MODERN GUIDE TO EQUALITY

Advancing equality in the workplace
introduction

There’s a ripple growing, and women are at the center of it.

The World Economic Forum projects that it will take 202 years to achieve economic equality between men and women. That means that, at the current rate of progress, parity will be a reality in the year 2220. That is too long to wait.

When we hear these “big” numbers, these vast stretches of time and vast disparities, it’s normal to think in terms of “big” solutions. But sometimes, the biggest impacts — the furthest-reaching ripples — happen through a collection of micro-actions and concrete steps.

It’s time to take steps for equality. That’s how a ripple will turn into a wave.

— The Female Quotient
About The Female Quotient

When you add more women to any equation, there is a return on equality.

The Female Quotient is a female-owned business committed to advancing equality in the workplace through collaboration, activating solutions for change, and creating metrics for accountability.

We are rewriting the rules of the workplace. Equality is better business. We work with forward-thinking companies and leaders to advance parity while advancing the bottom line through assessments, equality health labs, and actions steps for change.

Through The FQ Lounge, we bring women (and men) together to activate change through pop-up experiences at conferences, companies, and college campuses. The destination-turned-movement has become the largest community of women in business rising up to transform workplace culture.

The time for equality is now.
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It’s time to stop admiring the problem, and instead activate solutions for change and measurements for accountability.

- Shelley Zalis, CEO, The Female Quotient
the state of equality

Representation. Advancement. Leadership. Education. The state of equality has many different facets, and for many countries, the roadmap to parity is still a work in progress.

This is a harsh reality in the United States. The World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report establishes benchmarks for countries around gender parity. Of the 149 countries evaluated, the United States ranked 49th in 2018 — down from 51st the year before.

Gender inequality is a persistent global issue. To end it, countries must stamp out outdated stereotypes and embrace the true potential of women in the workforce. These changes are already in motion in some places. But at the local, national, and global level, gender parity is an opportunity that benefits everyone.
ICELAND

Through an equal pay law, companies with 25+ employees must prove that they pay men and women equally for equivalent work.

USA

Through salary history bans, 15 states have prohibited employers from requesting salary history information from prospective employees.

NORWAY

Norway requires all listed companies to have at least 40% women on their boards.

FRANCE

In response to a pervasive catcalling culture, France passed a series of stringent laws to ban street harassment.

NICARAGUA

Thanks to a series of progressive policies, it is projected that Nicaragua will close its gender gap within 15 years.

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica has created a quality seal to verify and certify gender equality in private sector organizations.

GERMANY

Through the Wage Transparency Act, companies with 200+ employees must publicly disclose all employees’ salaries.

URUGUAY

The Care Act ensures state-sponsored care for children, persons with disabilities, and elderly persons, which helps remove the burden of unpaid work from women.

NAMIBIA

The country’s leading political party adopted a zebra-system (alternation between men and women) on electoral lists for local elections. Currently, 43% of seats in the National Assembly are held by women.
The Global Gender Gap score stands at 68%, which means that, on average, there is still a 32% gap to close. While to date, no country has achieved parity, seven countries have closed at least 80% of the gap:

- Iceland (85.8%)
- Norway (83.5%)
- Sweden (82.2%)
- Finland (82.1%)
- Nicaragua (80.9%)
- Rwanda (80.4%)
- New Zealand (80.1%)

Transformation happens in steps – and we must create measurements for accountability in order for true change to happen. With that, The Female Quotient uses four key vitals to help companies to measure their current equality status, identify specific areas for improvement, and create customized plans to make their workplaces more inclusive, safe, and fair.
equality health pillars
parity
The economic vitality of women matters. They account for nearly 50% of the workforce. For half of American families with children, they are the sole or co-breadwinner. [1] Yet the chasm between the earnings and opportunity of men versus women continues to exist. More than half a century has passed since the introduction of the U.S. Equal Pay Act — but pay parity is still an aspiration, not a reality.

Right now, the average full-time female employee earns 80.7 cents for every dollar her male counterpart earns. [2] The Institute for Women’s Policy Research projects that pay parity will not be a reality in the United States until 2059. [3] Let that sink in for a minute. This means that, at the current rate, we need to wait nearly half a century until men and women are paid equally.

Forty years is too long. Pew Research Center refers to our current reality as the “narrowing, but persistent, gender gap in pay.” [4] How can we transform that to “narrowing, and fast-disappearing, gender gap in pay?”

- **20%** — the current average gender wage gap in the United States. [1]
- **$9,909** — how much smaller women’s median earnings are than men’s [5]
- **2119** — the year Black women will achieve pay parity, at the current rate.
- **2224** — the year Hispanic women will achieve pay parity, at the current rate. [1]
PARITY

PAY SECRECY POLICIES BY TYPE OF EMPLOYER: [6]

0%

PRIVATE

17% Wage and salary information public
17% Wage and salary information can be discussed in the workplace
25% Discussion of wage and salary information is discouraged by managers

PUBLIC

70% Discussion is formally prohibited, and/or employees caught discussing wage and salary information could be punished
15%
9%
6%

PAY SECRECY POLICIES BY TYPE OF EMPLOYER: [6]

IF THE PAY GAP WERE CLOSED, THE AVERAGE WORKING WOMAN COULD AFFORD EITHER: [7]

1+ additional years of tuition and fees for a four-year public university
74 more weeks of groceries
7 more months of mortgage and utility payments
14 more months of childcare

PAY EQUALITY IS GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY:

The U.S. economy would produce an extra $512.6 billion in annual income if pay parity was a reality. [8]

If women were paid equally, the poverty rate for all working women would drop from 8% to 3.8% (a 50% reduction). [8]

SOURCES:
COMPENSATION

THE PAY GAP IS NARROWING — but progress has been incremental since 2004. This leaves vast opportunity for improvement. In 2018, many think tanks say that the average woman earned 20% less than her male counterpart. But this oft-referred-to figure doesn’t include many women and industries engaged in the labor force. The Institute for Women’s Policy Research reports that, more accurately, women earn just 49 cents on the average man’s dollar. The takeaway? We continue to live in a “men’s labor force.” [1][2]

THERE IS A REASON to be optimistic. Last year, the pay gap narrowed by 1% — the first statistically significant shift in several years. Researchers at Payscale attribute the progress to the increased representation of women in leadership roles. As we look to the future, it is essential that we commit to actions that prepare current and future female leaders to succeed. [3]

DIVERSITY HIRING

IT PAYS TO HAVE A diverse workplace community. Consider the facts: According to a McKinsey study, gender diverse companies are 15% more likely to out-earn their peers. [4] It is also a key decision-making factor for job candidates; a recent Glassdoor survey found that 67% of job-seekers evaluate an organization’s workplace diversity when considering an offer. [5]
FOR A DIVERSE ORGANIZATION to really benefit both its employees and its bottom line, one key quality matters: authenticity. A Harvard Business School report revealed that diversity benefits industries that authentically appreciate the value of a diverse workforce. [6] This serves as a poignant reminder that organizations need to understand why an inclusive workplace matters — and only then can they attract and retain diverse talent.

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

THE STANDARD WORKFORCE does not reflect the standard consumer base. Take, for example, the fact that women control the majority of household spending across the world; in 2018, women controlled an estimated $40 trillion in consumer spending. Diversity of gender, race, background, and experience matters. And this diversity should be as well represented on the supplier side as it is on the consumer side. [7]

CONTRARY TO POPULAR belief, increasing the reliance on women- and minority-owned suppliers does not cost leading procurement organizations — in fact, many leverage supplier diversity to drive new sources of revenue. [8] When organizations partner with suppliers owned by women, minorities, veterans, LGBTQ, and historically underutilized businesses, their bottom line benefits: Hackett Group found that “on average, supplier diversity programs add $3.6 million to the bottom line for every $1 million in procurement operational costs.” [9]
case studies

COMCAST AND NBCUNIVERSAL

It takes a village. That’s why Comcast and NBCUniversal’s Supplier Diversity Programs utilize direct business-to-business outreach to engage a diverse supplier base. The media conglomerate also partners with advocacy organizations to create connections with diverse vendors. Through the online supplier diversity portal, companies can register with Comcast and monitor partnership progress. [1]

“When you fix the gap, it’s not just that you’re spending some incremental dollars which you can say publicly that ‘we have no pay gap...’ You can then attract the best talent to your organization and retaining those as well because now you know that’s something that we’re fully committed to.”

– Dan Schulman, CEO, PayPal

PAYPAL

For years, PayPal didn’t have the data on its pay gaps across gender and race. That all changed in 2015, when the online payments system invested $3 million to identify — and close — those gaps. PayPal, which operates on a mission to “democratize payments,” evaluates pay three times a year for all of its 20,000 employees. Its efforts are garnering results: as of 2019, PayPal had closed its pay gap by 90%. [2]

“The benefits of supplier diversity are reciprocal. Diversity within our supply chain gives our company a competitive edge, helps inspire innovation and offers us invaluable insights into the interests and needs of our customers.”

– Peter Kiriacoulacos, Chief Procurement Officer, Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal
case studies cont.

THOUGHTWORKS

Thoughtworks appreciates that talent can come from a myriad of experiences and backgrounds. The technology company created ThoughtWorks University, an entry-level program designed to prepare employees with the skills and experience they need to have a successful career at Thoughtworks. The five-week program caters to a broad target base; both recent graduates and individuals pivoting into a tech career are invited to apply.

“Creating a diverse and inclusive workplace is an everyday job and the responsibility of more than just an organization’s leadership. Every employee can contribute and it’s the sum of all the individual commitments that lead to impactful and sustained change.”

- Tarsha McCormick, Head of Diversity and Inclusion North America, Thoughtworks
GoDaddy wanted to create an environment where a diverse workforce could thrive. To do so, the domain registrar and web hosting company radically restructured its hiring practices. First, it mandated that every position have a diverse candidate pool before beginning the interview phase. It also removed a compensation history question from its application, so that female candidates could “leave their compensation baggage behind.” The results are already paying off: last year, half of the engineers hired by GoDaddy were women. [5]

“We eliminated the step in the process where we asked what they were making in their prior role. It’s been a great way to stop the cycle of insanity.”

