So many of us grew up learning that it’s impolite to brag. The problem with this lesson when it’s been learned too well is that we feel uncomfortable showcasing our expertise, experience, or achievements even when it’s appropriate to do so. A case in point is a woman who introduced herself to me at a networking event. She only told me her name and that she was in the publicity department of a publishing firm. When I later came to find she was the Vice President of the department I asked her why she didn’t give me her title. Her response was, “I didn’t want to sound as if I was bragging.”

I’ll spare you the myriad other examples I could provide. What’s important for you to think about is that there’s a difference between bragging and humble pride. I recently came across a terrific book entitled *Brag! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It* by Peggy Klaus. She starts her book with a Dizzy Dean quote, “It ain’t bragging if you done it.” Whether you’re in the market for a new job, a promotion or even simply recognition for the good job you’re doing, consider these myths that Klaus points out may be getting in your way:

1. A job well-done speaks for itself.
2. Bragging is something you do during performance reviews.
3. Humility gets you noticed.
4. I don’t have to brag; people will do it for me.
5. More is better.
6. Good girls don’t brag.
7. Brag is a four-letter word.

Here are some coaching tips we regularly provide to our clients for how to, as Klaus says, *toot your own horn without blowing it:*

1. Prominently display awards, plaques, or certificates. If you happen to have a lot them, don’t put them all out – just a few that let people know you’ve been recognized for your work or contributions. I once had to tell a woman to take the picture of her shaking hands with Hilary Clinton out of her desk drawer!

2. Hone your elevator speech. When someone asks what you do, find a way to describe your role or work in the most positive terms possible without embellishing or lying. Practice it until it rolls right off your tongue.

3. When given a compliment, accept it gracefully. Avoid phrases like “oh, it was nothing” or “I just got lucky.” Replace them with, “Thank you. I’m proud of what I was able to accomplishment and grateful for the help I got along the way.”
4. Define and market your brand. You may recall several months ago we discussed this concept. When it comes to bragging, it’s important that you differentiate yourself from other “brands.” For example, when asked about our firm, I’m quick to say, “We know there are many coaches and coaching firms springing up but we were one of the first and we’re the only team-based coaching firm in the country that we know of.” It’s not bragging - those are just two facts that differentiate us.

And while we’re on the subject of bragging, I’m proud to announce my next book, *Nice Girls Don’t Get the Corner Office: 101 Unconscious Mistakes Women Make that Sabotage Their Careers*, is now available for pre-order through [www.amazon.com/books](http://www.amazon.com/books). Just click on the link, type in my name and it will come up.

Until next month, stay well.

Best regards,

Lois P. Frankel, Ph.D.