



# **VISIBILITY CHECKLIST**

**FOR EMPLOYED BUSINESS WOMEN**

**VISIBILITY = OPPORTUNITY**

**VISIBILITY = INFLUENCE**

**VISIBILITY = SUCCESS**





## **Become VISIBLE in Your Job**

**and gain more opportunities, more influence  
and more success in your career!**

... oh yes, more money is also a nice side effect! ;-)

I belong to the extroverted people, so I have it easier in terms of visibility than many other women. I enjoy approaching people, have no problem being in the spotlight, and have always really enjoyed to network and connect.

If you are an extrovert, too, then you might know the mentioned advantages - and you're also aware of the disadvantages.

We are so-called "strong women", and we often rub people the wrong way. That doesn't always feel good in the corporate world, but it has (almost) only advantages when it comes to visibility. Many colleagues (male and female), remember us – even if we only meet them briefly. And that's exactly what this is all about!

Ever since I've been working as a coach and facilitator for women's career programs, I've realized that many women have a kind of blind spot when it comes to their own visibility.

They want to convince and impress others solely with their excellent performance. All they do is wait. They wait for these achievements to be seen and honored by their boss, or department head, or generally "important people in the company". What a substantial career mistake!

*„Don't wait for your excellent work  
or achievements to be seen by others,  
but make sure you can actively showcase them!“*

*Stefanie Voss*



There's absolutely nothing wrong with top performance. But – considered alone – it's a much too shaky path to your successful future.

Focus on performance AND visibility, and as a result, your career path will develop much faster and more consistently. This can happen within or even outside your current company.

*„Visibility needs a strategy!  
As an employee in any position, it is essential  
to promote yourself again and again!“*

*Stefanie Voss*

This checklist is a simple yet powerful tool to determine your current "status quo" in terms of visibility – and to immediately take action.

In my 15-year corporate career from apprentice to department head, I always made sure that I was seen, that people noticed me, that they remembered my name. Based solely on diligence and good performance, I would never have gotten as far as I did.

At 23, I went abroad as an expat for Bayer, and I was the first female expat in the company to be sent from Germany to Latin America. A few years later, I got approval for a year-long sabbatical to travel around the world, and this happened when such a thing wasn't standard at all. And after my circumnavigation of the world crewing on a sailing yacht, I was able to choose which position I wanted to take.

I was promoted to department head at age 31. I became pregnant and yet I kept my leadership position as a mother working part-time. Of course, I also had luck – but in addition to my luck, I always strategically did a lot to draw people's attention to me.

With this checklist, you will be having a series of "measuring points" at hand, with which you can immediately check where you're already doing really well in terms of visibility, and where there's still need for action.



## The 3 areas in which you can strategically build up and expand your visibility:

1. "On the Job" in everyday professional life
2. Personal contacts and networking
3. Social media and other platforms

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Go through this list point by point and assess yourself. Put a cross on the line from ☹ to ☺, where the left end means you're not doing anything in this area at all, and on the right at the smiling face, you're already TOP in this area!

**Wherever your cross sits somewhere in the LEFT 33% of the sheet, you should quickly take action!**

Be sure to work through this PDF file all the way to the end. There, you'll find a big list of creative ideas and all kinds of tips and actions that you can **immediately** put into practice. I've exclusively compiled the best "golden nuggets" from my "treasure chest" in terms of visibility for you!

*„ A clear assessment of my status quo is always helpful.  
Maybe it shows me that my current  
position is disastrous.  
That's not nice, but it creates motivation to act!“*

*Stefanie Voss*



## Area 1 - "On the Job" in Everyday Professional Life

*Note: I've limited myself to the essentials here, because this first area alone is huge. You'll find the points that I regard as absolutely critical to succeed as an employee, and what I experience again and again as "typical mistakes" from my coaching perspective.*

1.) I have a well-maintained address book (colleagues, customers, and network in general), which I regularly clean up and supplement with important information such as birthdays, special occasions, etc. This way, I always have the opportunity to approach contacts in my network and, if necessary, to follow up on previous conversations.



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2.) I always have my up-to-date business cards with me (with precise information and maybe even a QR code to my detailed profile), in every handbag, in jacket pockets, briefcase, folder, or wherever else. I distribute these actively, both internally within the company and externally, even if I'm not explicitly asked for them.



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3.) I regularly arrange informal exchanges with different people, e.g. lunch appointments or when having coffee with colleagues or network partners, or I just call people from my professional environment from time to time to hear how they're doing.



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4.) In every informal conversation, I make sure to,  
⇒ not talk too much about myself (IMPORTANT for extrovert women), but to listen a lot.  
⇒ tell interesting and important points about myself (IMPORTANT for introverted women),  
instead of just listening.