– Katee Van Horn, VP of Global Engagement & Inclusion, GoDaddy

Cisco orients its pay parity goals around the “Future of Fairness,” a thought leadership concept designed to embed equality into all its operations. To do this, the technology conglomerate developed an analytical framework to evaluate pay across gender, race, and ethnicity. And as a member of the Employers for Pay Equity Consortium, Cisco is sharing best practices to help drive pay parity across industries worldwide. [4]

“Pay parity is an ongoing commitment — not a point-in-time initiative. Where we find gaps — we’ll fix them. That’s the ‘Future of Fairness’ in action.”

– Shari Slate, Vice President, Chief Inclusion & Collaboration Officer, Cisco
advancement
knowledge sharing

Women are driven. They pursue 57% of undergraduate degrees and 59% of master’s degrees. [1] Women show up in the workplace. They represent 46.9% of the total labor force in the United States. [2] Women are dedicated. They own 10 million businesses, accounting for an annual $1.4 trillion in receipts. [3] Women are multi-taskers. In the United States, 62.3% of mothers with children under the age of three participate in the labor force. [4]

So why aren’t women advancing more quickly? The last few decades have seen a lot of progress. The pay gap is narrowing, female representation in leadership positions is growing, segregation across professions is lessening. But progress is slow — and women of color face a disproportionately steep climb. As we look ahead, how can we create a future where women have the tools they need to succeed? For one truth is certain: when women have equal opportunities to lead, everyone wins.

66%
The number of National Association for Female Executives (NAFE) Top Companies offering formalized sponsorship programs [5]

As of 2018, 75% of businesses have at least one woman in senior management (compared to 66% in 2017) [6]
## The Representation of Women Shrinks as Careers Advance

Representation by corporate role, by gender and race in 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>White Men</th>
<th>Men of Color</th>
<th>White Women</th>
<th>Women of Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry Level Professional</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Manager/Director</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVP</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-Suite</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Promotion Discrepancies by Gender:

For every **100 men** promoted to manager, only **79 women** are promoted to manager. [7]

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**Sources:**
WOMEN ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A COLLEGE EDUCATION THAN MEN [8]

Among adults ages 25 to 64, women are now more likely than men to have a four-year college degree:

In 2017, 38% of women and 33% of men had a bachelor’s degree.

Women are also outpacing men in postgraduate education:

In 2017, 14% of women had an advanced degree, compared with 12% of men.

WOMEN WANT TO RETURN TO WORK [9]

Women disproportionately leave the workforce for caregiving responsibilities:

Highly-qualified women with children leave careers or take a career break 43%
Highly-qualified women off-ramp to care for an elderly parent 24%

Women pay the price when off-ramping:

18% decrease in their earning power on average
(37% decrease when they’re out for three years or more)

SOURCES:
RETURNSHIP

PROVIDING AN ON-RAMP for returning talent is a business imperative. While there are many factors that pull women away from their jobs, the main reason for off-ramping is that women are traditionally the primary caretakers. “Returnships” are internship-like programs that help organizations maximize the potential talent of women who are eager to return to the workforce after a career pause. When returning workers have the support to get back in touch with their networks, catch up on industry developments, and learn new skills, employers win, too.

ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD LINK their targets around diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) to returnship opportunities that engage and elevate highly-qualified women throughout various life stages. 93% of women want to return to work after a career break. [1] The perspective that women bring back to work after gaining life experience during leave can make them more valuable employees. After all, a diverse workplace is a more competitive one: gender-diverse companies are 15% more likely to outperform the industry median, and a staggering 83% of millennials are more engaged in a workplace that demonstrates a commitment to DEI. [2]

MENTORSHIP

GUIDANCE MATTERS. More than 70% of Fortune 500 companies — and 25% of small companies — have a formalized mentorship program. However, research indicates that few organizations understand how to effectively leverage a mentorship initiative to benefit both the employee and the workplace. This doesn’t diminish the importance of mentorship; in a recent survey, 75% of executives reported that mentoring was critical to their career development. [3][4]

MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS BENEFIT both employees and their employer. Take a DDI study, which found that organizations with a formal mentoring culture experience 20% lower turnover. Mentorship captures institutional knowledge. It prepares the next generation of leaders. And it builds accountability and prepares employees to bring their best selves to the workplace. [5]
SPONSORSHIP

SPONSORSHIPS BRIDGE A GAP. They offer a direct pathway for industry leaders and entry-level employees to interact; they create a roadmap for entry-level employees to embrace new responsibilities and new career goals. While mentorship provides loose support to rising employees, sponsorship is more structured — and, typically, has the potential to drive accelerated career growth.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN sponsorship and mentorship is succinctly summed up by AnitaB.org CEO Brenda Darden Wilkerson, who notes, “While a mentor might have casual check-ins, a sponsor will take charge of the professional experiences of the women they are sponsoring and advocate for any and all opportunities.”[6] In a workforce where the majority of leadership positions are dominated by men, sponsorship provides a pathway for women to enter uncharted territory.

“While a mentor might have casual check-ins, a sponsor will take charge of the professional experiences of the women they are sponsoring and advocate for any and all opportunities.”

– Brenda Darden Wilkerson, CEO, AnitaB.org

SOURCES:
Hallmark places a heavy value on its customer-base, and for the greeting card company, women are the key consumers. So, it’s only logical that Hallmark’s workplace reflects its target audience. The company helps women grow in their career through the Hallmark Women’s Network, a formalized mentoring program. It also retains talent by offering nursing rooms and flexible work structures. The concerted effort has paid off: at Hallmark, 40% of senior managers and 75% of board members are women. [1]

“It’s first about creating an inclusive environment that not only provides the same opportunities for women as men, but equally important, ensuring those opportunities include senior leadership roles.”

- Philip Polk, Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, Hallmark

Bumble is designed to give women the driver’s seat in their love life. But the dating app strives to create a workplace culture that reflects their mission. It begins by creating an environment where women don’t have to sacrifice their personal goals to achieve their professional goals: with 16 weeks paid parental leave, back-to-work support services, a private lactation suite, and free breast milk shipments for traveling moms, Bumble invests in working mothers. [2]

“We want all our employees, mothers included, to bring their whole selves to work. We’ve built flexibility into our DNA, created beautiful, well-stocked places to pump, and developed a culture that flexes to allow kids to work alongside parents when needed. We have days when there are a handful of little ones coloring, doing arts and crafts projects, and playing together in our office. It’s just part of life here.”

- Whitney Wolfe Herd, CEO, Bumble [3]
ALLSTATE

Sponsorship has proven value to women, and Allstate took this reality to heart. The insurance company offers all female employees the opportunity to participate in The Power of 5, a sponsorship program that pairs entry and mid-level employee, as well as emerging leaders with executives. Since the program’s inception in 2015, 20% of participants have been promoted — and 50% of the director-level participants were promoted to VP roles.

“We’re proud of our efforts to attract, retain and promote female employees, and will continue to live into our core value of inclusive diversity throughout the company.”

- Christy Harris, VP of Talent Management, Benefits and Inclusive Diversity, Allstate

J.P. MORGAN CHASE & CO.

With global consumer and employee bases, JP Morgan Chase & Co knew it was essential to meet the needs of women. That’s why they created Women on the Move, an initiative that invests in the advancement of women around the world. The program has a bevy of resources, networks, and systems to help women advance in the workplace. Women on the Move was borne from a series of listening sessions, where program coordinators took the time to truly understand the needs of their employee and customer base. Last year, the banking company expanded the program’s focus to ensure female clients have more access to capital. In expanding its mission, Women on the Move is investing in women internally and externally.

“We are going to continue to focus on employees to make sure we have more women in senior positions, but the extension is around clients and providing access to capital.”

- Samantha Saperstein, Managing Director of Women on the Move, JP Morgan Chase & Co

GENERAL ELECTRIC

General Electric has a growth mindset, and that applies to its female employees. The power generation company identified a gap in the presence of women in STEM careers, and it launched the “Women in STEM campaign” to change it. GE aims to have 20,000 women filling STEM roles by next year, and a suite of interventions — including the “If You Can See It, You Can Be It” digital storytelling program — pave the way forward. [7][8]

“Often, we don’t know what we are capable of until we see it in those we admire. That’s why we launched ‘If You Can See It, You Can Be It,’ a global program designed to enhance the leadership skills of our Commercial Women and our customers through the science of Strategic Storytelling. Strategic storytelling is the ability to tell the right story, at the right time, at the right place, to the right audience to motivate them towards a desired action.”

– Cate Gutowski, former VP of Software Product Management and Digital Transformation, General Electric [9]

SOURCES:
culture
1,779. That’s the average number of hours that a U.S. employee spends at work each year. [1] Given that our employment is so core to our everyday lives — and makes up such a large proportion of it — doesn’t it make sense that our workplace should reflect our values? Despite this, a gap continues to persist: organizational culture does not represent the dynamic and diverse group of individuals that comprise today’s workforce.

The employee experience matters, and a good experience pays off: satisfied staff are 20% more productive at work. [2] On the other size of the coin, disengaged employees cost the U.S. economy between $450 and $550 billion each year. [3] In an era where workplace culture is taking on increasing importance — millennials cite a positive workplace culture as a key quality they look for in an employer — it’s time for organizations to take a temperature check. The key question: how can you create a workplace where everyone has an opportunity to thrive?

Employees who feel their voice is heard at work are **4.6x more likely to feel empowered to deliver their highest job performance.** [4]

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION MATTERS.** [5]

Of the HR leaders with an employee recognition program in place:

- ... helps with employee experience: 89%
- ... improves employee relationships: 86%
- ... improves organizational culture: 85%
- ... improves employee engagement: 84%
- ... builds organizational values: 83%
WOMEN ARE MOTIVATED TO BE IN A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP TO SHIFT WORKPLACE CULTURE [5]

Motivations for wanting to be a top executive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity to influence culture at my workplace</th>
<th>ALL MEN</th>
<th>ALL WOMEN</th>
<th>WHITE WOMEN</th>
<th>ASIAN WOMEN</th>
<th>LATINAS</th>
<th>BLACK WOMEN</th>
<th>LESBIAN WOMEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

59% of Gen-Z (<24 years old) report that they expect to remain at their current position for less than two years [6]

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT MATTERS [7]

Engaged businesses are 59% less likely to face staff turnover (but 51% of the U.S. workforce reports that it is not engaged at work)

79% of employees who cite feeling “under-appreciated” as a reason for quitting their jobs [8]

51% of employees who report being overall satisfied with their job [9]

SOURCES:

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

AN INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATIONAL structure creates an environment where a diverse workforce can thrive — and unlocks business growth in the process. Consider recent findings from a Gartner study, which report that highly inclusive organizations are 120% more likely to meet financial targets and generate 1.4 times more revenue than their non-inclusive peers. [1] Bringing diverse viewpoints to the table also makes businesses more innovative, more agile, and better equipped to tap into a truly market-representative mindset. 

