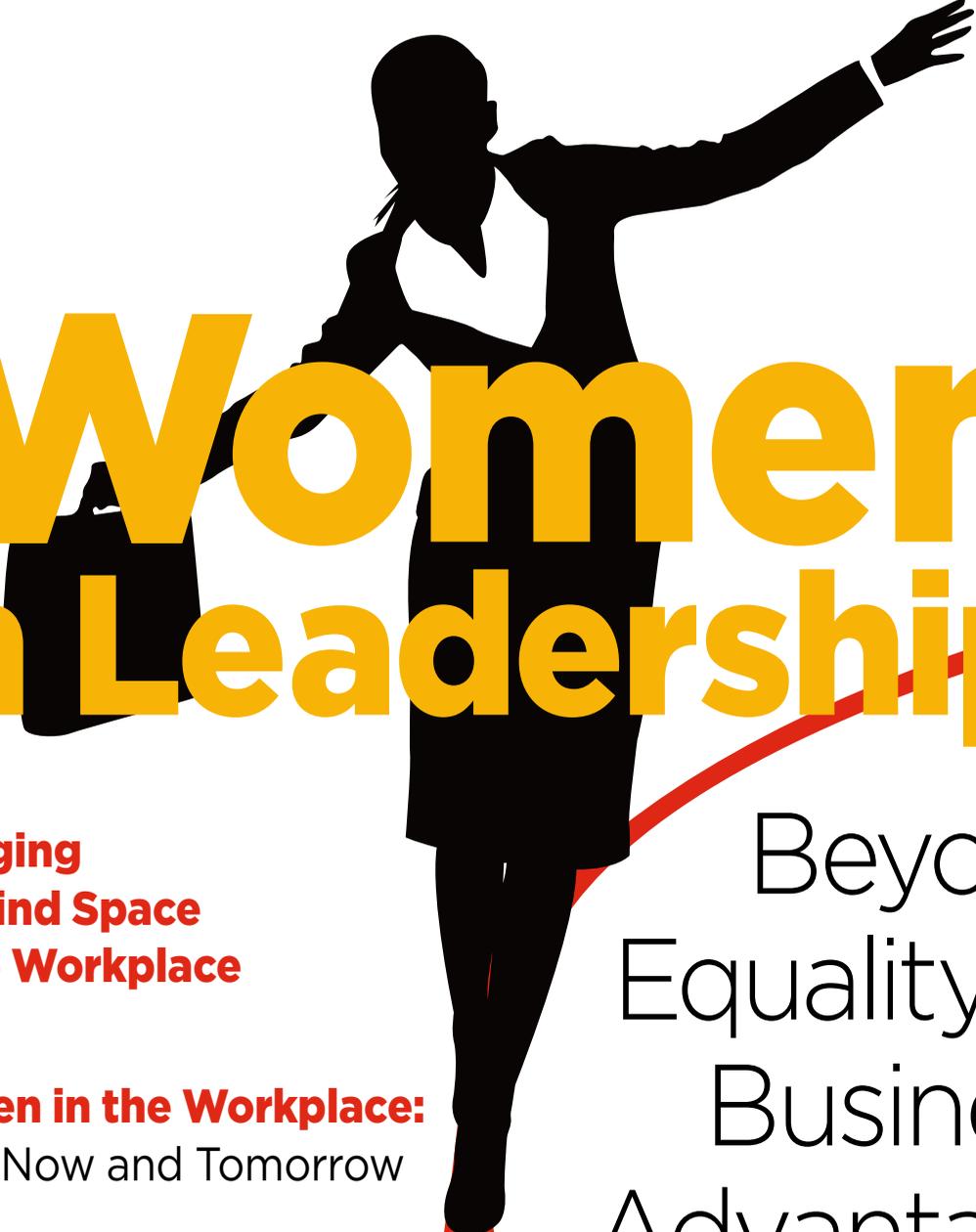


PeopleTalk

HRMA



Women in Leadership:

**Changing
the Mind Space
of the Workplace**

Women in the Workplace:
Then, Now and Tomorrow

Social Media:
A Woman's
Touch Required

Beyond
Equality to
Business
Advantage

Understanding Financial Risks of Employee Benefits



Need to recognize that a 'storm' is coming

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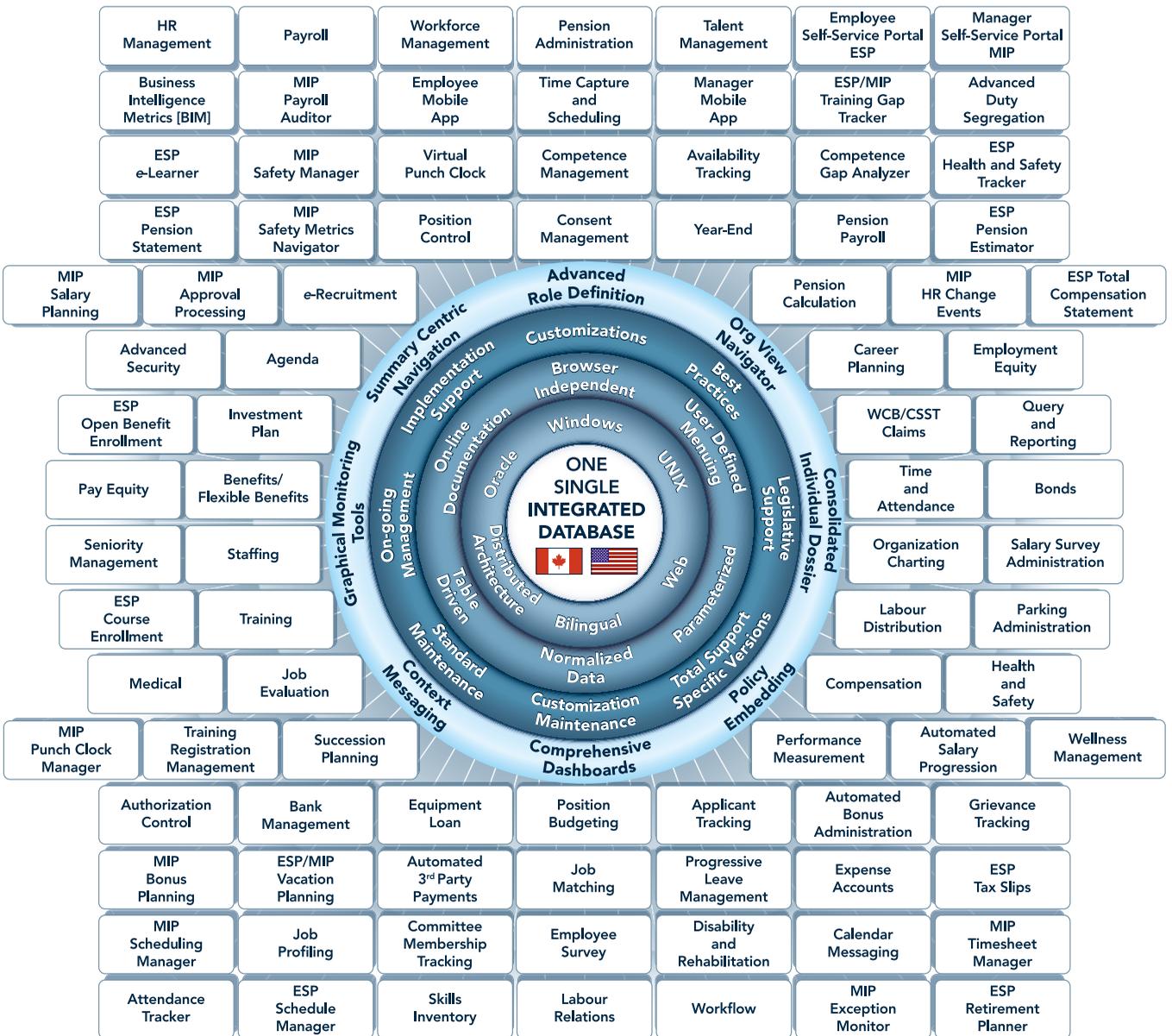
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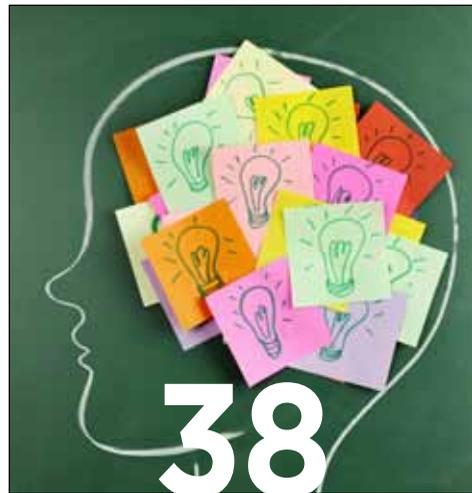


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—Geraldine Ferraro

"Any woman who understands the problems of running a home will be nearer to understanding the problems of running a country."
—Margaret Thatcher

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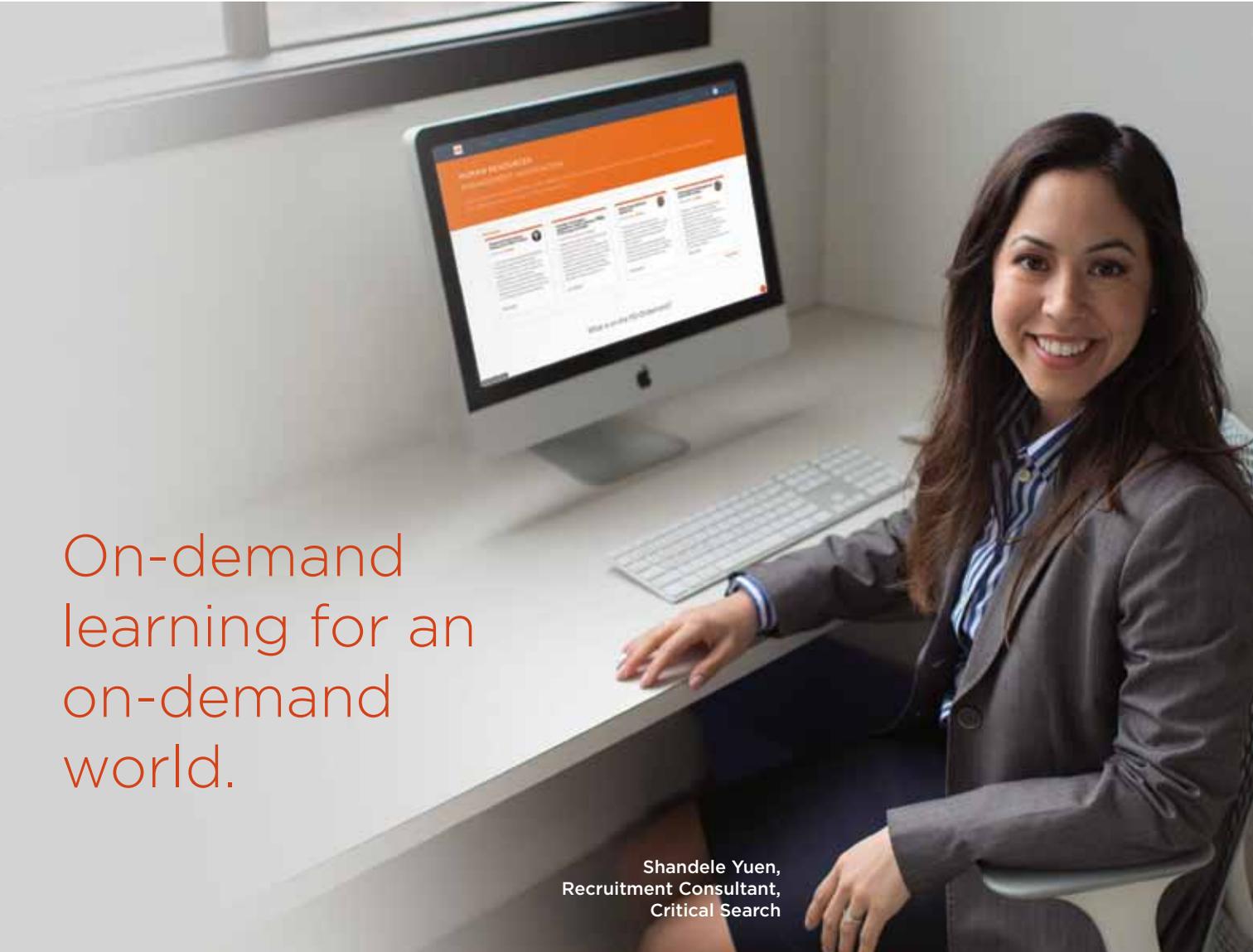
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Women in Leadership: A New Brand of Opportunity

WE LIVE AND WORK IN A VERY DIFFERENT world from when this Association first took form in 1942.

