Keeping More Women in the Leadership Pipeline

Drivers, Facilitators and Enablers to Advancing Women

In order for companies, and countries, to remain successful, they must build *sustainability and competitiveness* into their strategic objectives. Many sources report that a key factor to achieving this is to have greater gender equality and more specifically, more women in senior leadership roles. Organizations must take advantage of the *largest pool of talent* possible if they wish to forward their strategic agenda and to compete sustainably in today's global environment. Companies that fail to present *diverse perspectives, opinions and decisions* will be dealt with harshly. Maximum productivity and engagement will be required from every worker at every level. This will require a more *balanced and inclusive approach to leadership* to drive creativity and innovation in this age of the knowledge worker. This will be even more important in the coming years, as predictions point to the future being "disproportionately female".

2012 RESEARCH RESULTS
3 Themes, 7 Practices
DRIVERS
- Strong Mentors
- Developmental Opportunities
- Feedback

FACILITATORS
- Flextime
- Telecommuting

ENABLERS
- Top Performance
- Career Ownership

Existing research shows that CEOs and women leaders do not agree on the degree to which attitudinal barriers exist for women. Add to that the fact that the women leaders did not agree with the HR professionals about which initiatives were more helpful in advancing their careers. The women leaders felt that even when they did have the CEO's support, that support was not focused on activities that were actually driving results.

If we are to be successful in making these changes, we have to recognize that the majority of men do not view the lack of equality for women as a "loss" for women, but they do perceive the changes associated with increased equality for women as a "loss" for men.
Source: Federal Glass Ceiling Report,1995

How much do women earn compared to men?
1978 - $.55
1994 - $.70
2008 - $.71
Source: Statistics Canada
Note: Equal pay legislation enacted in Canada in 1978

"Diversity is not self-managing."
Source: Corporate Leadership Council, 2010

Gender equity has evolved from being seen as a women's issue, to being seen as a business imperative, with some saying it will determine the "competitive edge of Canadian organizations"

Rosabeth Moss Kanter, 1977
Harvard Business School Professor
- Structural change is necessary
- Problems associated with women in organizations are rooted in powerlessness, not sex
- Primary issue for women is lack of developmental opportunities

The key dilemma seems to be the fact that there is no single solution to improve the advancement of women and minorities in the private sector. The problem that started out as a human rights pursuit, evolved into one associated with "political correctness" and "organizational effectiveness". In 1995, the 250-page **Glass Ceiling Commission Report emphatically declared that the glass ceiling does in fact still exist.** The 'think manager-think male' bias is alive and well and is a global phenomenon. The challenge still seems to be the difficult question of how to keep the women leaders and develop them into senior roles, in such a way that they are willing to stay. In order to solve the problem of career paths for women, we have to stop looking at them from the career path model designed for men.

There has been no growth in the number of women leaders in the senior roles in Canada in the last two decades.

"A masculine culture that has existed for so long is not easy to see. People have come to view the culture as normal, but these norms "only appear unbiased." Source: Meyerson & Fletcher, 2000

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The actions, or inactions, on the part of the organizations have a direct role in "creating and maintaining the glass ceiling."
Source:Goodman, Fields & Blum,2003