Top ten list of tools, tactics or approaches you should avoid to attain successful outcomes

1) Follow your instinct – It is your experience and knowledge talking to you. Trust yourself. Trust your own expertise. Put it out there. If you don’t, someone else will.

2) Don’t be afraid to ask the question you don’t know the answer to. Every question creates a learning opportunity. In most situations, many in the room will be glad you asked.

3) Take credit when you deserve it. Give it when it is deserved. Exhibit a culture of thanks and respect – always.

4) Create Tension. Be the one to ask the tough question or challenge the team think.

5) Hire people who are smarter than you. Your team wins and you look brilliant. See number 4 – give credit.

6) Use your attire to communicate your goal. Dress edgy when you need to think outside of the box or be seen as someone that does not fit the mold. Dress in the dark suit when going into the board room. Don’t show too much cleavage: do you want them to see boobs or brains? Dress frumpy and you communicate you are not confident and that you don’t own your game. Dress more casual when you go to the rail shops or out on the line…so your employees can let their guard down around you and see you as real. When not in steel toes, wear heels if you can – I have read, and tend to agree, that heels can give more conviction to your image. You get the picture. What you wear communicates a lot!

7) Don’t be afraid of your god given feminine communication tools (collaboration, compassion, complimenting, listening). In certain crowds be direct (other women admire that trait). In others, use your softer side
(men might find an overly direct woman as combative and pushy.) You can be decisive and achieve your goals in either mode so know your audience and use the right tool at the right time: Lisa Murkowski

8) In Railroading we deal with a lot of technical information and specialized jobs. Remember – even if you are not the operations person – the industry needs your expertise. Don’t worry that you did not play with a model train set when you were young. Take me for example – I am an external affairs specialist by trade and not a railroad operations expert. In fact, I never thought in my younger years that I would work for a Railroad. That said, I have contributed to better corporate decisions at the Alaska Railroad because I come at problems and topics from a different angle than our operations people do. It takes a diverse team.

9) Infuse humor effectively. Don’t be afraid to make fun of yourself.

10) Learn the art of Gravitas: Linda Darr
   a. What does that mean: **Gravitas** may be translated variously as weight, seriousness, dignity, and importance and connotes a certain substance or depth of personality. Gravitas is causing feelings of trust and respect in others.
   b. Monitor yourself and others as you participate. Ask yourself: What’s my role here? What’s unspoken here? Where should we head with this, and how is my participation helping, neutral or hindering that direction? What’s needed here? These are all self-monitoring questions that can help you adjust your impact and delivery to be respected and taken more seriously.
   c. When done right, gravitas is not a mask—it’s effectively adding your unique value to important discussions while minding and maintaining important relationships.

11) Bonus tip: Act for the good of others too. How are you helping other women? I read somewhere that women can use a simple rhetorical technique to stop interruptions and reinforce points made by other women. When a woman made a good point, another woman would repeat it, and give credit to the originator. This made the idea harder for others to ignore, or to steal. The women called the technique “amplification.” Let’s practice this in our work world and help our colleague’s voices to be heard.