

Chapter 1 - In spite of great strides, we are still behind in terms of gender equality.

In this current developed world, women are better off than before, all thanks mainly to the women's movement in the previous century. However, at first glimpse it may look as if the fight against inequality has been accomplished; however, there is still a lot needed to be done.

Let's look at compensation: In 1970, American women got 59 cents for every dollar men got in the same jobs. Although that amount has increased, development has been slow: in 2010, it was just 77 cents. As one activist stated ironically, "Forty years and eighteen cents. A pack of eggs has increased ten times that figure." Neither is this issue sole to the U.S.: in Europe, the present figure is slightly better at 84 cents.

In addition, to being financially undervalued, various studies have demonstrated that women's performance is also unfairly belittled. When told to evaluate the performance and development potential of otherwise equal workers, both men and women discriminate against women.

However, definitely, this applies just to the ignorant and misogynistic, while we educated people would be fair?

Amazingly, the exact studies reveal that the more unbiased the assessor alleged to be; the more they truly discriminated against women.

This type of "benevolent sexism" is really more dangerous than the clearly hostile type, for the perpetrator typically has no knowledge of how his or her behaviors harm female colleagues and therefore feels no regret to reevaluate them.

Also, at home, inequality occurs. For instance, most people believe it is a woman's duty to care for children. In a survey that was conducted, when they were questioned if they anticipated their partner to leave their career in order to raise children, 46% of the men said yes, compared to just 5% of the women.

Chapter 2 - Women are still clearly missing from leadership ranks, partly as a result of the leadership ambition difference.

There is nowhere that gender inequality is really obvious than in leadership ranks: Globally, only 20% of parliament positions are controlled by women, and just 4% of Fortune 500 CEOs are women.

These numbers are conspicuous since in the term of academic accomplishment, averagely, women are better than men, getting 57% of all undergraduate degrees and 60% of master's degrees in the U.S. Still, in some way this surge of knowledgeable women going into the workforce becomes a trickle when they eventually get the leadership level.

A lot of reasons add to this issue; however one of the most essential is the leadership ambition difference. Various studies reveal that men are more ambitious and more prospective to want to be executives than women. Why is that so?

One cause is gender stereotypes: Women are not believed to be ambitious and career-oriented, and those who infringe these beliefs can be tagged as “bossy” or worse. These stereotypes, imposed since the early stages of life, can make women reduce their career objectives.

Likewise, whereas the majority of men naturally believe that they can have fulfilling personal lives and successful careers; women are regularly informed by society as well as the media that ultimately, they will need to compromise between career and family.

This regularly leads to women being less devoted to their career goals and quitting their work just to take care of their children. Surveys conducted among Yale and Harvard Business School alumni revealed that some 20 years after graduating, just 50% of the women got a full-time job compared to 90% of the men. With that kind of a mass departure of extremely-educated women from the workforce, it is not really surprising that there is such a leadership difference.

Chapter 3 - Let's discuss plainly on inequality and work toward addressing it, together.

We need to be able to talk plainly about gender and the shortcomings women encounter without this being viewed as complaining or as asking special treatment.

An open conversation brings awareness and motivates people to come out more and tackle the problems. This would, consecutively, encourage more women to lead and more men to want to become part of the answer and encourage women to lead.

More awareness can also cause little but critical transformation that will aid level the playing field. For instance, a professor who knows that women have a tendency to be hesitant about raising their hands when they ask the class a question can begin calling students directly, therefore, balancing the probabilities of every gender to answer.

Also, women need to support one another. Discouragingly, this has not regularly been the situation. Think of the "queen bee" occurrence: According to history, just one woman in each company could get to senior rank in the male-dominated corporate surrounding; therefore, she felt intimidated by other women and regularly actively obstructed their growth.

Likewise, mothers that stay at home may somehow make mothers that are working feel guilty and doubtful about their career decisions, and the other way round, causing both groups to unnecessarily criticize and discourage one other. For instance, the first female officer to join the U.S. Navy submarine stated that while her male crewmates appreciated her, their wives hated her deeply.

The drive for gender equality needs to keep going. It doesn't just help the society at large take advantage of the ability and leadership skills of half the population, however, as a study that was conducted using Harvard students revealed, equality truly increases the satisfaction of everyone involved, not only the direct beneficiaries.

