

PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2019



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“OVERCOMING CHALLENGES & EXPLORING UNTAPPED POTENTIAL IN PROFESSIONAL WOMEN”



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**“WOMEN ARE THE LARGEST UNTAPPED
RESERVOIR OF TALENT IN THE WORLD”**

—HILLARY CLINTON

THE GLASS CEILING NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED

“Women are equally capable and successful”

Proven corporate success

“The time to learn and appreciate diversity is now”

Local & global progress

“Bringing in women at all levels benefits everybody”

BUT Discrimination persists



WHY ARE WOMEN RISING?

MORE SKILLS + INTEREST

Including traditionally “male-only” roles

BARRIER REMOVAL

Impact of lobby groups, laws, equal opportunity policies

PROGRESSIVE ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Pressure, progressive views, societal views, male leaders’ scandals (e.g. Enron)



WHAT CHALLENGES HINDER WOMEN EMPOWERMENT?

1

Women are considered to be “homemakers” and nothing more

2

Raising a family
vs.
Achieving career ambitions

3

Stiff competition & harsh attitudes

4

Raising capital
(e.g. women entrepreneurs not given priority)

5

Demoralization which may limit goals & progress



WHAT CHALLENGES DO FEMALES FACE IN THE WORKPLACE?

1

Wrong Expectations

Judged more than a man, and if you are not cute you do not care about your job.

2

Work-Life Balance

Personal life tends to suffer due to work commitments.

3

Ego Clashes

A man or another woman who refuses to take orders from a female boss. (Work around the one who behaves as such).

4

Climbing the career ladder

Men advance faster as the society believes that women are “incompetent”. (Need to work harder/get close to decision makers).

5

Fear

Afraid of making a mistake, fear of failure. Poor performing companies may be given a lady CEO so that she may fall of the cliff.

7

Believe in yourself

The virtually inaudible question “Who am I to...?”

6

Perfectionist tendencies

Some ladies work so well that they get paralyzed by their perfectionist tendencies.

8

Shifting from being judgmental to yourselves

An internal conflict between being perceived as a respected leader versus a bossy woman.

9

Race and Ethnicity

Black women struggle and find it hard to make it to the top. Be smart/beat them at their game.

11

Returning to the workforce

Coming back to the workforce after being a caregiver.

10

Removing negative energy

Think positively about yourself and move on. Pick up on a team to work with – inside circle.

12

Sexual Harassment

Common today. Seducing you with sexy remarks/ emails/ pictures/ wrong touching. Ensure that there are company policies to deal with such. Ask during interview.

Challenges of an African Woman

African Union

- 1. Economic exclusion and financial systems that perpetuate discrimination**
- 2. Limited participation in political and public life including cultural decisions or political expression**
- 3. Lack of access to good education and poor retention of girls in schools**
- 4. Gender-based violence; harmful cultural practices and early marriages**
- 5. Exclusive of women from peace talks and cease fires decisions considering that in a certain country quarter million women were raped during a civil war. The war affected women but negotiations were being done by men.**



WHAT CHALLENGES DO FEMALE LEADERS (E.G. CEOs) FACE?

1

Female Leaders are still a minority

Creates Challenges:

Being the only woman

Communicating with male counterparts

Questions that men don't get asked

Being a pregnant CEO

2

Being the only woman

EXPECTATIONS

Personal life | Career | Community | Work

3

Pregnancies, feeding babies,
caregiving

BALANCE & EXPECTATION

Family

Board

Organization

Maternity plans



SO WHAT'S THE WAY FORWARD?



It will take women at all levels, including the top to change the conversation to make sure women's voices are heard and heeded, not overlooked and ignored

Sherly Sandberg

In 2017, World Economic Forum estimated that it will take 118 years for economic equality.

Get more women involved. The country, economy and community will be stronger and more prosperous.

Mobilize CEOs and world leaders to commit to gender diversity and grow a pipeline of top women leaders.