

The Administrative Experiences of Women Chemists Who Attended COACH Workshops and Their Perceptions of COACH

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This brief report examines data from a survey completed in 2015-2016 by women chemistry faculty who had participated in COACH workshops two or more years previously. The surveys were administered through a web-based process and links to the survey were sent to respondents via e-mail. A total of 114 women responded. Questions focused on the extent to which they had used skills learned in the workshops and how the skills had helped in various aspects of their careers. The women were also asked, "To what extent have you served in an administrative capacity in your institution or professional organization since attending a COACH workshop?" As shown in Table 1, around a third indicated that they had previously served in an administrative or leadership position, half were currently serving in such a position, and a fifth planned to seek an administrative post in the future. In total, three-fourths of the COACH attendees who responded to the survey had served in administrative or leadership posts after the workshops or planned to do so in the future. (See Figure 1.)

Those who reported serving in an administrative or leadership post were then asked to describe the position, and their answers are summarized in Table 2 and Figure 2. The results indicate that substantial proportions were in highly responsible administrative posts. One-fourth of the 114 respondents were currently or had been department chairs, a fifth were directors or managers, and a tenth held positions as dean or provost. Others are clearly poised for moving into higher administrative positions, with experience as associate chair, associate deans, and vice provosts.<sup>1</sup>

An open-ended question then asked, "Did COACH play any role in your decision to take a leadership position or help with the effectiveness of your leadership? Please explain." Sixty-three of the 82 women who had held administrative positions provided examples of how their experiences with COACH had provided useful skills and/or enhanced their confidence and overall effectiveness. These responses are given in Appendix A and depicted in Figure 3.

Series of closed-ended questions asked questions about the extent to which the respondents used specific skills taught in the workshops and how helpful they had been. Table

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<sup>1</sup> There were a few people who marked that they were administrators but did not indicate the position. Their post was determined through an internet search. One other person indicated that she was a finalist for high level post and an internet indicated that she had obtained that position. This information is included in the tallies in Table 2. The "director or manager" category does *not* include management of their own research group, but only of some larger entity.

3 reports the percentage of the women administrators who reported using specific communication skills either always or often. Results indicate that the majority always or often used 11 of the 13 listed skills. Data in Table 4 indicate that a majority of the administrative women always or often used 6 of the 10 skills listed regarding negotiation. All of the negotiation skills were used often or always by at least one third of the women. Data in Table 5 indicate that the administrative women also believed that the skills had helped them in their career interactions and progress. A majority of the women indicated that the skills had helped at least a fair amount in all but two areas. The two exceptions (teaching load and research support) were placed in these categories by over two-fifths of the women.

A final open-ended question was phrased, “Finally, we are interested in any general impressions you may have about how your experiences with COACH have affected your career advancement, leadership and achievement style, teaching, mentoring others, or overall stress level. Please feel free to share any impressions you may have, either positive or negative. Your responses will help us learn about how to be more effective in the future.” Fifty-eight of the administrative women provided such comments. These comments are listed in Appendix B and are overwhelmingly positive. In total, three-fourths of the women explicitly indicated that COACH had influenced their decision to enter administration and/or their effectiveness in their administrative work. (See Figure 3.)

Table 1

*Administrative Experience and Plans, Full Follow-Up Sample (n = 114)*

<u>Experience</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Currently in an administrative or leadership position	56	49%
Previously served in an administrative or leadership position	34	30%
Plan to seek an administrative position or leadership position in the future	24	21%
No plans to seek administrative or leadership position	27	24%

Note: Percentages add to greater than 100 because respondents could mark more than one option.

