How Perfectionism Holds Women Back

**50% vs
100%***

* CNBC 2/18/2015 "The No.1 reason women are not getting promoted." By Jennifer Openshaw



#1

Collaborative Competition Mindset



Collaborative Competitive Mindset Self-Assessment

1. When you approach a new experience or are learning a new skill, do you tend to:
(1) do the minimum, to
(10) do you tend to go all out – taking lessons, even neglecting other obligations to make sure you will be the best?
2. How would you describe your approach to competition and winning:
(1) meaning it is nice but not critical, to
(10) meaning winning is the most important goal?
3. Would you consider yourself someone who constantly strives for 100%?
(1) means you hardly try at all, to
(10) means everything must be perfect.



Collaborative Competitive Mindset Self-Assessment

4. How would you describe your approach to collaborating with others when you are forced to work on a project team?
*(1) meaning you don't care who is on your project team, to
(10) meaning you are unhappy if you have to collaborate with others who don't have as strong a work ethic and give 100% all the time?*
5. How much do you care about advancement at work?
*(1) means not at all, to
(10) means you believe if you are not constantly moving up, you think about changing jobs.*



Collaborative Competitive Mindset Self-Assessment

6. If you don't achieve an important career/project goal, how much impact does that have on how you feel about yourself?
(1) means not at all, to
(10) means that you feel like a failure
7. How much do you care about how your team members perceive you at work?
(1) means not at all, to
(10) means that it significantly affects your self-worth



Results

Noncompetitive Individual Contributor	1 to 5
Situational Collaborative Competitor	5 to 6.5
Collaborative Competitor™	6.5 to 8.5
Perfectionist Competitor	8.5 to 10.0



Success for Women Leaders in Competitive Professions

6.5- 8.5 — Those who have a healthy drive to win tended to take more of a strategic approach to collaboration rather than an extreme drive towards perfection and to winning and tended to be more self-compassionate, enjoy work more, were more successful, and overall led happier lives.

8.5 – 10 — Those who have an overwhelming desire to win tended to have more of a tendency towards perfection and this seemed to inhibit teamwork; they also tended to have low scores for collaborating with others.



Collaborative Competitive Approaches

- **Noncompetitive Individual Contributor** —
1 to 5 means you are not very competitive and tend to do everything yourself; you are not motivated by competition and may tend to under perform or not advance to your potential.
- **Situational Collaborative Competitor™** —
5 to 6.5 means you are somewhat competitive and can delegate some things; others' perceptions of you are inconsistent and can range from fairly goal oriented to solid team player depending on the situation.




Collaborative Competitive Approaches

- **Collaborative Competitor™** — 6.5 to 8.5 means you fall in the range where the majority of the Collaborative Competitive™ people fall; they are competitive, collaborative, and very satisfied with their work and life overall. You are able to go for and achieve your goals, delegate, collaborate with others to get the work done, and have a healthy view of competition.
- **Perfectionist Competitor** — 8.5 to 10 means you are extreme regarding competition and being perfect. You need to win and have things go well all the time or you don't feel good about yourself and your work. You don't tend to collaborate unless you have to and prefer to work with people who have a strong work ethic like you. Competition involves a winner and a loser and anything less than perfect is mediocrity.

Collaborative Competition Examples

Success 6.5 – 8.5	Challenge 8.5 – 10
Jane became a senior executive at a fortune 500 financial services firm with a BA in English	Clare, general counsel for a fortune 500 company got laid off after her boss left; she graduated top of her Ivy League law school
Built a wide and strategic network of informal relationships	Worked 100 hours a week
Took on jobs that were risky but critical to the company's future and succeeded	Didn't step outside of her comfort zone to reach out and continuously build a strategic network



**“The biggest human
temptation is to settle
for too little.”**

—Thomas Merton



#2

Resilient Mindset

Resilient Mindset

Optimism	Win-lose/perfectionist
Assume positive intent	Suspicious of motives
Curious mindset	I am right
Smart Risk taking	Avoid losing
<u>Optimism</u> : If I lose, there is a temporary and specific explanation; and, if I succeed, I make permanent and universal explanations*	<u>Pessimism</u> : If I lose, there is a permanent and universal explanation for setbacks; and if I succeed I make temporary and specific explanations*
Demonstrate self-compassion which leads to an expanded comfort zone	Protect self-esteem; defensiveness; blame; shrinks comfort zone

**Authentic Happiness*, by Martin E. Seligman, 2002, page 93.

Self-esteem versus Self-compassion*

Self-esteem – “I am awesome.”

- Focus on building up and protecting it
- Weaknesses are threats and create anxiety
- Evaluative – good or bad
- Some is useful for being courageous and influencing; does not predict greater success

Self-compassion – “To err is human.”

