



## Kim Fulton Marchand

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Kim Fulton Marchand is co-owner of Sesuit Harbor House. Throughout her career she has focused on expanding and improving opportunities for women in business, often mentoring and coaching young professionals. An underlying tenet in all of her work is to “lift as you rise” – advice from her Dean at Simmons College, where she earned her MBA. Her BA in Women’s Studies is from UMASS Amherst.

Marchand built a career specializing in change management, working for rapid growth or turnaround organizations, including venture backed startups. She has roots in the nonprofit world and, later, in the for-profit side of service industries. Before buying the inn, Marchand was a Partner and COO of Isaacson, Miller, a firm that finds leaders for mission-driven organizations.

Since acquiring the Sesuit in 2008 Marchand and her husband have rebuilt, expanded services, added amenities and focused on brand, reputation and community. Guest satisfaction has been overwhelmingly positive; the inn was awarded the Certificate of Excellence by TripAdvisor in 2011 and 2012.

In the off-season Marchand provides interim senior management, recently serving as the Interim CFO at Heritage Museums and Gardens. Her volunteer board work includes President, Dennis Chamber of Commerce; Past President, The Guild for Human Services and proud Marsh Monitor for APCC.

**“Effective mentoring can be helpful in developing future leaders but shouldn’t be viewed (or executed) in isolation. Mentors can help aspiring leaders accelerate their development by sharing perspectives and lessons that they’ve learned along the way. They can also be effective sounding boards and help to push a mentee to approach things from different angles. This certainly can help one’s journey toward leadership, but it is part of a broader development equation.”**

Susan Tardanico

## Stepping into your power

The issue of leadership can be a sticky one. While generalizations are risky and individuals vary a great deal, there is the perception sometimes that women are hesitant to lead, whether for lack of desire or lack of skills. Combatting this perception is key to establishing more women in leadership positions.

“We must be careful not to overgeneralize, but overall, women tend to have several characteristics that make them well-suited to leadership,” says Susan Tardanico, founding partner and CEO of the Authentic Leadership Alliance LLC, a leadership and communications consultancy that helps executives and their teams lead and communicate. “They tend to be empathetic, active listeners, collaborative, focused on others and adept communicators. When traits like these are combined with strong vision, self-confidence and strategic acumen, it can be a very powerful leadership combination. In fact, these traits are often associated with transformational leadership.”

Each person has their unique situation and circumstances that might impact their approach to leadership. That said, there are some fairly consistent themes among women when it comes to struggles with leadership roles, according to Tardanico:

**Behavioral Conditioning** – *There are behavioral standards that are often ingrained in young girls: don’t rock the boat, get along with others, be the peacemaker, don’t talk back, be selfless and soft-spoken, make friends. These behaviors, which gain us positive recognition as children (“good girls”), often seem at odds with the tasks of leadership. For example, managing conflict, making difficult decisions that affect people, asserting ourselves or going toe-to-toe with colleagues ... these behaviors are in contradiction with those we’ve been told are “good.” The paradigm is strong, and it can create a struggle.*

**Confidence and Self-Worth** – *Women often fail to see themselves as strong, worthy leaders. They question if they are enough – strong enough, smart*

*enough, deserving enough. This is a well-researched condition called the Imposter Syndrome. It creates such deep rooted insecurity (especially in women) that we feel like we’re an imposter - faking how good we really are. These overwhelming feelings of self-doubt can create a leadership struggle in several ways. For example, we could derail ourselves, not going for leadership roles because we don’t believe we’re capable. Also, lack of confidence leads to micromanagement – afraid to let go of any detail for fear of failing and being “found out.” This is at direct odds with effective leadership where you get things done through other people and empower them to take initiative.*

**Managing the Balance** – *Everywhere I go, the issue of balance is raised. Women often feel the pinch of juggling many responsibilities of career and family, especially in this 24/7, always-connected work environment. They already feel torn by competing pressures and expectations, and stepping up to a higher-level leadership role often creates additional struggle, whether it’s real, perceived or anticipated.*

It is critical that women harness their innate skillsets to become better leaders, and the first step in harnessing your innate skill set is to understand what that skill set is. “Women often find it easier to cite their weaknesses instead of their strengths,” notes Tardanico. “There are several tools available to assess your skills and strengths. Once you get clear on those natural assets, think about how you can assemble a team around you that allows you to leverage your greatest strengths to have the greatest impact. Strong leaders know how to build strong teams with the right blend of skills and perspectives. Also, consider how your particular skills and qualities can be used to inspire and move people toward a common goal. Find some new ways to demonstrate these skills, and get feedback. Feedback can be very powerful.”

Making good choices – even if they may be difficult choices – can help women strengthen their leadership capabilities. “There are limitless choices we can make, every day, that can impact our leadership capabilities,” says Tardanico. “We can choose to take a stretch assignment, a new role or simply choose to try some new behaviors. We can choose to ask and listen. We can choose to say yes or say no. We can choose to speak up, or choose to stay quiet. We can choose to believe in our potential and take a risk. Depending upon the situation, any one of these choices can have an effect on our leadership capability. As an aside, often, women fear that by choosing to have a family, it means that their leadership ability will be compromised. That’s perhaps the greatest leadership training ground of all!” **CPB**