

# New Rules of the Game: 10 Strategies for Women in the Workplace

*Susan Packard*

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10 Strategies for  
Women *in the* Workplace



"Finding comfort competing, the importance of practicing many roles on a team, and the key role that resilience plays—these define a winning spirit. Susan's book will be extremely useful to all women navigating career choices."

—MARGO GEORGIADIS, president, Americas, Google

SUSAN PACKARD

COFOUNDER *of* HGTV

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**Susan Packard : New Rules of the Game: 10 Strategies for Women in the Workplace** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised New Rules of the Game: 10 Strategies for Women in the Workplace:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Powerful Must Read for all Women!!!By Kindle CustomerAs a retired educator of 30 years, entering the workforce has been quite an adjustment. Over the years I have read hundreds of motivational and strategic books on countless subjects. New Rules of The Game is a must read for all women that desire not only success , but leadership roles in the workforce. The book is filled with endless "ah-ha" moments. Ms. Packard writes with a strong foundation of knowledge, insight and an introspective understanding of what behaviors to

avoid and what to capitalize on. You can hear and feel the passion Susan has for wanting to empower women to become as successful as they can be. Her voice is authentic throughout the book. There are examples from her own life in each chapter, from her successes (which were many) to her blunders (which were open and honestly shared). Practical steps are given that can be taken to overcome the obstacles that women face on a daily basis. Each chapter includes a "Your turn" section at the end which drive the points home and make the words applicable to your own life and career. The reader-friendly advice is relatable, humorous and easy to apply. This book details how "Gamemanship" can be successfully used to make advancements in any career. I can certainly see how this book would be a game changer for readers, making the difference in being an employee and becoming a leader in your company. New Rules of the Game can guide you to making a win of your career!!! I highly recommend this book for women in all stages of their career. I have purchased copies for my entire management team. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Business Book!! By Kellie Bravo to the author, Susan Packard. She found a way to communicate the art of competition and gamesmanship in a way that is understandable and applicable. I played competitive sports, have worked in a male dominated field (commercial real estate), read over 100 business books, and had mentors/sponsors/coaches galore. All have been impactful in my business success, but none have explained the complexities of competing in the workplace the way Susan has illustrated in her book. Her 10 strategies are easy to understand and full of "ah-ha" moments. Thank you Susan for this wonderful book and I cannot wait to give it to many of my friends in the business world as I know it will help them in their desire to excel in the business world. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Should be required reading for anyone seeking a career in management. By Ed Spray New rules of the game is a very engaging book, chocked full of information, ideas and amusing antidotes with themes that will be as valuable in the future as they are now. The first few chapters should be must reading for MBA management courses; actually the whole book should be required. The tips regarding composure, practice, clothing, speaking, brinkmanship, grit, etc., are extremely well presented. I've read so many "management books" that go on and on in making a point. Ms. Packard makes her points quickly, concisely with a fair bit of humor. She has walked the thin line between the sexes, their differences, their motivations, and their interests in a way that is completely inclusive and non-threatening.

Business is a team sport. Learn how to win. Where would your career be if you could understand how your colleagues--especially men--succeed and win at work? And if, in understanding and applying the rules, you could win, too? In New Rules of the Game, business leader Susan Packard shows you how to cultivate gamesmanship--a strategic way of thinking regularly seen in the video game and sports worlds, and most often among men--that develops creativity, focus, optimism, teamwork, and competitiveness. You'll learn the Ten Rules of Gamesmanship and how to use them effectively to:

- Compete outwardly in a healthy, rewarding way
- Build support groups to help you advance
- Step up with more grit to get the next win
- Approach your workplace with more lightness and insight
- Take loss in stride and provide the emotional distance needed to win at work

Packard shares her career story with humor and candor, including the successes and the mistakes, the triumphs and some personal and career setbacks, and presents them as teachable moments for you. But the book is much bigger than one person's experience. Packard also shares the stories of other presidents and CEOs who have become great gamers in their own fields, providing you with the insight and inspiration to play the business game smarter, stronger, and more successfully. You will also be better able to coach others, inspiring your team to perform at higher levels as you drive them toward the next win. From the Hardcover edition.