As per this issue of *PeopleTalk* with its theme of “Women in Leadership” though, there is still plenty of room and reason for further change. Despite all the progress made in the workplace and the research into the positive impact of greater diversity, women still hold a relatively slim percentage of executive leadership roles.

Then again, as a member and president of a professional association of over 5,500 members—71 per cent of whom are women—entrusted with helping evolve that change, I know those numbers are rising. As a wise mentor once told me, everyone is a leader at heart, simply at a different part of the journey.

A crucial step towards realizing that leader within is, of course, mindset and a realization of our individual and organizational potential. Given the breadth of opportunities now open to women and the economic realities of the day, women in leadership seems both a given and a necessity.

After all, how is one to innovate without giving equal credence to something so simple as the input of both genders? That we have moved beyond this in many ways does not detract from the statistics within this issue or the opportunity to further evolve.



Shannon Railton, CHRP

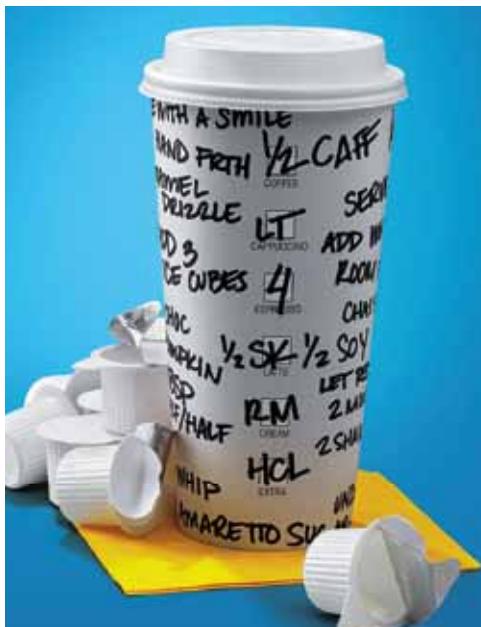
In keeping with that evolution theme for a moment, you likely have noticed a few changes to this issue of *PeopleTalk*—as well as other communications from the Association. Aside from the fact that our name is now officially the Human Resources Management Association, we have adopted a new logo, look and messaging as well.

Why? Much as with the discussion of women in leadership, because times have changed and we wanted to have something that reflected the true impact of HR and nature of our membership.

As such, you are bound to see some familiar faces popping into our communications and marketing pieces moving forward. After all, who better to reflect our membership than our members?

All told, the new brand for HRMA is simply a refreshingly, on-target take on an Association and a profession which I take greater pride in being involved with on a daily basis. Informative, trustworthy, authoritative and powerful: four words which really do define who we are and what we are capable of...as HR...as leaders...and most definitely as men and women alike.

Shannon Railton, CHRP
President, HRMA
president@hrma.ca



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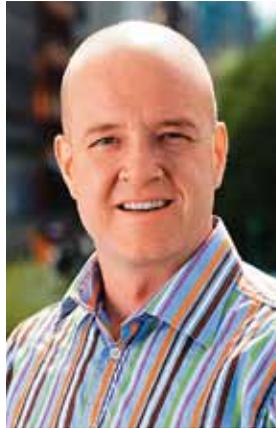
Business Equity Requires Equality

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WHAT IS IT THAT DEFINES A LEADER? VISION, DRIVE AND great communication skills are definitely in the mix. What about gender?



Jason McRobbie

What do you think the differences are between male and female leaders—if any? (p.12)

While such a question seems positively archaic, and contrary to human rights and business results, its relevance remains. In fact, I was assured as much by every woman I queried on the subject, but not for the reasons which once predominated.

As per the wisdoms of female leaders, who account for over 70 per cent of HRMA membership and hold a similar presence on the *PeopleTalk* Advisory Council, the challenges women continue to face show through in the numbers and anecdotes within. While the trend towards true equality continues to move in a positive direction, the need (and the opportunity) has never been greater for both sexes and businesses overall—as carried in our cover story by Donna Howes, “Women in Leadership: Beyond Equality to Business Advantage” (p.26).

Those aforementioned challenges come from within and without and both aspects are explored throughout, as is the progress being made by leading women at all levels. From “The Glass Ceiling Conundrum” (p.20) to the ongoing need for “Changing the Mind Space of the Workplace” (p.38), the external challenges remain, necessitating a new mindset for men and women alike.

As per “The ‘Lean In’ Factor” (p.36) espoused by Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg, “Women’s Leadership Imperative” (p.34) is hinged on tackling internal confidence issues as well. Fortunately, this appears to be far less an issue with the emerging generation of female leaders as explored in “Millennial Women Leading the (New) Way: Defining Leadership on Their Own Terms” (p.32). An excellent case in point is made on our final page interview with the 2014 HRMA Rising Star, Fiona Ho (p.48).

Another good indication of the growing impact of women in leadership ‘virtually’ shines through in “Social Media: A Woman’s Touch Required” (p.40). While the true impact and progress of “Women in the Workplace: Then, Now and Tomorrow” (p.44) is undeniable, so are the disparities remaining.

Reshaping those disparities to maximize equality and productivity goes to the heart of HR, as does the recently released “CHRP Competency Framework” (p.42) with its broadened emphasis on business results.

With the continued evolution of HR as a key, strategic business partner, the questions around women in leadership are unlikely to survive another decade.

Quite simply, no business can afford it.

Jason McRobbie
editor, *PeopleTalk*
jasonmcr@telus.net

PeopleTalk

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Each issue of *PeopleTalk* draws upon the HR expertise of our Advisory Council and editorial acumen of thought-leading business professionals. It is our pleasure to introduce some of the women in leadership who share their insights within this fall edition.



Donna Howes, CHRP

Women in Leadership:

Beyond Equality to Business Advantage p. 26

Donna Howes, CHRP, is principal of Humanity at Work, a coaching and organization development firm devoted to creating proud and produc-

tive workplaces. She contributes articles to *PeopleTalk* on leadership and organizational culture shift. As a certified executive coach and an accredited “Immunity to Change” facilitator, Donna helps leaders at all levels to increase their personal and organizational effectiveness in alignment with their values. Her specialty is leadership development, group and interpersonal dynamics, and culture change.

Jane Terepocki, CHRP

The Glass Ceiling Conundrum:

Does HR Have a Role? p. 20

Jane Terepocki, BA, CHRP is a specialist in the areas of recruitment and training and ongoing contributor to *PeopleTalk*. Jane’s work and volunteer experience include recruitment and training

at Mountain Equipment Co-op, a panelist on the XY Boom Conference and mentoring with the Women and Leadership organization. Her passion for HR includes harnessing the power of talent, culture and leadership to create a vibrant workplace where the spirit of diversity can flourish. Jane is a member of the International Leadership Association and has attended conferences in the USA and Europe.



Bernadette Smith

Millennial Women Lead the

(New) Way: Defining Leadership on Their Own Terms p. 32

As VP, talent development solutions with the Canadian Management Centre (CMC), Bernadette Smith understands the value of investing in people to create

an engaged, high-performance team that achieves results. Her passion and drive for results has created a culture that encourages collaboration and inspires creativity and innovation. Prior to joining CMC, her professional experience involved holding senior level marketing leadership positions in Canadian divisions of global organizations in a variety of industries including Bayer Consumer Care, Mattel, and Telemedia.

Mary Bacica

Looking Within at Leadership:

Sentis Takes a Selfie p. 22

Mary Bacica is a Certified Marketing Research Professional and a 25+ year veteran of the research industry. At Sentis, she works with public sector agencies, government and private

companies with particular emphasis on employee engagement and customer experience research. Prior to joining Sentis, she was VP of Loyalty Research at Ipsos Vancouver, and earlier, VP of Business Development at global research firm, Synovate. In recent years, Mary has branched out into “quasitative” research consulting—incorporating qualitative methods into quantitative research studies to meet the growing demand for deeper customer insights.



Kristin Zehnder, CHRP

The Lean-in Factor p. 36

Kristin Zehnder, BA, CHRP, is the director of human resources at the beautiful Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa. She has accrued over 15 years’ experience as an HR generalist in a variety of industries including

hospitality, education, engineering and manufacturing. In her current role, her main focus is employee and labour relations, change management, and occupational health and safety. She is most ardent about identifying opportunities where barriers exist to further organizational excellence. In her spare time, Kristin is an avid baseball mom and equestrian.

Pam Paquet

Changing the Mind Space of the Workplace p. 38

Certified with the Canadian Counseling Association, Pam Paquet ran a private practice for more than a decade before extending her psychological expertise to the workplace. Through

Pam Paquet and Associates Corporate Consulting, she helps companies identify staff and workplace problems and formulate training programs that generate lasting results. With an MEd and BA in Psychology with a specialization in mediation, she is also a master level facilitator, speaking internationally and sharing her expertise as an instructor with BCIT and as a committee member with Futurpreneur Canada and Douglas College.



“If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then, you are an excellent leader.”

—Dolly Parton

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What HR Can Learn From Female Entrepreneurs



By **Sandy Arsenaull**, CHRP

As HR professionals, we are designated advocates for both an organization and the people who work within it. We are also responsible for managing engagement and ensuring employee retention to the best of our ability. With entrepreneurs representing more than half of the business market, how can we harness intrapreneurship to further grow our innovative potential?

<http://bit.ly/1ATsnPU>

Leadership and the Sexes: The ROI of Gender Balanced Executive Teams

By **Leona Kolla**

Does your business strategy capitalize on gender brain science to achieve increased return on investment? To capitalize on the unique contributions and value of both genders within your organization, you need to think strategically and plan for the future.

<http://bit.ly/1pkiOON>



Leadership, Motivation and the Brain

By **Trevor Maber**

What does the human brain have to do with leadership and motivation? It may surprise you to know that, until recently, no one was entirely certain. With the advent of advanced medical tools, alongside an increase in interdisciplinary research, this mystery is at long last being unravelled and understood. <http://bit.ly/1tpIrZz>

New Female Corporate Directors: Breaking the Gender Barrier

By **Dr. Paul Dunn**

What does it take for a woman to join an all-male board of directors? The following is a summary of a study on the characteristics of new female corporate directors who break the boardroom gender barrier.