- Focus on improving or avoiding the mistake
- Non-evaluative – kindness & acceptance
- New research suggests it leads to higher levels of well-being, optimism, happiness, and more likely to achieve goals

* Heidi Grant Halvorson, “To Succeed, Forget Self-Esteem,” HBR Blog, September 20, 2012

Rebounding Example – 2008 Recession

Key Safety Techniques	Kathryn's rebound
Gratitude	Find 10 things every morning
Compassion	I am going to give myself a break
Set clear boundaries	The organization was not well-run but it was not mine to fix
<u>Optimism</u> : If I lose, there is a temporary and specific explanation; and, if I succeed, I make permanent and universal explanations*	I have a consistent track record of picking opportunities and roles that leverage my strengths. Due to the Great Recession, there were fewer options and I became fearful which led me to select something that didn't feel right
Reach out to someone you trust who may offer a diverse perspective	I reached out to a key male client; he said, "Sorry it didn't work out AND I am impressed that you had the courage to try something new – just know that is valued; welcome back - let me know how I can help

*Authentic Happiness, by Martin E. Seligman, 2002, page 93.

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Resilience Quiz

If I want to bounce back more quickly:

- A. Start talking about my strengths in a way that demonstrates I own them
- B. Accept that I am pessimist
- C. When I make a mistake, develop an optimistic specific statement
- D. Practice more self-compassion
- E. Get back out there and tell everyone I can do X



#3

Getting Support from Pacing Partners

Why Women Struggle with Competitive Relationships



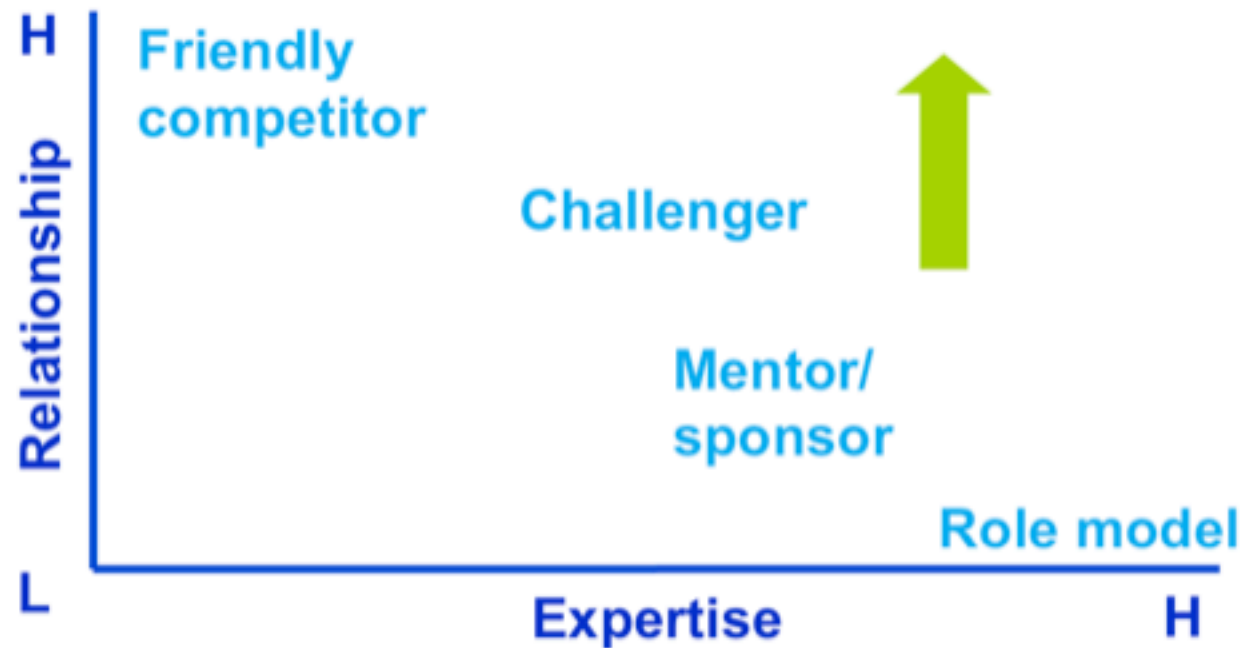
Status



Intimacy

Deborah Tannen, *You Just don't Understand. Men and Women in Conversation*. 1990.

Pacing Partners





Pacing Partners

Friendly Competitor (FC) — Provides a safe way to take risks and obtain honest feedback without negative consequences.

Challenger — A competitor who offers an opportunity to observe strategies and tactics.

Mentor/Sponsor — Supports you and makes connections and referrals on your behalf.

Role Model — Someone you admire and follow their achievements, but do not know personally.