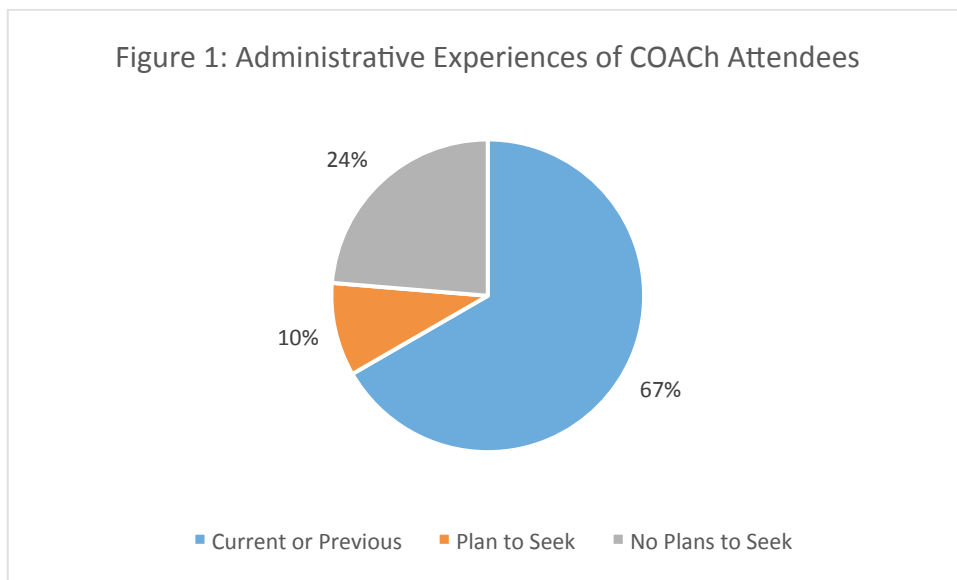
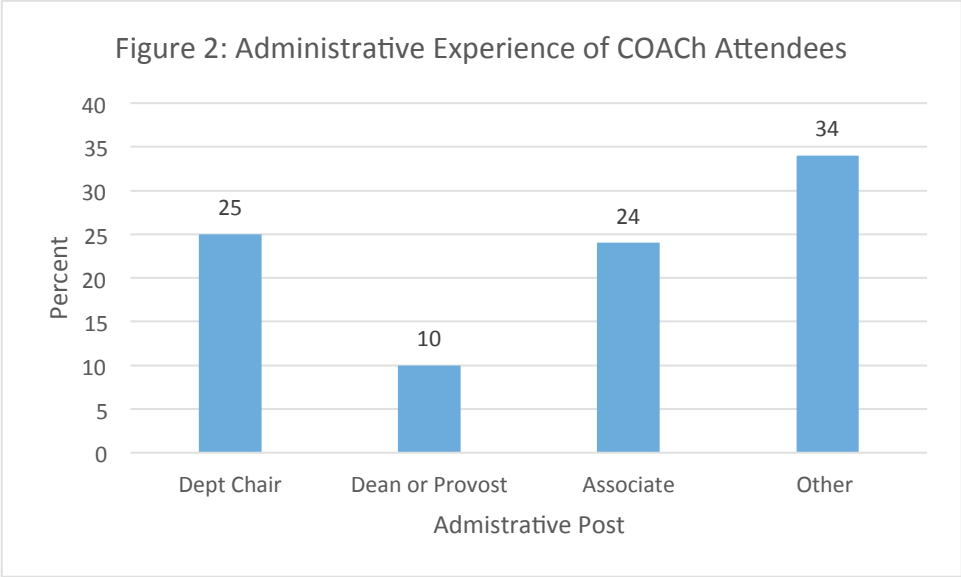


Table 2

*Types of Administrative Positions Held by COACH Attendees*

<u>Position</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Dept. Chair	29	25%
Associate Chair	9	8%
Director/Manager	23	20%
High Level University Committee	9	8%
Dean	7	6%
Associate Dean	14	12%
Provost	4	4%
Vice Provost	4	4%
Outside Academe, but Chemistry Related	7	6%
No Administrative or high leadership position	32	28%

N = 114. Percentages do not add to 100 because respondents could have more than administrative position. Results for “no administrative position” include those who plan to seek such a post in the future.



Note: N = 114. The attendees may have held more than one position. Bars represent the percentage of all respondents who had held a given position. Associate refers to line posts, such as associate chair, dean, or provost, as detailed in Table 2.