WHEN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE is designed to support the many instead of the few, the business is stronger as a result. [2] This potential can only be unleashed when diverse talent is fostered across operations and at every tier of the business — from entry to executive level. By investing in policies that support every member of staff, organizations can empower employees to bring their best selves to work.

SOURCES:
POLICY

SHARED EXPECTATIONS SET THE STAGE. They prepare every employee — at every level — to actively work to support the goals of their workplace. By formalizing a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, an organization isn’t just holding itself accountable; it is holding its employees accountable, too.

WHEN AN ORGANIZATION embraces “gender mainstreaming” as a workplace policy, inclusivity tends to follow. This type of policy integrates gender equality into all organizational operations — from planning to business development, from hiring to promoting, from implementing to monitoring business solutions. When a clearly articulated commitment to equality is set as a core organization goal, engagement follows. [3]

TRAINING

TO TRULY ACHIEVE workplace equality, an organization must get everyone onboard. It’s important to think of training as a gateway to inclusive thought — not the final destination. A recent investigative piece in Time found that training is a key entry point for employees to explore inclusivity, but intentional follow-up is necessary to create lasting effects. [4]

THE TRAINING NEEDS of every organization are nuanced. But every workplace should have a training program built around unconscious bias, sexual harassment, and behavior change. These events don’t just offer a learning opportunity; they also provide a venue for all employees to gain a shared understanding of — and have a stake in — their organization’s values and beliefs. [5]
**Accenture**

Accenture is invested in helping its employees do their best work. The global management consulting company recognizes that the definition of the “workplace” is changing. It’s evolving in conjunction with that, giving its employees access to flexible schedules, including job-sharing and flex-time opportunities. Consultants also tap into Accenture’s client-site flexibility, which offers fly-back flights, compressed workweeks, and extended weekends to help maintain a work-life balance. [1]

“**How we work is changing. Where we work is changing, too. Our workplace is no longer just somewhere to get work done. It is an intended destination where people, technology, and place connect to spark collaboration and innovation.”**

- Patrick Coyne, Managing Director, Global Workplace Solutions, Accenture

**Unified**

Jason Beckerman, CEO of Unified, strives to create a workplace where “great people from all walks of life” collaborate to deliver results. The social advertising data intelligence platform invests in its self-proclaimed “#u-life culture,” and routinely schedule team dinners and “micro town halls” where employees at every level can interact with one another. Its efforts pay off; in 2018, Unified was named as the “Best Place to Work” by Crain’s New York for the fourth consecutive year. [2]

“**Our workplace environment is critical to Unified’s overall success as the company continues to grow... We take pride in a thriving work setting that fosters great people with impactful, inclusive cultural programs.”**

- Jason Beckerman, CEO and Co-Founder, Unified [2]
“You build a team culture that promotes respect, creativity, the ability to fail, leadership and input at all levels and diversity of thought. I believe motivation and inspiration is a daily perspective, not only in achieving a big goal.”

- Shalima Pannikode, VP, Information Technology, Anthem Inc.

“"A company’s value is not measured by its sole economic performance. Because L’Oreal has always strived to be a virtuous and responsible company, we have placed ethics at the heart of our strategy and daily practices.”

- Jean-Paul Agon, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, L’Oréal

ANTHEM, INC
Anthem, Inc. recognizes that an inclusive culture doesn’t happen without proactive planning. That’s why the health insurance company invests in a series of trainings and workshops designed to get all employees on the same page around its values. By 2015, nearly all staff had completed a cultural competency training, and in 2017, Anthem, Inc. launched “Decide: The Neuroscience of Breaking Bias,” a management-level workshop designed to mitigate implicit bias. [4]

L’OREAL
With a presence in 140 countries, L’Oréal has a truly global footprint – and the beauty company aims to create an inclusive culture that embraces its multicultural workforce. To start off on the right foot, L’Oréal developed the “FIT culture app,” a component of its employee orientation system. The digital coach helps staff navigate company culture, identify values, and track progress toward goals. It also offers resources and learning games to help employees a series of daily resources and corporate culture learning games. [6]
LENOVO

Lenovo has more than 55,000 employees spread across 160 countries. The technology company stays true to its global tagline, Different Is Better. To facilitate an inclusive workplace, Lenovo offers a suite of progressive benefits, including Gender Transition Support. Its efforts are earning the company recognition: in 2018, Lenovo received a 100% ranking on the Corporate Equality Index (CEI), a benchmarking survey on LGBTQ workplace equality. [8]

“Lenovo’s culture is built upon diversity and inclusion – these values are so fundamental to who we are as a company and the products we make that they’ve become part of our brand promise, different is better.”

- Yolanda Conyers, Chief Diversity Officer, Lenovo [9]
leadership
Most Americans see men and women as similarly capable of embodying the key qualities that make a good leader, but their expectations of what helps women versus men attain executive positions is anything but equal: assertiveness and ambition are considered more helpful to men than women who are seeking leadership roles, while women are thought to benefit more from being approachable and physically attractive. [1] This lays bare a stark inequality and contributes to the expectation that in order to be successful, female leaders must embody contrasting — and often conflicting — mix of leadership qualities. Research, meanwhile, demonstrates that the most effective leaders aren’t “personality generalists.” [2] Instead, the best leaders know their strengths. They know how to motivate their audience to be their best selves. They know how to make superior performance the norm.

Ironically, these “best leaders” tend to be women. In 2017, Barack Obama famously said that women are better primed to be more effective leaders than men. And while he offers just one perspective, the data backs up the claim. According to a recent survey, women score higher than men on 13 of our leadership competencies. [3] And while this outcome is remarkable, it isn’t a surprise: women have always excelled at a balancing act — and their leadership style is no exception.
WHAT IS THE GENDER LEADERSHIP GAP? [4]

Women leaders can make companies stronger and more profitable. Why are there still so few women executives?

- 1% Women of other racial and ethnic groups*
- 1% Asian American women
- 1% Hispanic women
- 2% Black women
- 24% White women
- 63% White men
- 8% other

*American Indian women, Hawaiian women, women of two or more races

CEOS OF THE FORTUNE 500 ARE OVERWHELMINGLY WHITE, STRAIGHT, AND MALE. JUST A FEW WOMEN OF COLOR HAVE HELD THE ROLE, INCLUDING: [5]

- **URSULA BURNS**, CEO of Xerox Corporation from 2009-2017, is the only Black woman to ever serve as CEO of a Fortune 500 company.
- **ANDREA JUNG**, CEO of Avon Products from 1999-2011, is of Asian descent.
- **LAURA SEN**, CEO of BJ’s Wholesale Club from 2009-2016, is multiracial, of Irish and Chinese descent.
- **LISA SU**, CEO of Advanced Micro Devices since 2014, was born in Taiwan.
- **JOEY WAT**, CEO of Yum China Holdings since 2017, was born in China.
- **GEISHA WILLIAMS**, CEO of PG&E from 2017 to January 2019, was the first Latina CEO of a Fortune 500 company.

**SOURCES:**
THE LEADERSHIP GAP BY PROFESSION: [1]

**LEGAL**
Women comprise **45% of associates** but only
**22.7% of partners** and **19% of equity partners**

**MEDICINE**
Women comprise **40% of all physicians and surgeons** but only
**16% of permanent medical school deans**

**ACADEMIA**
Women have earned **majority of doctorates** for 8 consecutive
years, but account for just **32% of full professors** and
**30% of college presidents**

GENDER STEREOTYPES CREATE A DOUBLE BIND
FOR WOMEN LEADERS: [2]

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<th>STEREOTYPE</th>
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<td><strong>MEN TAKE CHARGE</strong></td>
<td>When women TAKE CHARGE they are viewed as competent leaders — but disliked.</td>
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| **WOMEN TAKE CARE** | When women TAKE CARE they are liked — but viewed as less competent leaders. |
| • Nurturing         |                                                       |
| • Emotional         |                                                       |
| • Communicative     |                                                       |

RESULT
**WOMEN LEADERS ARE SEEN AS COMPETENT OR LIKEABLE, BUT RARELY BOTH**
LEADERSHIP

YOUNGER WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO SEE GENDER DISCRIMINATON AS A BARRIER TO GETTING TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS: [3]

Percentage of women saying gender discrimination is a major reason why there are fewer women than men in high political office

![Percentage of women saying gender discrimination is a major reason why there are fewer women than men in high political office](image)


Percentage of startups with a woman in an executive position:

![Percentage of startups with a woman in an executive position](image)

SOURCES:
ACCOUNTABILITY

ACCOUNTABILITY DRIVES true progress towards equality. Setting goals isn’t enough; there needs to be a tactical plan to meet those goals, and metrics in place to hold an organization accountable for meeting them. HBR reports that companies with diversity task forces in place typically increase female representation by 9-30% in five years. [1] Global organizations, such as Deloitte and Google, are using task forces to hold themselves accountable — and they are getting results. Inclusivity starts with commitment. But it doesn’t become a reality without a concerted effort.

PEOPLE WANT TO reflect positively among their peers. This is the underlying theory behind “social accountability,” a tactic that many organizations employ to drive diversity efforts. A task force typically serves as the key mechanism to drive social accountability; this group is responsible for monitoring progress, identifying barriers to success, and driving results. Leadership typically identifies members to join the task force, and the most successful groups engage people across the organization, particularly employees from under-represented groups. By including everyone in inclusion efforts — and, crucially, putting metrics for accountability in place — we truly move the needle towards equality.

