

## **Male/Female Thought Processes Differ, But Succeed Collaboratively**

The differences between male and female brain types and the way they process information was a topic of lively discussion Friday at the program “One Plus One Equals Three: Men and Women as Collaborators,” which took place during the ABA Midyear Meeting in Miami.

Panelists John Mitchell of Chicago and Karen Kahn Wilson of Westport, Connecticut, also discussed the “Climbing the Ladder” and the “Crossing the Bridge” approaches to business situations and to one’s personal thinking.

The ladder approach suggests a pattern of thought that is hierarchical and that poses questions. Bridge thinking is more horizontal, more like a continuum. Neither approach is wrong, stated Mitchell, as different situations lend themselves to different methods. For example, there are times when a “chief” is needed to make decisions, while at other times a more collaborative approach is appropriate. The key is for individuals to make conscious choices about which approach to use in a given situation, said Mitchell.

According to both Wilson and Mitchell, the male brain seeks data and the thought process is pictorial in nature. In contrast, says Wilson, when considering the female brain “think Internet.” The female brain is about “interconnectedness,” seeks relationships and processes information through words. However, these brain types are not absolutes and instead range along a continuum between the two.

The program was sponsored by the ABA Law Practice Management Section.

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