

CASES BY WOMEN CEOs, OWNERS, EXECUTIVES & ENTREPRENEURS

CAPITALIZE THE POWER OF WOMEN'S

PSYCHOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE

LEADERSHIP

THE

# SIXTH LEVEL

Stacy Feiner, PsyD   Kathy K. Overbeke, DBA

Jack D.Harris, PhD   Rachel Wallis Andreasson, MBA

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## FOREWORD

### **Ali Hogan, Founder and Chairperson, Rung for Women**

“The most important thing in life  
is to be a good person.”

—*Jack Taylor, Founder of Enterprise Rent-A-Car  
and Ali's grandfather*

Growing up in my family, leadership wasn't an option—it was a requirement. Because I was born into privilege and had the freedom to pour into activities and passions I was interested in, this wasn't taken lightly. From a very young age, I understood the importance of service to others, something I am very proud of as it has guided me to where I am today.

I received the unique gift of being surrounded by a family of mostly women, a trait seventy-five years deep. I come from strong women, intelligent women, creative women—women who were and are still the backbone of my heritage. I saw substantial and tenacious ladies who were bold and effective in stewardship and it is my hope to pass this along to my two girls. Seeing powerful female examples at such a young age instilled in me the foundation of helping others as part of my life's work—leadership from a woman's perspective is built into my DNA. And yet, one familial male did provide some influence, as well.

When I was a child, my grandfather started a foundation. We grandkids were required to take up a cause of our own to instill the value of philanthropy in us, and to teach us the duty of paying it forward. We literally had to pitch our ideas to him, as if we were businesspeople in the boardroom. Imagine me at the tender age of ten, dressed in a professional blouse and slacks, trying to sell an idea to my grandfather and other family members. Beforehand, I needed to learn about organizations, promoting causes, and how to make appeals to “the board” so I could invest in my selected non-profit.

Through this exercise, I learned the importance of being inquisitive and professional. I acquired knowledge about asking questions and preparing to receive feedback—good or bad. Back then, I had no idea this *Shark Tank* type of ritual would become the center and core of who I am, and would mold the organization I founded.

My grandfather and the women in my family not only shaped me into a future leader, but prepped me to create a women's organization that instinctively understood female needs. My life today would not exist without first stepping into the family boardroom as a child, after learning how to share my ideas, pitch them, and then lead the action steps.

Being a woman in leadership isn't an easy feat. You are often underestimated or pigeonholed into a category you probably won't fit in. Instead of others viewing you as a maverick or thought leader, some may see you as someone who checked off a box or who fit the required ratio. What they don't tell you, however, is being a woman in a leadership position gives you a unique perspective that helps you guide others in a meaningful way.

A lot of men lead with power. Many women lead with emotion—too often perceived as a negative. But emotion cultivates vulnerability that enables us to self-correct and shift when necessary. Men tend to see things in black and white. Women see things more colorfully. We possess the benefit of allowing for shadows and changes in hues to emerge. With this advantage, we can become great leaders.

I have discovered a lot during my tenure as an organizational founder. I've learned to accept failure and to invite feedback. I know recovering from something makes you grow. One of my biggest mistakes early on was not admitting that other people knew more than me—that others were smarter in some areas.

A true leader understands that she doesn't have to be the most intelligent person in the room. But she does need the smarts to have the most intelligent person in the room sitting at her table. Being a leader isn't

singular—you need a qualified leadership team to teach and guide people with you. I am thankful to have a group of powerful women alongside me who are all great leaders. I've found women also feed off one another's strengths which makes us more impactful.

With *The Sixth Level*, you have the opportunity to learn from women from all spectrums of leadership, careers, and experiences. Reading this book will help you tap into your self's highest capacity, therefore giving you the ability to soar to heights previously unknown. The Sixth Level Leadership Model provides a blueprint that will help you walk in your purpose, effectively, and with confidence.

Tapping into this final level is key. I look forward to utilizing this method myself, as I continue Rung for Women's mission to inspire all women to climb the economic ladder. Please join me in this shift to an even deeper echelon of leadership development. Alone, we can do many things. Together, we can achieve the highest level of personal and professional success.