



Strategies to Build Women Leaders Globally: Think Managers, Think Men; Think Leaders, Think Women

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INTRODUCTION

You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.

—Maya Angelou

When we think about managers we think about men. However, when we think about leaders do we think about women? We must think about women because women are better leaders than men in several aspects. Most men talk about women empowerment and equality of women but in reality, a few of them walk their talk and advocate gender equality globally.

Although leadership is not gendered specific, we find only a few women leaders globally due to cultural, religious, social, and other factors

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including the glass ceiling. The good news is that currently women are smashing through the glass ceiling and excelling globally to carve a niche for themselves. Despite several constraints, women are proving their credentials and capabilities on par with men. They are not behind in any way when compared with male leaders.

Research shows that women take failures to their hearts and take a little longer time to move on from their failures. They are hard on themselves and love to be perfectionists. They fail to claim their achievements and make noise publicly especially on social media because of gender and cultural aspects. Additionally, they fail to leverage their networks and groups thus hindering their career prospects. Women fail to network for fear of being misunderstood by others. Women often ruminate about their failures more than men. They are harder on themselves than men. They are better at multitasking than men.

Research further shows that compared to men, women are better at interpersonal skills, soft skills, emotional intelligence, empathy, flexibility, and sociability. In a 2017 survey, Deloitte found that organizations with diverse and inclusive cultures tend to be six times more innovative, six times more agile in anticipating and responding to change, and twice as likely to meet or exceed financial targets. Organizations truly committed to gender diversity look at it not as a means of virtue signaling, but something as important as any business issue. It is observed that women get senior positions when companies are in a downturn and riddled with challenges. Women can troubleshoot effectively and can lead during crisis effectively. A series of experimental studies showed that a female candidate is more likely to be appointed to a leadership position when the position is risky and there is an increased risk of failure.

Myths and Truths About Women Leaders

Myths are major challenges globally. They are unrealities that hold the people back. They create wrong assumptions leading to wrong conclusions. They adversely affect society. Hence, they must be debunked with facts and figures. When you look at women and women leaders, several myths prevent them from contributing their best. They prevent them from achieving amazing success. Here are some myths with truths about them.

- Myth #1: Women are not ambitious. Truth: Women are equally ambitious like men but they are more relationship-oriented, unlike men who are more task-oriented. Women care for their families and children. Hence, it is improper to label them as non-ambitious.
- Myth #2: Advancement of women leaders is a threat to men leaders. Truth: Usually men often compete with men while advancing their careers. With the entry of women leaders, men must compete with men and women while advancing their careers. There is no change in competition except in gender. There is nothing to be concerned as long as men are strong in their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Myth #3: All men are against women's empowerment. Truth: No. Only a few men are against women's empowerment who cannot digest the fact that women should be treated equal to men in all aspects. It takes time for them to empathize and understand to respect women and empower them finally. Additionally, some men encourage women empowerment and advocate gender equality globally—#HeForShe.
- Myth #4: Women cannot execute tasks effectively. Truth: The truth is that women can execute tasks effectively and can also multitask, unlike men who can execute one task at a time effectively.
- Myth #5: Women cannot lead. Truth: Leadership is not gender-related. Anyone one can lead irrespective of their community, creed, caste, color, and gender.
- Myth #6: Women are unsuitable to occupy senior positions. Truth: Women are equal to men and can occupy all positions and handle issues with a cool demeanor. When you look at Indra Nooyi she proved as a successful CEO for PepsiCo for many years.
- Myth #7: Women are unfit for some military roles and operations. Truth: Although women have certain biological health issues, they can contribute to the way men contribute. Hence, gender is not an excuse to deny them equal opportunities to serve in the military.
- Myth #8: Women burst under pressure. Truth: In fact, women can work under pressure better than men. Men often burst when they are under pressure whereas women remain calm and composed under pressure. Additionally, women explore ideas rather than to brood over issues, unlike men.
- Myth #9: Women cannot manage money. Truth: It is only a perception that women spend money carelessly on shopping. But they are more cautious while spending money. They search for value

for their money and are better investors than men. Men are often emotional while investing money while women are often analytical while investing money.

