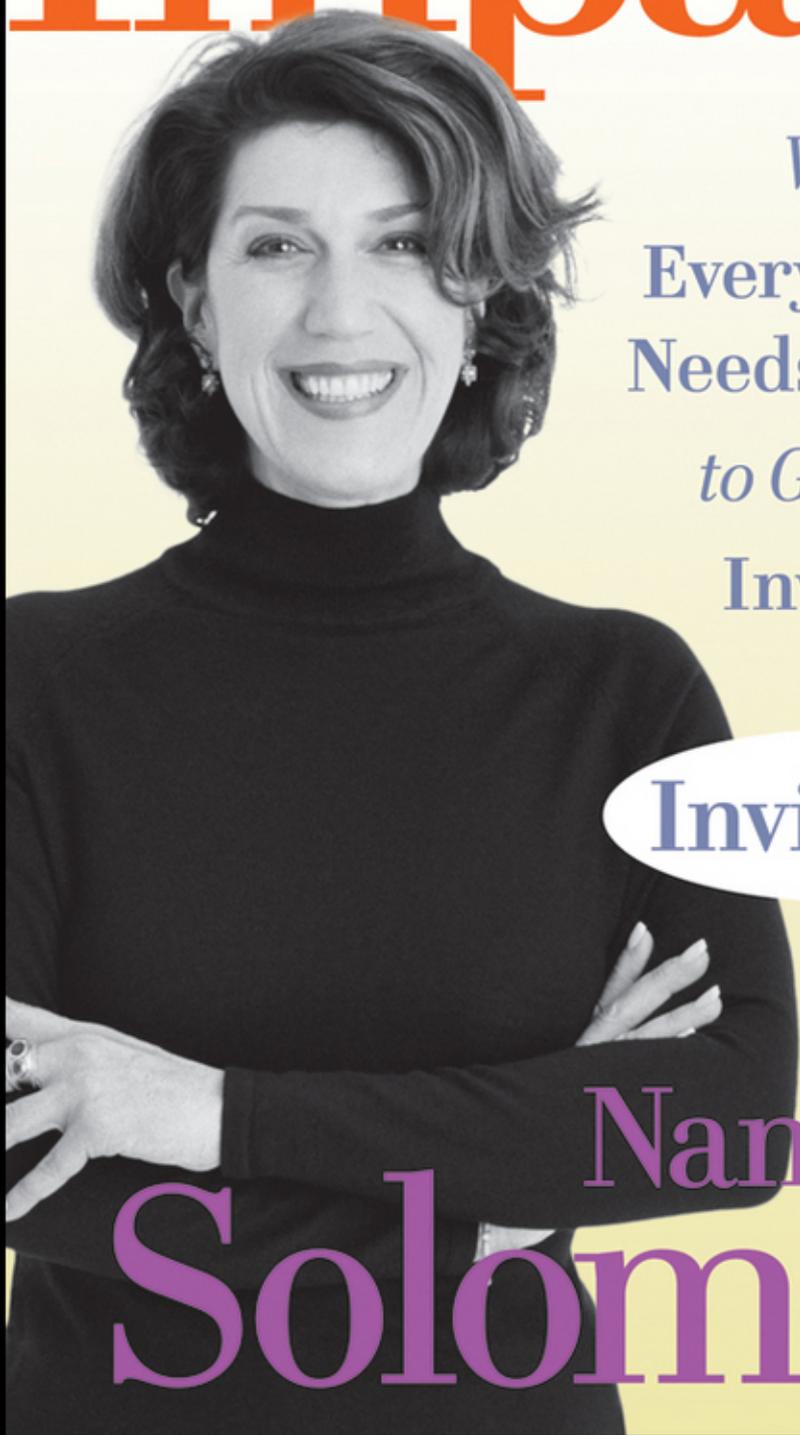


# Impact!



*What*  
**Every Woman**  
**Needs to Know**  
*to Go From*  
**Invisible**  
*to*

**Invincible**

Nancy D.  
**Solomon**

Nancy Solomon has done an outstanding job helping women understand what impacts their ability to live powerfully, and how to turn their untapped potential into performance in their work and in their lives. This is a must-read for women who are committed to getting more of what they want!

-**John Gray**, best-selling author of *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*

Nancy Solomon's treasure of a book is punctuated with real examples you can use to create a life on your own terms! Nancy delivers inspiration from the heart combined with common sense for everyday living. I thoroughly enjoy her down-to-earth approach, coupled with her delightful sense of humor! This is a treat you won't want to miss.

**Chérie Carter-Scott, Ph.D.** *If Life is a Game, These are the Rules: Ten Rules for Being Human*

Do yourself a favor: Buy, read, think about, and implement **IMPACT!** Nancy Solomon is a front-runner who inspires you to solve problems, navigate life's challenge and victories, and set a powerful direction for your life. While inspiring, humorous and candid, *Impact!* is a serious book that directly challenges the beliefs women hold about themselves--- the same beliefs that hold them back. If you're ready to lead from within, you're ready for *Impact!*

-**Sarah Weddington**, winning attorney *Roe vs. Wade*, professor

*Impact!* is a powerful, authentic book written by a savvy woman who has 'been there' and 'done that.'! Nancy Solomon masterfully connects the dots between personal power and financial education. My only regret is that *Impact!* wasn't available twenty years ago.

