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ideas with a colleague before a meeting, she knows, “If I bring something up, within a couple minutes, he will echo that and say, ‘Hey, I really like Sarah’s idea because of these three reasons.’”

Camba Lynn explained, “Now, that

does two things. If you’re lacking confidence like I was, you know you have someone in the room to continue that discussion. And if you find yourself in this situation where your idea has been dismissed . . . it’s a lot harder for it to be repackaged and credited to someone else.”

Juliann Edwards, of Energy Solutions, has worked in sales and business development for 15 years. She spoke about how she addresses workplace harassment—which affects 85 percent of women—using her training and experience in negotiation.

“In my opinion, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying is all a form of negotiation,” Edwards said. “Person A is trying to get person B to say yes to something or they’re trying to indirectly get you to accept or be more tolerant of that type of behavior that’s inappropriate.”

Edwards offered specific tools from the art of negotiating to prevent and address harassment and swiftly return the focus of conversation to business goals while building experience, self-confidence, and community with other women and supportive colleagues.

Jhansi Kandasamy, of GE Hitachi, is a past chair of U.S. WIN. Kandasamy spoke about natural leadership qualities, prefacing her comments by explaining she was not born a leader. Instead, she said, as a young electrical engineer at a nuclear plant, “I had to work extra hard. I had to know from a technical perspective exactly what I was talking about.

Why are we building it there? What is that wiring going to do? Is it going to hurt the outcome that’s needed? I had to know the ins and outs of everything and be better than my male counterpart,” she said. “I hate to say that, but that’s how it was back then.”

Kandasamy learned to be more vocal and earn the respect of her colleagues by asking questions in the field. She shared a motto that she uses today as a leader in her company: “Motivate. Innovate. Execute/Create. Celebrate. . . . Repeat.”



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