- Myth #10: Women are part of the problem. Truth: In fact, women are part of the solution. When men create problems, women create solutions to overcome them.
- Myth #11: Women must remain at home. Truth: That was the philosophy in the Stone Age, not now. Women must come out of their homes to lead and provide better directions to societies. No society can grow without the support of women. In fact, behind the success of every man, there is a woman. Women lead at the home. Margaret Thatcher once remarked, “Any woman who understands the problems of running a home will be nearer to understanding the problems of running a country.” Imagine the kind of world we would create when women come out and lead outside with men.

Strengths of Women

Women work harder than men to prove themselves in the male-dominated corporate world. They don't like to be scapegoated by male leaders. Hence, they work harder than men. They stand up for what they believe in and work with flexibility and adaptability. They are collaborative while men are competitive by nature. Collaboration is essential for the smooth functioning of organizations and equally essential is a competitive spirit without which organizations cannot succeed. Blending both collaboration and competition is essential to achieve organizational excellence and effectiveness. Here are some strengths of women: Biologically women have a huge potential and are compassionate by nature. They empathize with others and are sensitive to others' feelings. They are experts in interpersonal skills and soft skills. They can handle stress better than men. By nature, men are aggressive. However, women are soft and well-behaved. Women are also experts in hidden data of communication. That is why they know the knack of understanding male egos, emotions, and feelings better and act accordingly. Women are leaders at home. They lead their spouses and children effectively. They are more responsible for work.

Women vs. Men Leadership Styles

Leadership is fundamentally based on the individual, environment, and situation. Although leadership is leadership, it differs from person to person and between men and women. The way people lead differs from leader to leader. The way women lead is different from men. Women leaders emphasize more on the democratic process to build consensus. They make decisions after weighing all options by thinking coolly. They emphasize more on collaboration, not competition. They are empathetic and good listeners. They apply different strokes to different men as all men are not alike. However, they don't take many risks like men. Here is some characteristic of women that make them lead differently from men. Women are tender, moral, cooperative, and trustworthy. They are imaginative, empathetic, and open to listen from all sources. They give more importance to emotions and feelings. They emphasize inspirational motivation and adopt a transformational leadership style in the workplace to accomplish organizational objectives. In a nutshell, they adopt more of transformational leadership than transactional leadership and more of soft leadership than hard leadership.

Women vs. Men Communication Styles

Conflicts occur in all aspects of our life. They cannot be eliminated. However, they can be minimized to a great extent, if adequate precautionary measures are taken. Approaches to addressing the conflicts differ between the genders and on the situation.

Whenever conflicts arise women act differently from men. In fact, women act while men react to conflicts. Men often settle their scores instantly while women take a little longer time to settle their scores. While men forget most of their negative experiences, women remember and ruminate about them. It is a well-admitted fact that men share negative experiences, observations, and information with a few of their close connections while women share with more connections. Hence, there is a possibility of women spreading information more than men.

The communication styles differ from person to person and between genders. Here are some differences between women and men in their approaches toward resolving conflicts. Women seek more information than men to arrive at their conclusions. They can decode and encode data more effectively than men. They are more emotional than men and enjoy

talking more than men. They often see things from multiple perspectives, unlike men who often see from own their perspective. Women are indirect while men are direct in their approaches. Women use cell phones more than men and text more than men.

Research shows that humans demonstrate more than 10,000 facial expressions. But women use more facial expressions than men. Women are less likely to interrupt others. Women smile more often than men. Women are often more demanding than men and it is challenging to please women. Above all, women are more assertive while men are more aggressive in their communication styles. Understanding these differences helps you address conflicts effectively.

Whenever there was a miscommunication, change your approach, not your attitude; attack the issues, not individuals. While addressing conflicts both genders must note that neither aggressiveness nor submissiveness works but it is the assertiveness that works. Hence, be proactive to overcome the conflicts and be assertive to address the conflicts to resolve them amicably.

The differences between genders make approaches to resolving conflicts differently. Hence, both men and women must understand gender differences and adopt their styles according to the situation to address conflicts and ensure smooth communication to achieve organizational productivity and performance.

