



**WOMEN BUSINESS LEADERS**  
OF THE  
U.S. HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY FOUNDATION™  
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## **Ten Best Practices for Advancing Women in Business**

On March 6-8, 2002, approximately 100 senior executive women and women board members from the U.S. health care industry met for the first time in Leesburg, Virginia at the Inaugural Retreat of the Women Business Leaders of the U.S. Health Care Industry Foundation. During a Retreat session, the women discussed barriers to advancing women in business and attempted to identify “best practices” for addressing these barriers. The recommendations were then summarized into the following top ten “best practices” for advancing women in business.

- 1. Self-promotion is not only appropriate, but expected. Find your style and self-promote.**
- 2. Invest time in cultivating business relationships—take some action at least once a week. Do not merely be a ‘doer’.**
- 3. Be proactive about your career advancement:**
  - Choose or ask for a mentor or sponsor
  - Seek out a confidant or coach
  - Think ahead: where do you want to be in 1-5-10 years?
  - Advancement may be vertically (e.g., promotions) or laterally (e.g., board positions)
- 4. Make your business and professional objectives known to others.**
- 5. Be comfortable with delegating and surround yourself with excellent talent.**
- 6. Work/life balance is good for business. Find your balance and help others do the same.**
- 7. Informal networking can be just as effective as formal networking. You do not need to wait for meetings or retreats to network with others relevant to your business. Create your own meeting.**
  - Consider having informal dinners, invitations to your home.
  - Maintain relationships with search firms.
- 8. Every opportunity that comes your way is an opportunity for someone, even if you are not interested. Make recommendations and pass the information along.**
- 9. Failures are just challenges. You can learn a lot from challenges.**
- 10. Focus on communication styles:**
  - Become knowledgeable about differences in communication styles.
  - Know your audience and communicate in their style. You will be much more effective.