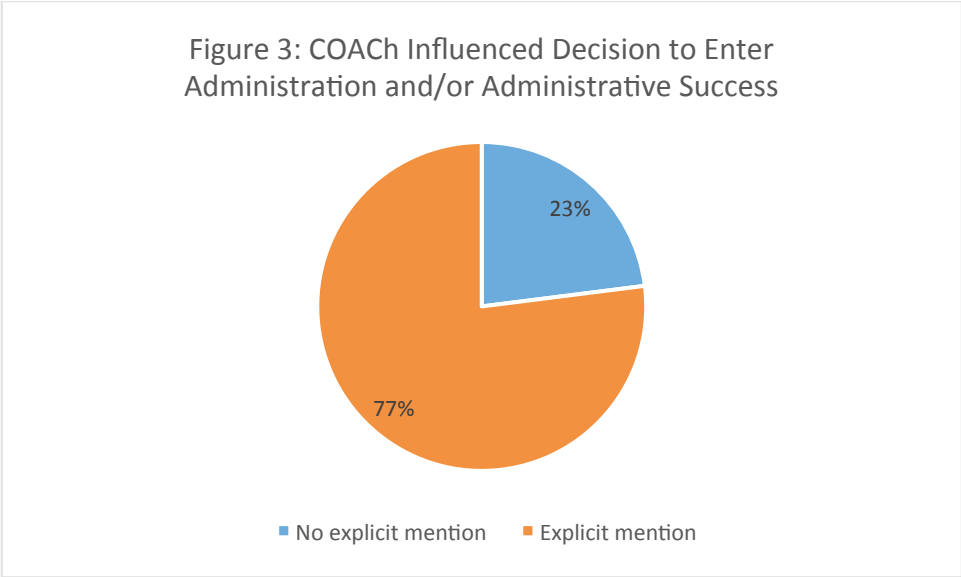


Table 3

*Percentage of Administrative Women Who Used Communication Skills Taught in COACH Always or Often and Views of the Most Important Communication Skills*

<u>Item</u>	<u>% Use Always or Often</u>
Clarifications of purpose or objective	81
Understanding the other's position	80
Preparation	73
Position in room	63
Using allies/confidants	62
Choosing timing, tone and wording	61
Vocal presence	59
Setting boundaries	56
Avoidance of personalizing	54
Posture alignment	53
Taking care of self	51
Holding steady	41
Physical/vocal warm-up	15

N = 79.

Table 4

*Percentage of Administrative Women Who Used Negotiation Skills Taught in COACH Always or Often and Views of the Most Important Negotiation Skills*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Use Always or Often</u>
Listening and responding	80.5
Providing options for solution	80.2
Identifying and meeting mutual interests	75.6
Researching supportive data	72.0
Managing your personal style	65.4
Keeping negotiations open	54.9
Practicing before negotiations	48.1
Packaging	45.7
Using a mentor or coach	42.0
Developing a BATNA	35.8

N = 81 to 82.

Table 5

*Percentage of Administrative Women Who Reported that Skills Helped "Quite a Lot" or "A Fair Amount"*

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<u>To what extent have the skills you learned at COACH:</u>	<u>Quite a Lot or a Fair Amount</u>
Assisted in career development	84
Helped you negotiate on behalf of others	84
Helped you negotiate for yourself	83
Helped you mentor others in negotiation skills	80
Helped feel more in control of your career	79
Lessened stress about meetings or negotiations	77
Improved quality of interactions with admin. staff	76
Improved quality of interactions with colleagues	74
Improved quality of interactions with research staff	57
Improved quality of interactions with students	56
Average	75
<u>How much have the skills presented at COACH Workshops helped you in addressing issues of</u>	<u>Quite a Lot or a Fair Amount</u>
Developing supportive networks	69
Improving climate	66
Promotion	62
Committee assignments	56
Tenure	56
Salary	55
Work/family balance	55
Teaching load	44
Research support	43
Average	56

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Note: Responses marked "not applicable" were omitted. N's for each item ranged from 46 to 81. Responses in each panel are ordered from those most often rated "quite a lot" and "a fair amount" to those least often placed in those categories.

## Appendix A

### Explanations of Impact of COACH on Decision to Enter Administration or Effectiveness of Leadership

Open-ended comments regarding whether COACH played “any role in your decision to take a leadership position or help with the effectiveness of your leadership.” Nineteen of the administrative women explicitly said no or did not respond. Comments of all of the others are below.

