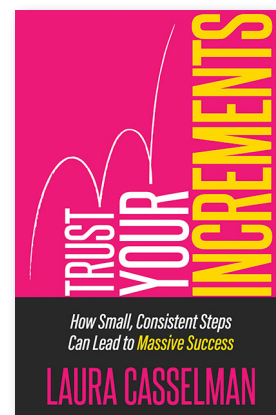


Trust Your Increments

How Small, Consistent Steps Can Lead to Massive Success

by **Laura Casselman**



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THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Leading is far from easy, especially when you're a woman in business. But once you're armed with your confidence, the world is your oyster.

Trust Your Increments: How Small, Consistent Steps Can Lead to Massive Success overflows with growth systems and wisdom that has the potential to change the way women approach things in business. The book details fifteen small and incremental steps you can take to climb the corporate ladder without compromising your personal values.

By painting the book with colorful real-life stories about climbing the ladder of male-dominated corporate America, author Laura Casselman offers an honest and entertaining perspective on being a female leader. She challenges us to put our focus on what matters to us the most, maximizing our potential, and hitting ambitious career goals by taking little, but consistent steps toward success.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to be confident and never apologize for it.
- How to take care of your reputation and image.
- How to run a successful business.
- How to know your value and shine by doing what you do the best.

Introduction

Success doesn't come easy but when you're armed with the right weapons, you begin to get closer to your destination with every passing day. Sure, sexism does exist. In fact, it's quite rampant. As a woman, you might get paid less than your male counterparts, you might even experience the "innocent" office banter that's nothing but poorly disguised sexism. Of course, all this needs to be changed, and thankfully, we're already moving toward a better and fairer future for women, people of color, and good people in general. Trust Your Increments will empower you with the tools you need to reach the top without having to compromise your values.

Chapter 1: I Like Myself

This might sound like a no-brainer, but confidence is everything we look to achieve in our life. It plays the biggest part in your success. But being confident doesn't mean being infallible. Life has a way of humbling us and it's just a matter of how you handle the tricks your mind plays and quieten those nagging voices.

Remember, wherever you are and whatever you're doing, there should be somebody better than you. After all, how would you learn if you were the best in the room?

When it comes to being on top of your game, the first thing to do is to find what you're good at and double down on that. When you're on this journey, stop worrying about what everyone else is doing. The only person you're in competition with is yourself – the "you" of yesterday, last week, last year, ten years ago.

When you're confident, some people are going to bristle at your sheer audacity in refusing to second-guess yourself. But there will also be some people who will encourage you to be, well, you. As always, it's a matter of surrounding yourself with the right people.

The line between confidence and misplaced arrogance can sometimes appear to be a thin one, but it's hugely important to learn how to stay on the right side of it.

Chapter 2: No, I'm Not Your Equal!

Here's something both men and women must understand – speaking for women is NOT synonymous with speaking against men. Regardless of factors like gender, race, and

sexual orientation, everyone deserves to have a fulfilling life and must be paid the same for doing the same job.

Sadly, we're still two hundred behind equal pay for women. Think about it, many women almost have their careers ended just by something as natural yet powerful as pregnancy! The tech industry is mainly male-dominated even today and women in all positions are stereotyped endlessly. When you're on a journey towards success, make sure you know your worth and stop giving discounts. If you think you deserve that raise, don't hesitate to raise your voice about it confidently.

Chapter 3: Image and Accountability

Succeeding in male-dominated corporate America is no small feat. However, women in positions of power are not always sunshine and rainbows to work with either. The Make Your Seat at the Table movement was an undertaking designed to assure every major American corporation had at least one executive female voice in the boardroom.

Sadly, this came with a massive problem – the movement talked about a seat at the table. Given how women make up 50 percent of the population, those numbers seemed a little skewed to me. This triggered fierce competition among women. After all, these companies weren't trying to do the right thing, they were just trying to tick a box.

Chapter 4: Be Responsible for Your Own Dang Happiness

Most people neglect happiness, especially in their professional lives. What they don't realize, however, is that it's never been about the remuneration package but about making a difference, helping somebody, and being happy with what you do.

Achieving trumps obtaining. Finding "your happy" that fills you with a sense of purpose, contentment, and fulfillment is better than drowning in work that brings you constant stress.

Learn happiness from hardships. After all, until you're tested – mentally, physically, and emotionally – you'll never know what you're capable of.

Shift the spotlight from a quick fix of joy to long-term happiness. When we don't know what's coming next, achieving balance in our lives can be challenging. But being happy and content is all about striking the right

balance between living in the moment and not making decisions that will enslave our future selves. Finally, don't let fear stand in the way of your happiness.

Chapter 5: Giving an F

The best possible way to be happy is to care about things that matter to you and stop giving an "F" about everything else. You gain nothing from it except unnecessary strain and misery in your life.

If being successful at something is important to you, focus all your energy on that. Success is not defined by comparisons, your co-workers, or friends. It is what you consider to be success that matters. For instance, just because somebody makes more money than you, it doesn't necessarily make them happy. Don't covet what others have, focus on what you want. Instead of seeking acknowledgment elsewhere, be your own cheer squad!

Chapter 6: Know Your Strengths

Learning what we're good at doing, much like learning what we love, begins in childhood. When our strengths make us happy, it takes the petty frustration out of life's more challenging moments. Sadly, so many of us are good at things that make us outright miserable.

Figure out what truly matters to you and use that information to make the trade between what you're good at and can earn a living doing and how much time you can afford to put into what makes you happy.