<http://bit.ly/1r3SRmx>



Giving Tuesday Celebrates Corporate Philanthropy

By **Clayton Bergquist**



Most people know about Black Friday and Cyber Monday as a marketing ploy used by the retail sector to spur sales of consumer goods for the holidays. The charitable sector has responded with Giving Tuesday as a branded movement to mark the launch of the annual giving season. Immediately following Cyber Monday, Giving Tuesday falls this year on December 2, 2014. Companies are invited to partner with Giving Tuesday to raise the media profile of their corporate giving and workplace fundraising programs. <http://bit.ly/1DIUo6I>

HRMA LinkedIn Weighs In...

Julia Chambers asks: I've recently moved to Vancouver from London where I have six years experience in a variety of HR roles, most recently as an HR business partner/generalist. I also hold the my advanced HR qualifications from the CIPD (the UK's professional body for HR professionals.) Does anyone have any advice for me when job searching for an HR role within Vancouver? Is it considered a disadvantage to have experience/qualifications from outside Canada?

Louise Cook responds: I recommend you network with HR professionals in companies where you would like to work. It might feel challenging to make the first couple of calls requesting an informational interview, but generally, you will find people very willing to meet, answer your questions and help you build your network. This will turn into job leads and that lucrative first position in your new home town. Please feel free to contact me. Good luck!

Ferdinand Tchokothe Edimo responds: I would advise you to do everything possible to have the CHRP designation which gives more value and recognition to HR practitioners in Canada. This designation will give you the chance to rapidly get into the competitive Canadian market and quickly find an HR related job. Though the CIPD qualification is well recognized in the UK, it's not really much valued in Canada. You will need to rapidly have a Canadian experience in order to be able to find a job. So try as much as possible to volunteer, be part of mentoring programmes, look for connections, participate in seminars, conferences. Good luck.

Top HRMA Tweets

Our domain name and URL have changed. Please update your links and bookmarks. You can find us at hrma.ca

The Power of Empathy: Leadership & Listening via @HRVoice.org ow.ly/AzUC4 #leadership #management #creativity #empathy

HR_Vancouver: @BCHRMA The Work, Health & Engagement Roundtable is my favourite! Looking forward to the ones in September! #HRMA #HRinVancouver

“What do you think the differences are between male

Lorie Corcuera



co-founder and CEO,
SPARK Creations

As the co-founder and creative essence originator (CEO) of SPARK Creation, Lorie Corcuera is energetic, driven, and tireless in her pursuit of self development and people contribution. Over the past 18 years, Corcuera has cultivated her coaching and leadership development, as well as her people and culture development experience as both a strategic and progressive senior HR leader. Corcuera is also the co-chair for the HRMA Learning and Development Roundtable.

Yes, there is a difference between male and female leaders. Women were born to birth children, so biologically there is a stronger natural ability to nurture, care and love. Men love too. However, the way a woman loves is different. Now, take that caring trait into a leadership skill and you have a leader that is compassionate, loving, and can connect on a deeper level.

Although both men and women have this ability, the bigger difference or challenge is whether the environment or culture empowers these leaders and teams to have this type of connection. We generally accept that more women care and lead in this way than men.

The world is changing now though and these “feminine” leadership styles are now required to be a whole and complete leader—one that is courageous enough to create and inspire loving human connections.

Scott Borland



organization development
consultant

Scott Borland is an organization development consultant specializing in strategy facilitation and top team alignment for companies that “do good.” With over 20 years experience consulting across a variety of sectors, he has also held senior leadership and executive roles.

In my work, I consistently see greater differences between individuals in terms of leadership style, behaviour and effectiveness than I do between the two sexes. However there just isn’t any consistency regarding whether being male or female makes one an inherently ‘better’ leader.

Some caveats—in my experience, males often seem to rate themselves more highly as effective leaders compared to how women rate themselves. Female leaders appear more willing to critique their own actions and incorporate greater self-awareness into evaluation of their own effectiveness. This often leads to strengthened energy and commitment for self development by women in leadership roles.

On a related dimension—self-confidence—my observation is that female leaders sometimes tend to underestimate their own abilities when faced with ‘stretch’ situations. Quite often, I see male leaders moving forward quickly into uncharted waters believing that they ‘have the goods’ (whether they do or not) while female leaders may give pause before moving to action. Self-confidence (whether justified or not) in the face of different/challenging situations seems to show up differently between men and women in leadership roles.

Marion Gushue-Geiger, CHRP



HR manager,
Commissionaires BC

Human resources manager for Commissionaires BC in Kelowna since 2007, Marion Gushue-Geiger’s full HR career spans industries, provinces and the past 25 years. Actively involved with HRMA for the past six years, Gushue-Geiger was Southern Interior Advisory Council chair from 2012-2014. As a Distinguished Toastmaster of 15 years experience, a wife and dog walker, she has been a frustrated painter most of her life.

Yes! Absolutely there is a difference in women and men leadership styles. We are hardwired differently; we have different hormones, check out the myriad of scientific evidence that supports this difference.

There are a few significant differences between females and males that contribute to leadership styles. Women are more empathic, like to talk, ask questions and collaborate; men not so much. Women are often viewed in a negative light because of this, however, it should be embraced.

There are three “Cs” critical to leadership and teambuilding—communicate, connect and collaborate. Regardless of gender, if you are honest, focused, respectful, empowering, integral, self-aware, confident, knowledgeable, and one who easily gives credit when it is due, you have the foundation to be a good leader.

Leaders who are self-aware of their leadership style and learn how to flex and adjust their style to match the needs of team and project become great leaders.

and female leaders—if any?”

Joanne Hanson, CHRP



executive director,
Court Services North Branch,
Ministry of Justice

Joanne Hanson, CHRP has worked with the BC Public Service since 1999 and as an HR instructor with the College of New Caledonia for the past four years. With more than 15 years of leadership and HR experience, she has also been recognized as a recipient of several Premier's Awards for her leadership and organizational excellence accomplishments. In her capacity as a leader and lifelong learner, she is passionate about leading people with a philosophy of developing leaders at all levels and helping them reach their potential. She has been a member of the Northern HRMA Advisory Council for four years.

A leader inspires, motivates, leads by example, is empathetic and can connect to build relationships and achieve results. These are not traits defined by gender, but rather by their degree of emotional intelligence. There are those who may suggest that females are natural nurturers thereby more effective leaders, but this trait alone does not define great leaders as evidenced by the many male and female leaders in our midst and throughout history.

If one were to canvas an audience to identify who they see as a leader in their lives, there is likely a range of responses and their attributes would not be aligned to their gender, but rather their skills, character and emotional intelligence. My leader role model is my father who inspired me to never let my gender define my potential. I contend that leadership is gender neutral and we are fortunate to have so many role models in our society, both male and female.

Catalina Rodriguez



corporate counsel,
employee relations
Best Buy Canada Ltd.

Catalina Rodriguez is an employment, workplace human rights and labour relations lawyer practicing in-house for Best Buy Canada Ltd, where her favorite company value is to “have fun while being the best.” She has a passion for human resources, equality—in the workplace and beyond—and popular psychology. The last book she read was Cordelia Fine’s How our Minds, Society and Neurosexism Create Difference—a must read for anyone interested in the good old nurture vs. nature debate.

Men and women leaders come in as many varieties as there are personalities, therefore I do not believe that one can draw clear distinctions amongst leaders based on gender alone. I have had the opportunity to work with bold, emotionally intelligent, assertive and caring leaders both male and female.

However, in my opinion there is one key difference—women leaders have succeeded in spite of multiple barriers that men do not necessarily face, such as being brought up or socialized to not prioritize their careers, to not advocate for themselves, and to “be nice.” Women are still expected, in certain environments, to take a backstage or a support role as opposed to a leadership role.

There is enough science today on the fact that people will live up to the expectations others have of them. So even though there may be no real differences on leadership styles based on gender, the journey to the top is harder for women.

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Rebrand Speaks to HR Equity

By Jason McRobbie

WITH A NEW NAME, LOOK AND PROMISE TO ITS membership, the Human Resources Management Association's commitment remains unwavering—to keep people first in the minds of decision-makers.

For the past two years, a core group of staff and board members have worked together with Myron Advertising + Design to explore what it means to be an HR professional today, and particularly as a member of HRMA.

What has emerged in the rebrand of the Association is at once more colourful and concise, with a first glimpse of the new brand revealed at the 2014 HRMA Conference + Tradeshow in Vancouver.

"We had the opportunity to look at ourselves as an Association and revisit our brand commitment. That goes beyond the logo of course. It begins with asking, are we relevant?" says Christian Codrington, CHRP, HRMA's senior manager, people

practices. "Having been part of this from the start, I can tell you the logo was the last piece of the puzzle to come together. We needed to look at our deliverables. We worked with Myron to explain what HR means today and shared a wealth of member insights, surveys and feedback during this process."



A History of Change

Without doubt, the HR of yesterday has changed, as has the face of the HR professional.

For over 70 years, what has become the preeminent HR association on the West Coast has continued to grow and transform. From the creation of the War Industries Coordination Committee in 1942 to a lengthy spell as the Industrial Relations Management Association, it was not until 1992 that HR was taken to the

heart of the brand with the British Columbia Human Resources Management Association.

Authoritative

Owning HR best practices, trends and professional development.

Informative

Giving context and meaning to human capital management.

Powerful

The power to assert our vision in a modern business context.

Trustworthy

We earn trust every day, and never forsake it.

Over two decades later, the need for further change had become apparent. With over 5,500 members spread over eight regions, BC HRMA had already reached beyond its provincial borders with the inclusion of the Yukon in 2013. Moreover, with the continued rise of HR as a strategic partner in business and growing recognition of the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation, the opportunity existed for a rebrand with a renewed focus on the people and potency of the profession itself.

Four Strong Words Anchor Future

Myron's account supervisor Donna-Jay Crowe, explains the brand development phase provided the opportunity "to create a clear, future-focused brand promise and key assets to begin the process of building on that promise. We sought to encapsulate the Association, the profession and the designation. As a team, we sought to avoid clichés and capitalize on the profession's unique characteristics."

What emerged from those discussions and explorations has become the foundation of HRMA's new brand, grounded in four words which all involved agree reflect those unique characteristics.

"Authoritative, powerful, informative and trustworthy: those four words became the bedrock of the creative work that Myron has developed. They took those words and looked for ways to make them emotive and connect," says Codrington. "As a result, we have four strong colours that speak to the feeling those words evoke."

More Visual Ties to Membership

Thus, the slate-hued 'informative' serves as the bedrock, the familiarity of blue anchors trustworthy, orange speaks to the authoritative aspect and a rich magenta conveys HR's powerful standing and potential.

Those four strong words and hues also emerged alongside a new tagline—The Voice of the HR Profession—a new iconic logo

that communicates the HR 'bridge', and a design focus that speaks directly to HRMA's strongest suit—its members.

"We're really proud of the people part and how it ties everything back to who we really are," says Codrington. "As an association, we previously tended to rely on stock photography for our branding. That got us thinking—why not feature our own members instead. It really works; they look great and I think it reflects well on all of us coming that much closer to actual source."

