

# marie claire

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# ASSERTIVE ACTION

The secret to continued success is all about confidence. Eight industry leaders explain how to tackle any tricky situation



**Dale Wiese,**  
Equal Opportunity  
counsellor and consultant

#### On dealing with confrontation ...

"If you're faced with someone who is very angry or upset, just let them talk - they'll eventually run out of steam. The worst thing you can do is interrupt. When they've finished, ask if they'd like to add anything and calmly talk through the situation. People will respect you if you handle yourself this way."



**Sheryle Moon,**  
CEO of the Australian  
Information Industry  
Association

#### On asking for a pay rise ...

"Many women don't feel comfortable or justified asking for a pay review. However, if you prepare and bring in evidence, the process will feel less personal and more businesslike. I also recommend keeping an ongoing 'brag file' on your computer containing any positive feedback you've received."



**Cristina Re,**  
Entrepreneur and director,  
Cristina Re Designs

#### On starting your own business ...

"Entrepreneurs have to see challenges as opportunities. When I started my business, people warned me it hadn't been done before, but I saw that as a good thing. I was initially worried I didn't know enough, but no-one starting their first company knows it all, so find mentors to help you."



**Tory Archbold,**  
Managing director, Torstar  
Communications

#### On nailing an interview ...

"Interviews are nerve-racking, but it's OK to take your time to answer each question; consider why it's being asked and process the question for a few seconds. It's more impressive to answer thoughtfully than provide a rushed response. Also, not having questions to ask makes interviewees look disinterested. Prepare three or four questions about the company culture and career progression."

#### On surviving a networking event ...

"Always remember that you know at least one person at any event - the host. They've invited you because they think you're an important part of the night, so make sure you approach them. It's also acceptable to ask your host to introduce you to more people. As a host, I'm always impressed by people who say goodbye to me when they leave or drop me an email the following day."

#### On giving a speech ...

"It's really important to practise any speech out loud. If you're nervous, go to the room where you're delivering the speech beforehand and practise. It will make you feel more at ease with the space. Also, remember that speaking slowly projects composure and gives people more time to absorb what you're saying."

#### On selling a great idea ...

"It's crucial to project a sense of certainty. Often people don't know whether an idea is good or not, but they will believe your surety. Also, think through all the questions you might be asked about your pitch afterwards - it's no good giving a great presentation and then being caught short at the end."

#### On giving criticism ...

"Giving negative feedback can be hard, especially if you're inexperienced. A good piece of advice is to separate the person from the behaviour, which will make the situation less personal and judgemental. To do this, ensure that criticism is timely and that you refer to specific incidents. Don't sugar-coat the message or your staff member may not understand the seriousness of the issue."



**Michael Kelly,**  
Business coach and  
speech consultant



**Siimon Reynolds,**  
Creative director,  
Love Communications



**Lynne Beggs,**  
Regional director,  
Hays recruitment



**Ian Paterson,**  
Consultant, Australian  
Institute of Management