Challenges Holding Women Leaders Back

Several factors are holding women leaders back within the global organizations—stereotypes, structural obstacles, lifestyle issues, institutional mindsets, and individual mindsets to name a few. There are several barriers to the advancement of women leaders including glass ceiling, prejudices, the old boy network, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and lack of mentors to name a few. Research shows that women are less consulted and receive less recognition than men in organizations. Here are some reasons that are holding women back to reach senior-level positions. C-suite women executives express that their gender cost promotion. Most women don't aspire to avoid pressure and stress at the top level. Most women work in staff roles, not line roles thus losing out in the race to the top.

It is a fact that women outperform men consistently in all aspects including curricular and extracurricular activities. Here are some solutions

to overcome the challenges. Offer equal access to developmental experiences that would prepare women for senior levels. Make HR policies women-friendly. HR feedback helps them assess and improve themselves. Encourage mixed-gender management teams.

Previously people talked about the biological differences between men and women. However, presently they are vocal about other issues including women empowerment, equality, and pay parity. There is a dramatic shift in the expectations and aspirations of women leaders. Hence, global organizations must address the causes that hold women back earnestly to empower women to achieve organizational excellence and effectiveness.

Overcome 'Queen Bee' Syndrome

There is a special place in hell for women who don't help other women.

—Madeleine Albright

Women encounter several challenges to establish and become successful. Mostly they encounter challenges from their male superiors and colleagues. In rare cases, they find challenges especially suppression from the same sex which is known as “Queen Bee” Syndrome. Cecilia Harvey, a London-based consultant and founder of global showcase platform Tech Women Today unfolds, “Queen Bees are adult versions of the mean girls from school—but now they have grown up and are more calculating. These socially aggressive behaviors include gossiping, social exclusion, social isolation, social alienation, talking about someone, and stealing friends or romantic partners.” The derogatory¹ “queen bee” label is given to women who pursue individual success in male-dominated work settings (organizations in which men hold most executive positions) by adjusting to the masculine culture and by distancing themselves from other women. Queen bees are the successful senior women who don't allow other ambitious princesses to succeed in the workplace. Worse, they prevent young women from reaching senior positions. Their attitude and approach hurt the interests of other ambitious young women leading to decreased morale and increased litigations within the organizations. Their

¹<https://ppw.kuleuven.be/cscp/documents/artikels-colette/the-queen-bee-phenomenon.pdf>.

behavior adversely affects organizational performance and productivity. Therefore, Queen Bee Syndrome can be defined as the practice where the successful senior women prevent ambitious princesses from reaching the senior positions.

Professor Allison Gabriel² remarked, “Women are ruder to each other than they are to men, or than men are to women. This isn’t to say men were off the hook or they weren’t engaging in these behaviors. But when we compared the average levels of incivility reported, female-instigated incivility was reported more often than male-instigated incivility by women in our three studies.” The examples of queen bees include Margaret Thatcher and Indira Gandhi who were former Prime Ministers to UK and India, respectively. In traditional Indian society, mothers-in-law usually turn out queen bees for their daughters-in-law.

Women are more ambitious to fast-track their careers than to advance the careers of their female colleagues and subordinates. There are several reasons for women turning into queen bees. They want young women to struggle and suffer because they struggled and suffered to reach their senior positions. They lack empathy and sympathy toward the same gender. They turn out to be hard and their leadership style becomes autocratic. There may be psychological reasons, their personality type, and the environment in which they were brought up. At times, they behave themselves more like men and distance themselves from other women thus endorsing the glass ceiling. A few women turn into queen bees to flow along with the mainstream to fast-track their careers.

Queen Bee Syndrome is a controversial topic that cannot be substantiated with research findings because it is based on perceptions. It may be a generational perception rather than gender perception. Therefore, it is essential to bust the myth that there is something inherent in women that hinders the growth of other women.

Queen bees must learn that great leaders pave the way for others by laying the ladder. To empower women and ensure their career advancement, we need righteous women, not queen bees. The young women must not give up their goals when odds are stacked against them including from the same sex. They must demonstrate their grit and determination to excel in all aspects of life to leave their marks for others to follow.