A Name Beyond Borders

As for the newly abridged name, while there is an argument to be made that the old logo never carried "BC" to begin with, the discussions went far deeper. The renewed focus on the profession vs. the province, is not only in keeping with past incarnations of the Association, but indicative of a greater emphasis on the HR profession overall, as already evinced by the professional HR associations in Ontario (HRPA) and south of the border (SHRM).

"There were big discussions around the relevancy of our name. We looked at our equity in the marketplace and explored what new equity could be gained," says Codrington. "What became apparent is that good people practices could not be bound by borders. We had already expanded into the Yukon. Our professional development and HR Metrics

Service have clients nationwide. Moreover, many of our members' organizations have operations across the country, as well as in other countries. In this evolving digital economy, we needed something that spoke to the breadth of our membership offering and with clarity."

From a full suite of redesigned membership materials to a new homepage for the Association at www.hrma.ca, the scope of the rebrand has been comprehensive—and aimed at facilitating further conversation of HR between both our membership and the broader business community. 

"We're really proud of the people part and how it ties everything back to who we are."



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Six Keys to Career Development

By **Raluca Manolache**

WHILE WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP IS THE FOCUS OF THIS issue of *PeopleTalk*, the career challenges and opportunities of the present moment are shared by women and men alike in the workforce. The way forward is nowhere near as clear as it once was and, in many ways, the old adage, “the only way is up” simply no longer applies.

Fortunately, the paths for personal and professional fulfillment remain marked by some traditional wisdoms.

1. Think Develop vs. Advance

In speaking with three strong female leaders in their own right—all in very different places with their careers—one thing became apparent; the term “career advancement” has become an anachronism. Instead, in a world of constant change and sideways shifts, career development is key and has become indispensable for individuals and organizations alike.

More importantly, while there is no one path to developing career success, six helpful hints did emerge over the course of our conversations.

With over 20 years’ HR experience prior to joining Knightsbridge Consulting in Vancouver, Wendy Knight, CHRP, CMA is a senior consultant in the career solutions practice. She has also been heavily involved with both HRMA and as a mentor with Minerva Foundation’s *Women Helping Women* program.

Knight points out that the path to success is always personal. “It is very much unique to each individual, their strengths, and their goals. Your career is a journey rather than a destination; it is about engaging and enriching experiences,” she says. “Everybody has their own unique way of defining career success. However, your goals need to be aligned with your own skills, your own values, your own interests.”

2. Let Go of the Ladder

Moreover, rarely do individuals work for the same company for their entire career as once occurred, adding greater complexity to the traditional depiction of the career ladder.

“Career progression has changed so much. It used to be a career ladder, a vertical progression. The world has changed hugely in terms of the types of jobs and experiences, and how people move to get different experiences and knowledge and building your tool kit,” says Meg Burrows, CHRP, HR manager, Western Financial Group.

Burrows’ journey is a direct reflection of her assessment. Holding a degree in psychology and a diploma in human resources management, Burrows captured the HRMA Rising Star award in 2009 and has been heavily invested in helping others develop their HR careers from her earliest involvement with the association. A mentor and prior chair on many committees, she is currently incoming chair for the Coastal Vancouver Advisory Council.

“Movement is much more fluid in today’s workplace”

3. Define Your Differentiators

In a world where opportunity is everything, she is a firm believer in creating those opportunities. According to Burrows, opportunities are the “true differentiators” that expose us to experiences and skills that we may not otherwise be able to acquire.

“It is often a competitive market; what are you bringing to the table that differentiates you from other people, what experiences do you have that are unique to help you be a stronger candidate?” asks Burrows.

Knight concurs and strongly believes that the key step in career development is knowing yourself and being able to talk about your accomplishments. “You need to be very realistic about what your value is to an organization. You need to be able to articulate your strengths and weaknesses and look at the opportunities. Do

a personal SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis," she recommends.

4. Remain Open to the Atypical

Helping others find that uniqueness is something Kyla Nicholson, CHRP has taken to heart throughout her career for over a decade. From curriculum design and teaching to consulting and training and development, it was during her time with HRMA that Nicholson helped develop the Career Path Tool for the HR profession.

"My career is a bit atypical because I haven't worked in an HR department specifically. I started out in education, teaching. The entire time that I was working in that field I did a lot of volunteering. I met the acting executive director for an agency that I was volunteering for. He also managed a consultancy company and he had a position for me," says Nicholson. "I think what the really important thing is—regardless of what your role is and what your expectations are—that you need to work hard enough to increase your opportunity to get noticed."

Both Nicholson and Knight speak strongly about the importance of checking in with yourself and being open to opportunity." The opportunity to work on special projects might be more in line with what you are looking for. It is about working hard and letting people know about what your interests are and letting opportunities come to you," says Nicholson.

Burrows agrees: "There is a lot of work done within organizations for mapping career paths. However, I think a career is always personal—it's somebody's own."

5. Build and Be Your Own Brand

While exploring new opportunities undoubtedly develops experience and toolkits, it also develops and evolves our personal brand. "Everybody has a brand. We may not think of it that way, but it's really our reputation. It's less about a role or a title and more about who you are as an individual—what do you want to be known for? What are the things you can be doing to support and develop that brand," asks Knight, reiterating the importance that brand showcasing is what makes each person unique.

However, making the most of that brand, Nicholson stresses, requires a strong network and a perpetually open

mind. "Movement is much more fluid in today's workplace," she says.

Knight emphasizes the importance of learning to draw on your network for information and insight in order to add depth to your career. "Ultimately—if you are setting goals, keeping it flexible, knowing where you want to go, and being able to communicate that to other people—that leads to your own flexible but unique career plans," says Knight.

6. Find Feedback and Support

Such flexibility is essential, as is the importance of constant learning. In this regard, having multiple mentors across industries is invaluable, providing critical and varied feedback along with knowledge and shared experience.

It is also important to have mentors in a variety of business areas, so that you can get as much varied feedback and insight as possible. As to whether that mentor being male or female makes a difference, the variety of learning experiences is the key, making a mix invaluable.

"What experiences do you have that are unique?"

Finding that same support network within an organization is equally important. Knight describes a three-pillar approach as best practice wherein "the organization supports the individual, the manager enables the individual, and the employee ultimately is accountable."

"The key to everything is to be inclusive with everyone who is interested in growing and being involved," says Nicholson.

Ultimately, male or female, young, old or in between, when it comes to career development, what counts most is what makes you uniquely you.

Continue the Conversation Online

For a final tip tied into this issue's theme, read the expanded article, visit: hrvoice.org/six-keys-to-career-advancement. 

Raluca Manolache is a passionate writer and HR professional who has worked with CBC/Radio, Service Canada and S.U.C.C.E.S.S.



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Online Tutorials Target Skilled Immigrant Opportunity

By **Sangeeta Subramanian**

SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES struggling to fill job vacancies will benefit from a series of free online tutorials designed to help them attract and hire skilled BC immigrants.

Collaboration Creates Online Resources

The Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) has collaborated with the Human Resources Management Association (HRMA) to offer a series of five tutorials featuring industry-tested tools, practical tips, videos and resources.

Topics range from how to attract and hire new Canadians to how to assess language proficiency, foreign experience, and academic and professional credentials. Viewers will learn how to create barrier-free job descriptions and define roles using key knowledge, skills and abilities. Tips on where to advertise job openings, as well as a list of programs and services that connect employers with qualified immigrant candidates are also featured.

“Employers are asking themselves what can be done to attract and keep the best and the brightest in this competitive global environment and we are responding with resources that will give employers an advantage in attracting and hiring new immigrant talent,” says IEC-BC executive director Kelly Pollack.

Skilled Immigrant Talent a Competitive Advantage

Pollack says employers who overlook skilled immigrant workers may find themselves disadvantaged when it comes to competing for the best workers. In BC, 26 per cent of all workers are foreign born and in the Lower Mainland that number climbs to 41 per cent. The majority of BC’s recent immigrants are in the prime working age of 25—44, have a post-secondary education and professional qualifications.

“Immigrants bring experience, expertise and enthusiasm”

“What’s more, immigrant employees often have international connections and an understanding of how to work globally,” says Pollack. “Employers who can concentrate on the skills an immigrant worker brings, rather than on their lack of Canadian experience, will be rewarded with top-notch, loyal employees.”

Inside the Employer Experience

Dawson Creek small business owner Michelle Rolls has spent the past seven years struggling to fill ongoing vacancies and is currently searching for a body technician and a paint technician to help her two automotive shops return to optimum production levels. Rolls says her experience hiring an internationally trained worker is one she recommends.

“The first month we had to bring him up to Canadian standards, but really it was because he called one thing something and we called it something else,” says Rolls. “It wasn’t that he didn’t have the skills. It just took him awhile to learn our method.”

Rolls says immigrants bring experience, expertise and enthusiasm that she is happy to embrace. “As an employer you have to be open-minded and creative because they may not do things exactly the way we do it, or may use different words for the same thing, but it’s something that can be easily overcome,” she says. “What we did was make things more visual so there would be less confusion than if we relied solely on language.”

Plan Ahead for Labour Challenge

Small to medium-sized employers like Rolls can use the IEC-BC resources to help attract skilled immigrants and be ready for the labour shortage expected to leave BC

employers short at least 61,500 workers by 2020. It's a problem many businesses will face in the coming years as demographic shifts and a growing skills mismatch create a skills shortage and fierce competition for skilled workers.

Every year BC attracts close to 10,000 highly skilled immigrants with the skills and experience needed for BC's workplaces. Tapping into this talent pool should effectively provide employers with the competitive advantage needed to compete in today's global marketplace. The challenge lies in connecting skilled immigrant talent with businesses, especially small to medium-sized businesses, which make not have the human resources capacity to source, hire and retain immigrant talent.

“As an employer you have to be **open-minded and creative**”

“HRMA is proud to have the opportunity to partner with groups like IEC-BC to provide employers with HR professional tools that can assist them in meeting their organizational needs,” says HRMA's Christian Codrington, CHRP, senior manager, professional practice. “We trust that the content in these immigrant employment tutorials will make it even easier for employers to access qualified immigrant talent.”

Explore Further...

The new immigrant talent tutorials are available on HRMA's recently unveiled PD On-Demand web portal that was launched in September. They can also be accessed through the IEC-BC website at www.IECBC.ca. 

Sangeeta Subramanian is manager, Immigrant Employment Council of BC.

Hiring skilled immigrants is good for business. Here's why:

- Skilled immigrants are often multilingual and can help a company access global markets;
- Skilled immigrants knowledge of international business practices can help employers build business and build relationships around the world;
- Businesses can be an employer of choice by reflecting a diverse workforce in recruitment and marketing materials;
- Skilled immigrants foster a workplace culture grounded in diverse thinking; and
- Skilled immigrants can provide insight into local ethnic markets.



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The Glass Ceiling Conundrum: Does HR Have a Role?

By **Jane Terepocki**, CHRP

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE they stay the same.

The Economist magazine recently stated that female economic empowerment is the most profound social change of our times. Globally, women are getting advanced degrees at higher rates than ever before and are the heads of state for 17 countries around the world. Moreover, within the business realm, there are increasing numbers of women in middle management.

Despite all these advances, there are very few female CEOs—as evidenced by a recent *Business in Vancouver* magazine feature outlining the top 100 highest earning companies in British Columbia. Only four out of the 100 CEOs were female.