- Yes, I have learned to speak up, especially for others and to better gather people for a good cause.
- Actually COACH played a significant role in my willingness to "lead." As I attended the negotiation workshop in 2002, I was in the midst of a contentious battle for chair of chemistry department. I lost that battle but was able to stand up to the instigator of opposition. Two years later I was nominated for associate dean and decided to try a new level of leadership. It was a good move and allowed me to have a larger impact on my institution than would have been possible as department chair. Obviously negotiation and communication were two of the major skills I needed to employ. I thank COACH for being there for me.
- Learned a great deal of skills through Coach
- Yes, the workshop made it a more realistic goal as well as providing "best approaches" techniques.
- Improve my communication skills.
- No part in decision. I participated in COACH a long time ago; so it is hard to attribute direct cause and effect. However, the workshop gave me a lot of food for thought, and I think that it has influenced how I interact with people and try to
- Coach helped with some of my negotiations. The challenge is that in retrospect I should have negotiated for more, and been stronger in holding my ground. Perhaps then I would already be a full professor.
- Effectiveness of leadership as Department head
- Certain aspects of the leadership course were useful in helping me understand how to manage faculty.
- Not yet, I hope it will in close future
- Yes, I think so
- Communication and negotiation skills probably help with my effectiveness of this position.
- Yes, helped me realize that visibility is key to making career progress at the local level. It worked!
- I don't think it played any role in my decision making, but it's definitely helped with the effectiveness of my leadership.
- COACH helped me negotiate the release that I needed to take a leadership position. And it helped me negotiate for the programs that were included in the HHMI grant, which included a new faculty hire.
- COACH did not affect my decision to be chair. I had served previously as chair and was asked to step in again when the current chair left for another position. Hopefully, COACH has influenced my effectiveness. I try to use the skills I learned.
- Yes. I felt more confident and negotiated heavily.

- Opened the possibility for attaining leadership position
- Probably
- COACH was good to illustrate and giving support and some knowledge. However, for me to learn - I will need to practice and go back more. I liked it a lot and it was helpful - but I needed to do it more for it to be really helpful.
- Yes -- communication and negotiations skills were critical
- Confidence improved
- No, but has helped me be a more effective department head
- Definitely - it has been critical to my negotiation skills, bot in getting the position and in negotiating with faculty
- Yes
- Yes. I am concerned about salary and resource inequities in my department and I have come to believe that I can catalyze change only as Chair.
- All aspects of the COACH workshops assisted with the effectiveness of my time in this office.
- COACH played a huge role in preparing me to lead a committee in a year-long intensive activity. I learned how to not take differing opinions as personal attacks. I learned that fact-based discussions can move forward and only to pull out emotions (being a strong advocate for a good cause or standing of the way of unacceptable behavior) when they are backed up by facts. I also learned that I may disagree with colleagues today and tomorrow we are allies (I actually learned this from Justice Ginsberg, but COACH opened my ears to the conversation).
- Helped with effectiveness
- Yes. COACH made me more confident to try being chair, helped with various aspects of chair responsibilities, especially helping promote new faculty, mentoring female faculty.
- YES. Courage and Confidence
- COACH did not directly play a role in my seeking an administrative position, but the skills that I learned during the workshops have certainly helped me in my present role.
- Yes. I use the skills to help lead colleagues who are more difficult to manage.
- I was already in a leadership position, by virtue of my experience, maturity and first-child personality, but the COACH workshops have helped me learn and see the importance of new skills that I was not aware of.
- Yes. Enhanced my professional skills set vital to my success in administrative positions
- When I became Chair, I was managing two older colleagues, one of whom had recently been Dean. I used some of the strategies I learned through COACH to defuse some personality power struggles with the former Dean until we both settled into our roles, and I continue to use those strategies. I'm actually the most effective person in the department at dealing with him.
- Yes - COACH and other subsequent leadership training programs gave me the confidence to pursue this leadership role.
- Yes. The training about communication helped me to recognize my strengths as a person who can listen well and therefore communicate effectively across a broad array of disciplines and constituents. Good communication skills (as well as good a
- Yes it did
- Yes, it helped me be confident that I could be direct in communicating in stressful situations.
- Yes, I feel I learned skills to communicate with an all-male department.