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5.) I know the important "stakeholders" for my career in my company and actively seek opportunities to make myself visible to them, e.g., through a comment in a meeting, through a well-structured e-mail, an interested inquiry, or something similar.



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6.) I actively look for opportunities to engage in cross-functional teams and projects to regularly allow myself a look beyond my own area, both in terms of topics and in terms of people and network building.



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7.) When I participate in an important meeting, I prepare well and actively contribute. If it's a longer meeting, I contribute several times, at least at the beginning and shortly before the end (this usually is remembered better in participants' memory than the middle part of long meetings).



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8.) I consciously ensure that my name appears on all documents, presentations, and in all forms of communication for projects in which I've been involved. If the opportunity arises, I always present the results or information that I'm responsible for.



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9.) I always introduce myself with my name AND my topic or my expertise. "I'm Anna Miller and I am taking care of topic XYZ" is my standard introduction, and a simple "Hello, I work in Mr. X's department" would never cross my lips.



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10.) I pay attention to the traps of "typically female" behavioral patterns. I give a firm handshake, look people clearly in the eyes, don't speak too softly, sit in visible positions in the conference room, and ensure an open, upright posture in conversation situations.



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## Area 2 - Personal Contacts and Networking

*Note: In the list I'll talk about "the professional network", so these can be colleagues in the company, customers or suppliers, but definitely also private contacts with whom there are small, but relevant overlapping topics professionally.*

1.) Overall, I have a good professional network and know many interesting people, both on my own hierarchical level and in lower and higher positions.



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2.) I regularly attend events with a networking character, either in my company, in my professional association, in the wider circle of colleagues, or in my local environment.



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3.) I know various professional networks (or associations or interest groups or peer group meetings) and have already been open to joining a network with a more fixed structure to get involved there.



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4.) I actively connect people I know from professional environments and introduce them to each other, when I recognize that a connection could be advantageous for one or both persons.



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5.) People in my professional network actively approach me to meet me, exchange ideas with me, and ask me for advice.



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6.) When I think of very influential and well-known people in my network, I know that I can simply contact one or the other and have solid networking base with several influential personalities.



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7.) People from my professional network actively approach me to get an introduction to someone else from my network. I am seen as a valuable bridge to other valuable contacts.



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8.) I know that my name is mentioned more often when it comes to special expertise, when supporters for a topic are sought, or when potential candidates for special tasks are being looked for.



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### Area 3 - Social Media and Other Platforms

*Note: I write a lot about LinkedIn here, because it has become THE online network in the professional context of many international businesswomen. For women working purely in German-speaking countries, XING can also still be a good alternative, or specific platforms for individual professional groups, e.g., ResearchGate for the scientific community.*

1.) I have a well-maintained profile with a professional business photo in our company's internal address book and also a meaningful profile on a public network platform like LinkedIn.



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2.) When I meet someone for the first time professionally, I later look for this person on the intranet or in the internet and connect with them on internal and public social media network platforms.



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3.) I actively use at least the intranet or an external platform like LinkedIn. Active usage means that I regularly post longer comments to something that has been published or publish my own content (e.g. the link to an interesting article and my view on this article). I participate in surveys or ask smart questions (gladly critical, but always appreciative!) for town hall meetings or similar events.



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4.) I strive for the active expansion of my network, inside and outside my company. I use opportunities to network with interesting people from my professional context whom I don't yet know personally. This works through the intranet or on external platforms like LinkedIn, for example by writing to them with a specific question or asking for advice.



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5.) When asked, I seize the opportunity to contribute to a larger article or post that is widely distributed (e.g. to act as an interview partner, to co-write an article for the employee newsletter or an industry magazine or similar). If I can position myself for and with my topic, then I use this chance and actively spread the contribution.



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6.) If I get the opportunity to contribute a talk / presentation / lecture / be a panelist at an event within my organization or my professional community, I go for it.



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## **CHECKLIST COMPLETED! OK, and now?**

Here comes the MOST IMPORTANT step – you get into ACTION!

**Please decide what will be your first 3 steps that you tackle NOW:**

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

*„Working through a checklist like this  
is an important exercise.  
However, if you don't do anything afterwards,  
you've wasted your valuable time.“*

*Stefanie Voss*

You want to get started? Here you go: A broad and multifold collection of tips can be found on the following pages. I've used them for years to MASSIVELY increase my visibility. Some of these ideas might sound a bit crazy, but they work! And you're welcome to steal from my inspiration without any guilt. ;-) How about you connect with me on LinkedIn and tell me about your experiences? I'd love to hear from you!



