

# Sierra Nevada Powerful Woman: Want to be a better leader? Start with yourself



**Annie Flanzraich**  
Special to the NNBV

“Lean In.” “Stop Apologizing.” “Do Less.” “Unleash Your Voice.” “Drop The Ball.”

Search amazon.com for the phrase “women’s leadership,” and those are some of the titles that will appear — the first of more than 7,000 results.

There are seemingly endless tomes of advice for women seeking to become better leaders. Some are blithe, and some are cliché, some are blunt and some are soothing. Moreover, they all reflect the

importance of women finding their leadership stride, both for themselves, their families and their companies.

“All the research is showing that when companies have more women in leadership, they do better in terms of performance, productivity and profitability,” said Joelle Jay Ph.D., a nationally-recognized expert in personal leadership who is known for her success in the advancement of executive women.

Jay, who lives in Reno, is a partner with the Leadership Research Institute, a global leadership development firm focused on executive leadership. As an executive coach, she helps prepare senior-level executive women to take a position on the executive committee and make sure they’re successful when they get there.

She’s a keynote speaker and author with her own pair of books: “The Inner Edge: The 10 Practices of Personal Leadership” and “The New Advantage: How Women in Leadership Can Create Win-Wins for Their Companies and Themselves.”

As she coaches and helps women leaders achieve what they want to achieve and lead the lives they want to live, Jay begins with a core concept — leadership begins in oneself.

“There are endless techniques when it comes to leadership, and there’s lots of advice for women,” Jay said. “But, for women who want to be extremely successful at work and in their lives? The place to start is with personal leadership.”

Leadership, Jay said, is the ability to define a compelling vision of the future, and then inspire people to achieve it. Personal leadership is the ability to do that for yourself, she added.

“Just as leaders need to develop a strategy for their companies, individual leaders also need to have a strategy for themselves,” she said. “Once you have the mindset of personal leadership, you can lead yourself wherever you want.”

Her book, “The Inner Edge,” delves into 10 core principles to help women develop their personal leadership. Some of these include:

### ***Get clarity***

“It always starts with getting clarity,” Jay said. “That’s the first principle of personal leadership for a reason. It’s much easier to achieve what you want to achieve if you know what it is. So, it’s important for leaders to step back and ask themselves some critical questions. ‘What do I want for my life? What do I want for my career? What do I want as a leader? What’s the big vision?’ Because that vision is your destination on what I call the path to achievement.”

### ***Tap into your brilliance***

“Leaders are always more successful, not to mention happier, if they’re able to lead in a way that aligns with their natural talents and strengths,” Jay said. “So, rather than doing things the way other people do them, or doing things the way people told you to do them, or the way you’ve always done

them, a much more powerful approach to accomplishing your vision and goals is to do it in the way that's best suited for you."

### ***Maximize your time***

"If you want to be a powerful, successful leader, and you want to do it in a way that improves your quality of life, then you're going to need to devote time to that effort, and that can be a challenge," Jay said. "This is the game changer for women who embrace the idea that they own their own time, and that they, as powerful leaders, deserve to invest in themselves. When they do that, they give themselves the opportunity to break away from the pack. They recognize that it's not just about doing the work. It's not even just about leading the work. It's about leading the leaders. It's about leading themselves."

By taking an inside-out approach to leadership development, women can master skills that will help them to lead other people and also live rich, fulfilling lives.

"The old paradigm was that if you wanted to be successful in business, you had to make a lot of sacrifices in your personal life," Jay said. "Women felt they had to choose between being successful as a leader or having a happy, healthy, relaxed family or personal life. That choice is not very healthy. You'll be much more powerful as a leader and enjoy your life a lot more if you can bring those two things together. In the new paradigm you can be a better leader and lead a better life."

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**Dr. Joelle Jay** is a Director with the Leadership Research Institute, as well as an executive coach, keynote speaker, and the author of *The Inner Edge: The Ten Practices of Personal Leadership*. Joelle specializes in the advancement of executive women, and she is proud to have supported the development of top talent into positions of leadership for many successful companies, including MetLife, Adobe, and Microsoft.