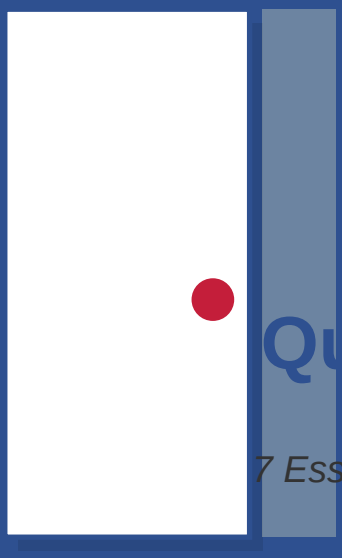

Qu

7 Essential Lessons for Opening Doors

"Stand and hold the door open, even if you can't walk through it. This is what educated women do."

— Ada Wright, Milwaukee's First Female Officer (1975)

By Sheronda Grant

■ FREE DOWNLOAD

This Quick Start Guide gives you the core lessons from the complete ebook. Use it as your roadmap for understanding your power, learning from trailblazers, building mentorship relationships, and creating opportunities for others.

LESSON 1: Your Presence is Power

The Core Truth:

You don't have to say or do anything extraordinary. When you show up as your authentic self—especially in spaces where people like you haven't traditionally had access—you create accountability, inspire others, and open doors simply by being there.

Why This Matters:

- When people see someone who looks like them succeeding, they believe they can too
- Your success defies negative stereotypes
- You normalize diversity in spaces where it's been absent

THIS WEEK:

Show up authentically in one challenging space. Notice how your presence changes the dynamic.

LESSON 2: Find Your Ada Wright

The Core Truth:

Find trailblazers who fought battles you'll never have to fight. These people have wisdom that can save you years of pain and mistakes.

Ada Wright's 5 Essential Lessons:

- Not everyone wants you to succeed — It's about their insecurity, not your inadequacy
- Don't change who you are to fit in — You were hired as yourself, stay that person

- The rules will change — Expect criteria to shift when you become eligible
- Set high standards as the first — Your performance creates expectations for those who follow
- Care about the next person — Your career impacts others beyond yourself

THIS WEEK:

Identify 3 potential trailblazers. Send a connection message to one.

LESSON 3: The Double Whammy

> *female. It's not our burden; it's the burden others heap upon us. But we have to strive to do our best and re*
>
> **— My Mentor**

The Core Truth:

If you face multiple barriers (race, gender, class, orientation), you need mentors who understand. Find someone who's walked your specific path.

What a Good Mentor Provides:

- A safe space to be vulnerable
- Validation that what you're experiencing is normal
- Practical advice based on real experience
- Honest feedback, even when it's hard to hear
- Encouragement when you want to quit

LESSON 4: Bring Up the Next You

The Core Truth:

Mentorship is reciprocal. The door was held open for you—now you hold it for others.

How to Be an Effective Mentor:

- Identify potential in others — Tell them you see it
- Share your story — Vulnerability creates connection
- Provide honest feedback — Constructively and privately
- Open doors — Make introductions, recommend them
- Hold them accountable — Mentorship isn't just cheerleading
- Let them go — Help them grow beyond needing you

THIS WEEK:

Tell ONE person you see leadership potential in them.

LESSON 5: Get in Good Trouble

> *"Get into trouble. Good trouble."*
>
> **— Congressman John Lewis**

The Core Truth:

Use your voice to advocate for others. Challenge unjust systems. Create opportunities. Accept that progress requires sacrifice.

What Good Trouble Looks Like:

- Writing letters to leadership about systemic problems
- Rebuilding broken organizations or programs
- Speaking up when it would be easier to stay silent
- Advocating for those who don't have a voice
- Using your position to create opportunities for others

THIS WEEK:

Identify one systemic problem you could help solve.

LESSON 6: Harvest Anger, Not Bitterness

ake me mad, you will make me successful, because I am going to harvest that anger and show you how go

— Sheronda Grant

The Core Truth:

You will face weak people, haters, and jealousy. Don't internalize their insecurity. Use it as fuel for your excellence.

But Also Protect Your Wellbeing:

You cannot pour from an empty cup. Talk to someone when you're struggling. Seeking help is wisdom, not weakness.

LESSON 7: Hold the Door Open

The Core Truth:

Being an educated woman isn't about degrees or titles. It's about recognizing your power, staying true to yourself, and holding the door open for others—even if you can't walk through it yourself.

Your Legacy Checklist:

- ✓ Recognize your power and use it wisely
- ✓ Stay true to yourself—don't change to fit in
- ✓ Seek wisdom from trailblazers
- ✓ Mentor the next generation
- ✓ Create opportunities for others
- ✓ Get into good trouble
- ✓ Hold the door open, even if you can't walk through it

"Stand and hold the door open, even if you can't walk through it. This is what educated women do."

— Ada Wright

Now go open some doors.

— Sheronda Grant

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