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THE IMPORTANCE OF FEMALE EXECUTIVES FOR YOUR BUSINESS

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We are in the 21st century and women have been taking the world by storm. In comparison to the condition of women just two generations ago—defined by strict gender roles that confined them to house and family matters, we have come a long way. The global circumstances for females are far from being homogeneous, but there is an evident change in women's rights all over the world. Feminism, thanks for that!

Having more women in leadership is good for business. Studies have shown that having more **women in leadership positions** boosts firm performance, contributes new skills and diverse thinking, helps reduce risk within the business, brings greater integrity to board conduct, and drives greater innovation. But, globally, businesses are still slow to address the gender disparity amongst their leaders.

Women have committed to developing their professional careers, they are **more present** in higher levels of education, and they have found ways to balance their work-life with their personal and familial responsibilities. Yet, in 2020 **only 7.4%** of CEOs of the Fortune 500 list were female—and this was a record-marking year (only two women made the list in 2000 compared to 37 in 2020). So, why is this underrepresentation of women in C-level positions still prevalent?

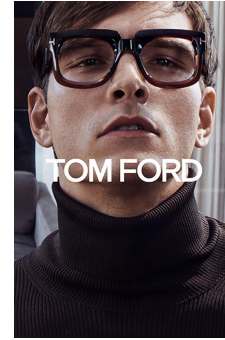
The Bias Against Women in Leadership Positions

In 1978, at the Women's Exposition in New York, writer Mairlyn Loden used the term "**glass ceiling**" for the first time. She related it to the disparity between women and men in leadership positions in the workplace. She also talked about the biased obstacles women have to face to develop and be rewarded professionally. The glass ceiling effect is multiplied when there are other discriminatory factors at play, such as ethnicity or age.

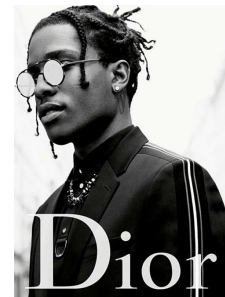
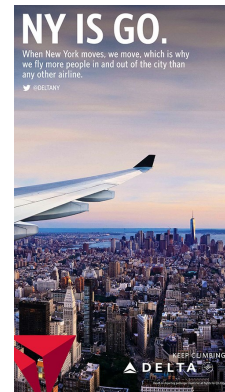
Centuries of deep-rooted patriarchy on a global scale and unchallenged (even celebrated) misogyny have contributed to the number of misconceptions about women in leadership. For instance, the idea that women "**follow their emotions**" when making decisions, while men use logical thinking, is well-known. Another myth is that women are aggressively competitive toward their female co-workers. However, **according to the Peterson Institute**, senior female leaders have been proven to reduce gender discrimination in recruitment, promotion, and retention.

Even though the perceptions about women in leadership positions are easy to refute with objective data, the gap in opportunities available to women remains wide. Women are expected to meet higher standards than men to qualify for a position, and to be **likable**. Women are also more exposed than men to unreasonable rejection, due to maternity or pregnancy. **According to the Human Rights Watch**, women are disproportionately impacted by gender-based violence in the workplace, including sexual harassment and assault. Yet, most women continue to cultivate their professional careers with resilience and building enterprises from scratch.

How Female Leaders Are Perceived by Other Team Members



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Despite gender bias, those who have had the opportunity to work under the guidance of female leaders have stated that women were **as effective, capable and competent** as their male counterparts in management positions.

Moreover, female leaders were actually **more valued than men** in certain aspects:

- Providing emotional support to team members and understanding them on a personal level
- Acknowledging and making efforts to promote the holistic wellbeing of team members
- Supporting team members to face work-related challenges
- Preventing team members' burnout, or addressing burnout empathetically
- Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace and showing higher levels of work ethics than men

Female leaders are valued by their team members for their emotional intelligence, which helps create safe and inclusive work environments. The emotional wellbeing of team members, including the possibility to develop a healthy work-life balance, is crucial to retaining human talent and generating loyalty to the company.

From a financial perspective, creating **happy workplaces** is also beneficial. The logic is simple: when people at work are happy, they tend to be more productive. If team members are in alignment with the company's culture and they have the opportunity to grow professionally, managers can not only count on employees to work hard, but can also view them as motivated friends who consider the **brand's development** as their own.

Organizational and Economic Benefits of Hiring Women for Leadership Positions

There are many business benefits to closing the gender gap. Promoting gender equity and giving women the same opportunities as men, offering equal pay for similar responsibilities, and providing merit-based promotions regardless of gender are corporate strategies that will make a business thrive organizationally and financially.

1. As mentioned, **empathy** is critical in the workplace. But there are other *soft skills* that women excel at, such as active listening, coaching and mentoring, critical thinking, conflict management, and inspirational leadership. All these are important assets which allow a company to thrive. They help create a loyal team and a solid professional network.
2. Transparency and honesty are essential qualities in a business leader who wants to build long term partners, clients, and employees. Everyone wants to know what they are contributing to, and to feel good about it. Women's professional ethics are *more trusted* than men's, particularly during *crises*.
3. Having a culturally diverse team with gender equity makes team members feel valued as individuals, and promotes creativity. This is likely to attract like-minded partners and clients. Businesses' core values are becoming more important in our global and highly competitive market. And gender equity has been proven to be a **competitive advantage**.
4. Gender diversity in leadership and management positions has also been shown to **increase profitability**. There are several studies and global surveys backing this data. So, promoting women on merit generates revenue regardless of culture. In other words: **"Without women in corporate positions, your company is simply losing money"**.

Women are effective leaders with particular strengths that differentiate them from men. When included in a workplace, they contribute significantly to the success of the company and the enrichment of the culture. Having an equal number of women in executive positions also increases the company's material and immaterial prospects. Promoting **women to leadership** positions can directly boost the emotional wellbeing of your team, the strength of your partnership network, the competitiveness of your business (in terms of production and innovation), and the reputation of your brand. And furthermore, there are no relevant risks or disadvantages to gender equality in the workplace.

Join the future: advocate for female leadership.


References

- [New Study On Women In Leadership: Good News, Bad News And The Way Forward](#)
- [Women CEOs: 15 Reasons why you should hire them](#)
- [Hiring more female leaders is good for profits. Here's the evidence](#)



Author's Bio:

Patrick Mataix became an entrepreneur in 1996 and co-founded Vistaprint in Paris with Robert Keane. They both shared a common objective of gender diversity to grow their business. The growth and success of Vistaprint over time, with female executives running large chunks of the business from North America, to Europe and Asia, led the company to its current position as a 5bn USD Nasdaq venture. Patrick experienced many great benefits of this gender balance across the business – not only at the strategic and board level, but also at an operational and management level. He believes that ss biodiversity is essential to life, gender balance at board and top executive level is a significant competitive advantage for most businesses. Through **Female Executive Search** Patrick aims to improve the current figures of female executive representation and see the number of top executive placements filled by women in the future, for the benefit of the global economy and humanity.



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