SOURCES:
1) HBR, “Why Diversity Programs Fail,” 2016
2) Fast Company, “How These Top Companies Are Getting Inclusion Right,” 2017
COMMUNICATION & CONSCIOUS MINDSET

INTENTION MATTERS. When leadership is vocal about their goals around advancing equality, it sends a clear message to the rest of the organization: diversity and inclusion are a key priority, and everyone has to get on board. Embodying a conscious mindset — and being transparent about progress along the way — helps leaders increase buy-in across the organization and accelerate results.

THE BENEFITS SPEAK for themselves: a Gallup study found that organizations with above-average gender diversity and employee engagement — a direct result of clear communication — experience between 46-58% better financial performance than organizations with below-median employee diversity and engagement. [2]

GOAL SETTING

ACHIEVING AN AUTHENTICALLY DIVERSE workplace requires deliberate effort. While goal-setting is a key strategy to drive parity, many organizations hurry through the critical first step: defining what those goals are, and why they exist. Workplaces that are most successful in achieving equality invest time in this process. Leaders solicit advice from employees to better understand the shared vision of the organization. Then, the leader communicates those goals internally (and, ideally, externally). [3]

CLEAR GOALS SET A STANDARD, and communicating those goals — visibly and frequently — motivates people to meet that standard. An Accenture report found that having clearly articulated goals is one of the most effective ways to drive equality across the organization. [4] By creating and publicizing goals around parity, an entire workforce engages together around a shared sense of purpose — and holds themselves accountable. Faster results tend to follow.
case studies

CHICO’S FAS
Chico’s FAS was founded by women and its products are designed for women. The company holds its target audience at its organizational core: women comprise 96% of the workforce, and 91% of executive leadership positions are held by women. Through mentoring, sponsorship, investment in employee-resource groups, and training at the leadership level, Chico’s FAS ensures that there are direct pathways for women to advance to leadership positions. Its concerted efforts have paid off: this year, Chico’s FAS was named one of the 2019 NAFE Top Companies for Executive Women. [1]

“I am passionate about increasing the number of women in leadership roles, not only because high performing women deserve equal access to opportunity, but because the inclusion of women in these roles is proven to be better for business.”

- Karen Lynch, Executive Vice President, Aetna [2]

AETNA
At Aetna, women hold 64% of management positions. The healthcare company seeks to advance its female employees to leadership roles through a suite of programs. Core to these efforts is the Women’s Leadership Alliance, a group that supports the advancement of women to executive positions through mentoring, coaching, training and networking opportunities to help women reach their career goals. A key component of this is Strategies for Success, a sponsorship program that pairs rising staff with executive leaders. [2]

“Diversity and inclusion are important corporate values. Women drive 70% of consumer purchases, through a combination of influence and buying power. It only makes good business sense to have decisions affecting those products in their hands, too.”

- Shelley Broader, former CEO, Chico’s FAS [1]
**ULTIMATE**

When Ultimate was founded nearly three decades ago, women were starkly under-represented in the technology industry. The software company has been working to change that every day since its inception. Core to their efforts is Women in Leadership, a Community of Interest that offers networking events, educational resources, and other social outlets for women across all levels of the company to connect and grow together. Thanks to these focused efforts, women now account for nearly half of the company’s frontline manager positions. [3]

“Ultimate recognizes the pivotal role women play every day, as people and professionals, and how their pioneering work and achievements have impacted our lives throughout history.”

- Vivian Maza, Chief People Officer, Ultimate [3]

**E. & J. GALLO WINERY**

Role models matter. That’s why E. & J. Gallo Winery launched Women Behind the Wine, an awareness initiative to support the growth of women in the food and beverage business. The multimedia platform highlights female leaders in the industry and facilitates networking events where emerging talent can learn from the successes of their peers. Tandem to the program is Women of Wine, an employee resource group that supports female staff through networking events, mentoring, and professional development. [4][5]

“Our field is complex, challenging, and most importantly, growing. Women Behind the Wine empowers women with meaningful educational experiences and champions a more innovative and inclusive category.”

- Joe C. Gallo, Vice President, E. & J. Gallo Winery [5]
**INTEL**

In 2015, Intel made an announcement: it aimed to foster a workplace that reflects the percentage of women and minorities in the workforce by 2020. At the end of 2018 — two years ahead of schedule — the technology company achieved its goal. Intel didn’t just make its goal public; it also routinely reported out on strategies to meet its objective. Key to this effort was Warmline, a retention initiative designed to help women and minorities advance their careers. Since its inception, Warmline has worked with more than 20,000 cases and achieved an 82% retention rate. [6]

“Diversity and inclusion cannot be treated as an add-on. It has to be integrated into everything we do and this is just the beginning. We need to make sure inclusion remains at the center. Every voice matters, and we need to listen and act to make change happen.”

— Barbara Whye, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Intel [6]

**SOURCES:**

steps for equality
EQUALITY HACKS

1. Use a wage gap calculator to simulate scenarios to close the gap and optimize the economic opportunity.

2. Add diversity requirements in your RFP for supplier selection.

3. Track diversity at the bidding stage to ensure representation.

4. Ensure that there is a minimum threshold of at least 30 percent women in your workforce to transform culture.

5. Hire for passion, train for skill.

6. Have an interruption bell in every meeting room to ensure that every voice is heard.

7. Institute paid parental leave to eliminate the motherhood penalty.

8. Follow the “Platinum Rule”: do unto others as they would want done unto themselves.

9. Life-stage profile accommodation will help attract and retain the best talent.

11. Practice mentorship in the moment. We all can learn from each other.

12. Create multi-generational teams so we maximize our strengths.

13. Provide women with the same opportunities that you give to men.

14. Find a sponsor or mentor who is different than you.

15. Once you have employees in the door, show them their pathway to success. It’s all about the journey.

16. Measure what you treasure and create KPIs for equality.

17. When asked to speak at an event, make sure that diversity is represented.

18. Bring empathy and compassion to the boardroom.

19. Have an open and transparent culture so everyone feels comfortable sharing the good, bad and the ugly.

20. Don’t just sign a pledge, #MakeEqualityMoves.
expert interviews
You’ve said that inclusion is an “opportunity.” Can you expand upon this?

In addition to being the right thing to do, inclusion of multiple perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds has been repeatedly shown to drive better business outcomes and improve employee retention, morale, and productivity. The challenge, as Thomas Edison said, is that people often fail to recognize opportunity because it looks like hard work (I paraphrase). There’s no getting around it; evolving to a more inclusive society and organization is hard work but it’s worth it and made much easier when what is necessary to do good and to do well are so clearly aligned.

An overwhelming amount of data shows that diverse teams deliver better results. How does bringing together different backgrounds and perspectives benefit a business?

The bottom line is our best work happens when our workforce reflects the world around us. We see that all the time at Google, where we are trying to make products that increase access to information and opportunity for everyone. We know that the best way to do that is to make sure our workforce also truly represents - and is inclusive of - everyone. This holds true for every industry - from space travel to tampons - the more diverse perspectives you have, the more likely you are to have covered every angle. We can be more innovative as a society if every voice is heard.

How can companies work with their partners to further gender diversity?

There’s a lot of potential in this area - when marketers started
demanding more diverse teams from their agency partners, everyone noticed! And progress accelerated. All of us need to ensure that our values extend to our partners - we do that today around things like service standards or data security and we need to make sure we are also doing it around gender diversity.

We do this today in our Marketing organization by supporting media partners and programming that reflect our values, especially those leading with in-culture and in-language programming. We also invest in and prioritize organizations focused on giving women and minority groups more visibility and resources in the tech industry. For example, our Small Business Supplier Diversity Program connects minority-, women-, veteran-, disabled- and LGBT-owned small businesses to opportunities within Google by adding them to our procurement network and giving them the tools and resources they need to be successful working with any company.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women?

Outline a clear vision, set specific goals to enable that vision, communicate both widely, monitor and manage progress, and reward success appropriately. I have seen substantial success here by our treating gender equality like any other business goal and investing comparable leadership time and resources in improving representation and experiences of all minority groups. Find pivotal moments and initiatives that will have disproportionate impact. For example, we saw retention of women increase dramatically when we expanded maternity leave from 3 to 5 months. I’ve also been inspired by IPG, where Michael Roth has led a very proactive agenda to support women and minority groups through initiatives ranging from massive events and messaging to talent sponsorship programs to tying executive compensation to progress against diversity objectives.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

Shine the spotlight on the little things. I remember pointing out to my female boss that she was judging a woman who was complaining about not having been promoted much more harshly than that woman’s male peer who was doing the same. She told me that helped her see unconscious bias she hadn’t been aware was there and would carry forward. I speak often about how I juggle my three kids, husband, job, and meager attempts at personal time, and the teams (both women and men but more women) tell me what a difference that makes in creating a culture where people can be their whole selves. I gave some tough love to a woman who was going to not apply for a job because she had been rejected in comparable ones before to get her to do it and she told me it changed the course of her career. A female boss of mine overrode significant objection to putting me in a job that she knew I could do that her male peers were not as convinced, and it changed the course of my career. The little things add up.

There are so many of us women and great male allies out here with much more power than we know or consistently deploy. We have already seen meaningful change inspired by motivated women and men and it will only accelerate as we all continue to lean in, together.

We have already seen meaningful change inspired by motivated women and men and it will only accelerate as we all continue to lean in, together.

Ask her

WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU DO WHEN YOU WAKE UP?
Drink a bottle of water. I read somewhere that’s very healthy and I need the easy wins!

WHAT IS YOUR DREAM POWER LUNCH? Alexander Hamilton, Oprah, and Ruth Bader Ginsberg. My list is longer but I’ll go with them.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB? The diversity of all I get to do, the amazing people who work with me, and the impact I can see on others. Also the free search.

WHAT COMPANY DO YOU WISH YOU STARTED? Netflix.

WHAT’S YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE AT THE END OF A LONG DAY? TV and chocolate.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER AT HER FIRST JOB? “Whatever you are, be a good one.” - Abe Lincoln.
In The Equality Lounge @ Davos, you noted that “women are so often seen as victims, and there is a need for justice.” Can you expand upon this, and how programs like WE Empower help change the narrative?