²<https://www.bustle.com/p/what-is-queen-bee-syndrome-it-might-explain-why-some-women-are-uncivil-to-each-other-at-work-8402852>.

Impart Soft Skills Training for Women Leaders

Soft skills are essential for everyone irrespective of rank, position, and gender. They are essential, especially for women to excel as leaders and C-level executives. There is a myth that soft skills are closely connected with gender. The truth is that soft skills are not gender-related. They are essential from janitors to the highest positions in the organizations.

Soft skills are the skills, abilities, and traits about your personality, attitude, and behavior. There are several skills that collectively constitute soft skills such as self-management skills, communication skills, speaking skills, writing skills, reading skills, listening skills, leadership skills, teambuilding skills, decision-making skills, conflict-management skills, problem-solving skills, time management skills, career management skills, critical thinking skills, customer service skills, negotiation skills, networking skills, entrepreneurial skills, analytical skills, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, and initiative to name a few.

You can acquire soft skills by various means including observation, reading, training, experience, and practice. Soft skills training equips you with skills, abilities, and knowledge. However, your interaction with others helps acquire soft skills greatly. Since soft skills are behavioral skills, people must learn by trial and error method by using their emotional intelligence, and through flexibility and adaptability. You must be practical, realistic, and situational to acquire soft skills. Above all, you must learn from your failures to improve your behavior to get along well with others effectively.

You must develop emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. You must observe and understand people and their behaviors. Travel unknown destinations to understand people. Talk to them to get along with them. Understand their cultures and behaviors. Traveling teaches tolerance and improves soft skills. When you travel to unknown destinations and communicate in a non-native language, you will be able to improve soft skills effectively.

Reading soft skills is one aspect and applying them is another aspect. Attending workshops and training programs help you understand what are soft skills and how you will be able to acquire them as such programs conduct role-plays to bring out behavioral improvement.

The dearth of soft skills will adversely affect accommodation, food services, retail, health, and social work sectors in the future. Therefore, there must be coordinated and integrated efforts from all stakeholders

including individuals, organizations, intellectuals, educational institutions, policy-makers, thought leaders, government, and nonprofits to promote soft skills in all spheres.

Equip Networking Skills for Women Leaders

It is not *what* you know but *who* you know matters in this networked world. Having connections helps you greatly to fast-track your career. Some people get quick visibility while some remain incognito forever. Some people even leave this world as unsung heroes and heroines. Therefore, having connections helps you greatly to achieve success.

LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company³ found in their major new study—with almost 30,000 employees across 118 companies that women’s odds of advancement are 15% lower than men’s. A study⁴ explains “Women and men agree that sponsorship is vital to success and advancement, with two-thirds describing it as ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ important. Yet they do not have the same type of professional networks, which may result in different levels of support.” It is obvious from these research findings that women lack strong networking skills to excel socially, professionally, and virtually. Hence, they receive the news of employment opportunities much later than men. In fact, most employment opportunities are not available through newspaper advertisements. They are filled mostly through connections and referral recruitments. The people who work in the companies know about the openings and refer their close connections who get shortlisted and selected. The incentives are directly credited into the accounts of the people who referred the candidates. Things have changed from the conventional methods of recruitment to advanced methods of recruitment. People who know the top people can get access to opportunities for employment. After joining the organizations, the employees who have strong connections with the top hierarchy in the organizations get promoted quickly.

Currently, 3Cs are essential to succeed in all spheres—content, communication, and connections. Content is king while communication is queen. When your content is strong, you earn respect from others. At

³<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/women-in-the-workplace-2017>.

⁴https://www.huffingtonpost.com/marilyn-nagel/women-network-differently_b_8259538.html.

the same time, you must have strong communication skills to convey your content to reach the right audiences. Connections are the people who spread a word about your content and communication. Hence, having content, communication, and connections helps you achieve amazing success in all spheres.

