

Women at work: Don't try to go it alone

Shelley E. Cochran 12 a.m. EST November 26, 2013



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When I was a youngster, the Lone Ranger was all the rage. I also pored over Batman and Superman comics. In school we learned about George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Edison (my favorite because we shared the same birthday). Here in Rochester we are justly proud of Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony and George Eastman.

The way these stories were often told made it sound like each of these characters came to greatness almost single-handedly. Every single one, it seems, managed to stop the bad guys, win a war, eliminate racism or sexism and invent the electric light or easy-to-use cameras and film — without any help at all.

It's expected that when we grow up, we'll know better. But Americans apparently still believe in the "Great Men" theory of history (and it is usually men who are highlighted). Truth is, none of it is reality. Not one of the heroes or heroines of history or today acted alone. They all had others around to help them.

If you're launching a new business or project, remember the true lessons of history. Don't try to go it alone. Network. Seek mentors. Check out resources such as the Small Business Administration or the Business Division of the Central Library. Join professional groups and get involved. Check out possible resources through Google!

And then remember to thank those who helped you. I don't recall whether the Lone Ranger ever thanked Tonto. But thanking those who help us along the way is not only common courtesy, it just makes sense. There will be a time when we are the ones who need help again. Spread help and respect and it will come back to you.

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