"A straightforward guide to success that deserves a prime spot on the bookshelves of career women aspiring to reach the highest corporate ranks." — Kirkus  
 "When I read Susan Packard's Ten Rules of Gamesmanship, I found many relatable truths. In our family we did not list them as 'rules'; but we learned by my mother's example. Difficult balancing acts, like being gracious while staying cool, and showing grit while valuing being likeable to others, and if you fail, learn from it and try again. I live many of Packard's 'rules of gamesmanship' through my mother's wise examples." — Rachael Ray  
 "Finding comfort competing, the importance of practicing many roles on a team, and the key role that resilience plays; these define a winning spirit. Susan's book will be extremely useful to all women navigating career choices." — Margo Georgiadis, President, Americas, Google  
 "Susan Packard shares a successful formula for all in her new book." — Paul Polman, CEO, Unilever, Inc., a Global Fortune 500 Company  
 "Packard's New Rules of the Game gives practical insight that we can all learn from." — Gina Bianchini, founder and CEO of Mightybell, cofounder of www.LeanIn.org  
 "Susan's strength and skill shine through in New Rules of the Game. This book provides actionable steps for success in business." — David Zaslav, President and CEO, Discovery Communications  
 "The insights on gamesmanship in Susan Packard's book will better enable women, and men, to fulfill their potential every

day.” —John Bryant, CEO, Kellogg, a Fortune 500 Company “With style that’s observant, insightful and funny, Packard teaches the rules and the language of winners.” —Sally Jenkins, Washington Post “There’s no question that business advancement requires passion and a spirit of competition, as well as collaboration. How women can express this successfully is captured well in Susan Packard’s New Rules of the Game.” —Susan Cameron, CEO, Reynolds American, Inc., a Fortune 500 Company “This book could become a new guide for women in business, helping any one of you at home work your way to the top of your industry.” —Kristin Farley, ABC-News

About the Author Susan Packard has been on the ground floor and helped build powerhouse media brands such as HBO, CNBC, and HGTV. She is the cofounder of Scripps Networks Interactive and former chief operating officer of HGTV. Under Packard’s helm, HGTV became one of the fastest growing cable networks in television history. Today, HGTV is available in more than 98 million U.S. homes and distributed in over 200 countries and territories. Packard helped build Scripps Network Interactive to a market value of over \$10 billion. She can be found online at [SusanPackard.com](http://SusanPackard.com), @PackardSusan, and [facebook.com/PackardSusan](https://facebook.com/PackardSusan).

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Foreword

Some LEADERS are born WOMEN.

GERALDINE FERRARO

1984 vice presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro’s fighting-spirit quote became a rallying cry for many of us in business in the 1980s. Things were truly changing, or so we thought. More and more women were penetrating the hierarchy in all of the business sectors. It seemed just a matter of time until we reached a critical mass in the leadership ranks. . . . and when that happened, the gender differences in style and temperament that so strapped us (or that we were effectively hiding) would no longer be an issue. The cultures would change and the businesses would thrive. Clearly that didn’t happen. What did change, however, is that today women can go as far in business as they choose to. There are just two requirements: Find a business culture that supports your talents and skills. Learn the language of gamesmanship that it takes to succeed in that culture. The latter is what this book is about. It is written by a woman who knows of what she speaks.

