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Rena Seltzer

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THE COACH'S GUIDE FOR WOMEN PROFESSORS

*Who Want a Successful Career
and a Well-Balanced Life*



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Foreword by [to come]

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Rena Seltzer : The Coach's Guide for Women Professors: Who Want a Successful Career and a Well-Balanced Life before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Coach's Guide for Women Professors: Who Want a Successful Career and a Well-Balanced Life:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Research-Based Advice / Practical Tips By Laura Senier (Disclosure: I worked with Rena as a client when I was in the first few years of my first tenure-track job, and I found her one-to-

one advice invaluable. The book is almost as useful as having her at my elbow, encouraging me and cheering me on.) The thing I love most about this book is that Seltzer has done a ton of research on faculty career trajectories, so her advice is solidly grounded in empirical evidence (of gender gaps in advancement, salary equity, and student evaluations; data about which work habits and patterns contribute to productivity and professional advancement). She's especially scrupulous in covering the challenges that face minority faculty, on all fronts, and gives some space to the challenges facing interdisciplinary or jointly-appointed faculty. She has a great knack for quickly distilling the research, but then goes beyond to show you how to put that advice to good use in your own career. You don't need to go out and read 6 books about negotiating the job offer; just read the chapter in this book and then work through some of the what if scenarios and role playing exercises that she proposes. (Yes, having a helpful friend or mentor available for those role playing exercises is key to using this book, I think.) As a pre-tenure faculty, I was surprised to find that I really appreciated the chapters on leadership and life after tenure. It can be hard while you're mired down in the day to day to think that there's anything on the other side of that hurdle. (And most of what I hear from newly-minted female associate professors is hair-raising--about escalating demands for service that completely derails your research productivity.) Seltzer confirms some of those rumors (again: more data), but also suggests concrete and specific ways to manage the burden. I was especially gratified by the chapter on leadership. It's encouraging to think that if/when I get to the other side, I'll be in a position to argue for diversity and help other women colleagues thrive in this crazy system.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Practical Wisdom for Academics By Michelle Segar As a researcher of motivation and an author, wife and mother, I highly recommend this book. I could relate to many of the stories, which I expected, but I didn't expect to find so many helpful solutions. I know from my research in the area of fitness that we don't make changes because we know on an intellectual level that change will be good for us - we change when we experience the immediate reward of increased energy or a sense of well-being. Many of Seltzer's suggestions are built on a similar psychology. For example, she explains how her clients use metaphors like climbing a mountain, or running, to positively reframe difficult parts of the writing process. And rather than merely telling us that we "should" set stricter boundaries around our time, Seltzer shows how to make a game of it by taking on a challenge to find ten "nosrdquo; in a week. This is an engaging, book that offers practical wisdom for over-committed academics that everyone can relate to.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Excellent and Engaging Advice for Busy Academics By Jessica Mellinger I can't say enough good things about this book! As a new junior faculty member at a large academic medical institution, I struggled with how to balance the clinical demands of patient care with building an academic research career. The advice in Rena's book is spot-on. Written in a warm, engaging style, she gives straight-forward advice for a wide variety of issues from how to manage your time to developing a strong network of support to getting papers done and published. I read her book at the start of my academic career 6 months ago, and I keep her book on my desk and dip into it regularly whenever I need a refresher. I've found the "Into Action" sections especially useful in helping me see how to implement Rena's advice in my life. The Coach's Guide for Women Professors is an invaluable resource for anyone who wants to succeed at an academic career while maintaining their sanity. I highly recommend it!

If you find yourself thinking or saying any of the following, this is a book you need to pick up. I know or suspect that I am underpaid, but I hate negotiating. I do everything else first and then write in the time left over. I'm not sure exactly what the promotion requirements are in my department. Since earning tenure, my service load has increased and my research is suffering. I don't get enough time with my family. This is a practical guide for women in academe--whether adjuncts, professors or administrators--who often encounter barriers and hostility, especially if women of color, and generally carry a heavier load of service, as well as household and care responsibilities, than their male colleagues. Rena Seltzer, a respected life coach and trainer who has worked with women professors and academic leaders for many years, offers succinct advice on how you can prioritize the multiplicity of demands on your life, negotiate better, create support networks, and move your career forward. Using telling but disguised vignettes of the experiences of women she has mentored, Rena Seltzer offers insights and strategies for managing the situations that all women face--such as challenges to their authority--while also paying attention to how they often play out differently for Latinas, Black and Asian women. She covers issues that arise from early career to senior administrator positions. This is a book you can read cover to cover or dip into as you encounter concerns about time management; your authority and influence; work/life balance; problems with teaching; leadership; negotiating better; finding time to write; developing your networks and social support; or navigating tenure and promotion and your career beyond.

