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The always-evolving media industry can be a very challenging place to work for anyone, male or female. Technology advances happen at a breakneck pace and consumer demands constantly change.

But couple this with the unique challenges of being a female business executive and you have the makings of a very stressful career path.

Not so for Anne Doris, vice president for Cox

Communications, Tucson and southern Arizona.

Doris, 48, has forged a very successful career in her nearly 20 years as a cable industry executive.

Like most working women, she says that finding the right balance between work, family and personal time is a constant struggle, but a rewarding one.

And, like many working women, Doris has faced gender discrimination firsthand. It happened when she was managing cable operations overseas.

"Business is conducted very differently from what we are used to in the U.S. While we could still go further in this country in terms of gender equality, we are light-years ahead of some parts of the world," she says.

Has she had to work harder than her male colleagues to get where she is today?

"I believe women of my generation just simply work harder period," she says. "It is the world we belong to and I, along with so many others, enjoy working hard and exceeding expectations."

And what are her best – and worst – moments as a woman in the business world?

The funny thing is they were the same situation – and it had nothing to do with the fact she was a woman.

"I was negotiating a programming agreement to be announced at a major press conference by internationally known business leaders. The corporate

jets were in the air and the world-famous leaders were on their way to the press location," she says.

There was just one problem. The deal wasn't yet finalized.

"My worst moment was the realization that if I didn't complete the negotiation, we would have a major league embarrassment to both companies."

Fortunately, the best moment came soon after when Doris was able to successfully knock out a contract that satisfied all.

"I buckled down and we hammered out a contract that worked for both our corporations. The deal got done; the press event went on as scheduled and I made an enduring friendship with the person on the other side of the negotiating table."

Doris feels that, more than anything, being comfortable in her own skin has been her biggest career advantage.

"I'm happy to be who I am: a female business leader. I wouldn't want to change places with anyone."



Anne Doris

Cox Communications

Anne Doris

Education:

- ▶ MBA, Long Island (N.Y.) University
- ▶ Bachelor's degree, City College, New York

Community involvement:

- ▶ Southern Arizona Leadership Council
- ▶ Tucson Cinema Foundation
- ▶ Tucson Urban League

"For women to be successful we must acknowledge gender differences especially in communication processes. We have the ability to vary our communication techniques to assure success. I encourage anyone coming up to read books and talk with other women about their successes and failures. I was convinced I could do anything I wanted to do, even if my propensity was toward traditionally male professions like engineering and construction."

– Katharine J. Kent, 48,
president, The Solar Store