In spite of the current state of female empowerment, women are still not equal players in the top positions of power; in fact, they are a minority. Why is this and can HR help break the glass ceiling?

Pinning down one reason for the inequality or fixing the problem is akin to eating an elephant in one bite. Ultimately there is no magic formula to solve this complex issue. Sometimes the best approaches are time-tested and true—re-examine what HR is currently doing and do it better, look at inclusive methods to create strategy and re-examine human traits and tendencies. Exploring the ideas of some of the top minds in business also helps us to arrive at some viable approaches.

The Confidence Issue

A current top business book, *The Confidence Code*, by Katty Kay and Claire Shipman examines the difference between men and women from both anecdotal and scientific perspectives, as well as why women have not broken through the glass ceiling in mass numbers. Their research finds that women have the capability, but lack confidence in spite of increased levels of responsibility; this lack of confidence is why they do not traditionally succeed in reaching CEO positions.

The authors share an example of

an orchestra where women were not hired as often as men. An experiment was conducted whereby the applicants interviewed were not visible and only their musical ability could be heard. This resulted in women and men being hired in equal numbers. (This would be an interesting experiment in the recruitment departments.) That such a small, simple change can yield such significant results veritably begs the experiment to be tested in recruitment departments.

Confidence Boosting is Key

On the practical side, Kay and Shipman list a few confidence boosters that any employee can practice. Below is a list of small game changers, micro-confidence boosters—and a caveat.

1. **Fail Fast**—Small failures are key to confidence.
2. **Leave the comfort zone**—A ship is not built to stay in the harbour.
3. **When in doubt, act**—Nothing builds confidence like taking action.
4. **Don't ruminate, rewrite**—Reframe negativity to improve efficiency and balance.
5. **Take compliments and own accomplishments**—Keep it simple and honest (a.k.a. “Thank you, I appreciate that.”)
6. **Repeat, repeat, repeat**—Practice makes perfect.
7. **Speak up**—Women speak 75 per cent less when men are in the majority.
8. **Think small**—When faced with something daunting, a single step is a start.
9. **Be grateful**—Simply saying “Thank you” is key to optimism and happiness.
10. **Meditate**—This increases your ability to remain calm, control emotions and be clear about your goals.
11. **Sleep, move, share**—Get enough sleep, exercise and spend time with friends.
12. **Practice power positions**—Sit up straight. Abs in chin up. Try nodding your head. Always sit at the table.

13. **Pass it on**—Encourage a colleague to take action.

As for the caveat, here is one ‘booster’ to avoid—fake it until you make it. Confidence springs from genuine accomplishment and work. In short, women have to be heard and if we want to lead we have to act; this is the power of confidence.

A New Look at Confidence

Kay and Shipman posit that confidence in women looks different than men, as women:

- Don't always have to speak first;
- Can rely on colleagues to help make our point;
- Can pass credit around and can avoid alienating potential adversaries;
- Can speak calmly, but carry a smart message that will be heard—confidence can even be quiet; and
- Can display vulnerability and question our decisions. Reviewing our decisions with an eye to improvement is a strength, as is admitting mistakes.

The authors stress that this last point is not to be confused with ruminating for days over decisions already made. This is not confidence. If a single point emerges as a mantra throughout *The Confidence Code*, it is this—make decisions and act. As evidenced at the recent 2014 HRMA Conference + Tradeshow, it is a mantra and mode of being that continues to serve plenary speaker Nilofer Merchant exceedingly well.

The Jane Bond of Innovation

Having worked for the likes of Apple and Adobe before striking out to launch more than 100 products netting \$18 billion in sales, Merchant has been dubbed a visionary by CNBC—and listed as the number one person most likely to influence the future of management.

Her thinking has the potential to break the glass ceiling for good, calling upon the

recognition of every individual's potential to harness their 'onlyness' to greater purpose and profit. Speaking at the HRMA conference, Merchant outlined some of her innovative ideas approaching strategy; her most important contribution to this discussion is the movement from "me to we" in creating effective strategy.

"The future is not created. The future is co-created." That central thesis behind her first 2010 management book, *The New How: Creating Business Solutions Through Collaborative Strategies*, has now become a recognized truth across Fortune 500 companies and small to medium sized businesses alike. Simply put, businesses can no longer afford organizational divisiveness if they are to thrive.

Merchant is part of an emerging group of practical, experienced professionals who have adopted the shared value networks and collaborative role definitions necessary for knowledge-based workers to succeed in our current and future business environments. The silos and constraints of traditional business organizations will not survive the challenges of the next decade and Merchant's latest book, *11 Rules for*

Creating Value in the Social Era, provides a step-by-step manual designed to help business not only survive the future but excel.

HR's Role In Breaking the Glass

In Nancy R Lockwood's article, "The Glass Ceiling: Domestic and International Issues," she addresses areas where HR is able to affect change with employer policies and practice.

Human resources professionals have a significant part to play—through organizational culture, workplace policies and practices, change management and work-force education—to develop women leaders who will break down gender-based barriers. These barriers run the gamut from gender stereotypes to preferred leadership styles to tokenism in the high managerial ranks. The following are some areas where HR can make a real difference.

- Examine organizational culture by looking for barriers;
- Drive change through management;
- Foster inclusion, including mentoring;
- Educate and support women in career development;

- Measure for change—track women's training throughout the organization;
- Review company policies to make sure they are fair and inclusive; and
- Explore reasons why women leave the company.

HR is uniquely placed to affect change in organizations. Women represent a relatively untapped source of talent for leadership in the workplace. We can influence strategies in the C-suite, provide training that will increase confidence in employees and help guide and change policies and procedures. Perhaps in the future, BC will have more than four female CEOs in its top 100 earning companies.

Once these simple strategies and formulas are in place, there is no reason why other minorities who face impenetrable barriers cannot break through their own "glass ceilings" using the same simple approaches. **P**

Jane Terepocki, CHRP is a specialist in the areas of recruitment and training with a passion for harnessing the powers of talent, culture and leadership.

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The Voice of the HR Profession

Looking Within at Leadership: Sentis Takes a Selfie



By **Mary Bacica**

TAKING AN ORGANIZATIONAL ‘SELFIE’ CAN BE A RISKY proposition, particularly when you are asking for honest expression from everyone involved. However, its value is indisputable.

Turning the Focus Inwards

As researchers, we traditionally turn our focus outward to better understand what is really happening in a particular market, with a group of customers or in a specific area of the country. However, for this issue of *PeopleTalk*, Sentis Research took the opportunity to turn that focus inwards and look at the perceptions of leadership and gender within our own organization.

With both a female and male managing partner—Julie Winram and Adam DiPaula—with broadly similar experience in the research industry, we had the perfect testing-ground to delve into the differences between female and male leadership. Moreover, with a group of employees all part of the Millennial generation, the temptation to ‘look under our own hood’ became overpowering.

With many questions going in, we focused on four primaries:

1. **How does generation play into perceptions of leadership and gender? Are Millennials more gender-agnostic than their older counterparts?**
2. **What makes a good “leader”?**
3. **What, if anything, distinguishes a female leader from a male leader?**
4. **Does gender play into leadership perceptions and how?**

How Does Generation Play into Perceptions of Leadership and Gender?

Our research took the form of a focus group with our employees. To loosen everyone up we started with an exercise—draw a picture of a leader in as much detail as possible and give this leader a name.

At the completion of the exercise one thing was abundantly clear—no one at Sentis missed a higher calling as an artist as all but one employee drew a stick person. However, artistic abilities aside, most employees drew pictures and chose names for leaders that were male. A few female employees specifically chose gender-neutral names (e.g. Cory, Sam), but the rest were definitely men.

Another exercise—to name a well-known BC business leader—elicited a similar result. Male business leaders were rattled off fairly easily, but our group of Millennials had to reach a bit deeper to think of a female BC business leader and ended up fortifying the list with a few female politicians.

When we finally introduced the subject of gender and leadership, our Millennials were clear that gender didn’t matter and that it is a leader’s qualities, personality and vision that distinguishes him or her, not their gender.

Even among forward-thinking Millennials, who express support for gender neutrality in leadership, the stereotypical, male leader persona still subconsciously resonates.

What Makes Good a Leader?

According to our group of Millennials, it includes a lot of things. There are the predictable qualities—confidence, charisma, intelligence, inspirational, sees the big picture—as well as some less common qualities, such as being a good follower when they need to be and someone who is able to put trust in their team and step away at times.

Another key aspect of good leadership is communication, but this was implicitly, not explicitly stated by employees. Anecdotal explanations continually touched on the communication between leaders and their followers, yet no one yelled out “a good communicator!” Instead our employees chatted about humour and how it is integrated into the workday, how they have interacted with past managers, bosses, etc.

Communication is so important it is a non-verbalized ‘given’—akin to asking people why they choose a particular airline and no one mentioning ‘safety record.’ It has to be there or nothing else matters.

What Distinguishes Female From Male Leaders?

It is very difficult to separate gender from personalities, so we let our employees talk quite a bit about the different personalities of our two leaders at Sentis—to get past that and actually start understanding real, if any, gender differences.

One key difference seems to be the level of direction provided by female leaders; they tend to be more specific when tasking employees with a project or undertaking. This seems to be related to risk-taking. The general sense among our employees is that female leaders are more apt to want to control what they can control, while male leaders are more willing to ‘let go of the strings and let things fly’; they are more willing to take a risk.

The only other clearly defining characteristic that emerged from our session was that our employees felt female leaders are more apt to share their thoughts about the business and what is going on.

Does Gender Play into Leadership Perceptions and How?

Yes, but in a way we didn't originally consider. The part we were missing in our original question was the gender of the employee being asked. Gender matters on both sides as female employees feel they interact somewhat differently with male leaders than they do with female leaders; male employees feel the same way.

The main interaction difference seems to centre around the 'comfort level' of communicating with someone of the same gender. While all our employees felt they could speak openly with either our two leaders, they admitted that they do communicate in a slightly different way with each.

For example, our female employees felt they were more likely to share family updates and anecdotes with a female leader than a male leader. If being a business leader is not challenging enough, leaders have to be sensitive to the personalities and to the gender of those who report to them.

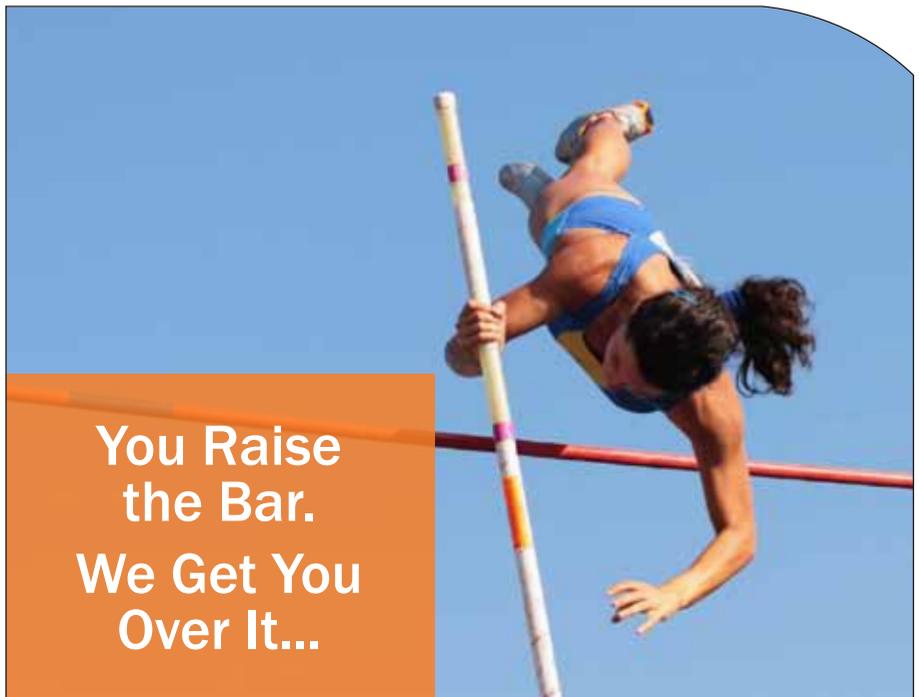
A Caveat in Closing

Is our group of employees reflective of other employees at other organizations? Would such an experiment work in other workplaces? The honest answer is we are not sure.