"Graduate schools do not prepare women for the numerous challenges they encounter in the various facets of academic life. This book identifies challenges and issues related to women's lives in academe and suggests practical and studied tactics to help women thrive in the academic world and in their own lives. Rena Seltzer has extensive experience as an academic coach and has gathered a compelling amount of data and first-hand experiences from women professors. She acknowledges that surviving in academia is not easy, especially for women and under-

represented minorities. Oftentimes, women feel isolated and are not aware that some of the challenges they face are not uniquely their own. By identifying such challenges, Rena Seltzer achieves the goal of bringing awareness to these common experiences. In addition to identifying these challenges at the different stages of academic life, the book offers a deeper analysis of the issues and obstacles of academic life as well as provides practical advice on how to overcome them. Anecdotally, all female academics I have shared this book with have expressed great interest in it and admitted they would like or need to read it. One said, "I wish this book was around when I started out!" The book is recommended to all women in academia but also to any faculty at any stage in her or his career who is experiencing some of the same challenges.

(Reflective Teaching) "I highly recommend Rena Seltzer's book, *The Coach's Guide for Women Professors*, to anyone who is engaged in or contemplating a tenure track academic career. I connected to this book on two different levels. First, the advice corresponded to conclusions that I have drawn from my research on work/family concerns and women faculty. My own research on dual career couple hiring policies and academic motherhood supports the orientation of this book and the types of advice given. Secondly, I related to the book on a more personal level—being a tenured professor at a research university, being a parent and spouse, and having newly accepted a position as an associate dean. As I read the advice, I found myself nodding in agreement—sometimes recognizing things that I already do to help myself manage my multiple roles and sometimes noting new things that I hadn't yet tried but that might be worth exploring. I loved the checklist at the beginning of the book and I found myself laughing at how many of the items I felt related to my own experiences. Although I read the whole book cover to cover the first time, I did make use of the survey to help me hone in on additional areas where I could use some extra help. The writing style in the book is very engaging and the personal narratives helped to make the advice practical and not preachy. The book is comprehensive—covering a range of topics of interest to women at multiple stages in their careers. I particularly found the advice about voice and about strategies to energize myself to be salient in my current role. Many of the recommendations were things that I have tried (sometimes successfully and sometimes not) as well as things that I would recommend to newer colleagues in my mentoring relationships with them. There is a lot of advice out there to be had on how to successfully manage life as a woman and as an academic—this book gathers it all up and puts it together in a useful manner that will certainly be of service to many." (Lisa Wolf-Wendel, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies; Professor, Higher Education)

"I would not have gotten tenure without Rena Seltzer's skillful coaching. I am positive of that. If you can find a way to work with her as a coach, do it! But if you can't, read her book at least twice. It has all the life and career hacks every academic (male and female!) needs. Rena knows academia, in all its glories and pitfalls, and it is exhilarating to see one's world so accurately portrayed through on-point advice. I am a happier, healthier, higher-impact, and more productive academic, thanks to Rena's coaching and book." (Dolly Chugh, Associate Professor)

"I needed to transform how I approached my research. Rena was instrumental in ensuring I was incredibly productive. From goal setting to structuring my time effectively, to creating metaphors that facilitated my ability to push through challenges, she has helped to make me a happier and more efficient academic. Her positive energy is infectious and her ability to help her clients see the big picture is unparalleled. I don't know what I do without her!" (Modupe Akinola, Assistant Professor)

"This book distills the key lessons from Rena's vast experience coaching academics. Her coaching has helped me enormously professionally, but I also appreciate the greater peace of mind; thanks to our discussions, I don't take work frustrations home with me. Although Rena's book is tailored to women professors, most of these lessons and strategies apply to everyone; we ordered copies for myself and my advisees." (John Cawley, Professor of Policy Analysis and Management, Professor of Economics, and co-Director of the Institute on Health Economics, Health Behaviors and Disparities)

"Rena Seltzer's workshops are perennial favorites with Yale faculty. Workshop alumni get more writing done, have more control over their schedules, and feel increased confidence in their leadership skills. Rena has also served as a coach for a number of Yale faculty leaders. Here as well, her work has been transformative. I am delighted to recommend *The Coach's Guide* to anyone aspiring to learn from this wise and inspiring academic coach." (Tamar Szaboacut; Gendler, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, Vincent J. Scully Professor of Philosophy, and Professor of Psychology and Cognitive Science)