We tend to think of women as victims, particularly of violence and, of course, we are the majority. But we don’t always think about other issues like climate change. Women and children are 80% of victims of climate change. There’s a real need for social justice. What we often forget is that women are also the solution. The reason climate change is on my mind so much is that, last week, here in Hawaii, they recorded 4.15 parts per million of CO2, which is the highest in three million years. We’re on a really worrying trajectory. Women and girls are the number one solution to climate change, saving 120 Gigatons of CO2 by 2050, according to the work that Paul Hawken and his research team have done on Drawdown.

The idea behind the WE Empower UN SDG Challenge is to showcase women entrepreneurs, in particular, who are helping to solve big problems like climate change and supporting the Sustainable Development Goals that all UN member countries agreed on back in 2015. Recent research shows that women in business are more likely to take environmental and social considerations into account and, therefore, to do more good through their enterprises. WE Empower has three aims: to honor and showcase women entrepreneurs supporting the UN SDGs through their business endeavors, to invest in their growth, and to ignite change. One of the questions that is asked on the WE Empower entry form is, “What obstacles do you think you, as a woman, face that a man may not in business?” And we hear all sorts of things like, “Inability to own property,” for example, which then impedes collateral for a business loan. Or, “I need my husband’s permission to start a business,” which is still the case in a number of countries. So these kinds of barriers help highlight the fact that it’s not a level playing field and yet despite that, women are doing amazingly well. McKinsey estimates the global economy could grow by as much as $28 trillion with true gender equality.

More than 90 percent of countries still have laws that discriminate against women and prevent them from being economically active. What can we do to change this?
One of the really exciting projects that I was privileged to lead at the World Bank documents laws that discriminate against women. Since we started the project 10 years ago, Women, Business and the Law has recorded over 230 reforms. The thing that is not so positive is that, according to the latest data which considers a woman’s life journey from getting a job through to retirement, only six countries have fully legislated gender equality.

So how can legislators bring about change? The Human Rights Council reviews the legislation of every United Nations member country around every five years. We are launching a joint initiative in Japan in the margins of the G20 with the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Women Political Leaders Forum. The idea is to make parliamentarians aware of when their country will be up for review and engage civil society actors to press for change. There is an opportunity to create positive momentum by updating and changing discriminatory laws to fully meet the obligations every UN member has to promote gender equality.

The UN’s Sustainable Development Goal #5 is to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Can we achieve this goal by the target date of 2030? Are we on track?

I am an optimist. Yes, I think it is possible to achieve this goal. One of the great things is that many of the metrics are already being tracked and there’s a project underway with the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and the UN and the World Bank to make sure that there are metrics to really figure out how we are progressing. In 2020, we will be at the five-year mark with ten years to go. That would be an ideal time to take stock, double down on our efforts, and figure out how we can move forward. Our contribution with the broader WE Empower partnership is to help create momentum for change with legislators, which addresses the first and ninth targets for Goal #5.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization/entity can take to advance women?

The first step is to ensure that there are family-friendly and flexible work policies. I experienced this firsthand when I was Head of Communication at Westpac Banking Corporation in Australia. At that time, paid maternity leave was not mandated for women in Australia. But Westpac, as a good employer, provided six weeks. It was fascinating to see the data from before and after. The cost of maternity leave was considered to be a problem, but because the senior management team believed that this was the right thing to do, they went ahead. But, astonishingly, they actually saved $6,000,000 to the bottom line. When they did the research, they realized that they had increased retention and, therefore, cut costs for retraining and recruitment significantly. Smart employers these days are beginning to recognize the importance of improving employee engagement for both men and women. We often forget that men are fathers, too. More and more men are admirably wanting to play an equal role in parenting. So more family-friendly and flexible policies can not only make life easier for employees, but can also help improve productivity and retention. This is critical.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

For senior managers, it would be really critical to consciously think about mentoring and/or sponsoring a female employee in the same way as we see senior men in companies almost intuitively doing that for younger men. If we could have both senior women and men committing to mentor or sponsor at least one woman in their company, it would be a fantastic commitment. There is value both ways too. Younger employees are often more tech savvy, have creative outlooks, and different perspectives on the business. You will often find, as I have in my career, that this kind of commitment is not just an obligation, but that it can also have real positive benefits for you as an individual as well as for the company or the business.
Media influences culture, and by this token, equality onscreen can have wider implications across society. How can brands more accurately portray women in their media and advertising?

First, it’s important for media to accurately reflect what women look like; women come in all different shapes, sizes and colors. Second, women should be represented as who they are, life’s primary characters: the leaders, the decision makers, the bosses, and the moms. Third, there should be equal representation of men and women. Young girls and women need to see that they are valued by society, that they are equal to men in every respect, and that they can be and do anything.

How do brands — and, specifically, their bottom lines — also benefit from promoting gender equality, both internally and in their media and advertising?

Internally, it’s important to have a diverse set of leadership. Different perspectives lead to new business opportunities, products and partnerships, resulting in new sources of revenue. In media and advertising, the majority of product purchases are made by women, if you are not speaking to them, you are missing a large piece of potential sales. In WWE, our fans demanded equal representation of our women through social media; we responded by rebranding our Women’s Division, providing equal opportunity to our female athletes as featured

Stephanie McMahon
WWE
Chief Brand Officer
performers, and we created a pay-per-view event featuring only our female Superstars. During this time, we have seen significant growth across all lines of business, including consumer products, sales of content across television and digital platforms, as well as positive media coverage from brands like People Magazine, Forbes, Cosmopolitan and GQ.

We often hear about the “confidence gap,” the theory that women are less self-assured than men — and to succeed in the corporate world, confidence matters as much as competence. Do you think this theory holds true? If so, how can we address it?

Confidence is 80-90% of your success at anything you choose to do. I believe there is a perceived “confidence gap” between men and women, at least that has been my personal experience. I can’t speak for men, but I don’t often hear them second-guessing their decisions, or questioning if their clothing is unflattering. I’m sure there’s a whole host of reasons why; maybe it’s because boys tend to play more sports (another huge focus area for gender equality) and thus are more sure of their abilities as a result, or they are taught at a young age not to show their emotions, or because society puts pressure on boys and men to “be strong.” I’m not sure that men are actually more confident than women, but they certainly can present that way. Personally, I have ongoing struggles with insecurity, to the point where I have questioned my self-worth, but only I can determine my self-worth. I need to believe in myself. We all struggle to find ourselves, who we are, who we’re not and who we want to be. My best advice for building confidence is to play to your strengths. When you do what you do better than anyone else, that’s when you will thrive. Once you show up as your whole self, that’s when you have the most impact. Alex Morgan, U.S. Women’s Team soccer player, has said, “You have to instill confidence in yourself, and tell yourself that you’re good enough until you really believe it” and I think that’s absolutely true.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women?

As an organization, it’s important for the senior-most leadership to demand equal representation of men and women, at every level. Fostering a diverse and inclusive environment is critical to helping women advance, and that starts with recruiting. As a part of an organization’s hiring process, leaders should ask for an equal ratio of male and female candidates in their recruitment pipeline, and demand diversity among the candidates that are presented. If you’re always hiring the same type of people, you’ll never challenge the status quo and your organization can become stagnant. I once heard a great quote, that you should hire someone who is a cultural add, not a cultural fit, and while that’s not always our instinct as human beings, it will ultimately lead to a better bottom line and workplace environment.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

Be a champion for women; offer support, ask their opinion, and give them credit for their ideas. Don’t gossip or get bogged down in trite commentary; it is a waste of time and energy. Celebrate their successes. When women win, we all win.

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**Ask her**

**WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU DO WHEN YOU WAKE UP?** Snuggle with my middle daughter (who is usually the one who wakes me up).

**WHAT IS YOUR DREAM POWER LUNCH?** Eleanor Roosevelt, Maya Angelou, and Oprah Winfrey.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB?** Getting to help fulfill WWE’s mission of putting smiles on people’s faces, whether at our shows or in the community.

**WHAT COMPANY DO YOU WISH YOU STARTED?** Netflix.

**WHAT’S YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE AT THE END OF A LONG DAY?** A steam shower with eucalyptus aromatherapy.

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER AT HER FIRST JOB?** Work hard, don’t complain, believe in yourself, and take every opportunity to learn and grow.
Ted Bunch
Chief Development Officer

A CALL TO MEN promotes a “healthy, respectful definition of manhood.” What does this mean to you?

At A CALL TO MEN, we teach that embracing and promoting a healthy, respectful manhood prevents violence against women, sexual assault, sexual harassment, bullying and many other social ills. But it also promotes male authenticity and leads to improved physical health and emotional well-being for men. Anyone can start living by the principles of healthy manhood by:

1. Embracing and expressing a full range of emotion.
2. Not conforming to the pressure to always be fearless and in control.
3. Valuing a woman’s life, treating all people equally and promoting the betterment of humanity.

4. Not using language that denigrates women and girls.
5. Developing an interest in the experience of women and girls, outside of sexual conquest.
6. Modeling a healthy, respectful manhood to other men and boys.

Why is it time to evolve our definition of masculinity, and how can it be embodied by society?

It’s time to evolve because it’s not serving any of us. A CALL TO MEN coined the term the Man Box to illustrate the collective socialization of men. The Man Box identifies the limitations on what a man is supposed to be and what he believes. These expectations are taught to men – sometimes
unconsciously — and reinforced by society. In the Man Box, men are supposed to be: powerful and dominating, fearless and in control, strong and emotionless, and successful. In the Man Box, women are objects, the property of men and of less value than men. The Man Box perpetuates a heterosexual norm that devalues all those who don’t conform to a gender binary. People in the LGBQ and trans/GNC community demonstrate great courage when they reject the rules of the Man Box and embrace their authentic selves. Bottom line: the teachings of the Man Box allow violence against women, girls and other marginalized groups to persist.

What is one thing you think men should know about working or interacting with women in today’s world?

I want men to know that they can be part of the solution. But it won’t be by refusing to meet with women or backing down from this issue. The answer is not punishing women for the discrimination and abuse they have already faced. We will achieve the change we seek when we men bring #HealthyManhood into the workplace, actively commit to change workplace culture and pursue gender equity.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women in their organization?