The Power of Pacing Partners

Friendly Competitors (FCs):



Sheryl Sandberg, COO
Facebook and
Mark Zuckerberg, CEO
Facebook



Jared Donaldson and Taylor Fritz
Tennis rivals from the USA

More Power of Pacing Partners

Challengers:



**Mark
Zuckerberg
CEO Facebook**

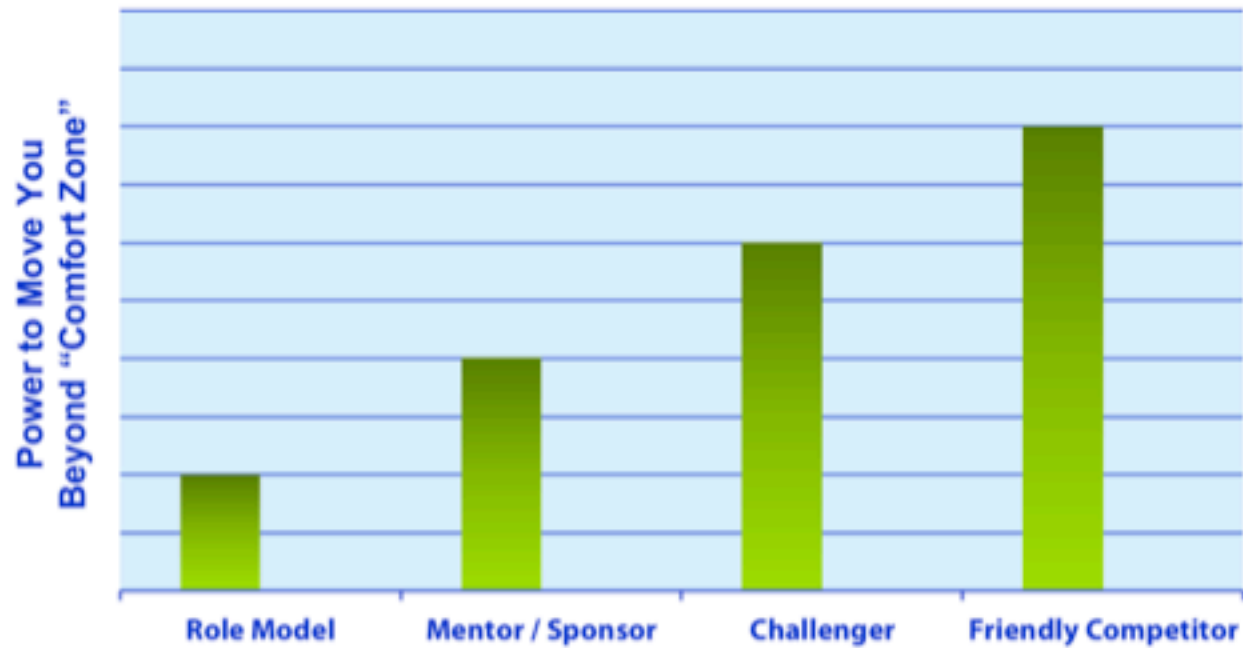


**Sundar Pichai
CEO Google**



**Hillary Clinton and
Bernie Sanders
Campaign Rivals**

Power of Pacing Partners





How Pacers Advance Careers

GROW:

Michelle, a top real estate broker was able to become computer savvy from a new broker, and in turn Michelle mentored Gail on selling real estate.

THRIVE:

Jennifer, a highly ranked financial analyst was able to move into a VP role that required marketing and presentation skills by building informal relationships with male-rival colleagues.

How Pacers Advance Careers

Sheryl Sandberg (COO of Facebook)
shared this example in her book, *Lean In*:



“In 2004, four female executives at Merrill Lynch started having lunch together once a month. They shared their accomplishments and frustrations. After the lunches, they would all go back to their offices and tout about one another’s achievements. They couldn’t brag about themselves, but they could easily do it for their colleagues. Their careers flourished and each rose up the ranks to reach managing director and executive office levels.**

** Sandberg, Sheryl, *Lean In*, page 164, 2012.



Five Tips for Forming Effective Pacers

1. Form at least one relationship with a **Friendly Competitor**.
2. **Establish ground rules** – regarding how to support and push each other
3. **Ask for and expand the variety of support** – focusing on strategic advice and **giving honest feedback** – **TRUTH TELLING**
4. Share critical personal and professional goals, strengths, or areas for improvement
5. Seek out **Pacing Partners** who have **diverse views** and different skills from your own.



Who is the Best Pacer for You?

1. Ask a close friend if she/he can offer honest feedback and support.
2. Ask for advice from a colleague at work who has complementary skills and/or a different style, with whom you have a positive relationship.
3. Offer a compliment to a colleague at work who you admire, with whom you have little trust with or don't know well. Try to build trust so that you can learn more from him/her.