"*The Coach's Guide for Women Professors* will be an amazing asset for female academics. It is packed full of practical and empowering strategies that will pay immediate dividends, as well as being a resource that you will want to return to for clear solutions to challenges that arise. It is an invaluable resource for women (and men) who care about advancing their own careers as well as the careers of women in the academy." (Linda C. Babcock, James M. Walton Professor of Economics, Carnegie Mellon University, Author of *Women Don't Ask: Negotiation and the Gender Divide*)

"*The Coach's Guide* is a true gem, realistic and empowering. It touches on a wide range of challenges from time management to departmental politics to the nuances of identity, and the universal truth that no one gets anywhere alone! Achieving a successful career and a well-balanced life is a continuous task, not a one and done event, and this guide will stand the test of time." (Nancy Cantor, Chancellor)

"This book has something for ALL women in academia. Traditionally, the academy has been governed by unwritten rules that determine academic career success. Through the lived experiences of women faculty, *The Coach's Guide* sheds light on those unwritten rules in order to

help women navigate successfully around them. This book offers just the right tools.” (Gloria D. Thomas, Director, Center for the Education of Women) “A thoughtful, immensely practical resource for women to achieve excellence and well-being in academic careers.” (Adam Grant, Wharton professor and New York Times bestselling author of Give and Take) “The Coach’s Guide provides a toolbox of ideas relevant to faculty across life and career stages. Each chapter contains concrete, pragmatic, and targeted strategies designed to help faculty identify and overcome obstacles to professional success and to re-discover joy and balance in their work and personal lives.” (Deandra Little, Director, Center for the Advancement of Teaching Learning and Associate Professor) “Every administrator, faculty member and graduate student can benefit from implementing the concrete recommendations in The Coach’s Guide. It’s akin to having a professional development coach at one’s beck and call.” (Yolanda Flores Niemann, Professor of Psychology University of North Texas, and co-editor of Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia) “Rena Seltzer’s book is the next best thing to a personal life coach. The book is partly a how-to manual with advice on just about every aspect of the academic career: What to do about time management, how to motivate and assess students, strategies for getting work published. Rena Seltzer (although you may find yourself referring to her by her first name, because this book will feel like a comforting friend) distills usable techniques from the enormous literatures on writing and teaching effectiveness. As we all know, however, a successful career is not only a matter of mastering writing skills and communication techniques. The greatest wisdom of this book is in the recognition of the deep psychological and sociological issues that lie at the base of our challenges. With insight and empathy, Rena Seltzer picks through the detritus of embarrassing episodes and horrendous faux pas to distill lessons for the next round. Using examples from real people she has helped through a variety of struggles, she has constructed labels through the labyrinth. Rena Seltzer has written a gem of a book. I have watched her present parts of it at faculty development sessions at Yale University where I was Deputy Provost for Faculty and Development. The women professors who attended these workshops could not get enough of Rena Seltzer, because she provides wisdom for what matters most: career success on terms that make us happier people. I am delighted she has written this book, and you will be a richer person for having read it.” (Frances Rosenbluth, Damon Wells Professor of Political Science) About the Author Rena Seltzer is the founder of the coaching and training business, Leader Academic. Over the past decade, Leader Academic has specialized in coaching and workshops for professors and academic leaders. Rena is a popular presenter at major research institutions including Yale, Cornell, the University of Michigan, and the University of Virginia. Rena earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Michigan. With a bachelor’s degree in Social Science and Women’s Studies and a Master of Social Work degree, Rena has always been interested in both women’s issues and the interaction between people and their environment. In her first career as a psychotherapist she specialized in addictions, solution focused work, family therapy, and employee assistance. Rena completed her coach training through the Mentorcoach program and finds that her earlier psychotherapy training and experience add depth to her work as a coach. In recent years Rena has become a student of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) and is a core member of the Community of Applied POS practitioners, a group of coaches and consultants striving to put POS research into practice. Rena has written pieces for the All But Dissertation Survival Guide, The College and University Work and Family Association Newsbriefs, MomMD.com, The Ann Arbor Observer, and Current. She also wrote a series of columns on family issues for Gay.com. Rena lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan with her physician partner and two sons. She holds a black-belt in Shorin-Ryu Karate and enjoys running, camping, and hiking. Author website: www.leaderacademic.com