Let's discuss plainly on inequality and strive toward fixing it, together.

Chapter 4 - Women's lack of confidence can refrain them from their professions.

Additionally to the numerous external hindrances that obstruct women at work, they also encounter a fight from within self-doubt all the time.

Even the greatest skilled professionals and the author as well can be overwhelmed by the impostor syndrome which is the feeling that your abilities and success are sham – and would be exposed shortly. Generally, women have a tendency to experience impostor syndrome more severely than men and also underestimate their own skills.

Various studies from a multitude of fields like medicine, law, and politics reveal that women are likely to critic their own qualifications and performance as worse than they really are, whereas men do the opposite and are likely to be excessively confident.

Likewise, men have a tendency to credit their accomplishments to their own inherent abilities and blame external causes for their failures, while women attribute their accomplishments to external causes and blame their inherent skills for their failures.

These misunderstandings cause more insecurity in women, and insecurity can damage your career: you need the confidence to support yourself at a senior job interview or to have a spot at an executive meeting.

Also, insecurity can make women sacrifice good career opportunities since they view themselves unqualified. But, in a rapid-moving world, you cannot lie around for flawlessly tailored posts to be vacant; rather, you need to make use of the initiative, take the opportunities, and make them work for you. In a nutshell, you have lean into your career, not stay back or stand aside.

Therefore, what to do?

Although you can't drive yourself to be confident, it is actually helpful to fake it sometimes. Pretending and carrying yourself like you are confident can regularly change into real confidence.

Also, we have to recognize that women are less likely to feel confident to get opportunities and so, we have to fix this through encouragement and support.

Chapter 5 - Careers are similar to jungle gyms than ladders; target the top; however, be flexible in your path.

Nowadays, the career ladder idea is wrong. People don't move straight from entry-level to executive in one company or industry anymore. A more correct depiction is a jungle gym with a lot of paths to the top.

This idea is reassuring for people who, such as the author, have no certain career choice after finishing college. In a jungle gym, you don't require a precise goal; you can attempt the multiples paths available and decide which ones take you in the right path.

In order to assist you on this path, you need to have a plan for the long term and the short term.

A long-term dream doesn't need to be anything precise or attainable; however, it has to assist you chose the type of work you love. For instance, the author wanted to do significant work; therefore, she used this belief to direct her all through her career.

Additionally, you need to assess career opportunities based on one most essential thing they provide: potential for development. When the author thought whether she should take a job at a then quite infamous Google, the CEO said to her that she needs to just bother about personal development potential, which is biggest in fast-growing companies: "If you're given a spot on a rocket ship, you don't question what seat. You only have to get on."

He was correct, and you as well should check for teams, projects, and companies with great development potential.

Also with the long-term goals, you have to also create short-term (e.g. 18-months) goals. Add work goals and personal learning goals. Ask yourself, "Where do I need to improve?"

Chapter 6 - Women need to cautiously navigate the razor's edge of drive and likeability.

Even nowadays, gender stereotypes influence our opinions of others: men are expected to be decisive and ambitious, women sensitive and communal.

A woman that has a successful career infringes her gender stereotype, which is the reason why likeability and career success are positively associated with men; however, negatively associated with women. Skilled, driven men are commended, while women like that are seen as “bossy” or “not team players.” This is extremely unfair, particularly as likeability is an essential component for career success.

But, struggling to fit into her expected gender role can as well hinder a woman's career, as it signifies being less driven and less susceptible to seizing career opportunities. This forms a “damned if you do, damned if you don't” situation.

Nowhere is this really obvious than in the problems women hold in bargaining for promotions or higher payment. Such bargains are completely important for career growth; however, a woman supporting herself is responded to hostilely – by both men and women.

Researchers have noted some special thoughts for women navigating this minefield: You need to attempt to appear as “appropriately feminine,” meaning nice and communal. Therefore, attempt to soften your message by talking for a group instead of yourself, for instance, “Our department has had a good year” or “Women regularly get less payment than men.”

Unluckily, to conquer gender biases, women need to also legitimize the act of bargaining, for instance, by mentioning industry reward standards or by stating that someone more senior, such as a manager, recommended they bargain.