My very personal

## **VISIBILITY TREASURE CHEST**

by Stefanie Voss

- I always introduce myself with my first and last name and pronounce them very clearly and distinctly, so that they are definitely well understood.
- My name (and as an entrepreneur also my logo) appear everywhere on my materials, on sticky notes, on books that I give away or borrow etc. All of these things are clearly attributable to me. Whoever gets these things in his or her hand or takes them home remembers me.
- These days, I write personal messages on my own A5 postcards. As an employee, I had an A5 pad with my name on it, on which I often and gladly wrote notes to colleagues, a book recommendation, a personal greeting with a thank you, or something else. With short, handwritten messages on MY paper I keep reminding people of me.
- I always have my business cards with me everywhere – and distribute them generously. I use this question: "May I give you my card / leave it here? Maybe there will be a situation where I could be a good contact for you?" And guess what, I've never heard a no.
- My business cards have a photo. For larger groups, at networking meetings, and for cards that the recipient only picks up on a book display, this is a HUGE advantage. If a business card with a photo is offered in your company, then please use this opportunity.
- The email signature is also a place where a well-made business photo brings a lot - you should preferably smile on it. Every message WITH a picture is always more personal and friendly than if there's just a name and a long signature.
- During travels on the train or on the plane, I often use my business cards as my bookmark, so my seat neighbor – if he or she is curious, and we ALL are! – can see what I do professionally. This has already connected to a bunch of exciting people.
- When meeting someone for the first time, I mainly listen and ask at least two to three not-too-common questions. This creates a connection (everyone likes it when you listen to them), and I learn things that I can follow up on at a later stage.



- I send the link to an exciting article I've read to someone from my network who might be interested, and I always write a short, personal message going with it. This way, contacts can be easily re-established, even after a longer silence.
- I have an unusual and particularly nice message on the mailbox. People react very positive and like to leave a message – and they remember me for my little creative idea. If your company allows it, by ALL means record more than just your name on the mailbox.
- I write a lot by hand, a birthday card for a colleague, a thank-you post-it for the particularly helpful technician at the conference, again and again and on all possible occasions. That's called "good contact maintenance". And that distinguishes me CLEARLY from many other people.
- I call people "just like that" and speak cheerfully on their mailbox if I don't reach them. In general, I prefer to pick up the phone rather than sending an e-mail. On LinkedIn, you can now also leave voice messages. I use this function a lot when I don't have a phone number but know that someone uses LinkedIn actively.
- I have different e-mail signatures depending on the target group and occasion. Internally, for example, a short signature, but externally somewhat longer, and depending on the topic, I add a note or a link. This can be managed very effectively with simple pre-defined text inclusion software.
- Even for employed women, it makes a lot of sense to network with colleagues from their own organization on LinkedIn. Especially with managing directors, board members, or international contacts from the company who don't often cross your path in the office corridor. This way, you can make sure they keep you at the top of their mind, and maybe your name will cross their thoughts when the next great job opportunity arises?
- When leaving a large conference or bigger event, I check in later with someone who had a long trip home. I briefly ask them in the evening / the next day if they've arrived home safely, and I take the opportunity to thank them again for the interesting conversation, fruitful collaboration or whatever else we had in common.



# PROFILE

Stefanie Voss is an international keynote speaker, leadership & team coach and she circumnavigated the globe. She is often called "Mrs. Blackbeard" - the businesswoman with the pirate soul.

She went to the U.S. as an exchange student at the age of 16, moved to Argentina for her employer at age 23, and signed on as crew member on a sailing yacht at age 25 to circumnavigate the globe. Her curiosity and open-mindedness made her a cosmopolitan early on.

At the age of 31, she became department head in a DAX company with extensive budget and personnel responsibility. After 15 years of a very successful, international corporate career, she changed course in 2009 and founded her own company.

Stefanie Voss consistently shows the courage to make audacious and unusual decisions far from what "one should do". Her clients appreciate her extraordinary sailing experience, her pragmatism, but also her broad business expertise through international leadership and management assignments in Europe, the U.S. and Latin America.

Her unconventional keynotes on pirate strategy, VUCA, diversity, agility and leadership are radically honest and evocative - and they get people into action. Stefanie Voss' interactive team and leadership development programs and her highly goal-oriented coaching work inspire participants from a wide range of professions.

She works for large corporations, SMEs, freelancers and the social and public sectors. Her client list includes companies and organizations such as Audi, Bayer, BASF, Bosch, Covestro, Daimler, Diakonie, Nespresso, Pfizer, Roche, Shiseido, Stadt Köln, Thyssenkrupp, Volks- und Raiffeisenbanken, Zippo and many others.

Stefanie Voss was born in 1974, is married, has two children and lives near Düsseldorf.







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*"It's not about the wind, but it's  
about how I set the sails.  
I am the LEADER on my SHIP!"*