While the value of the feedback and insights acquired is indisputable, our organizational 'selfie' experiment comes with a pair of caveats—expect the unexpected and do not count on easy answers. Following up and working through the issues raised must also be considered key to the process.

What emerged with surety from our experience is that business leaders of both sexes have a range of challenges to navigate every day—and being a female business leader does not make the role any easier. 📌

Mary Bacica, CMRP, VP is an integral member of the employee research team at Sentis Research.



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Women in Beyond Equality to



Nancy McKinstry



Lisa von Sturmer

By **Donna Howes**

“WHY ARE WE STILL TALKING ABOUT THIS?” Great question. The answer is *because it still matters*. In fact, given the economic costs of the gender gap and the increasingly urgent need for exceptional leaders, it matters more now than perhaps at any time in the past.

PeopleTalk sat down with four accomplished leaders whose experience spans the finance, marketing, insurance, energy, recruitment, sustainability recycling, non-profit and education sectors to find out what makes ‘women in leadership’ a topic that is as vital for a boardroom as it is for a #hashtag campaign.

Each leader interviewed made the same strong statement—women in leadership is neither an equity nor a perception issue. It is a business and competitive advantage issue.

Gender Gap Stifles Economic Windfall

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) says Canada’s workforce gender gap costs the Canadian economy in excess of \$145 billion annually, about 10 per cent of our national GDP. At

the pace of change we’ve seen in the past 20 years, CCPA says it will take a further 228 years to close the gender gap and reap benefits that are currently costing the economy.¹

In Canada, the issue of gender inequality has recently focused on the lack of women in executive leadership positions. *PeopleTalk* opened its pages to this topic because ‘how women lead’ is essential to achieving business and organizational results.

From an HRMA perspective, our mission is to keep people first in the minds of decision-making leaders. Given our strategic role and commitment to advance people practices, the question becomes, “How can we as practitioners ensure there are seasoned, diverse voices at the table to help make the important decisions?”

Championing a Culture Change

Nancy McKinstry listens from a depth of experience that reflects her unique profile in BC’s business and non-profit communities. Her unparalleled leadership comes from a lifetime of firsts which have led her to C-suite roles and to serve on many corporate boards. Throughout, McKinstry has championed and advocated

Leadership: Business Advantage



Leslie Meingast



Bob Elton

for culture change and become a role model for other women as a founding member of the Minerva Foundation for BC Women—an organization dedicated to helping women achieve their educational and professional goals. Her life-in-progress achievements have earned her an Order of Canada and an Honourary Doctorate of Law from Simon Fraser University, among many other accolades.

“I’m tired of this talk frankly,” McKinstry says. “I’ve been fighting this battle since I started my career and I’m tired. What I want to see in your article are the actual steps to change the ‘women in leadership’ discussion.”

So let’s talk about solutions and the steps to get there.

Diversity Key to Boardroom Debate

The Conference Board of Canada has said women’s decision-making and leadership qualities are in demand because they bring a divergence in views which lead to “constructive debate behind the boardroom door and encourage diligence in decision-making.”² In other words, it is good for the Canadian economy to have diverse opinions at the table.

Speaking to Source



Nancy McKinstry, Minerva Foundation founder and Patron’s Circle board member speaks about the value of women in the workplace and the importance of diversity. <http://bit.ly/1BR0zhE>

For further conversations with leading minds visit www.theminervafoundation.com.



Bob Elton, adjunct professor, UBC Sauder School of Business and past CEO BC Hydro speaks to the essence of values-based leadership and questions the notion of instilling values. <http://bit.ly/1BR0KcR>

Top Five (x4) Leadership Tips

Great leaders are perpetual learners, so here is a compilation of the top five leadership tips from each of our four cover story sources.

Nancy McKinstry

1	The relationships that you build, develop and honour will carry you through—be honest, open and transparent, and bring heart to the task.
2	Make culture change inclusive. It has to come from the CEO and trickle down.
3	Address conflict—if there's an interpersonal conflict, sit down, address it and don't take anything personally. It is about the business.
4	Be a life-long learner and learn from mistakes quickly—don't be afraid to ask if you don't know.
5	Manage the lifecycle of your career and keep yourself in the game. Remember you can do everything; you just can't do it all at once.

Bob Elton

1	Establish relationships before getting down to deal with the issues. If you don't do that, the issues generally don't get resolved as well— especially when a situation is urgent and a decision needs to be made more quickly.
2	Learn the value of people who may not speak up or act as quickly—often they are able to help you think differently about an issue.
3	Lead from your values—it is largely about connecting who you are with what you do.
4	Have open conversations with people about what is important to you.
5	Even seasoned leaders need to keep learning and there is huge value in 'reverse mentoring.'

Lisa von Sturmer

1	Trust yourself—embrace your decisions with confidence and don't second guess yourself.
2	Create a culture of collaboration—say 'let's work together to get the best solution possible' because everyone's contribution is important before you make a decision.
3	Set an annual strategy—create quarterly, monthly and weekly goals and then focus on what's important not what's urgent.
4	Set soul goals to keep each person's individual goal alive—it ties into community spirit.
5	The emotional side of a workplace is a big driver, especially for your people—create the room for the emotional quotient.

Leslie Meingast

1	Know yourself and your market and see the potential of all your constituents within and outside of your organization.
2	Lead by example and lead with purpose by having a personal vision and a company vision.
3	Credibility is built on the small things like being on time, doing what you say you will do and saying 'please' and 'thank you.'
4	Create a cohesive team by having a common language that will draw a pathway to help everyone get to the same end game.
5	Step up and ask if you don't understand something—clarify it and don't assume.

This is being recognized globally, as McKinstry heard when she attended the International Women's Forum in Hong Kong in May 2014 which attracted a group of 400 senior women leaders from 30 countries around the world. The theme of the conference—"A World Without Borders"—was no small topic to cover in four days, with discussions around the affect on financial markets, healthcare, technology and the environment.

"One of the speakers used a wonderful parable," says McKinstry. "She said, humanity has two wings, male and female. Currently the male wing is flapping too hard, and in order to fly, both wings need to be in balance."

Small Increases, Major Opportunities

While women's representation on the boards of public companies increased from 10.3 per cent in 2011 to 12.1 per cent in 2013, a *Financial Post 500* survey by Catalyst reports that the picture for private sector boards is not encouraging.

During the same period, there has been no meaningful increase in the number of female board directors across Canada. British Columbia actually has the lowest percentage of women on board seats coming in at 11.9 per cent, well below Nova Scotia (25.7 per cent), Saskatchewan (23.2 per cent), Quebec (19.8 per cent), and Ontario (16 per cent).

Recognizing the economic pitfalls of one-dimensional boards, the Ontario Securities Commission (OSC) has announced amendments that would require companies listed on the TSX to increase the participation of women on boards and in senior management, as well as disclose their approaches to gender diversity.

"Our proposed amendments are intended to encourage more effective boards and better corporate decision-making, which will benefit investors and the capital markets," said Howard I. Wetston, Q.C., chair and CEO of the OSC. "This is about helping TSX-listed issuers tap into a pool of talented and capable resources currently under-represented on today's boards and senior management."

McKinstry says this is a step in the right direction. "Women are smart, numbers-driven, and people-oriented, and the OSC is taking a leadership stand through this initiative. The next step is to make these changes systemic and to change the culture of our organizations. It has to come from the CEO and it has to trickle down. It's not rocket science."

Not Rocket Science—Just Bright Thinking

When Bob Elton was CEO of BC Hydro, he drew on a wealth of experience in consulting—including more than 20 years with Price Waterhouse Coopers as CFO and CEO—to grow leaders at all levels of the iconic BC organization. His personal and professional leadership philosophy is based on making values-based decisions, and his experience has shown him that women are naturally strong in this leadership capacity.

"At Hydro we had a lot of diversity around the management table," says Elton. "Half of the management team were women and over the time that I was with the company we ended up with about 40 per cent of the top 100 leaders being women—and it was probably 10 per cent before."

Values-Based Leadership Broadens Appeal

So why is that important? Primarily because values-based leadership is anchored in relationships and relationships drive the discretionary effort of employees—as well as the brand loyalty that underpins every successful HR and customer relationship strategy.

In business and in life, the quality of the relationship matters.

"Every conversation you have is an opportunity to talk about values," says Elton. "When you ask people what is important to them you'll get a values-based answer. We need to pay attention to that because who we are as people, who we are at our core, is intimately connected with what we do at work and how we do it."

Of Old Schools and Triple Duty

If the key to effective decision-making relies on diverse views and values working together, why is it so difficult for organizations to hire, mentor, train and progress women through the lifecycle of their careers?

"Some organizational cultures still promote the old style thinking that we need to hire people like us because it worked before....and it's easier," Elton admits. "Let's face it, having a group of 10 or 11 people—half of whom are women—does mean that the conversation will be different. It means that questions will be asked in a different way, and that could mean that some men around the table are uncomfortable, or that it takes longer, or that we have to listen more to each other."

The other piece of engendered thinking Elton still sees holding sway is the expectation of women to be leaders on all fronts: at home and in the community, in addition to their careers. "The work with aging parents is seen as women's work, and we continue to ask women to play these multiple roles. The workplace will have to change unless women can outsource certain things," says Elton.

Taking Preconceptions to School

Changing attitudes requires challenging the process and the status quo. Elton is educating and mentoring the next generation to do just this through his role as adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia's Sauder School of Business where he teaches leadership.

While student intakes are 50 / 50 women and men in Elton's Sauder program, gender balance issues in the real world are discussed. "I had a note last week from a former female student who has just taken her first job," Elton relates. "What surprised her is how male-dominated her new organization is and how different from the openness and transparency in the higher education environment."

This he maintains, is where young women leaders need to understand their values and their personal visions in order to succeed. "The best advice I have for young leaders, women and men, is to bring all your great skills and personal qualities to the table. Find a trusted leader with whom you can converse and learn, and if you're really good, people will make room for you," says Elton.

**"Women
are smart,
numbers-driven,
and
people-oriented."**

A Strong Belief in Self Required

Being really good requires believing in yourself first, before asking anyone else to make room for or to believe in you. Consider Lisa von Sturmer, an award-winning entrepreneur, G20 Youth Entrepreneurship Summit Canadian delegate, and successful Dragon's Den winner.

As a young woman in business, Von Sturmer maintains she has to prove herself to be taken seriously. She started in television and with creative agencies before deciding that she wanted to spend her life doing something positive with a tangible impact on the community. In 2010, she quit her "career" and founded Growing City, Canada's only office composting recycling business.