Susan Packard was a member of the founding team, and the only woman, at Scripps Networks Interactive (NYSE: SNI) when the company launched the HGTV cable network in 1994. In 1997 Scripps acquired the Food Network. The founding team went on to build both entities into multibillion-dollar businesses. I first met Susan when I joined the Food Network in 1998. I had known her by reputation for years. She was the industry’s ranking woman in the rough-and-tumble, totally male-dominated world of affiliate sales. She played the game with great skill, great guts, and unbelievable perseverance. She became HGTV’s chief operating officer, with responsibility for the sales groups, marketing, and international and new business development. I assumed in order to accomplish these things Susan would be one of those edgy and desensitized women who seemed to prevail at the time. I couldn’t have been more wrong. I was taken totally by surprise by her openness, her support, and her willingness to share information, which is, of course, where the power always lies. I was also very taken with her passion for building a culture that supported and prepared women for power positions, while recognizing women generally are not motivated solely by competition and power. Women bring other attributes into the workplace, such as collaboration and management prowess. Susan intended to fully use those strengths as building blocks for the business. With that in mind, Susan guided the business into a set of declared core values that are still in place today. These values include compassion and support, openness, shared responsibility, and work-life balance. And, of course, all employees benefit, as does the company. Scripps is ranked among the best cable networks to work at in every survey. Susan also held regularly scheduled women’s gatherings that were informal and off the record. Women from all over the company would gather with her and the other managers and talk about their challenges, their shortcomings, and the ins and outs of the gender gap we were all experiencing. It was a wonderful way for us all to become mentors to one another and share experience and wisdom without any regard to titles and rank. Perhaps her biggest contribution and legacy, however, will be the lessons she shares in this book. It’s the recognition that business is like any institution, and as such we, as women, need to understand the rules, behaviors, and norms if we want to advance there. Then, when we clear the field from middle management into positions of authority, we can—and should—make business a more matriarchal place. Her book gives us practical lessons to become leaders and, as such, is a huge step forward. In this book we can find that whatever we choose to achieve is truly in our grasp.

—Judy Girard, president of the Food Network (2000–2005) and HGTV Network (2006–2008)

Introduction

In 1956, twelve-year-old Joan Cronan decided to compete. She was a great little baseball player in south Louisiana, where she grew up. She knew she was good because she’d often beat the boys who’d come to play in her backyard. She asked local coaches if she could try out for Little League instead of girls’ softball. She was told no. But it’d be OK if she were scorekeeper or cheerleader. She went on to play the sports that were acceptable for women—volleyball, tennis, and golf. She pursued a career in the business of athletics and, at the peak of her career in 2011, rose to become the head of all sports programs—men’s and women’s—as the University of Tennessee’s athletic director. She is the only woman to ever hold that position in the Southeastern Conference (SEC)—the most powerful football conference in the nation. And football is where the money lies in college athletics. After three decades serving UT sports and a season at its highest position, Joan retired in the summer of 2014. From backyard baseball to big-time college athletics, Joan had no trouble competing against boys. In fact she loved it. She thrived on

it. And the question I raise is, Why? Why are some women comfortable with competition and showing the world what they've got while others are not? This book is about employing lessons from the love of games and competition to advance in your career. I want to help women learn how to unleash their competitive spirits and win. I call those who do this—women like Joan—gamers, and what they practice, the art of gamesmanship. In our popular culture today, the word gamer has become synonymous with playing video games, but in this book I'm using it in a much broader context—a competition context. Simply put, a gamer loves to compete, and more often than not, she wins.

### WHAT IS GAMESMANSHIP?

Gamesmanship is my word for a broad, strategic, and overarching approach to success in the workplace. It is something we practice every day in sports—and in business. It occurs whenever there's a competition with at least one other person. When we played board games or video games or even hopscotch as kids, we were engaged in gamesmanship. Organized sports are perhaps the most common form of gamesmanship, but it occurs anytime we compete. And it occurs endlessly in business. The concept of gamesmanship is hardly new to the business world. It's not a coincidence that game-playing metaphors have invaded the business workplace. Our colleagues are our "teammates"; our goals revolve around "winning"; that new deal or promotion; the "competitors"; are others in our industry; we need to "practice"; our presentations or skill-building techniques. We "roll the dice"; we "raise the stakes"; we "punt"; on a deal we don't like, and we're urged to always "cross the finish line." In a cover article of the April 8, 2013, issue of Fortune titled "Rivalry," the writers highlight the greatest business competitions of all time, including Coke vs. Pepsi, Ford vs. GM, and Nike vs. Reebok. Business leaders think in terms of competitions and winning. I know I did, and it got me to the corner office of a large, successful company that today has a market cap of over \$12 billion. Gamesmanship asks that we view the workplace the way most men do, as one giant playing field with women and men running around on it. Sometimes we're in competition with them, and other times we collaborate. Business functions very much like a team sport. If you're a pro pitcher, you compete with the other pitchers on your team for a slot in the starting rotation. But when the game's on the line it's all about the team, and any internal competitions fall away. Everyone on the field goes for the team win. Good gamers are on board to rally and fiercely compete for their company, just as athletes are for their team. As an individual on the team, there are big and small wins, and they change every day. They can be anything from the big things (a promotion or raise or acquiring new resources to do your job) to day-to-day matters (securing a meeting with someone of influence or even booking your favorite conference room). You know you're a gamer—one who uses gamesmanship mindfully, with purpose, to move up in the workplace—when something happens at work that you orchestrated, and your reaction is an under-the-breath yes! and a subtle fist pump. The win is always about moving our careers and our companies to the next level of success. We cultivate strength, creativity, and focus through the practice of gamesmanship. We learn to become better problem solvers. Games are already showing themselves to be far more than fun; they indicate who we are and what we can do.