- No, but I am hoping to use what I learned in the workshops, if I get the position, to make me a more effective leader
- Yes; helped me continue to balance competing demands (not feel overwhelmed)
- Yes. COACH reinforced the idea that women must step up into the leadership roles for positive changes to occur.
- Yes, indirectly, by making me aware of the need for women to pursue leadership positions
- Yes, lots of good ideas and reinforcement for my plan to become an administrator in higher ed in sciences and math.
- COACH helps the effectiveness of my leadership. I often think about my BATNA and the different negotiating options I have. I also think of nonverbal ways to establish the appropriate emotional position. When I need to assert dominance, I wear red, I sit at one end of the table, and I make sure to have office assistance present. When I need to be accepting or submissive, I wear more subdued colors. I usually meet with my faculty in their offices, so they feel comfortable on their own turf. But sometimes I meet with them in my office when I need to maintain more control.
- I think the COACH workshop helped me to be aware of meeting dynamics more and to determine ways to better fit into those dynamics.
- Yes. I tend to be very detail-oriented, and COACH has helped me to focus/enhance this strength.
- I attended Coach as a non-tenure track instructor, used the skills learned to negotiate and seek for my current position which even though non-tenure track, provides more stability when compared to the yearly renewable instructor position.
- Yes. I negotiated better.
- I don't think that COACH played a direct role in my decision to take on this leadership position, but I have certainly made an effort to put several of the COACH skills in action during high-stakes meetings with administrators. Thanks for the
- Confidence, negotiation, not getting "rattled"
- I gained many valuable skills from COACH that have helped me in leadership endeavors.
- Yes, all the workshops I have attended have been beneficial
- COACH gave me the skills and confidence necessary as I began administrative work.
- Absolutely! I felt like I had more skills, tools upon which to draw and more capacity to "fake it til I make it"
- I was told that I was the new co-ordinator. However, COACH has helped with my decision making.
- Yes, I negotiated what I wanted with respect to student support and salary.
- I am sure that COACH helped, but I did not think consciously about it
- Certainly help by using the skills listed earlier in this survey.
- Yes, the skills learned have served me well in accomplishing goals
- Helped with the effectiveness of my leadership. Valuable communication skill were key to doubling institutional support for the graduate program over the last five years.

Appendix B  
Additional Comments about COACH

Twenty four of the women administrators provided no additional comments. Comments of all the others are listed below.

- I feel it's a great program and wish I had taken more advantage of it up to this point in my career. I think that networking is extremely important to get a variety of perspectives on career aspirations and obstacles.
- I am happy that I was able to reach out after the course and gain assistance from another COACH member on negotiating book deals. I am still in the process of these negotiations and have applied a lot of what I learned in the workshop and from my "mentor" in this process.
- I felt empowered by my COACH experiences. My views on many important career aspects were broadened by both the content and the participants. I think the structure is pretty effective.
- Without question, participating in COACH has empowered and encouraged me to advance my career. It provided me with tools and insight that I did not have.
- It is a great program and I hope that it will continue in the future because the skills that are being taught are very valuable for women's careers.
- I am grateful for the opportunities I had at the workshops. It helped me see that some of the problems I experienced were common to other female faculty members. The representation of women in chemistry department is better than it was 10 years ago. However, many of the same barriers to advancement remain in place. An organization such as COACH still has plenty of work to accomplish.
- Very good experience, planning to attend again
- The general impression is that it helped me in my vision to future endeavors
- The women running the workshop were very knowledgeable and specific in their advice.
- Negotiating is still painful. => But at least I'm better prepared.
- COACH has transformed the world for many women scientists. Seriously. Nearly all of the senior women in chemistry that I know have been to at least one workshop. We have learned to use one another to strategize for improved conditions for women
- Because I participated in the COACH workshops after I was promoted to full professor and while I was department chair, I have not used the skills as much for myself. As a mentor, however, I have tried to transfer much of this information to new, young faculty in our department and across campus.
- Although I know I don't implement the things I learned in the workshop as much as I probably should, I think the workshops was really good for me in making me be more conscious of my own issues and insecurities and having some strategies for dealing with them. It was also good to not feel alone.
- COACH made me much more aware of interpersonal interactions within my university.
- I think it is a good idea, but I've been unable to follow up on what I learned. I am unable to attend many national meetings.
- COACH was great, thank you for including me!
- I think that you were awesome and that it was great to get the confirmation and support. Unfortunately I was browbeaten for so many years that it took a .... award for me to finally stand

up and tell my colleagues - no - enough - stop treating me so rotten. I think that women need practice at this and you do a great job and need to continue to do it.