Networking is an art, not rocket science. Anybody can network if they acquire basic tools and techniques. Here are some tools for women to network with others successfully. Women must diversify network development strategies. They must treat other women as allies, not enemies to build strong networks. They must network with both women and men equally. They must not seek favors immediately. They must extend their hands and explore opportunities. Currently, there is more of “boys club” than “girls club” in the organizations. Hence, they must network with both clubs to advance their careers.

Whenever you get an opportunity, seize it to deliver a speech to get noticed. You must come forward to deliver their talks during public events, functions, and award ceremonies. It enhances visibility and offers innumerable opportunities. Remember to emphasize quality connections. Instead of networking with too many people, choose a few people especially 2–3 people with positive body language in the events and talk to them. Take their business cards and give your business cards to them. Follow-up. Note down their email ids and send them an email with a thank-you note. In case, if there are any opportunities, your email helps them connect back with you. In a nutshell, to be a successful networker, you must be an attentive listener, empathize with others, emotionally intelligent, ask the right questions, respect the listener, add value to the listener and make a difference.

Internet and technology have thrown tremendous opportunities for ordinary individuals to excel as extraordinary individuals. If people know how to create original content and share it with their audiences on social media with the right hashtags at the right time, they can be seen easily and promoted quickly. Some ordinary people showcase their skills, knowledge, abilities, and talents through YouTube channel and get recognition instantly. They build networks and create a fan base. They build their leadership brands.

If a raindrop falls into an ocean, it loses its significance; if the same raindrop falls into a shell, it becomes a pearl. The right people must connect with the right people at the right time to achieve the right outcomes. The difference between the lucky people and the unlucky people is that

lucky people have connections while the unlucky people don't have any connections.

Close the Gender Pay Gap Globally

Globally the gender pay gap is a burning topic but very few take it seriously to bridge the gap earnestly. If women are equipped with negotiation skills the gender pay gap can be minimized in organizations. Women find it hard to negotiate their salary. They are behind men in expressing and expecting the desired outcomes in salary and compensation.

Women must learn how to negotiate their salaries to end up rich at the end of their careers. Failing to do so will result in undervaluing their resumes, low productivity, and low morale in the workplace. They must remember that unless they ask, they don't get what they want. While negotiating pay compensation men are direct and women are indirect in their approaches. At times it becomes difficult for employers to understand what women want. Therefore, women must communicate clearly about their expectations.

Women must remember that gender stereotypes are pervasive. They are often at a disadvantaged position at the negotiation table thus adversely impacting negotiations. Hence, they must ask what they want during negotiations. They must not react negatively across the negotiating table. They must maintain neutral body language; avoid expressing eagerness to get employment or overexcitement if offered more salary, and keep cool and composed. They must focus on their core skills and strengths and bargain from the position of strength.

Salary negotiation is a collaborative process between the employer and the employee. It must be a win-win outcome to ensure employee engagement effectively and achieve organizational excellence and effectiveness.

Be realistic when you negotiate your salary. Research to find out the prevailing salaries paid in your current position in your industry. Ask for a reasonable hike. Don't quote sky high as you lose the chances of getting employment offer. Fix low and high figures on your mind and negotiate to make it win-win. A win-win outcome is always better than a lose-win or win-lose outcome. If you are convinced that others are getting salaries better than you, be assertive to ask for it. If you find that the present employer doesn't pay as your abilities, explore employment opportunities elsewhere to get a higher salary. When you know your true worth and the

prevailing salaries in your industry, you can negotiate from a position of strength.

Countries including Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark have taken appropriate measures to close the gender pay gap. For instance, Iceland fines for companies with gender wage gaps; Norway pays mandatory paternal leave; Finland and Sweden offer flexible schedules, and Denmark provides partially subsidized and affordable childcare. Global companies including Starbucks, Intel, Salesforce.com, GoDaddy, and Accenture have taken the right steps to bridge the gender pay gap.

Ensure Work-Life Integration for Women

Work-life integration is a challenging issue for both men and women. It is more challenging for women as they must take a break for their motherhood and take care of their children at home. Currently, the employees work very hard to earn their livelihood and beat the competition. Hence, taking care of all aspects is not an easy thing. If anybody has it all, they are truly blessed.

