

How Women Undercut Their Brilliance

Corporate Talk

Research consistently shows very little biological difference between the genders. Socially-mediated differences (such as difference in ability in math, spatial awareness, and interpersonal skill) are also lessening over time as society becomes more aware of the influence gendered childhood socialization has on educational attainment of girls and young women. Despite these growing signs of equality in intelligence between the genders, an underdiscussed gap remains in the area of exceptional intelligence.

Studies show that exceptional intellectual talent, also known as genius, is viewed as a 'male' trait. This distinction will not be unfamiliar to anyone who has worked in male-dominated fields that highly value genius such as tech, science, or applied sciences. Despite having a high bar for entry into these fields, we have all met the exceptionally bright colleague who seems to be gifted with innate brilliance that we don't measure up to. So what happens to women in fields where genius is fetishized?

Talk Outline

This talk will discuss the relationship that women have with their brilliance, genius, and talent (and what that means for their careers). We'll cover:

- How genius is perceived and commoditized in male-dominated industries
- What happens when genius is a 'male' trait?
- The cost of unequal perceptions of genius for ambitious women
- Specific actions you can take to help your talent and intelligence get recognized at work

The goal of this talk is to help women understand and examine the gendered lens their colleagues view their talent and genius through so that their careers are not held back due to a difference in perception.

About The Speaker



Holly Burton **Leadership Coach for Women in Male-Dominated Industries**

Holly is speaker, facilitator, consultant, and coach with expertise in leadership, career development, feminist theory, and the unique mix of issues that make it challenging for women to succeed in STEM fields.

Holly spent the first ten years of her career as a mining engineer in an industry that is only 17% female. She now coaches ambitious women that want to advance their careers and works with companies to develop programs to retain female talent.

Holly speaks regularly at organizations including EA Games, DevOps Days Vancouver, Women in Mining BC, Disrupt HR, The BC Women in Energy Network, UBC Masters of Public Policy & Global Affairs, Women in Tech Week, The Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology (SCWIST), The Women in Leadership Foundation, and her own Women in Male-Dominated Industries Speaker Series.

Holly can be found online at her [website](#), or via her meetup, [Women in Male-Dominated Industries](#).

The Details

Length: 1 Hour **Format:** Lecture-style talk (with Q&A)