Von Sturmer's belief in herself has helped her overcome what others might perceive as challenges. "I have real challenges with being taken seriously. I'm ultra-feminine—'read' as young—and my voice is really high pitched," she admits.

Fortune Favours Solid Principles

Her leadership strategy is to listen, learn as much as she can from others with experience and to focus on what is important, not what is urgent. She picked up *Mastering the Rockefeller Habits: What you must do to increase the value of your growing firm* by Verne

Harnish, and read it cover to cover to learn about the structures, policies and practices she needed to improve her business.

"I found this dry, slim little book about what the *Fortune 500* companies are doing and got really excited. It taught me to focus on what is important," says Von Sturmer. "Things like setting weekly goals and objectives at the beginning of every week, and following up with mid and end of week check-ins on how we did. That's been really productive."

These are solid leadership practices that have helped grow her green business into a multi-city enterprise, now expanding into the United States. From a leadership perspective, Von Sturmer has a clear purpose and is decisive about the outcomes she expects. She is also living her values of being collaborative and community minded.

“At its root,
the primal
job of
leadership
is emotional.”

Emotional Connections Resonate

Does von Sturmer think she's doing anything different because she's a woman in business? "This is a woman-run business, and we set soul goals as well as business goals. We support and value each other, and that's a big attraction for young employees who want the emotional connection to their work in addition to a paycheck."

The role of emotions in the workplace is emerging through

Facts and Stats

Some growth:

Women's representation on boards of public companies increased from 10.3 per cent in 2011 to 12.1 per cent in 2013.
[Catalyst, 2013 Catalyst Census: Financial Post 500 Women Board Directors.](#)

Falling behind:

Public companies continue to have the lowest representation of women on their boards as compared to private companies, crown corporations and cooperatives. In 2011, 10.3 per cent of directors of public companies were women, which represents a zero increase from 2009.
[Catalyst, 2011 Catalyst Census: Financial Post 500 Women Board Directors \(March 8, 2012\)](#)

Although nearly one-third of companies have 25 per cent or more women senior officers, nearly another one-third continue to have no women senior officers. In particular, 35.9 per cent of public companies had no women senior officers in 2012.
[Catalyst Census: Financial Post 500 Women Senior Officers and Top Earners \(February 19, 2013\)](#)

BC ranks lowest across Canada in the percentage of board seats held by women:

Nova Scotia	25.7 per cent
Saskatchewan	23.3 per cent
Quebec	19.8 per cent
New Brunswick	17.1 per cent
Manitoba	17 per cent

thought leaders such as Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee, authors of *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the power of emotional intelligence*. They argue that the fundamental task of leaders is to prime “good feeling” in those they lead: “That occurs when a leader creates resonance—a reservoir of positivity that frees the best in people. At its root, then, the primal job of leadership is emotional.”

This aspect of emotional intelligence—being intelligent about emotions—matters to von Sturmer and how she leads as a woman in business. “Women create the room for the emotional quotient which helps create the culture you want for your whole company to thrive,” she says. “It matters to me that I lead from the starting point of saying—Let’s work together so we can get the best solution possible.”

Beyond Pink and Blue Think

That “good decisions don’t come in pink and blue” is a well-wrapped wisdom attributed to another female business leader in BC.

“Yes, it sounds like something I would say,” says Leslie Meingast, CEO of TPD (The Personnel Department). Her leadership wisdom is as straightforward as it is sage and her business is one of North America’s leading workforce & HR solutions firms—and BC’s third largest business owned by a woman.

“Leadership is about good decision-making. You better be inclusive and have a language around engaging customers, especially when you factor in that the women’s market is a \$15 trillion dollar market,” says Meingast, who is not only a leader in the HR recruitment field, but is a seasoned and successful business strategist. “Companies are not built by quarters, they are built over the long term—and great leaders are the same.”

Asked ‘how to ensure there are diverse voices at the table to make the important decisions’, she is certain about the first step every leader must take regardless of gender.

“You have to ‘know thyself’. Because as a leader you have to show up, be present, and lead by example. You’ve got to go places where nobody would go because if you don’t walk in that fire first nobody is going to follow you,” Meingast explains.

Lean In to the Opportunity

The truth is though, being exceptional, knowing oneself and living through values isn’t a leadership challenge for women. Meingast sees exceptional, values-driven female leadership potential every day, working with women across all industries looking for the next opportunity to succeed. She believes the real challenge is for organizations to make a pathway for these women throughout the lifecycle of their careers.

“There is a fluidity to people’s careers and companies need to pay attention to that. At TPD we have an alumni and we always keep that connectivity. We’re looking for pathways back and forth all the time to keep women engaged,” says Meingast.

As leaders—women and men—we have been encouraged to ‘lean in’ and change the conversation from what can’t be done to what can. The conversation most needed about women in leadership

today is how to help the best leaders, a growing number of whom are women, navigate the paths to leadership and, at the same time, unlock the means for organizations to get the best out of all people. 

Donna Howes, CHRP, is principal of Humanity at Work, a coaching and organization development firm devoted to creating proud and productive workplaces.

“Changing attitudes requires challenging the process and the status quo.”

- 1 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2013.pdf
- 2 Donna Burnett Vachon, Carrie Lavis, May 2013

Links

[About Lean In](http://leanin.org/about/)

<http://leanin.org/about/>

[Catalyst Censuses 2013: Financial Post 500 Women Board Directors](#)

<http://bit.ly/1AP4vNy>

[Centered leadership: How talented women thrive](#)

<http://bit.ly/1s2MKLX>

[Global Gender Gap Report - World Economic Forum 2013](#)

<http://bit.ly/Zma6iJ>

[Women in Leadership: Perceptions and Priorities for Change](#)

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Millennial Women the (New) Way:

Leading

Defining Leadership on Their Own Terms

By **Bernadette Smith**

WORKPLACE DYNAMICS ARE changing. Millennials have been in the workforce for about 10 years and continue to enter at a rapid rate. Through sheer volume, their values and attitudes have the power to create a shift in culture that has not been seen since the Baby Boomer era.

Generation Confidence

What they have—even with little work experience—is the confidence to contribute innovative ideas about how we should work, leaving even the most experienced managers scratching their heads about how to ‘work’ them into the workplace.

This confidence extends across gender. Millennial women will rewrite the rules of management as they leave outdated gender perceptions behind, stepping up into leadership roles earned through demonstrated talent and achievements.

This shift is already well under way as Millennials are the fastest growing segment in the Canadian workforce. By 2015, they will outnumber Baby Boomers in the workplace. eldest of the Millennial generation are in their early 30s and are already rising into leadership positions.

Goal, Team and Achievement-Oriented

Their management style is a reflection of their personalities and their values, beliefs and attitudes formed from their life experiences to date. Females in this generation are goal, team and achievement-oriented, as well as confident and ambitious. They strive to make a meaningful difference

in the workplace and have been bred to believe that they are special and can accomplish anything they want in life. As a result, these women have a lot to contribute to the workplace and will not be afraid to challenge traditional leadership practices that are no longer relevant.

“These women have grown up with **diversity as the norm**”

This generational influence has prepared Millennial women to break through barriers—perceived and actual—in the workplace and to gain a sense of equality. They have been raised to be more confident and believe in themselves. Participation in traditionally male-dominated sports has demonstrated from an early age that girls can do anything that boys do.

Diversity as the Norm

These women have grown up with diversity as the norm, so they don’t feel at a disadvantage, unlike their predecessors. They’ve been inspired by successful female role models that have broken through the glass ceiling and helped pave the way for their younger protégés. Many obstacles that have held other generations of women back have been removed, setting Millennial women up for leadership success if

Five Core Millennial Values

Collaboration: ‘We’re in This Together’

Team collaboration leverages different talents and enables creative solutions to tough problems. There’s less reliance on hierarchy as each team member is encouraged to contribute equally.

Flexibility: Openness to How the Job Gets Done

Enables individuals to optimize their own productivity in managing schedules and timelines as to how and when the work gets done outside of the traditional 9-to-5 workday.

Transparency: Being ‘In the Know’

Information is shared with anyone who needs to know, to give them an opportunity to contribute ideas to the solution or action.

Casual: Just Be Yourself

The work style is less formal in the way that people interact with one another—promotes equality among team members.

Balanced: Successful at Life as a Whole

Work and life are not balanced, but integrated. Flexible work arrangements create a more fulfilling approach to life.

they choose this path. These life experiences have given women a new sense of equality and have shaped their approach to work and career.

Millennial women leaders are not afraid to shake up traditional practices in the workplace, especially if they are outdated. In their book, *Manager 3.0*, Brad Karsh and Courtney Templin identify five core values that Millennials live by and are instilling in the workplace that challenge how things have been done in the past.

These young leaders are building a more rewarding work environment by creating a more collaborative, flexible, transparent, casual and balanced culture. Work isn't just work to them—it is an extension of themselves. These values represent the guiding principles used in managing work and decision-making that lead to building great teams and solid relationships

Redefining Leadership and Ladders

This trend of change will impact existing cultures and transform the way people work. It will also create friction among the different generations that are comfortable with a hierarchical management style. It will not be an easy transition for some. Living these values will set this generation of female leaders apart from their more traditional colleagues; it will also help forge more forward thinking business futures.

Millennial women that choose a leadership path will do so on their own terms. This generation of women are goal-oriented and have the potential to be

high-achievers. For many though, it is no longer just about climbing the corporate ladder in hopes of achieving happiness through accomplishment and earning more money.

“It is no longer just about climbing the corporate ladder”

Women of this generation want to do meaningful work, make a difference and be recognized for their achievements. This may mean transforming the career ladder, where the only way is up, into career scaffolding that enables them to move sideways into more meaningful or interesting work. Then, depending on their stage in life, they may choose to take a step down to reduce their level of responsibility to focus on other important things in life.

Supporting Tomorrow's Leaders Today

Those of us in leadership positions and in the HR profession need to support and enable young, high-achieving women to move up in organizations. They are our

future leaders and have a lot to offer. We need to recognize that, like it or not, the culture of many workplaces will be transformed by this influential up-and-coming generation of leaders. It's important that we provide training to develop essential management skills that will set them up for career success early in their journey. This will also provide the tools to help them evolve their organizational cultures effectively to the more dynamic environment necessary to engage their peers while respecting traditional practices.

Millennial women on the leadership path are now in a position of strength. They have earned their position as equal contributors among their peers through their achievements and will pursue leadership roles with confidence if they so choose. They are wired to make a difference in their organizations and will be driven by their core values to create a more rewarding work environment for all involved.

Make no mistake, Millennial women will rewrite the rules of management and we will all benefit from the fresh dynamic that they will bring to leadership. Achieving happiness through a fulfilling career is no longer an endpoint. In the future-present, women will be able to achieve that at every point along their journey by choice. **P**

Bernadette Smith is VP, talent management solutions with the Canadian Management Centre (www.cmcoutperform.com).



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Women's Leadership Imperative: Speak Up, Stand Out and Succeed

By **Isabelle St-Jean**

"The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems." —Mohandas Gandhi

WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THAT THE MAJORITY OF TOP TIER positions within corporations are still male-dominated, seeing change can be difficult—even discouraging. However, it is not a matter of how far women have come, but how much further we can go that defines the true scope and potential of women in leadership.