One can anticipate that as powerful women become less of exclusion, such acrobatics will not be needed anymore.

Chapter 7 - To nurture effective communication, you need to exercise and support authenticity and appropriateness.

Authentic, honest communication is important in the place of work. It toughens relationships, enables reckless choices to be confronted and helps people bring up uncomfortable topics. Yet, a lot of people, particularly women, are scared of talking honestly at the place of work because they believe it can make them look negative or overly critical. Therefore, they regret, when in fact, their input is greatly required.

This is the reason why leaders need to do everything within their power to encourage authenticity by asking people for their feedback and suggestions, and also by publicly appreciating those who have been authentic.

The strategy to effective communication in any type of surroundings is to combine authenticity with the right thought for other people's feelings: be delicately honest, and not brutally honest. But, this is easier said than done.

Don't confuse aptness with beating around the bush. For instance, don't say that "Although I believe in your analysis, at the moment, I feel doubtful about the likely problems of your proposal," when you actually mean, "I don't agree with this idea."

Humor can be an effective method of bringing up a tough matter sometimes. For instance, one Google executive was having a problem starting an authentic conversation with an apparently aggressive colleague until he asked her jokingly, "Why do you detest me?"

Hardly is there a complete truth in any circumstance; therefore, in order to communicate well, you need to first attempt to view things from the other person's point of view. Endeavor, for instance, to think aloud on their stand: "I know that you're annoyed about this because you feel..."

Also, when you say anything, attempt to begin with "I" instead of making them sound like absolute truths: "I feel we have to..." instead of "You're wrong." The former assists start conversations, the latter disagreements.

Chapter 8 - Entice instead of approach mentors, and form a natural, mutual relationship with them.

Nowadays, a lot of current young professional women look near-obsessed with looking for a mentor for themselves— and for a good cause. Senior executives who guide you and utilize their power on your behalf are vital to career development, irrespective of gender.

Unluckily, it very hard for women than men to see such kinds of relationships. One cause is that the majority of senior corporate leaders are men, and they feel awkward mentoring young women as a result of the possible misunderstandings of such type of relationship.

However, another cause is that nearly all seminar, blog post and article related to career advancement in the previous decade has told professional women to look for a mentor in order for them to excel, whereas, as a matter of fact, they need to excel in order to find a mentor. Research demonstrates that mentors select their protégés based on performance and future potential; therefore, a flat out “Will you be my mentor?” to a complete stranger is less likely to work.

Giving an exceptional performance can certainly catch the attention of a would-be mentor’s; however, that isn’t the only method.

Also, approaching a senior executive with a particular, well-prepared review from time to time can brood a continuing relationship. Even random brief chats or email can form a relationship that is as helpful as “formal” mentorship. Nevertheless, it’s both the relationship and degree of investment that matters and not the label.

Regardless of whatever you do, know that mentoring is a mutual relationship where the mentor also gains beneficial information and a sense of pride from seeing the mentee develop. Value your mentor’s time and skill; don’t only meet with them to “catch up” or to complain.

Lastly, think of which of your peers can also be valuable mentors, for they regularly understand your circumstances better than any management could.

Chapter 9 - Equality signifies a really equal partnership at home, as well.

For women to successfully mix a fulfilling career with bringing up a family, a supportive spouse who is devoted to equality at home is important. A study that was conducted in 2007 on well-educated women who quit the workforce revealed that 60% mentioned their husbands as an important factor in that choice, talking specifically to their husband's lack of involvement in child care and other domestic chores.

Therefore, how equal are homes nowadays? According to current data, in U.S. homes where both parents are full-time employed, the mother still uses 40% more time on childcare and 30% more time on housework than the father does.

At times, it is the mother herself who pushes the father away from childcare responsibilities by criticizing him anytime he cares for the baby: "That's not how to wear a diaper. Stay put and let me show you how!" The outcome is that the father becomes less and less involved, leaving most of the work for the mother.

For real equality, mothers need to treat fathers as equally competent partners and need to share duties in order for both parents to have a duty to do.