Organizations must recognize that policies and procedures are critically important but they won’t lead to meaningful culture change. The workplace is a microcosm of a male-dominated society - one where men have been collectively socialized to view women as property, objects and as having less value. A CALL TO MEN provides training and education to help men deconstruct that socialization, understand how to use their influence and platform to promote equity, and actively work to create a culture of respect, equity and value for all.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

The first step is to look inward and challenge any harmful messages you have received about gender. The second step is to listen to women and validate their experiences. By doing those two things with intention and commitment, you are sure to experience a paradigm shift. We have a list for men who want to be part of the solution. It includes every day actions as well as more systemic approaches to pursuing equity.
Why should diversity be an integral part of the business plan, and not just a side project?

The fact is, diverse teams are more creative and higher performing. We’re living through a time of relentless transformation, with rapid shifts underway in technology, in the economy, and across society. If you want to lead that transformation, rather than be led by it, you need perspectives and informed opinions. And there is not a single person, or group of people, on Earth that has all the answers; there are no monopolies on knowledge. For any leader that’s serious about future-proofing their company, diversity isn’t optional—it’s the only way forward.

Studies show that women are less likely to apply for positions unless they meet 100 percent of the qualifications listed in the job posting. How can we remove this self-imposed restriction?

You know what one of the greatest advantages in my career has been? Being a woman. Qualities we generally associate with women—like relationship building—are vital in this business. I credit them with making me a strong executive.

So, I urge every woman to trust her abilities. Apply for bigger jobs. Ask for promotions. Grab the opportunity right in front of you. And should you get rejected because you don’t fit someone’s
“We’re living through a time of relentless transformation, with rapid shifts underway in technology, in the economy, and across society. If you want to lead that transformation, rather than be led by it, you need perspectives and informed opinions.”

cookie-cutter idea of who should fill the position, think of it as a blessing. People who stick to the old way of doing things aren’t cut out for this fast-paced, rapidly-transforming world, and you want to be as far away from them as possible.

How can mentorship contribute to career advancement? If you’ve had a mentor: How did your relationship help set you up for success?

I think this is one of the greatest professional gifts you can give someone. If you’re in a position of power, you owe it to the next generation to take an active role in coaching those who are still making their way up the ladder, especially women and minorities, who too often face implicit and explicit barriers to advancement.

I’ve always had a community that has guided and mentored me. One person who had an immeasurable impact on my career was Ted Turner. Ted was a visionary who had incredible conviction to bring his ideas to life and make tough decisions. Working with him helped me learn to act confidently and decisively.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women?

Equality starts at the very beginning—with hiring. At NBCUniversal, we worked with our hiring managers to write gender-neutral job descriptions, to evaluate “blind resumes” or resumes without the applicants’ genders attached and an opportunity for returnships—an opportunity for experienced workers who’ve stepped away from their careers for one reason or another, to learn valuable skills to help them return to the job market. These steps have already yielded more interviews for women candidates at NBCUniversal. These are simple but significant ways that any organization can make a real impact.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

Listen. The way you create change—like building a more equitable workplace—is recognizing that you don’t know what you don’t know. When you open yourself up to new ideas and new ways of thinking, you’ll make real progress. But if you dominate the conversation, or drown out voices that don’t sound like yours, you’re bound to fall behind. It sounds easy, but it’s not. In a hard-charging business like this one, it takes courage to cede the floor and open yourself up. But I promise, it’s the most important thing you can do.
What affects the advancement and retention of female talent? How can we identify — and, if necessary, mitigate — these factors?

Talent activation, advancement and retention are at the center of what we do to maximize opportunities for our people. We believe that training plays a critical role in developing next generation leadership and we invest significantly through a variety of initiatives - from innovative onboarding experiences to on-demand training to expert workplace skills training - help our talent grow, engage and prepare for their next step.

We also want to supercharge engagement. We provide competitive compensation and benefits that support healthy and happy lives for our employees, and their families. Along with a culture of inclusion and personal development, we give every reason for employees to invest in and stay with Verizon Media.

How can leadership address unconscious bias and mitigate its impact across their teams?

We believe the industry must take an honest look at where we are and make strides towards building an inclusive culture. We have started exploring the topic of unconscious bias with all levels of leadership and how it affects employees, customers, suppliers and the overall business.

As we are made aware of the lenses we put on and the stereotypes we operate with, we can consciously challenge ourselves in our assumptions and decisions. From performance
evaluation to succession planning to recruitment, removing gender and other bias is an important step to building an inclusive and productive environment.

Ultimately, we understand that hiring a diversified workforce ensures that diverse experiences are represented across the team and within the work our company produces.

Last year, Verizon spent over $5 billion with diverse suppliers. How does a diverse supply chain help you better serve your customers and communities?

A diverse supply chain is a competitive advantage and business imperative at Verizon Media because it affords us diversity of thoughts, ideas, values and innovation that drives our business forward. It also helps us connect with customers in new, innovative, and authentic ways by providing us with the greatest opportunity to offer advanced, high quality, and cost-effective solutions for them.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is "steps for equality." What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women?

As an organization, we strive to support everyone with meaningful workplace programs and policies that intentionally foster an inclusive culture. Our Employee Resource Groups - including the Women's Inclusion Network, PACT (Parents and Caretakers Together), Prism, and Neurodiversity - create space to connect, support and advocate for one another across cultures, identities and abilities. These groups champion all employees to bring their whole, authentic selves to work and create a positive impact on Verizon Media’s culture and products.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

Contribute to building an environment of trust and transparency and advance the equality conversation by asking difficult questions and speaking honestly with peers and leaders.

“As we are made aware of the lenses we put on and the stereotypes we operate with, we can consciously challenge ourselves in our assumptions and decisions.”

What is the first thing you do when you wake up? Kiss my kids.

What is your dream power lunch? Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and my great grandmother.

What is your favorite part of your job? Spending everyday with the brightest, kindest, most creative teammates anyone could ask for.

What company do you wish you started? Warby Parker.

What’s your guilty pleasure at the end of a long day? A glass of rosé and an episode (or three) of Killing Eve.

What advice would you give your daughter at her first job? Don’t apologize for being who you are or asking for what you deserve.
“Man Enough” invites all men to challenge the unwritten rules of traditional masculinity. What are these rules — and how can we rewrite them?

I remember a distinct point in my upbringing when things changed. It began in the schoolyard, when other boys started policing me in regards to what I could or couldn’t do. The rules were interesting. They were: “Don’t show any emotion. Don’t cry. Crying is for girls, and girls are weak. They shouldn’t be a part of our group. Later in life it became, “Girls are only good for sex. You can’t have any friends that are women because if you have friends that are women that you’re not sleeping with, you’re not a real man.” Also, “If you are a member of the LGBTQ community, you’re a freak, and should be ostracized.” And that, from grade school until college, was the chess board of masculinity. In time, I myself became a bully, calling out other guys for not being manly enough. Sadly, this was a projection of my own insecurities around fitting in.

Tony Porter from violence prevention organization A CALL TO MEN, who’s also featured on “Man Enough,” refers to these unwritten rules as the “man box.” But they’re also projected on to women. Media and culture bombard women with imagery telling them that real men don’t show fear and don’t cry. Real men are a little dangerous, can protect them physically and will always provide for them financially.

The way I see it, our society is policed by these dangerous, problematic gender norms that separate men and women from one another, and from our own humanity. When you tell a seven-year-old boy that he can’t show emotion or cry, you’re ripping away his humanity from him and decreasing his changes...
at becoming an emotionally intelligent human. To me, there’s a huge opportunity right now to educate parents, men and teenagers on the consequences of these seemingly innocuous directives. The first step is realizing that a lot of the wounding around, and between, genders starts with the “man box” expectations put on children by our parents, friends and the media.

You talk a lot about accountability. How can leaders hold themselves — and other leaders — accountable for furthering equality?

There’s a reason “be the change you want to see in the world” is one of the most popular Gandhi quotes. When I consider the current gender conversation in America, I feel that it points to a unique moment in our development as a society. For the first time ever, this philanthropic, activist, transformational mindset is sexy. It’s cool to be a good person.

But, here’s the problematic nature of it: because social justice is en vogue, a lot of people talk about it — but not a lot of people actually do it. So my invitation to any leader is to recognize that true transformation starts in your psyche and in your heart. If you’re a man without an internal system of accountability for your own ego and trauma, there’s no real way you can help a company promote equality and social good with any true meaning or effect. There is no way you can empower any woman if you don’t first empower yourself as a human being and as a leader.

Speaking from personal experience, the most effective way to help open people up toward accountability is to start with their traumas. We all have childhood experiences that we’ve suppressed and locked away in order to survive in the world. By having empathy for someone’s traumatic experiences, which make up the foundation of all externalized problematic behavior, we create the space for healing and a pathway for new behaviors rooted in our truth and power instead of wounding.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women in their organization?

I read an article recently that said 80 percent of high-level management at Fortune 500 companies are men. So, if we’re really interested in advancing women across corporate America, the men who are in those positions of power need to mentor women. When I’ve been mentored it wasn’t an official thing like, “Hey Fa rhoud, I’m going to mentor you.” It just kind of happened. But one of the things I learned is that people typically mentor people who remind them of themselves. So, historically men mentor other men.

From my perspective, it’s a critical mission for organizations to focus on diverse mentorship, reaching beyond the personal framework and mentoring someone who needs it. And I’m not just talking about mentorship from an operational/organizational level. I mean life mentorship — how to evolve, be a good person, navigate your trauma, and succeed professionally while maintaining your integrity. Sometimes the greatest skills you can share are about mental health, wellness and work-life balance. That’s the secret sauce, not just how to make a spreadsheet or run a meeting, but the real life skills that impact how you show up with your team members once you’re in that meeting.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

Humans can be very transactional and mechanical, because we’re so focused on survival, success and the complexities of our own lives. But if our goal is to truly be inclusive and diverse, we first have to be human. Robots don’t even have the potential of being inclusive or diverse. (Not yet, at least.) Humans do. We have to leverage that, and we can start by dealing with our own trauma and experiences, reflecting that understanding onto those around us and educating by example. Less talk and more walk.

If we can do that, so many of the problems we’re dealing with will evaporate, because we’ll be human — engaged, open and inclusive — when we’re hiring. We’ll be human when we’re mentoring. We’ll be human when we’re doing a performance review. We’ll be human in our marketing meetings. We’ll be human in our casting. That’s the goal — being human all the time.
HP takes its D&I initiatives seriously: Forbes ranked it on its list of Best Employers for Women and its diversity stats are well above the industry average. How does the company walk the talk?