For women, there is often a conflict between the biological clock and career clock. Balancing both is a challenging task for them. Companies including Facebook and Google encourage work-life integration which encourages some leisure time for their employees to pursue their hobbies or to relax during the working hours to enable them to recharge.

Instead of searching for work-life balance, women must reframe their minds and integrate work and life to lead a complete life. Previously people worked hard for more than 8 hours a day for 6 days a week. Presently people work smart for 8 hours a day for 5 days a week. In the future, people will work wise 6 hours a day for 4 days a week. Therefore, we are looking forward to a world where people eat the cake and have it too. That means, they enjoy during work hours and achieve peak performance in the workplace.

Build a Team of Connections Globally

When you want to achieve amazing success globally you must build a team of strong connections and networks. After completion of your education, parents have a limited role to play in your life except in

supporting your family and finance. However, when you want to fast-track your career, you must build a team of connections globally to add value to them and leverage their connections.

Connections are crucial for your career and leadership success. They help you keep in the right place at the right time. They help you timely and immensely. When a raindrop falls into an ocean, it loses its significance. In contrast, if the same raindrop falls into a shell, it becomes a pearl. Right connections, coaches, and mentors help you fast-track your career.

Even if you don't have money, your connections help you greatly. That is one of the major reasons why people invest their time, energy, and resources to build connections. Some people attend events and functions to network with others. There are networking events at the end of each program to connect with like-minded people to explore opportunities. It is a well-admitted fact that behind the success of every person there is someone who laid the ladder for their success. Therefore, success is not a solo game. It is a confluence of various factors including hard work, persistence, and connections. Here are some tools to build your network. Don't be shy to talk with strangers. Be comfortable to open up with them. Don't be overly conscious about making mistakes. Be cheerful. Smile to connect with others. Start your conversation based on your knowledge, skills, and abilities. Also, initiate your conversation by outlining others' areas of interest. Be a good listener first. Don't interfere when others converse with you. Present a positive body language to connect with others. Adopt mirroring techniques to connect with others quickly. Avoid interfering with their personal issues and lives. Your conversation must be professional with an emphasis on ethics and etiquette.

People prefer to pursue an education in prestigious institutions. Apart from acquiring knowledge from the best faculty and exchanging knowledge with their peers, they enjoy quality connections. Some of their connections reach higher positions in the long run. They help themselves since they hail from the same institution. The alumni from these institutions help their institutions to grow stronger and greater. In this way, they elevate their brand and strengthen their connections. Additionally, if you want to stay rich forever, one of the best ways is to acquire quality education in prestigious institutions as the alumni extend their help among themselves. Remember, a single contact with the right person at the right time will keep you in the right place to touch your tipping point.

In this cutthroat competitive world what makes the successful and unsuccessful is the ability to network with others effectively. There are people who became stars due to their connections. Subsequently, they worked hard; built their skills and abilities; and retained their positions. Hence, don't underestimate the power of networks and connections. In fact, "who you know" matters more than "what you know" in this cutthroat competitive world.

It is observed that some people are very strong in their areas but they don't know how to build connections and showcase them with others. They find it challenging and remain unnoticed and unrecognized throughout their lives. On the other hand, some people have the right connections and showcase whatever the little they have and achieve recognition and success quickly. Hence "who you know" certainly matters more than "what you know." If "what you know" is the king of success, "who you know" is the queen of success. Both the king and queen are essential to run your career empire successfully.

Leverage Social Media

Social media has played a crucial role to highlight various social issues including women empowerment. It has highlighted many unnoticed issues. It has connected the people globally and brought democracy virtually. Although it has created chaos in some aspects, it has transformed society by highlighting social justice and bringing social change. Women are better informed than ever before due to the internet and advanced technology. There is growing awareness and assertiveness to fight for their equality.

You can communicate with anybody on social media across nations, time zones, and demographics. You can share your vision, mission, and execution and your knowledge, skills, and abilities. It is an open platform for everyone either to agree or disagree with what you have posted. It is a democratic platform to exchange ideas, insights, opinions, and views. It is a great opportunity thrown open to humans by technology. Therefore, women leaders must express their ambitions early in their careers to reach top positions and spread their words on social media to get noticed. To be successful in social media, you must be consistent in your content and communication. It takes lots of effort, energy, and time to build your brand. It requires loads of passion, patience, and perseverance.