In her 2010 TED talk, Dr. Jane McGonigal from the Institute for the Future described four traits of video gamers:

- Urgent optimism: Gamers act immediately to tackle a challenge.
- Social connectedness: Gamers connect with others and build up social relationships.
- Blissful productivity: Gamers are happier when challenged and willing to work hard.
- Epic meaning: Gamers like missions and stories and become empowered with hope.

Other research on video gamers is also notable. Brain researcher Jay Pratt investigated what he termed "the useful field of view." That's the ability to see a wider net of activity, or in sports terms, seeing the whole playing field. Women trained on action video games significantly improved the breadth of their field of view. This broader view reveals a dynamic workplace, with many players who impact the ebb and flow of their careers. In other words, it's more than their boss who can help or hurt their advancement. Although Pratt and McGonigal were studying video gamers, there's a far larger context for their analysis than just the virtual world. This gamer is playing in the real world, in everyday business, in the real time of real lives. Gamesmanship is a way of thinking, and it's an attitude. It uses your inner competitive drive to maximize opportunities. As such, it recognizes that you may lose a round one day, but you can—and will—win one the next day. To be a great gamer means unleashing your competitive spirit with courage and unbridled enthusiasm in any arena, including the business world. And here, ladies, is where the tension lies.

### WHAT WOMEN ARE AND WHAT WOMEN ARE NOT

Before the enactment of Title IX in 1972, women rarely played college sports. Most in the workplace today were not raised to play team sports growing up, at least not with the intensity afforded the boys. You weren't trained from a young age to learn the importance of mental and physical agility and stamina. You didn't get all of the positive reinforcement that boys got playing games. You didn't hear "Fight for it! You go girl! Show us what you've got!" And that's unfortunate, because having confidence when you're in the game gives you a better chance of winning at that moment—and the next time. Confidence builds on itself. And to actually score points, what a euphoric feeling that is! Things are changing today for the younger generation of women, which is wonderful, but for most of us without such rearing, it's tough to express our competitive spirits outwardly. We like to collaborate, not to compete. Competing requires, by definition, winners and losers. Most women are compassionate; winning, and especially losing, requires dispassion. One of the most important teachings of