First of all, diversity and inclusion are part of our DNA as an organization. Our founders Bill and Dave embraced diversity — and that’s continued on through the organization for 80 years and counting. We really feel like it drives meaningful innovation. It’s a business imperative, not just the right thing to do or a nice to have.

When we launched the company after the split, we got to focus on diversity and inclusion more than ever before. It started with the creation of our board of directors. We actually have the most diverse board in technology: 55 percent of the board is diverse and women make up 45 percent of the board. It’s just great to have this incredibly diverse board — they are role models for the organization.

On top of that, we’ve made it a priority to focus on diversity, recruiting, and retention. We focus on how we create an environment inside the organization so people feel comfortable. About 31 percent of our executives are women which, for a tech company, is high. Our workforce globally is 36 percent women, and it’s over 50 percent for some of our functions.

It has been repeatedly proven that diverse teams are better teams. Why do we still struggle with hiring a diverse workforce?

People hire other people that look like themselves or who remind them of themselves. You always hear senior leaders say, “I love this guy. He reminds me of me,” right?

You have to help managers look for the people who have the right values and elements of your corporate culture, but who also bring a diverse perspective. Sometimes people say, “They’re not a culture fit,” which can be code for, “They’re not exactly like
everybody else.” I think we do a good job of defining our values and hiring for that in all different variations. We like to say “talent is our only criteria.”

So, what happens is diversity begets diversity. We push our employees across the whole organization to be talent scouts. Employee referrals are really important. We want them going out and identifying other people who will be successful here. When you have diverse people, they tend to live in diverse communities, and so they attract more diversity. I always challenge all of our female leaders to go out and help us hire one more woman because that will double the number of women we have here. It’s really important.

We hear the word “inclusive” a lot — but what does it really mean to be an inclusive workplace? What are the biggest factors impede a truly inclusive workplace, and how can we mitigate them?

One of our number one values is respect — respecting people’s differences, and the things they’re going through from a personal standpoint. That empathy of putting yourself in someone else’s place really helps to foster inclusion, so people don’t feel like they have to hide because they have a family, or they have to be out because their kid is sick.

Inclusive workplaces understand that people will do their best work when they feel safe bringing their authentic selves to work. That’s embraced in this environment at HP. It’s just part of our values and who we hire, and what we’re focused on. That creates a really positive environment. We had a woman who was hired and wrote a piece on LinkedIn where she talked about getting hired into a role at HP Lab. One month into the role, she found out she was pregnant. She said, “I was encouraged to take as much time as needed for maternity leave, and then given flexibility as well as solidarity when I returned. HP provides nursing rooms for new mothers, but having male leadership,” she put that in caps, “that supported my decision to pump three times a day, as well as leave work early for daycare pick-up, is a testament to HP’s culture in supporting mothers.” She just got promoted to move into another role.

That example is actually inclusion. It’s understanding what people are going through, supporting them as they do that, and making them feel comfortable at work being who they are, such as a new mother who has to go and pump three times a day. We try and train our managers to create that environment for people.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women?

One of the most innovative steps we took was led by our Head of Marketing and Communications, when he first joined us a few years ago. He looked at our customers, who are 50 percent women, and he created a leadership team that was 50 percent women. He then went to all the vendors that he worked with and said, “I expect you to field teams that look like our customers and our employees. So, I’m going to give you a year to turn this around and give us a team that is representative.”

Then, many other companies followed suit, so he literally changed those industries. Within a year, people had brought female partners and directors on to the teams and more promotions happened. We’re bringing that initiative to legal, finance, HR, and different areas as well — and I believe it’s a real step that not only changes a company, but also industries.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

I think the individual is even more important than the organization. It’s really important that every individual take responsibility, and doesn’t just hand it off to their institution or organization to fix it.

It starts with what I said before: if every individual just went out and recruited or referred one diverse person to the organization, imagine what an impact that would have on the company. When you create that environment, there’s a tipping point. Then, go talk to somebody and find out what they need to feel included. The inclusivity component means focusing on how we support people so we can retain them. I think that makes a huge difference, and every manager can do it. Whether it’s supporting an employee so she can leave early for daycare or someone caring for their parents, we have to remember to ask people questions so they feel respected and heard.
Janaye Ingram
Director of National Partnerships, Airbnb
Co-Founder, The Women’s March

Former First Lady Michelle Obama once referred to you as “an impressive leader who plays an important role in our progress toward the mountaintop.” Can you tell us about your journey to become such a prominent champion of equality?

My journey dates back to being a little girl and watching the news with my mom and discussing politics in an attempt to understand. I can often remember saying to her that certain things weren’t “fair” and really being concerned with equity and equality. Then as a young woman in middle and high school and learning about different social equity movements, I began to understand how certain strategies could be employed to create political pressure that resulted in changes. But what really catapulted me into movement building and social justice was when I began working with National Action Network. It was there that I switched from pure advocacy to activism. A few weeks after I started the job, I was told I was going to plan my first march – something I had never done. Reverend Sharpton believed in me and time and time again, he put me
in positions that allowed me to grow. And in those moments, I became stronger in my activism and more outspoken on issues of injustice and it really created a pathway for me to make history by planning the Women’s March on Washington in 2017.

You’re a co-founder of the Women’s March, a global movement to highlight women’s issues. How can we involve everyone in furthering gender equality?

The best way to further gender equality is to make it intersectional and inclusive of male allies. The struggles women face collectively are not equal, even among women. There are disparities that exist depending on a woman’s other intersections – her race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status and education level. A cis-gendered white woman has different challenges than a queer Latinx woman, who has different challenges than a disabled Muslim woman, who has different challenges than a Black trans woman. When advocating for change, we should be striving to address the issues of the most marginalized and solving to make the world more equitable for them, understanding that if their challenges are solved, all of our challenges will be solved. We also need to make sure that we have male allies. In the same way that people of color can’t solve racism, women can’t solve gender discrimination – we need male accomplices who are willing to help us break glass ceilings and clean up sticky floors. Men are in rooms that women aren’t always in and we need them to be passionate about breaking down the structures that keep women out of those spaces. These two things are critically important in creating equity.

Myriad research shows when women are empowered, societies benefit – and the same goes for businesses. What do you think is the business case for equality?

Diversity and equality are huge assets in business. There is research that shows that companies perform better when they have diverse stakeholders at the table making decisions and creating products. The diversity of the workforce and decision makers leads to greater innovation – creating products and services that work better for the masses, and ultimately have a greater ability to result in profits. When people are invited to bring their whole self to work, they are able to bring their unique perspectives and that can change the way a company does business for the better.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that a business can take to advance women in their organization?

For most businesses, and for all successful businesses, goal-setting is something that allows them to track their progress and growth. When it comes to advancing equality, there have to be goals that a business is holding itself accountable to. Whether that goal is about attaining a set percentage of women within the company or deciding how many women should be in leadership, there has to be a goal that a company is bound to that will guide its actions and strategies.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to advance equality in their organization?

Sponsorship is so important to advancing equity and can be a game changer for how women and other underrepresented people are able to access power and opportunity in places where they may be otherwise ignored. More than mentorship, sponsorship is being an advocate of someone when they aren’t there to advocate for themselves. Crucial to advancing equality through sponsorship is ensuring that we are sponsoring people who are different from us – who come from different racial-ethnic groups, whose backgrounds are different, who may be the opposite gender or gender nonconforming – really ensuring that, as we are advocating for opportunities, we are doing it with an eye toward equality. Often times, people want to sponsor people who are similar to them – they find comfort in the familiarity, but we should really find a way to embrace and advance people who are different.
Tell us about your journey as an entrepreneur. What were the biggest challenges you faced?

I’ve had an amazing journey, in the sense that I’ve been able to start a company with unwavering purpose and passion. The scenery is mind-blowing, I’ve met brilliant people along the road, sometimes the terrain is rough but that’s when I feel super charged to move ahead.

I started hint because it solved my problem and I saw how easily that experience could be extrapolated to other people. I wanted to create products that help people lead healthier lives without taking away the enjoyment factor. We started with flavored water with no sugar, no diet sweeteners, no preservatives, no calories, just real fruit essences. Then, we added sparkling water (hint sparkling), caffeinated water (hint kick) and recently a special version for kids (in kid-friendly boxes) and we’ve moved into the beauty segment with oxybenzone- and paraben-free sunscreen scented with the same real fruit essences. I may have tripped a few times in the early days, but we’ve leaped past expectations, too, especially considering my background was in the tech, not beverage, industry. In fact, big beverage executives insisted that what I wanted to do was impossible, not only to produce, but also to sell. “Sweetie, people like sweet.” Now, they want my recipe or they’re launching our competition.

My journey is far from over and I appreciate the moments when I can stop and look around and celebrate where I am…but I’m always looking ahead, around the next curve and over the
next mountain. We have a lot more people to help, for instance, our latest challenge is getting bottled water into the public school system which presently only offers milk, orange juice and tap water. After all, kids should have access to clean and safe water every day. I’ve already met with eight legislators and a grassroots campaign is also in the works.

You’ve said that mentoring others makes you happiest. How do mentorship and sponsorship set people up for success?

Sharing experiences, connections and opinions or simply championing ideas helps new entrepreneurs take the leap. At times, it may lead them to look through a new lens, take a different approach, start a relationship or even sever one. I believe in forward, encouraging entrepreneurship and helping people move along the road to success. It really does make me happy.

As of 2018, just 5 percent of Fortune 500 companies were led by women. In your experience, what are the greatest obstacles to female advancement in companies and industries?

I’ve been lucky in this regard. Sometimes you have to set yourself up so you can’t be ignored and hope for the best. The biggest obstacle is people believing that women cannot command the same respect as men, have the same commitment to work as men or make great decisions like men. When you say it out loud, it’s just ridiculous!

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women?