-**Barbara Stanny**, author of *Prince Charming Isn't Coming: How Women Get Smart About Money; Secrets of Six-Figure Women; Overcoming Underearning.*

At a time when American businesses need to re-evaluate its practices, re-engage employees and stimulate innovation and creativity, Nancy Solomon's new book, *Impact!* arrives just in time. Her empowering philosophy, direct approach and compassionate heart will cultivate the leader in every reader—whether you're a C-suite executive or a stay-at-home mom. . This self-help business book should be on the top of your must-read list.

-**Sandra Yancey**, Founder and CEO, eWomenNetwork, Inc.

Nancy Solomon has written a book that is both loving and empowering. It's an inspirational and practical gem for women - and men - at all phases of career and life.

-**Rick Foster**, co-author of "How We Choose to Be Happy" and "Choosing Brilliant Health."

Impact! is the key to success! Nancy Solomon captures the essence and importance of being intentional: this book will help people learn, grow, engage, drive and ultimately enjoy a successful life as they define it! Impact! provides insight, tips and exercises from Solomon's wealth of experience and wisdom. You'll want to buy a stack of books and give them to every woman you know and care about..

-**Alicia D. Kroll**, Talent Acquisition, SUPERVALU

When women decide to move out of the shadows from invisibility and to own their invincibility, remarkable things happen. Thanks to Nancy Solomon for inspiring women to championing their unique light and share it with the sisterhood and the entire world. It's a great way for women to live in the flow of life where expansive things can happen.

-**Yitta Halberstam**, author, Small Miracles.

Nancy Solomon's *Impact!* challenges the paradigms governing personal growth, and provides a route map that will lead anyone and everyone towards personal and commercial success. What a masterful piece of writing from the genius that is Nancy D. Solomon - well worth waiting for!

-**Jonathan Farrington**, Chairman, The Sales Corporation

Author Nancy Solomon asks you to 'consider how much grit it takes to put your life in full view of everyone you care about and respect.' Her book, *Impact!*, is a heapin' helpin' of grit, served up with a side order of "you had it in you all along."

-**Maureen Anderson**, host, The Career Clinic® radio program

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# Part Five

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## Impact at Work



# Essay 32

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## From the Ironing Board to the Board Room

Business Is Personal

**Editor:** Is *Impact!* a business book or a self-help book?

**Me:** Yes!

**Editor:** It can't be both. It's either a business book or a self-help book. What shelf in the bookstores do you want to see it on?

**Me:** Both. As a woman in business, I don't want to have to choose between the two. When I help myself, I help my business, don't I? After all, it is my 'Self' who's conducting the business, isn't that so? *Impact!* needs to be in both places, just like I am. In fact, it *must* be in both places because it's timely, relevant, and current. Just like we women are!

**Editor:** Sigh.



Business life. Personal life.

Don't you find it intriguing that we perversely cling to the idea that they are mutually exclusive? In this day and age, I wonder why we continue to think that these two vital components of our lives should be kept separate. I'm equally perplexed that there are some people who

believe that there are benefits to be reaped by pretending that business and personal matters actually *can* be segregated; that it's even possible should we decide it's advantageous. Which it most certainly is not.

Divorcing our business from our personal life is as archaic and ludicrous as designating specific colors or jobs as either male or female.

In every other area of our lives, we're demanding that boundaries become more fluid and malleable than ever before. Consider this: Pink used to be a woman's color until it became the new black for men's shirting. Gardening used to be women's play until it was monetized, and then it became men's work too. Attorneys were, historically, men and now women earn half the seats in law school. You get the point.

I grew up, professionally, at a time when people were defined, in absolute terms, by the nature of their work or their business. It was implicitly understood that our work and our identity were synonymous. Those 50, 60, 70 hours a week were *it*—it's what gave us our self-esteem, our self-worth, our value. Everything else in our lives, by default, was dismissed as frivolous.

It's one life we have, isn't it? To be sure, there will be times when one aspect obscures the other, or when the challenges in one part of our life bleed onto its neighbor. But life, in general, is just life.

The separation was initially born in an era when business was for boys and emotions were for girls. Which, in sexist lingo, means that business was the important stuff and the personal was merely fluff. Today we call that bad business. Today we're all a-twitter with this new concept called relationship marketing—marketing that is based on and has evolved out of our need to emotionally connect to one another (and our selves, I might add).

Let's back up a moment, shall we?

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Take a moment and define business. \_\_\_\_\_

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Take another moment and define personal. \_\_\_\_\_

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What did you learn?

What beliefs do you have about both of these?

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Pardon me if I seem a bit simple—I am not—but I am on a mission to persuade you, encourage you, and coerce you into rethinking the way you relate to both aspects of your life, and how both aspects correlate with one another.

