Sylvia Ann Hewlett’s “Forget a Mentor, Find a Sponsor” shows readers how sponsorship can fast-track their careers

Research shows that while mentors matter, sponsors are the proven path to success. Seventy percent of sponsored men and 68 percent of sponsored women feel they are progressing through the ranks at a satisfactory pace, compared to 57 percent of their unsponsored peers. These findings underpin the premise of economist and thought leader Sylvia Ann Hewlett’s new book, “FORGET A MENTOR, FIND A SPONSOR: The New Way to Fast-Track Your Career” (September 10, 2013), which steers readers through the path of finding, managing, and leveraging the sponsorship relationship to achieve career success.

“Mentors can build self-esteem and provide a sounding board—but they’re not the ticket to the top. If you’re interested in fast-tracking your career, what you need is a sponsor—a senior-level champion who believes in your potential and is willing to advocate for you as you pursue that next raise or promotion,” states Hewlett. “Sheryl Sandberg popularized the importance of leaning in, and FORGET A MENTOR, FIND A SPONSOR provides the roadmap for moving careers forward.”

The book’s seven-step roadmap directs readers through the nuances of the sponsor and protégé relationship and explores critical components of the relationship: how to set your sights, target the right leaders, win their loyalty, and leverage their advocacy to attain your goal. Hewlett also offers a mix of solid data and vivid narratives from powerful executives to reveal the “two-way street” that makes sponsorship a mutually beneficial relationship. Featured executives include:

- **Ken Chenault**, whose early-career sponsorship by then-CEO of American Express’ Lou Gerstner fueled his aspirations to lead American Express and became one of today’s most powerful African-Americans;
- **Joanna Coles**, whose pursuit of media powerhouse Cathie Black as her sponsor helped her rise to editor-in-chief of *Cosmopolitan*;
- **Brady Dougan**, CEO of Credit Suisse, who credits his fast ascent to a sponsor who gave him his hardest assignments and sufficient air cover;
- **Pat Fili-Krushel**, Chairman of NBCUniversal News Group, whose backing by Bob Iger, now CEO of Disney, helped her become the first woman to head an American network news division;
- **Sallie Krawcheck**, former president of the Global Wealth & Investment Management division of Bank of America, whose experience as a sponsor points to the need for protégées to seek out more than one sponsor;
- and **Sylvia Hewlett**, who recounts her own story of being passed over for tenure at Barnard College because she made “the classic female mistake” of not forging a sponsorship relationship.

Hewlett’s soft cover book offers professionals, across all industries, the tools needed to navigate the complex, yet necessary sponsor relationship. For more information, visit [http://www.sylviaanhhewlett.com/site/about/findasponsor](http://www.sylviaanhhewlett.com/site/about/findasponsor).
ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Sylvia Ann Hewlett is an economist and the founding Chairman and CEO of the Center for Talent Innovation, a Manhattan-based think tank where she chairs the “Task Force for Talent Innovation,” comprised of more than 75 global companies focused on fully realizing the new streams of labor in the global marketplace. She is also Co-Director of the Women's Leadership Program at the Columbia Business School. She has appeared on “Oprah,” “60 Minutes,” “The Today Show,” “The View,” “Charlie Rose,” and many other programs.

ABOUT THE BOOK:

FORGET A MENTOR, FIND A SPONSOR: The New Way to Fast-Track Your Career
by Sylvia Ann Hewlett
Harvard Business Review Press
Publication date: September 10, 2013