gamesmanship centers on losing. Losing is OK. Losing means you're in the game, you're at least playing, and playing is critical to advancement. The great news is that when you practice the rules in this book, you'll win a whole lot more than you'll lose. The important point is that you're actively a part of the game, and by playing, you're managing your career advancement. In the parlance of games, you can't roll seven if you don't roll the dice. OH NO, I WON'T BECOME A MAN! I'm not asking you to. Gamesmanship is one of the languages of business, much like finance. But with any new language, you have to learn how to speak it. Think of it this way: I may want to learn a new language, let's say French. I take lessons, practice, and eventually I'm pretty conversant. If I keep practicing I can even begin to think in French. Does that mean I've lost English as my first language or that I'm any less American? Of course not. Gamesmanship is quite simply another language, a new skill set that will help you become more successful and fulfilled, just like learning a new language. To keep with the analogy, if France is the business world, it's best if you learn the language to be fluent there. France is populated with the French; business is populated with men. And men have controlled the territory since history began. Until you learn to speak the language of business, men will control the conversation. You don't forsake any of your womanhood to employ gamesmanship. But, as you will see, I'm asking you to think, and act, more like an athlete. This means showing up with confidence on the playing field and having a winning spirit. It means composure. Mental fortitude. It means loving the game called business and being fueled by the raw adrenaline of winning. It means thinking like a winner. With enough practice and use of the steps I outline in this book, you can do this. And I suggest you must, if you want to level the playing field with men. Here's what you're up against. THE GUYS My work experience suggests that most men just love to compete. I swear before the alarm clock goes off in the morning they're in bed thinking, Who goes down today? They see much of life, and certainly business, as a game. If you report better profit margins or a better market share than your competitors, it's a win. Outside of business, men think this way too. Case in point: In a November 6, 2012 (Election Day), article in the Wall Street Journal titled "For Men, Election Is Like Big Game," a Duke neuroscientist tracked men watching election results and found their hormonal response to be similar to men watching a great ball game with their favorite team on the field. For those of us who have chosen business as a career, we do have competitive juice. We're not morticians, right? But we tend to focus more on self-mastery than competing with others. There's a name for that—perfectionism, which deserves a separate book of its own. This book, however, explains how to channel your drive for self-mastery toward outward competition. There are so many advantages that come from thinking this way. You will get promoted more and move your career along more quickly. You will be able to take loss with grace and to learn from it. You will be better able to coach others, inspiring your team to perform at higher levels as you drive them toward the next win. The excitement is invigorating, and everyone's morale benefits. The gamer lens also provides the emotional distance you need to win. It helps desensitize you from the politics of corporate life, and it teaches you to set boundaries between work and life. With this lens you will come to understand your male colleagues better and not to personalize so much their interactions with you. Business is a winning game for the men, so shouldn't it be a game for you too? Most important, the gamer lens is a means to level the playing field with men, your constant competitors in the business world. The best news of all is this: Once you start winning and clear the field from middle management into senior roles, you can influence company cultures from the top down, moving them to become more matriarchal. But first you have to get there. THE REALITIES FOR WOMEN Learning good gamesmanship becomes all the more critical because of imbalances women face in the workplace every day. This book doesn't sugarcoat that. If you want a book describing equal standards of behavior in business for women and men, I'd love to write that, but it wouldn't be reality. There is still a wide gender gap, which is why gamesmanship is such an important tool. Let's look at ways women are held to different standards: • In a famous 2003 study by Columbia Business School professor Frank Flynn and New York University professor Cameron Anderson, students were presented with an actual case study of a successful female entrepreneur. Half the students received the case study with the entrepreneur sporting her actual female name. The other half received the same case study with one change: a male name in the entrepreneur spot. The groups gave the businessperson equal marks for respect, but the students whose case study retained the female name were more likely to score the subject as someone who was selfish and not someone they would want to work for. Same data, the only difference being gender. • A Stanford School of Business study on power and influence found that women who are perceived as competent are also often perceived as unlikable. Men, on the other hand, do not face this likability/competency issue. • Behaviors like impulse control are also given a much wider berth for men than women. Men can scream when they're angry. Women can't, if they want to be respected. Men can fool around at work (I've even heard office flings called "sports sex"—ironic given the thesis of this book). Screaming and affairs may generate office chatter, and none of it charitable, but those men won't be relegated to corporate Siberia the way women would. Clearly no one should do either of these things in the workplace, but men often get away with it. • There are words in the business world that are laden with different meanings for men and women. Men can be ambitious, aggressive, and powerful, and that's good. But for women,

those same terms can be a negative. A man may be called a boss, and that's a good thing. Even bossy is OK for men; it shows they are in charge. But if a woman is bossy, that's bad. Men are lauded for aggressively pursuing goals. Women who do the same are called pushy. I'll never forget the day my female neighbor, who also had a management job, told me she perceived me as ambitious. You could tell by her tone she didn't mean that as a compliment. My first thought was, She thinks I'm selfish! But then I realized she was right, I am ambitious—and that was OK. Perhaps even we've been brainwashed to buy into these double standards. Instead of throwing up our hands in frustration, we can play like gamers, and win.