At its most fundamental:

- ◆ Business is conducted by people.
- ◆ Business provides people with a service or product.
- ◆ Business provides people with jobs for which they earn compensation.
- ◆ People impact their own businesses and the businesses of others.
- ◆ People are *also* impacted by their own businesses, and the businesses of others.

Think reciprocity!

If our selves, as human beings, are the ones who are inextricably enmeshed in business, then logic follows that anything that helps us, supports us, educates us, validates us, assists us, in any way, impacts how we do business, why we do business, and the bottom line of that business, as well.

Self-help is business help because “*who we are impacts everything we do.*” If it impacts us, it impacts our business.

There can be no distinction, despite what we’ve been told, how we’ve been trained, or why we deceived ourselves into thinking otherwise. To attempt, in any manner, to separate the personal from the business is arrogant at best and ignorant at worst.

My professional experience, as one of the people to whom businesses turn when the “soft issues” become agonizingly hard, has repeatedly reinforced my assertion that business is personal. Very personal.

The Great Divide, as I call it, is that invisible space where emotional currency is replaced by intellectual capital. It’s the place where we ostensibly park our feelings at the door and pick up our professional personae at the same place. In truth, it is an abyss into which our most treasured values can potentially fall.

Thom works in a public accounting firm and has been a top-performing partner for the past 17 years. His company, like the competition, has been dramatically affected by recent economic events. Thom was recently called into his boss’s office and, due to falling profits and much needed cutbacks, was told that he was being laid off. His boss, a gentleman he’d worked with for over five years, said “Thom, please don’t take this personally, but the new budget demands that we trim our overhead, so we’re letting you go.”

Does Thom now go to his bank and say to them, “Please don’t take this personally, but I can’t pay my mortgage and I just know you’ll understand?” Of course not! Was Thom’s career impacted by this corporate decision? Yes! Therefore, did it impact his personal life? You bet!

Most of us wouldn’t go through the futile exercise of trying to pinpoint the precise place where the personal ends and the business begins. What is evident is that the more we’ve answered life’s call, the more we’re living our life purpose and following our passion, the harder it is to distinguish what is personal from what is not. We just *are*. No clear delineation is required. No clear distinction really exists.

Where does feeling end and thinking begin? It doesn't: Business begins and ends with us: every holistic cell of us. There is a plethora of research that has unequivocally concluded that feelings override rational decision-making. Hands down. It's not even a conversation anymore according to most studies.

I'm prompted to inquire as to what it is about the prospect of our feelings and our fragile psyches that's so uncomfortable for us that we are willing to perpetuate the myth that good business excludes the mother of all motivators—emotions.

What I've observed, an unpleasant number of times, is that people use the "it's just business" rationale as a catchall excuse when they don't want to take responsibility for dealing with feelings they're uncomfortable with. So "Don't take this personally" becomes the repository for the emotions the owner has yet to metabolize. While you may enthusiastically be reading a business self-help book, there are many people who would rather climb a 10,000-foot mountain barefoot than deal with the complexity of their feelings. I work with these folks every day. Unfortunately, they are not an anomaly.



The current economic debacle that has overtaken us is doing a fine job of shaking things up; some of which needed shaking and others, not so much. We've produced the perfect storm in which to reexamine our lives, elucidate our values and narrow the gap between our espoused beliefs and our embodied ones. Lest we fall into victimization and blame, every one of us needs to own our part in this financial fiasco. It's not just those in the C-Suite who pulled the wizard's curtain shut. We watched them do it.

Why are we here? What caused us to spend beyond our means, accept large amounts of bonus money while not achieving our

organizational goals, and extend credit to people who hadn't yet earned it?

Ego.

And ego is personal. Ego may impinge itself on business, but it grew out of our psychological need, not our intellectual one: Our need to have a bigger title than the person in the next cubicle, to make more money than our colleague, to have more direct-reports than the other award-winning high potential newbie. This ego affliction is not confined to executives; it's endemic to every corporate culture. Ego speaks of our self-importance, self-aggrandizement, self-centeredness, self-image, self-absorption, and self-worth.

Self.

Personal. Emotional. Nary a mention of business.

The global economy has caused businesses to become more holistic than ever. The recent ethics and moral scandals have stimulated us to reexamine and to establish more congruence throughout our lives.

Add to that mix Gen X and Gen Y, with their allegiance to their lifestyle, and I can't imagine us reverting to the segregation of our day job from the rest of our lives. We're in global economic purgatory because of some insatiable need to feed our egos, not because we're intellectual imbeciles. So let us stop fantasizing. Our personal lives and our professional lives go together like peanut butter and jelly.

## Initiate Impact!

1. How does who you are, at your core, impact your career?
2. Which of your core personality traits enhance your job and improve your performance?
3. Which traits hinder your career and negatively impact your performance?

4. What is one event in your personal life that profoundly impacted your career?
  - ◆ What happened and what was the consequence?
5. What one event in your career profoundly impacted your personal life?
  - ◆ What happened and what was the consequence?