Sometimes I wonder if we were actually gender-blind if this would all go away. In terms of steps to take, I think it has to start at the top with a team that is open to the idea that the best person for the job, regardless of gender, should advance. Then, we need to offer flexibility when it’s possible rather than deny it for old-fashioned mores. We need to trust that the multi-tasking capacity of women far outweighs the compromises made for work-life balance. We need to correct things like that and make sure all the silliness of the past goes away...because really those stereotypes are just not in play anymore. We also need to educate girls and boys from an early age with an equality platform. My sons find it hard to believe that all companies aren’t run by women...it’s part of their culture and it needs to be part of everyone’s.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

Commit to having 50/50 (at the very least) gender split in your company at every level, and make sure salaries are also equally distributed.

“The biggest obstacle is people believing that women cannot command the same respect as men, have the same commitment to work as men or make great decisions like men. When you say it out loud, it’s just ridiculous!”

Ask her

WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU DO WHEN YOU WAKE UP? Go for a hike in the hills behind my house with my husband and our dog.

WHAT IS YOUR DREAM POWER LUNCH? Martin Luther King, Ruth Ginsberg, and Sting.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB? Innovating...and implementing new ways to get our brand in everyone’s hands.

WHAT COMPANY DO YOU WISH YOU STARTED? Apple

WHAT’S YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE AT THE END OF A LONG DAY? A nice cozy bed with feather pillows and a down duvet

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER AT HER FIRST JOB? Be yourself. Be authentic. I’m sure they know you’re appreciative of the opportunity and you should know how lucky they are to have you.
What is the importance of communicating an organization’s commitment to diversity, both internally and externally?

Both are important. Internal communication is paramount, as employees are a company’s number one customer, and prioritizing diversity is table stakes for any organization today. Communicating a commitment to diversity internally helps raise awareness of what programs actually exist and gets more people invested in making a difference through these programs. From a corporate level, it also demonstrates that we care about our employees.

Externally, the conversation around the talent market continues to be tough for all employers. Being “woke” is the new norm, and if you don’t have a real commitment to diversity based in authenticity and action, your organization will struggle with recruiting.

Braze is making a concerted effort to bridge the opportunity gap in the tech industry. How are you doing this?

Last year, we established a program called Braze for ALL, a company-wide initiative focused on foregrounding diversity and inclusion throughout the organization. This multi-pronged program touches a wide range of activities and events, including: overhauling the Braze approach to employee recruitment; encouraging thoughtful community engagement and charitable
“Every individual can take action by holding their companies accountable. Regardless of level, employees need to call out anything they see or experience that doesn’t live up to the company’s commitment to equality.”

Ask her


WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB? Making marketers better marketers, and learning in the process.

WHAT COMPANY DO YOU WISH YOU STARTED? Bumble.

WHAT’S YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE AT THE END OF A LONG DAY? Usually catching up on live TV I have missed, OR a book I can’t put down.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER AT HER FIRST JOB? Take the work, but not yourself, too seriously. Be humble. Always be clear about what you want.

giving; organizing employee cultural outings highlighting diverse voices; and hosting in-office talks and events exploring different perspectives and experiences. As part of Braze for ALL, we have also expanded pathways to tech education for high school students from low income neighborhoods and traditionally underserved populations to directly address the opportunity gap. While diversity and inclusion has proven financial and operational benefits, we do these programs because we fundamentally believe it’s the right thing to do.

If employees don’t have a feeling of belonging, they won’t feel empowered to reach their full potential at work. What frameworks can be put in place to build an inclusive culture?

We have four employee-led resource groups that help bolster our inclusive culture, which include Jews@Braze, Parents@Braze, Pride@Braze (LGBTQ + employees), and Women@Braze. As Braze grows, we expect the number of groups to increase to support the growing needs of employees. Additionally, we host events and activities that cover a variety of topics as part of Braze for ALL.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that any organization can take to advance women?

Equal pay. At Braze, we will continuously evaluate pay parity across gender identities to ensure higher or lower pay based on gender isn’t an issue.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to champion equality?

Every individual can take action by holding their companies accountable. Regardless of level, employees need to call out anything they see or experience that doesn’t live up to the company’s commitment to equality. This only improves when a company has established an open dialogue where every single person can participate.
You founded the Gerety Awards to “challenge the status quo” in the advertising industry. Tell us more about how the awards do this, and why it’s time to push for progress.

Advertising awards, until very recent initiatives, have been overtly male-judged. By becoming a creative prize judged exclusively by women, we can set a precedent and a standard in an industry where the culture and award systems have traditionally been male-dominated.

Studies show that the majority of women feel that advertisers don’t understand them, despite making up 80% of all purchasing decisions. Gerety Awards ensure that advertising is held accountable and meets the standard that clients and consumers should expect.

An award show should be a focus group of how advertising should be done — and what better focus group than with the most powerful consumers on the planet?
Where does the industry currently stand in terms of the accurate representation of women and minorities?

Culture has changed, language has changed and communication has to change as well. We aim to integrate and provide a place for the feminine vision of the creative industry. We do this by encouraging young talent by giving them a chance to vote in the jury, in order to further illustrate their importance in the industry as future creatives.

The issue is being pointed out and now something needs to be done but since cultural changes go slow, we need to help the industry go faster.

Why is it so important to champion diversity in the creative industries? How does this trickle down into society?

The Gerety mission is to highlight leading women and mentors within the advertising industry. The lack of female creative leads affects young women coming into the industry. As one of our jury members said in an interview, “You can’t be what you can’t see.” Gerety provides a platform for women to shine and have the place they deserve within the industry. Judging is a very important part of a creative director’s CV and, as award juries have been male-dominated, women were simply not invited to vote. Agencies look up to creatives that have been juries in award shows, so the vicious circle goes on and on. We want to shine a light on this problem and kick-start a necessary change in the industry.

The focus of this edition of the *Modern Guide* is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that advertising and media can take to advance women?

Be bold, lead by example, and put your money where your mouth is.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to advance equality?

The same advice stands: Be bold, lead by example and put your money where your mouth is.

“Culture has changed, language has changed and communication has to change as well. We aim to integrate and provide a place to the feminine vision of the creative industry.”
What are some of the unique challenges that women face in the workplace, and how can they navigate them?

At some point, American women will be treated equally or, at least, more equally than we’ve been in the past. Because of this shift in the dynamic, women will need to learn leadership skills such as change management, coalition building, clear communications, and resiliency (i.e. not to take things personally) to be truly successful. How can we to accomplish this? Education. That’s the key. All women are incredible beings who manage multiple life pulls as caregivers, partners, friends, colleagues, and supervisors. Increased knowledge, our ability to balance personal and professional responsibilities, and growing “power” in the workplace will fuel our future success.

Today, women in their late 40s and baby boomers need to heed fresh protocols in a digital workplace shaped by Generations X, Y, and Z. These workers have different priorities, expectations, and habits. To continue to be effective, we need to embrace the idea that learning never stops. Women must not only adapt to change, we have to have the insight to anticipate it.

Even I realized the need to update my leadership skills ASAP. I went back to school at 53 to earn my MBA in organizational leadership and gain a better understanding of the current business landscape. Education. Education. Education. Career coaches, mentors, and professional development programs can help women to define goals and create plans to achieve them. You may be born with leadership qualities, but leadership itself is learned and practiced.
You’ve talked about the “new girls’ club.” Can you explain what this is?

The “new girls’ club” illustrates a simple fact -- “Ladies, we’re in this together.” Back in the day, women were very suspicious of other women. There was no real support in the workplace. Instead, women competed with each other, and tore each other down through criticism and negativity. This helped no one. The new girls’ club focuses on the positives we all bring to the table. It’s not about putting someone else first, but about putting yourself in someone else’s shoes to avoid misunderstanding.

We’ll succeed by creating a new habit of support. I’m making it sound simple because, in the end, it really is. Of course, we’ll always encounter people who are mean, rude, inconsiderate... the list goes on. But, the majority of people — including men — are willing to work together and have each other’s backs. If we actively encourage this, imagine how interesting it would be. Through mutual support, we learn from each other, not trash each other. In the girls’ club, we assume the positive and listen to all perspectives first. Assume the positive and voice perspective first. It’s a win / win / win.

How can organizations develop their female talent — and what’s in it for them?

I believe there are three ways organizations can develop talent -- education, mentorship, and support for employee’s passions. Obviously, I believe education is the most important. If you’re a Realtor, doctor, nurse, or CPA, continuing education and license renewals are a given. This should be the same across all industries to ensure that staff remain relevant. Employees at all levels within an organization, regardless of size, should be required to build their professional and interpersonal skills. In turn, employers reap the benefits of improved performance and work quality. Mentorship opportunities also are important to women across all levels of an organization. Fostering relationships among different generations, cultures, and levels of seniority fosters a supportive culture, and builds understanding and teamwork. Each person has a basket full of experience a fresh perspective to share. Let’s say I was working full-time and was mentoring a 25-year-old colleague. Of course, I’d be able to show him or her “the ropes,” but I bet I’d learn a lot in return.

I also think it’s critical for organizations to allow people’s passions to shine through. In my work as a professor, I begin each semester by asking my students to present their interests with the class. This gives us all insight into who each person is, and how he or she communicates. It also creates a level of comfort, even for shy people. Then, we use that information to build a core of commonality to reach shared understanding. It’s a win-win-win.

The focus of this edition of the Modern Guide is “steps for equality.” What is one tangible step that a business can take to advance women in their organization?

It’s important to give women fiduciary and operational authority in completing projects. I’m talking about women at all levels and in every department. If you say, “This is your baby. Come back to me with your ideas and progress, and let’s review,” then women can take charge. The more you empower people and value their opinions, the more engaged they become. They’ll go the extra mile, which is critical when there’s a learning curve involved. Hand over the reins in a way that makes sense for managers and staff. This allows women to start small projects, work their way up to bigger projects, and have a reason to do so. Trust leads to greater engagement. By allowing women to make mistakes while moving forward, organizations promote equality.

Now, let’s narrow the focus to the individual level. Is there a simple, impactful action that any person can take to advance equality in their organization?

Treat everyone without bias. We’re human and we all have natural biases about things we know little about or are uncomfortable with. It’s almost impossible to put all biases aside. If work is done anonymously, you’ll find that it’s accepted at face value and assessed honestly. We need to apply the same standard to all work to achieve real equality. It shouldn’t matter if a woman or man is the project manager.

Women have to grab onto the fact that we can level the playing field, and promote this honesty through our own work and professional relationships. We’re a powerful group that can literally change the world, if we so choose.