You're more likely to be happy when you play to your strengths. However, sometimes it's not that simple. If your weaknesses are holding you back, make sure you look at them first. At the very least, learn enough to know whether somebody else is helping or hindering you.

Aside from understanding your own strengths and weaknesses, learn to enjoy other people's strengths. If your friend is an amazing chef, don't hesitate to let her take the lead when you're having dinner together.

As the saying goes, you're old enough to know better and young enough not to care. If you still don't know what you're good at when you're forty-two, it's not an excuse to give up. Remember, you cannot do everything in your business. So, delegate tasks to save your time, health, and happiness.

Chapter 7: Collaboration

Anyone who reaches the summit can sometimes find it tricky to have support. Collaboration with an additional sounding board from outside your company may not seem easy but it can prove highly valuable. After all, when you're based within your company, you'll only know what your business knows.

Guidance and mentorship are arguably the most important aspects of collaboration. Reach out to a mentor who has more experience than you and you'll be surprised to know how many of them would be willing to help.

We all need to work with external companies, suppliers, and clients to achieve what we set out to do. Constructing harmonious working relationships with others is another piece of the puzzle when establishing meaningful collaborations.

Chapter 8: Staying Positive During the Sh** Storm

Here's a bite of truth: when you're the CEO of a company, crises become a regular occurrence. Sometimes, when there's a fire blazing around you, the only option would be to put that fire out. Self-reflection has to wait until that's done.

When this happens, don't think, "Well only half the building is burning down. I'm grateful for the other half that isn't." Instead, make sure you sit down and think about why something happened and what you can do to prevent it from happening again.

Chapter 10: Know Your Value

Women in particular often mistakenly believe that carving out time for themselves to meet their own physical and emotional needs is somehow selfish. This couldn't be any further from the truth. If you don't take care of yourself, you'll be in no condition to take care of anybody else.

Understanding this and taking the time out for yourself is a critical part of knowing and understanding your own value.

Being on the top level can demand insane hours of work, especially if you're absolutely determined to do great things. But does that mean you must sideline your well-being? Absolutely not. The human body isn't like a car that you can replace with a new and better model when it breaks down. The most innovative thinkers and leaders make their health their top priority.

Aside from your body, your brain also needs a little time off now and then. When it fails to get that, decision fatigue comes knocking at your door. Decision fatigue makes you say, “Whatever, do what you want,” That is typically when everything can come crashing down.

There are several ways to prevent this. For example, don’t email and don’t check social media first thing in the morning to avoid a mountain of questions on your plate before you finish your coffee. Delegate what you cannot find the time to do.

Chapter 11: The Power of No

No is a powerful word. Unfortunately, when a woman in business uses the word no, it will invariably send shockwaves through an industry.

There were times earlier in my career that I was uncomfortable with saying no to people. This was most prominent when I was working in sales and I was expected to wine and dine with prospective clients. Eventually, I reached a point where I drew the line. I would be in the office from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm and I was done after that. No is not a four-letter word. It’s one syllable that will change your life for the better, one use at a time.

There are also situations when the word no must be used carefully. For example, if you have a great team full of ideas but have something planned ahead for months, your no could be directed in a way that won’t shoot down their suggestions in a negative manner.

If somebody you respect gives you a no or you seem to find your path blocked at every turn, there’s nothing wrong with respectfully asking why.

Chapter 12: Top 15 Tips for Successfully Running Your Business

Every business is different and faces unique problems. However, these fifteen universal tips can help you overcome common concerns:

- In the beginning, plan for the end. Be it good or bad, nothing lasts forever, and the end of a business relationship can resemble a messy divorce. So, before the beginning of your venture, make sure you’ve already arranged an exit plan.
- Always know your numbers to ensure your business’s cash flow is stable.

- If you don’t ask, you’ll never receive. Nobody else would look out for your best interests except for you.
- Know your objections and crush them. If your boss is unwilling to give you that raise, get ready to explain why you deserve it.
- Plan an end result and work backward so you always steer a conversation back to the goal you’ve planned.
- Don’t hesitate to say no when you think it’s appropriate.
- Pay yourself first – you’re the only sure thing.
- Rainy days are coming and investment is your umbrella.
- Apply for awards and win them.
- Fire yourself from jobs that eat up your time and delegate them instead.
- If you’ve tried something and it’s not working, let it go.
- Speak only when you have something to say.
- Your time is your own so manage it well.
- Your network is your net worth.
- Define your boundaries.

Conclusion

We’re all on the cusp of great things, but we’re not yet here. We all need to play our part in creating a new world order. Even if naysayers and ignorance outnumber us, it’s our job to change that. Never apologize for your self-belief and confidence and never accept unequal treatment based on your race, gender, sexual orientation, or anything else. Do what makes you happy and dedicate yourself to it while taking care of your reputation and image. Always know your value and never let anyone take that from you.

I’m doing it, countless women are doing it. Now that the curtain has been pulled away, you can join the revolution too!



An innovative voice in digital marketing, **Laura Casselman** is the CEO of JVZoo.com and co-founder of Vidastreet LLC. She has nearly two decades of hands-on experience in successfully growing sales and revenue, improving customer service, and aggressively controlling expenses in competitive market environments. Her writing has appeared in Inc Magazine, Entrepreneur and SmartInsights. Laura climbed the corporate ladder by mastering the rules of the “Old Boys’ Club” and beating them at their own game.

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