Technology has become both a boon and bane and it all depends on how you view it. Instead of viewing it as your enemy, you must treat it as your ally to harness it effectively to achieve human progress and prosperity. Many people viewed it as an ally and participated in social media to share their knowledge, ideas, insights, and opinions. Some people leveraged social media to build their brands and fast-track their careers. Women leaders including Oprah Winfrey, Sheryl Sandberg, and Arianna Huffington have successfully leveraged social media to brand and market themselves. Hence, women must know how to leverage this amazing platform to fast-track their careers.

If you are a novice, here is how you can proceed on social media. Understand the basics of all social media platforms and their pros and cons. Shortlist the ones that suit your profile, area, and image. Stick to those platforms and share your ideas, insights, thoughts, knowledge, skills, and abilities regularly. Gradually people will notice and follow you. Comment on their posts and they will reciprocate if they find the time and feel that your posts or comments are interesting. Be consistent in your posts and messages. Build your credibility. Be persistent because it takes a lot of time. At the same time don't get addicted to social media. Fix some time every day and use it judiciously without hampering your core activities and assignments. Use your filler time in the day such as traveling while you commute to your office. In this way, you can leverage your traveling time judiciously to build your brand and market yourself. Here are some tools for women leaders to adopt to excel personally, professionally, and socially. Don't shy to market and brand yourself. Be visible on social media to showcase your strengths and achievements. Make a noise whenever you achieve something worthwhile to enable the people to notice you and to become an inspiration for others. Here is a caution: Be careful about what you are posting. Avoid posting sensitive issues related to religion and politics. Avoid kicking up controversies for getting short-term fame.

Social media highlighted women empowerment and atrocities on women thus advocating gender equality globally. It unfolded many things that were unknown to many people. Therefore, women must use social media judiciously to fight for their rights and fast-track their careers.

Humanize Your Leadership Brand

These are the days of branding and marketing whether you are a spiritual leader, religious leader, business leader, political leader, or academic leader. With the advent of social media, people started using technology aggressively to build their credibility and enhance visibility. There are celebrities including film stars, cricketers, and sportspersons who hire marketing people and social media managers to click photographs with their pets and post on social media. They meet poor people in developing nations and the less fortunate; click photos and upload on social media platforms especially on Instagram to enhance their visibility. They want to show visually that they are committed to making a difference. Are they honestly humanizing their brands?

By leveraging social media, ordinary individuals excelled as extraordinary individuals by branding and marketing aggressively. Several celebrities bank on the support of other celebrities to leverage their brands rather than to extend opportunities to the average individuals and upcoming ambitious individuals. Such celebrities hardly humanize their brands.

When you look at Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King Jr, and Nelson Mandela they worked for their causes, not applause. They walked their talk. They did not crave for publicity and visibility. It was the people who spread their ideals and ideas, and struggles and sacrifices through word of mouth and built their credibility and enhanced their visibility. However, in this internet age, most celebrities pump their money to build their brands and market themselves aggressively to create more wealth. They hardly walk their talk and make a difference in the lives of people.

Humanizing your brand means giving a human dimension to your brand by connecting with your audience and touching their lives. It is to connect with your audience emotionally, not mechanically. It is to convert invisible elements into visible elements and intangible aspects into tangible aspects. It is to include emotions with a humane touch to your brand. It gives a competitive edge to your leadership brand.