### OUR ADVANTAGES

Most women work toward win-win situations. We approach work and life that way, which is why we're such great collaborators and excellent managers of people. The problem with creating win-win situations is that it assumes others around us want wins too. What you may find, however, is that often your male teammates prefer a playing field of winners and losers. It's quicker than building consensus, and getting the win is just plain thrilling. It's a real adrenaline high. What can you do about that? Gamesmanship is an excellent solution. Let's look at all of the advantages women bring to the playing field: a win-win approach to work, intuitive brains, interpersonal skills, strong team management skills, observational and listening skills, an interest in learning, and an impressive work ethic. These attributes have been discussed at length in other books, so in this one I'll focus on new skills to develop and use. However, there is one advantage listed that is worth a second look—most women are excellent observers and listeners. That ability allows them to get into the heads of their teammates and learn about others in the workplace, be it a colleague, a supervisor, or a client. Once you know people, you can understand what's important to them and how to create win-win situations. But because win-win outcomes are not always possible, Plan B is to beat them good. Here's a slice-of-life example of why getting into the heads of others seems to come more naturally for women. Have you ever had a conversation with your husband or partner who's just been out with one of the guys? You asked him what went on: "Nothing," he says. "How are Jane [wife] and Jimmy [child]?" you ask. "I don't know. We didn't talk about that." "Well, what did you talk about?" "Not sure. Not really anything." Whenever I have these nonconversations with my husband, it reminds me of the joke about the Three Wisewomen, which goes like this. If there had been Three Wisewomen, instead of men, they would have:

- Asked for directions
- Arrived on time
- Helped deliver the baby
- Cleaned the stable
- Made a casserole
- Brought practical gifts

It's a funny reminder that in a broad comparison, men and women are different. It's been that way since we were boys and girls. As a little girl you probably didn't bite your PBJ sandwiches into the shape of a revolver. You didn't punch another girl to say hello. We're just made differently, and this book is not intended to be a male basher. I've learned almost everything I know about business from some very talented men, including gamesmanship. My point in writing is to help other women close the gap and become great gamers too.

### TEN RULES OF GAMESMANSHIP

How can you be a gamer? In this book, I'll answer that question with concrete discussion, stories, and solutions. You'll learn the Ten Rules of Gamesmanship and how to use them effectively to succeed. The first seven rules focus on skills, behaviors, and strategies needed to be a great gamer:

- Rule 1: Conditioning
- Rule 2: Composure
- Rule 3: Playing offense
- Rule 4: Brinksmanship strategies
- Rule 5: Fan clubs
- Rule 6: Practice, practice, practice
- Rule 7: Uniform requirements

The last three rules take a holistic approach to gamesmanship through focus on emotional maturity. They round out the process of becoming a business leader.

- Rule 8: Good sportsmanship
- Rule 9: Grit
- Rule 10: Team play

I'll introduce you to each rule, show you how it applies in a business setting, and give you practical ways to incorporate it into your life. At the end of each chapter, in the section titled "Your Turn," I'll summarize the high points and ask that you try the strategies yourself. Many of the rules require a certain finesse because we're women, and I'll point those out too. To become great gamers, you need to sometimes play from the women's tees, or with rules of finesse. It doesn't mean you're not as strong or capable as men; it just means winning at work is often trickier for women than it is for men. For example, the ability to be liked as a leader is a more fragile thing for women, as many feel we're expected to behave in supporting rather than in leading roles. Along the way, I'll share with you the stories from my own experience as well as the tales of other presidents and CEOs who have become great gamers in their own fields. It's a diverse and rich group of storytellers, and I'm sure you'll learn from them as much as I did when interviewing them. Business is a team sport. Let's learn how to play.