- Invaluable in helping me with strategy and tactics for salary increase!
- Every time I attend a COACH workshop I leave invigorated. Thank you for providing women from around the world this opportunity.
- COACH training in negotiation skills was essential to obtaining tenure at my current institution upon being hired after not being granted tenure at my first institution. The key was to think of it as something to negotiate. The chair asked if there was anything he could do to help me decide to come here, and I simply said, "Tenure would be nice." Of course it was essential that I had 3 other good offers I was simultaneously considering! Now I am using my negotiating skills to try and rectify my dramatically low salary. I have not been keeping an eye on it over the years--I was busy with grants, teaching, and children.
- I have recently attended workshops with graduate students, and I think that the negotiation and communication skills workshops are just great for them. I think we need to keep things positive, however- one that I attended recently focused strongly on the negatives of implicit bias. Although that is important information, it is absolutely critical to move through it quickly and provide the positive tools. The negotiation workshops with role-playing are, I think, the very best for all of us. Thanks!
- My experiences with COACH were completely positive. Being in a room full of other women scientists with the purpose of discussing strategies for success gave me a whole new arsenal for maneuvering my professional goals. I am a big fan. Basically, COACH taught me how to deal with bullies. I learned that there is not one single path for a solution; instead a multi-prong set of approaches leaves me well-prepared for the grenades that are launched my way. Sometimes I feel like Wonder Woman, fending off bullets with my wrist bands. COACH taught me some new ways to use those wrist bands. This frees up my time to science, which was my goal in the first place.
- good network, but feel a bit like a second class citizen because I'm not at an R1 institution yet I am proud to be at a PUI
- Even though I didn't mark many points above as explicit skills that I apply directly from COACH, that's probably because I attended a long time ago and don't remember the details. However, I had, and continue to have, an overwhelming positive view of the COACH programs I attended. I did gain considerable confidence from COACH in taking on the chair position; it was especially helpful in mentoring new faculty.
- AMAZING EXPERIENCE and I still use things I learned in my daily life.
- Positive. Mostly regarding the two workshops I attended, negotiations and communication. I believe that they have made a difference during my promotion to full professor and in my ability to argue for resources.
- The workshop encouraged me to seek mentors outside my university. I wrote to other women scientists who are in my field to introduce myself and I try to stay in contact once per year. This has been so valuable to me to have someone I can talk to about anything that arises.
- It came too late, I had already signed a contract when I moved to a new University. However, for example I did negotiate my salary, ultimately by lack of salary increases over the next 3 years this was compressed back to what it would have been without negotiating.

- The first COACH workshop in Indianapolis, about 15 years ago was an eye-opener about the strengths and skills of communication and negotiation. I have tried to make these skills available to as many younger, technically-skilled women as I can. It is important to acclimate young women to the rough-house and verbal jousting world of the men around them. Their mothers and society have long discouraged girls from becoming 'confrontational' or 'aggressive' in making a case for their own needs and desires. The long-recommended path to feminine success is passivity, but this generally leads to under-employment and under achievement and under payment. None of this is really full filling to a well educated women (or man). The newest trend is to recommend that men share the work place and home with women, and that this will lead to better ideas and products in the workplace and better home and family life and stronger children. Sharing is a win-win for men, but they have for 1000's of years looked at their world as strictly "I win, you lose" or "You win, I lose." Seldom is the world really that black and white, but men often overlook this fact when they, out of habit, imitate what they have seen their own father and uncles do for decades. It is not easily unlearned or replaced.
- COACH is a fabulous program that gives women the tools they needs to be successful in the academic workplace, which undervalues their contributions.
- As I've reflected on my experiences with COACH, I realized that you provided really concrete skills and examples that we could take away. I've obviously assimilated several of those skills and use them regularly enough that I don't think about them. They definitely make me a more effective leader, which has led to quite a few leadership opportunities that were not necessarily a part of my mainline career. I also developed at least one friendship through the workshop, and I still reach out to her for information when I need to.
- As a woman chemist, I was an under-represented minority in my field. While moving up, I've seen more women in leadership roles. When I became dean, I was the only female academic dean among five. Now there are three out of five females. I have come to recognize that the under-represented minority does see things differently from the white male majority. This is an asset in a complex organization. I think that the COACH program, as well as the HERS program, has helped me to understand the importance of diversity in any organization. You need to have a seat at the table to have your voice heard, and under-represented minorities have much to contribute because their perspective is different from the others.
- a great organization, keep up with the wonderful work!
- I was already tenured when I was invited to attend a COACH workshop, but it would have been even more valuable to attend when I was a new faculty member. I felt that I already understood quite a bit of the information presented although it was empowering nonetheless. I urge you to continue to recruit newly hired young women faculty/postdoc's/graduate students. Now that I have more and more administrative responsibilities (leadership in department, mentorship of junior faculty, encouragement to advise more students) on top of teaching and research, I would value meeting other women in similar roles who are challenged by new roles as a senior faculty member. Perhaps COACH has these networking opportunities and I have failed to take advantage of them due to the difficulty in attending the ACS meeting early. We typically take 5-10 undergraduate research students to present their work at the national ACS meetings so it is difficult for me to come early to a meeting.
- I think I could have benefited more if I had colleagues with whom to discuss further the topics covered.