When everyone involved in social media is human why cannot you humanize your brand? To humanize your brand, you must emphasize emotions, egos, and feelings. Therefore, brand humanization can be defined as the process of giving a human dimension to your brand by involving emotions, egos, and feelings to connect with your audience

quickly to touch their lives and make a difference. In this age of automation, it is essential to emphasize human elements to your brand due to the dearth of physical proximity. Humanizing your brand is a marathon, not a sprint. It requires regular efforts, energy, enthusiasm, and time to humanize your brand. Here are some tips to humanize your brand. Emphasize social issues to bring social change. Take up a few core issues globally and highlight them. Focus on average individuals and their issues to explore ideas. Include emotional elements to touch their hearts and offer inspiring ideas to ignite their minds. Accept your mistakes and apologize. Don't worry about flaws. Accept flaws and failures because nobody is perfect in the world. Keep people before profit. Avoid short-term temptations. Be agile and active. Engage your audience on your social media platform. Encourage agreement and disagreement. Be honest and transparent. Observe ethics and etiquette. Build trust and goodwill in the audience. Build social media warriors and soldiers. Build brand ambassadors and evangelists. Walk your talk and go the extra mile. Above all, learn, unlearn, and relearn to humanize your leadership brand constantly.

Some people kick up controversies to get noticed on social media. They want instant fame on social media. Such tactics don't help them in the long run because a consistently growing graph is essential to build your brand on social media. However, there will be occasional setbacks in career graphs. When you look at the authentic influencers, they mean business and grow consistently on social media with meaningful dialogues and discussions by sharing great content consistently and adding value to their audiences.

If you think that brands are like humans on the move, you will personalize, engage, and inspire your audiences effectively and successfully. When you look at global companies including Google, Apple, Facebook, Nike, Coca-Cola, South West Airlines, McDonald's, and Starbucks, they humanized their brands successfully. They emphasized customer delight which is far ahead of customer satisfaction. When you humanize your brand, you can achieve customer delight.

People have become much wiser and smarter than ever before because social media has thrown everything open to assess individuals and their activities. It reviews and offers feedback instantly. The audiences watch their leaders from all spheres; branding and marketing tactics, and assess authenticity. Hence, ordinary individuals who aspire to excel as extraordinary individuals and successful individuals who intend to become more

influential must add value to others by humanizing their brands and making a difference to the world.

Smashing Through the Glass Ceiling

There is no great force for change, for peace, for justice and democracy, for inclusive economic growth than a world of empowered women.

—Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

We cannot force men to sacrifice their careers for women. Instead, we can implore men to support women in whatever the best possible way to achieve women's empowerment and advancement. Women must realize that playing a gender card does not work in any way. Instead, they must participate and work hard and smart in developmental activities. They must chart their paths to prove themselves identifying their inner talents and understanding their limitations. They must take initiative to move forward as nobody invites them to lead from the front. They must express their ambitions in the early stage of their careers; build connections; seek help from others; and help other women leaders to accomplish their goals.

To summarize, when you want to achieve growth and prosperity it is imperative to encourage women participation in developmental activities. A bird cannot fly with one wing because it needs two wings to fly. Similarly, when you want society to progress, you must advocate women empowerment and participation who constitute half of the global population. When both men and women participate, imagine the type of society we will pass on to the next generation. Hence, men must support women wholeheartedly to build a prosperous world. To conclude, women must smash through the glass ceiling. They must not shy away from shouldering responsibilities. They must stay in the game by learning and leading. They must break structural obstacles and build connections to fast-track their careers.

CHAPTER TAKEAWAYS

- Currently women are smashing through the glass ceiling and excelling globally to carve a niche for themselves.
- compared to men, women are better at interpersonal skills, soft skills, emotional intelligence, empathy, flexibility, and sociability.

- Women work harder than men to prove themselves in the male-dominated corporate world.
- Women leaders emphasize more on the democratic process to build consensus. They emphasize more on collaboration, not competition. They are empathetic and good listeners.
- Communication styles differ from person to person and between genders. Women seek more information than men to arrive at their conclusions. They can decode and encode data more effectively than men.
- Several factors are holding women leaders back within the global organizations—stereotypes, structural obstacles, lifestyle issues, institutional mindsets, and individual mindsets to name a few.
- Women encounter several challenges to establish and become successful. Mostly they encounter challenges from their male superiors and colleagues. In rare cases, they find challenges especially suppression from the same sex which is known as “Queen Bee” Syndrome.
- Queen Bee Syndrome is a controversial topic that cannot be substantiated with research findings because it is based on perceptions.
- Soft skills are essential for everyone irrespective of rank, position, and gender. They are essential, especially for women to excel as leaders and C-level executives.

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