

Women as Business Leaders: *Industry Facts and Figures* *on the Situation, Opportunity and Solution*

Women are breaking through traditional barriers in the board room and in senior executive roles, and their entrepreneurial, innovative, problem-solving and decision-making skills are valued more than ever. Companies that include women in leadership positions – supporting “gender diversity” at the top – are benefiting, both financially and culturally, from the combined strengths of men and women.

In fact, gender-diverse leadership is making a distinct difference for organizations trying to succeed in a complex, competitive business marketplace; and, research proves the success that comes from this more-collaborative generation of leaders is building stronger, smarter organizations and economies.

And yet, women are still working harder than ever to fill these leadership roles. The following industry facts and figures illustrate the situation, opportunity and gender-diverse solution for the greatest business potential.

THE SITUATION: Women Needed in Leadership Positions

- Twenty of the Fortune 500 CEO’s are women (4 percent), and 25 of the Fortune 1000 CEO’s are women (4.5 percent). ([Catalyst](#), May 13, 2013)
- Women comprise 47 percent of the total U.S. labor force. ([U.S. Department of Labor](#), 2010). And yet, women hold only 14 percent of the senior executive positions, and 17 percent of board seats. ([Catalyst](#), Dec. 11, 2012)
- Sixty-five percent of women in senior management positions have children, keeping their executive jobs and raising families. ([Women and Diversity, WOW Facts 2001 - Business Women's Network](#))
- Compared to Europe, women in the United States and the United Kingdom have to wait a few years, until the law supports them. For example, in 2006, Norway passed the first mandatory quota that requires all corporate boards of publicly traded companies to include at least 40 percent female representation. (International Policy Analysis, “[Women on Board: The Norwegian Experience](#),” 2010)
- GovernanceMetrics International, the leading independent global corporate governance and ESG research firm, shows that 40 percent of the world’s largest publicly listed companies have not appointed even one woman to their boards. ([2011 Women on Boards Report](#))

THE OPPORTUNITY: Women Play Critical Roles in the Economy

- In the past decade, the number of privately owned companies started by women in America has increased twice as fast as the number owned by men. Women-owned companies also employ more people than the largest 500 companies combined. ([The Economist](#), December 30, 2009)
- Women employ 27.5 million people and generate more than \$3.6 trillion in sales. ([National Foundation for Women Business Owners](#))
- Women are starting new firms at twice the rate of all other businesses. ([National Foundation for Women Business Owners](#))
- Women small-business owners will create 5 to 5.5 million new jobs across the U.S. by 2018, transforming the workplace of tomorrow into a far more inclusive, horizontally managed environment. ([The Guardian Life Small Business Research Institute](#))
- Women business owners in the U.S. are more likely than man entrepreneurs to participate in volunteer activities and to encourage their employees to volunteer. ([National Foundation for Women Business Owners](#))
- Women are projected to account for 51 percent of the increase in total labor force growth between 2008 and 2018. ([U.S. Department of Labor](#), 2010)

THE SOLUTION: Gender Mix on Leadership Teams Brings Financial Success

- Companies with more equalized gender distribution have 30 percent higher IPO's. ([Forbes](#), April 23, 2012)
- The best performing teams are mixed genders. ([Harvard Business Review](#), Oct. 30, 2012)
- According to a comprehensive study by [McKinsey & Company](#), "Women Matter":
 - Companies with the most gender-diverse management had 48% higher earnings.
 - Gender diversity is an asset for the corporate image and helps bring closer together the company, its employees, its shareholders and its customers.
 - Companies with significantly more women in the senior ranks had 1.7 times greater stock growth.
 - Companies where women are most strongly represented at board or top-management level are also the companies that perform best.
 - Women are the driving force behind more than 70% of purchasing decisions.
 - Companies with three or more women in top management functions score more highly in the following areas: leadership, innovation, work environment and values, accountability and capability.
- Gender-diverse companies are 69% more profitable. (Harvard Business Review)
- Women on boards are a real advantage for accelerating progress. ([McKinsey Quarterly](#), April 2013)