Also, Institutional policies discourage the father from playing an equal responsibility at home. Both in the U.S. and Europe, days of maternity leave provided by companies or instructed by law is longer than paternity leave. Also, men who infringe stereotypical expectations by making their family a priority over their careers have a tendency to be punished more for it in salary and promotions than women.

Not only is equality at home essential for women following careers; however, it also causes happier relationships and lays an essential example for children. Therefore, it is worth all the time challenging an unequal current situation at home, even if it forms a few fights for a short time.

Chapter 10 - Before you take maternity leave, lean into your job as much as possible.

From a tender age, girls are trained that a day will come when they will need to choose between a successful career and being a good mother.

This depiction is not just deceptive and discouraging; however, it also has a bad consequence: Women ruin their own careers by preemptively creating space for what they believe will be a difficult balancing act between career and family.

Think of a determined young lawyer who is given an exciting new duty at work – a real career maker. Since she decides to begin a family in “only” a few years, she starts to think if she can actually take on this new duty. Nevertheless, her children will also need time. After thinking, she rejects the opportunity.

Decisions like this signify that when the baby comes, the mother is in a severely different state career-wise than if she had ambitiously followed all opportunities. Rather than being a rising star, she may see her career deteriorating.

This entails that when she has to make decisions on things such as her career and child care, her work will be really less rewarding than it could have been. And after her maternity leave, her career may appear really unpleasant that she decides to leave the workforce totally. Therefore, the actual steps she used to help fit her job and family together essentially put her career to an end.

The years and months before motherhood are not a time to fall back; however, a dangerous time to lean in as much as possible. Don't hit the brakes at work till you actually have to.

Chapter 11 - Don't attempt to do everything flawlessly; concentrate on what's essential.

The myth of “having it all” is one of the riskiest tricks ever set for women. No one can actually have it all since life is about compromises. Nobody can do everything at home and work flawlessly.

In high-stress works, people regularly do all the things the company tells them to do— and then abruptly leave work because of stress. This is senseless.

Rather, create boundaries and endeavor to work the job on your own rules. Companies and leaders, for their part, should change to a culture that is less concerned with face-time and concentrate on outcomes instead of time used at the office.

Also, there is pressure at home as well, where mothers are anticipated to use increasingly high amounts of time with their kids. This quite new exhaustive mothering phenomenon can form guilt in working mothers; despite the fact that research reveals that having other care for your child while you work has no negative outcome at all on any part of the child’s growth.

Effective guilt management can be as essential as time management for mothers. As a rule of thumb, do not concentrate on the things you are not doing; however, instead, concentrate on finishing and enjoying the task you have to do.

Since nobody can do it all, prioritize and concentrate on what’s really essential. For instance, create time for your daughter’s dance presentation; however, don’t bother about folding the linens flawlessly. Don’t aim for perfection; rather, endeavor to seek solutions that are sustainable in the long run and fulfilling in the present, both at home and at work.

There is no “perfect” method to have both a fulfilling personal life and a successful career; therefore, look for any method that works best for you.

Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead by Sheryl Sandberg Book Review

In spite of great strides in gender equality in the former decade, women are still obviously missing from leadership posts. This is as a result of external causes like persistent gender biases and stereotypes, and internal pressures like lack of confidence and anxiety over the problems of having a career and raising a family together. Working to solve and fix these problems benefits not just women; however, society at large.

Does gender inequality occur nowadays and what should be done about it?

- In spite of tremendous strides, we are behind regarding gender equality.
- Women are still obviously missing from leadership posts, partly as a result of leadership ambition difference.
- Let's discuss plainly on inequality and work toward fixing it, together.

What are the causes that can help or obstruct women's careers?

- Women's lack of confidence can refrain them from their careers.
- Careers are similar to jungle gyms than ladders; target the top; however, be flexible in your path.
- Women need to cautiously navigate the razor's edge of drive and likeability.
- To nurture effective communication, exercise and encourage authenticity and appropriateness.
- Entice rather than approach mentors, and form a natural, reciprocal relationship with them.

What reasons help fuse a successful career with a fulfilling personal life?

- Equality entails a really equal partnership at home, as well.
- Before you go for maternity leave, lean into your job as much as possible.
- Don't attempt to do everything flawlessly; concentrate on what's essential.

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