“It made us better tennis players.
I don’t think either of us would
have lasted as long without the
other.”

“It gave us inspiration and a lot of
incentive to work harder and try
to continue to improve.”

— Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova





Action Plan

3 Tools:

1. Collaborative Competition mindset
2. Resilient mindset – self-compassion and optimism
3. Pacing Partners – get support from one

What is one **SMALL ACTION** or
regular **PRACTICE YOU CAN START** to
Stay in the **GAME** and Enjoy it?



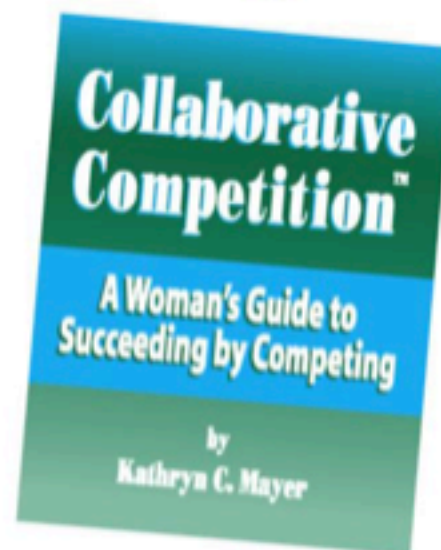
Appendix: Additional Reading

- Brown, Brene, [Daring Greatly](#), Gotham Books, 2012.
- Buckingham, Marcus, [Go Put Your Strengths to Work — 6 Powerful Steps to Achieve Outstanding Performance](#), The Free Press, 2007.
- Deluca, Joel, [Political Savvy: Systematic Approaches to Leadership Behind the Scenes](#), Evergreen Business Group; 2nd edition June 1999.
- Mayer, Kathryn, [Collaborative Competition™: A Woman's Guide to Succeeding by Competing](#), 2009.
- Sandberg, Sheryl, [Lean In](#), Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.
- Seligman, Martin, “**Building Resilience**,” *Harvard Business Review*, April 2011 and [Authentic Happiness](#), The Free Press, 2002.

COLLABORATIVE COMPETITION: A Woman's Guide to Succeeding by Competing

Available now at Amazon.com
and as an Ebook

Join my blog at
www.kcmayer.com and look for
my next book on Risk Taking for
Perfectionists



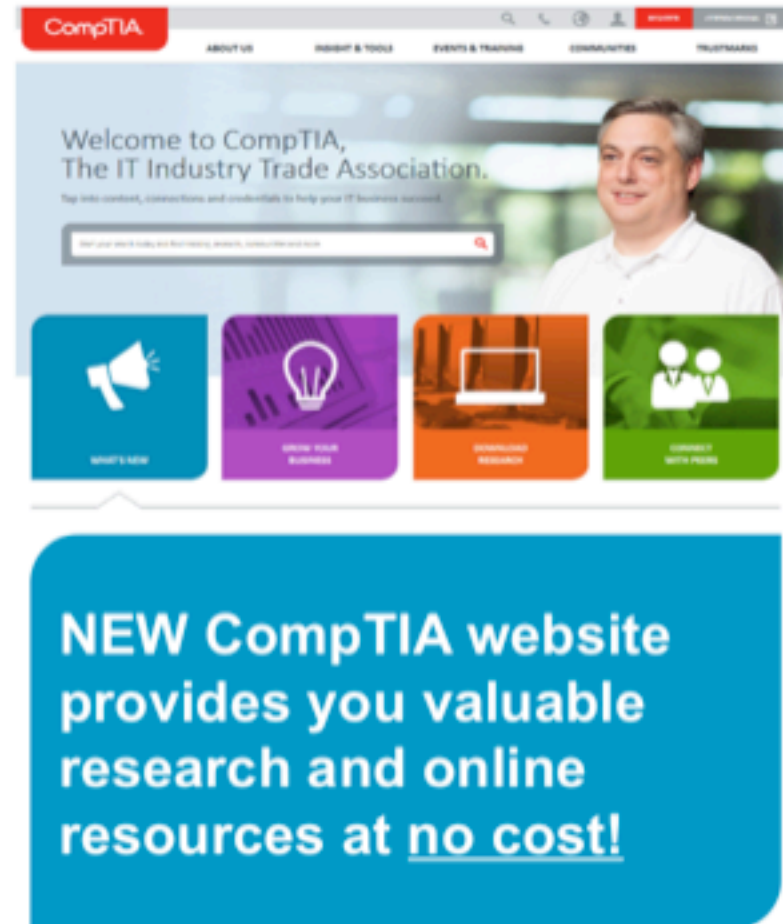
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You!*

Kathryn C. Mayer
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Next Webinar:

Cultures that Support Women, Jessica Mah,
October 20, 2016

Get Involved!





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Thank you!

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