- Appreciate opportunity to participate; benefited from meeting other female faculty
- COACH workshops made me feel less isolated, and my concerns felt validated.
- Generally very positive. I have used techniques I learned in the workshop to manage conflict and build collaborations
- Coach was very valuable to me at the time.
- The COACH workshop was at that point in my life a bit of a boost to my confidence, but I still have seen a lot that is very depressing. Women are not being funded at the same rate as men with comparable backgrounds. Women are not as able to tr
- Coach helped me to feel connected to other women in science. I have always traveled a "lone" road and have had trouble finding supportive voices for my career path. Coach helped me and I appreciate being able to fill out this survey. Even doing this reminds me that I am connected to the effort to promote women's equality. Role models are few and far between. I have to pretend that there are some out there!
- I appreciate the existence of COACH and respect Dr. Richmond a lot for setting this up in addition to her successful traditional research career. I wish I could get to more national ACS meetings to participate in COACH, but my kids are little and it's hard to do business travel right now. I think COACH might be able to provide help to women (and all) faculty by leading a discussion on how to count collaborative publications in promotion and tenure. We are grappling with that as an institution. This affects young scientists tremendously, both female and male, and a lot of "old-school" faculty who came up through P&T with single-PI pubs and grants do not know how to evaluate these dossiers. It does affect women significantly, because many women faculty are good team players in the big questions of science.
- To be honest, the workshop was a long time ago. I still think about the strategies, but it is sort of like being vaccinated: after a while, a booster shot might be useful. I think I could get a lot more out of a communication/negotiation/mentoring workshop now that I have more experience and a different perspective. I don't know that it has made a huge difference in my career advancement overall, but I don't feel I have no control over certain situations.
- COACH has given my very useful tools, although it is taking me some time to learn how to use them well/effectively.
- I brought some of the Coach workshops to my previous institution. They were expensive, but very well received.
- Coach was very helpful for my professional development. I was able to apply the knowledge gained in the workshops to advance in my career that came with better benefits
- I think I present myself and my work more positively.
- Since the COACH workshop I went to at the beginning of my tenure-track time here, I have now been tenured and am serving the faculty in a leadership role with administration. I probably could have used a refresher/reminder workshop about 5 yrs
- I enjoyed everything about the COACH training and have reflected on the experience frequently throughout my career.
- Coaching always helps to improve confidence and helps one to understand the difficulties of fighting for advancement in the workplace.
- COACH was enormously important at an earlier stage of my career (asst prof) and has been of progressively less relevance as I moved into an upper administrative position. I would enjoy

reconnecting with COACH, although my requests have not been successful, and forming a network with other senior women administrators so that I may continue to learn from skilled facilitators and other participants.

- Though my stress level remains high I was profoundly impacted by the training COACH provided. I can point to specific ones that I use regularly that are now just part of who I am.
- COACH was one of the best experiences I have ever had in my career. While I have not yet moved to a different university, I have accepted a senior-level position at another university and negotiated exactly what I wanted after "selling" my abilities. They were willing to give me or try to give me what I had asked for. I felt empowered.
- I thought that the workshop was eye-opening and very useful.
- my peers who have done COACH workshops and I always talk about Coach when it comes to where to sit, how to find allies, etc. I always ask my grad students/postdocs if they have looked to see if there are Coach workshops at the upcoming ACS meetings.
- The best workshops were those organized by similar rank. Need to learn more on management of people below, in addition to the useful negotiating skills external to unit. Maybe this workshop exists, but I haven't attended.
- Negotiation skills proved critical for timely promotion to full professor despite several dependent care leaves since tenure.