Speak Up to Stand Out

As stated by Judith Humphrey, founder and chief creative officer of The Humphrey Group, in a recent interview, women's progress up the corporate ladder seems to have come to a standstill. Conversely, Humphrey emphasizes, it is more important now than ever for women to reach these leadership roles to help bring about real transformation.

Humphrey's most recent book, *Taking the Stage: How Women Can Speak Up, Stand Out and Succeed*, is crafted with this paradox in mind to encourage women to "find their own strong voices and seize new opportunities to lead." Over the past 25 years, The Humphrey Group has helped countless leaders hone their presentation skills and enabled tens of thousands of women to shift beyond their perceived limitations and free their authentic leadership voice.

Overcome the Doubts of a Lifetime

Exploring the root cause of what holds many capable women back from stepping into leadership roles, Humphrey notes that the latest office politics are just the tip of a much deeper iceberg. "We carry the seeds of our upbringing through our whole life," she notes.

If we are not wholeheartedly encouraged and taught to develop and believe in our strengths as children, we are likely to keep seeking approval of others in adulthood. Similarly, if we were discouraged from particular behaviours or pursuits as children, that impact too carries over to present day. Moreover, if define ourselves through the approval of others, we lose touch with our authentic self, our inner True North. That in turn breeds the ground for self-doubt to make itself at home in the decorum of our minds.

Humphrey's accomplishments are many, including being awarded the 2012 YWCA's prestigious Woman of Distinction award for Entrepreneurship. However, her greatest achievement is ongoing—enabling women and men to connect with their inner source of confidence, to validate themselves and free up their self-expression. As we learn to trust our insights and voice our ideas, we grow in our capacity to form larger visions that can fuel an expansive leadership spirit.

Be A Visionary Change Agent

In her keynote address at the 2011 Women's Leadership conference in Australia, Linda Dunkel, former president and CEO of Interactions Associates, spoke engagingly about the new imperative for women to lead purposefully as visionary change agents embracing a new mindset.

Pondering the question of how real change could come about, Dunkel pointed out that the expansive opportunities and demands of globalization on corporations have already created changes within organizational hierarchies and will continue to do so for the next few decades. With a greater pool of opportunity, coupled with continued demands for diversity and innovation, women will have access to the upper echelons of large companies in greater numbers; they will also be better able to stir the corporate world towards a more inclusive, expansive vision whose time has come.

Four Tenets of the Triple Bottom Line

Centring her talk on the concept of conscious capitalism, Dunkel asserted that the world is in desperate need of a model of doing business that includes the triple bottom line—people, profit and planet. She grounds this re-orientation of business upon four primary tenets:

- A higher purpose that goes beyond making money;
- Primary clients and shareholders aligned and in sync with that purpose;
- Conscious leadership; and
- A conscious culture based on trust, caring, compassion, respect and authenticity.

This type of culture—rooted in the new economy of meaning, wherein consumers are discerning and buy what matches their values—is not modelled on competition and has little precedent in the traditional patriarchy of the workplace. Rather, this type of culture is based on fostering creativity, innovation, and synergetic collaboration while honouring what are traditionally considered female strengths.

A Broader Bottom Line

This model of leading business, beyond the single bottom line, is a natural fit for women because of how they tend to differ from men on the psychology of money. Raised as bread-winners, men have traditionally been oriented towards "more is better" in order to satisfy their family's needs. In contrast, more women tend to associate earning money or creating profits with a specific purpose in mind; it's a means to an end.

The psychology of the profit-only-driven business unfortunately is far more pathological as outlined by books such as *The Corporation*. As men have traditionally dominated the upper echelons of the corporate hierarchy, much of this pathology has been attributed to them, fairly or not—after all, women in leadership also need to answer to the bottom line.

It is the breadth of that bottom line that makes the difference. Emotional intelligence not only counts, it turns a profit.

Firms of Endearment

When financial profits are not the sole priority, it turns out that companies with humanistic profiles outperform the S&P (Standard and Poor's 500) index by nine to one over 10 years. In *Firms of Endearment*, author Raj Sisodia presents convincing data that shows companies achieve a better financial bottom line when they are focused on both social and financial outcomes while being dedicated to creating an engaging, wholesome work environment.

Already redefining leadership, women are uniquely positioned to bring about the changes necessary for our corporations to embrace a more ethical compass while being in service to all its stakeholders as well as our host—planet Earth.

Look to Contrast vs. Conflict

In a workplace setting, women are also more likely to demonstrate the strengths that come about from what presenter/author Shawn Achor refers to in *Before Happiness* as the triangle of intelligences: IQ, EQ and social intelligence. Less invested in presenting a business 'front', women more often opt for transparency in the ways they relate and go about producing results.

As we work towards the needed changes, we are called to rise above, and move beyond, gender differences. While refraining from heading down stereotype alley, let us remember the roots of those gender contrasts. A wide spectrum of research has consistently shown that females:

- display an early preference for cooperation over competition in play;
- naturally have a willingness to be team players,
- are good at keeping their egos in check; and
- tend to adapt well to complex realities.

We Need to Disagree (Sometimes)

In a more conscious workplace culture, men and women can learn to express themselves fully, even, and perhaps especially, in disagreement. Without the ability to speak openly much is lost: from the valid point overlooked to the sparks of joy that can make a work environment contagious with creative energy.

As author Susan Scott affirms in *Fierce Conversations*, human relations require both appreciation and confrontations. This is where women of all generations are wise to further develop the art of speaking up and trusting their own ideas, guts and wisdom.

Undeniably, women can better unleash their self-expression and speak with clarity and impact as formidable change agents. After all, that is an opportunity we all share—to lead the way as 'humane' beings and people leaders of a better world at work and play for generations to come. 

Professional speaker, author, life and business coach, Isabelle St-Jean, RSW, PCC brings to her clients a decade of experience in leading, educating and providing practical solutions to major work/life challenges and transitions. (inspiredmomentum.com).



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The “Lean In” Factor

By **Kristin Zehnder**, CHRP

Sally is a talented, ambitious and career-focused professional. Her achievements are considerable and she feels confident she will be the successful candidate for an upcoming promotion. During the interview, she is able to substantiate her qualifications and provide evidence as to why she would be the most suitable candidate.

When Sally doesn't get the promotion, she is left wondering why. She is provided with vague feedback implying she is not the best “fit” for the position, and can only conclude that her co-worker, Bob, has somehow achieved a better “fit.”

Disheartened, Sally either begins the process of searching for other opportunities, or worse, resigns herself to complacency within the confines of her current role.

According to Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook COO and author of *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*, this situation was not likely blatant gender discrimination, but rather the result of an unconscious bias of traditional male and female roles.

Of Heidi and Howard: What's In a Name?

Sandberg references the Harvard Business School case study of Heidi and Howard. The study is based on the real-life success story of entrepreneur, Heidi Roizen, and chronicles how she became a successful venture capitalist. Half the students in the study were given Heidi's story to read; the other half were given the exact same story with one key difference—Heidi's name was changed to Howard. The students were then asked to answer questions about their impressions of Heidi and Howard.

The results of the study showed that while both groups acknowledged Heidi and Howard for their achievements, Howard was clearly more likeable. He was the kind of person you wanted to work with and for. Heidi, on the other hand, was perceived to be selfish. Sandberg comments on the outcome of the study:

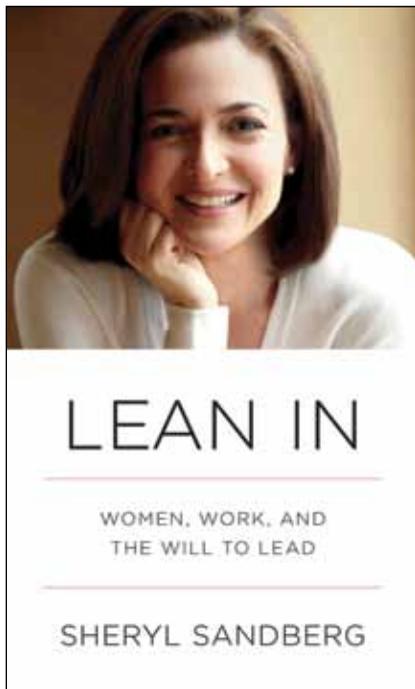
“This experiment supports what other research has already clearly shown: success and likability are positively correlated for men and negatively correlated for women. When a man is successful, he is liked by both men and women. When a woman is successful, people of both genders like her less.”

The theory behind this concept is based largely on stereotypes Sandberg notes that the traditional male stereotype—that of provider—is driven, decisive and assertive. In contrast, the female stereotype is nurturing, often the caregiver and dedicated to helping others.

According to Sandberg, “[Women] are aware that when a woman acts forcefully or competitively, she's deviating from expected behaviour. If a woman pushes to get the job done, if she's highly competent, if she focuses on results rather than pleasing others, she's acting like a man. And if she acts like a man, people dislike her. In response to this negative reaction, [women] temper [their] professional goals.”

For those women who have experienced this reaction as a result of being decisive and assertive, it can have a very lasting impact. I recall a meeting amongst colleagues where I was ‘jokingly’ referred to as bossy because I provided some much needed forward-thinking feedback. My reply was that “my doctor refers to this character trait as ‘determined’, not ‘bossy’.” Even though my usual “grab the

bull by the horns” demeanour remained intact, I walked away from that meeting with an unhealthy dose of self-doubt.



“Women not only want to meet expectations, but exceed them.”

Self-Doubt and Owning Success

Self-doubt pervades in far less obvious circumstances. Consider the job application process. Typical job postings provide detailed information about the job particulars, including required and preferred skills and experience. Observation of applicants shows that men are more likely to apply for positions even if they do not meet all the criteria. This “see what happens” approach helps initiate a foot in the

door which leads to increased opportunity.

Women, on the other hand, are less inclined to apply if they feel they do not meet all of the criteria. Women not only want to meet expectations, but exceed them. In this case, self-assurance and self-promotion in one's own ability is overpowered by self-doubt brought on by past experiences. Sandberg comments:

“Owning one's success is key to achieving more success. Professional advancement depends upon people believing that an employee is contributing to good results. Men can comfortably claim credit for what

they do as long as they don't veer into arrogance. For women, taking credit comes at a real social and professional cost. In fact, a woman who explains why she is qualified or mentions previous successes in a job interview can lower her chances of getting hired."

Once you begin to realize the effect of the unconscious gender bias, it creates a conundrum for women wanting to advance their careers—not unlike the ridicule many men have endured entering the stereotypically female nursing profession, or HR for that matter.

Learn to Love Leaning In

How then do women advance their careers without being labeled as the proverbial "B" of the office? As per the title of her book, Sandberg suggests leaning in. Far too often women of all generations are hesitant to sit at the table, raise their hand, or render their opinion. Without being brash or overly aggressive, it is critical that women fully engage in discussions and foster a culture of inclusivity. Physical presence at the table, leaning in to show interest and connection, are all components to subtly demonstrate equality in the boardroom and meetings.

"success and likeability are positively correlated for men and negatively correlated for women."

Going back to the Sally and Bob scenario, Sally didn't do anything wrong and her company didn't do anything blatantly inappropriate or unlawful. When presented with two equally qualified candidates for one position, you have a 50/50 chance of being selected as the successful candidate. The question here is could Sally have done anything differently to increase her opportunity?

Sandberg looks at how to influence those opportunities by being conscious of hidden gender bias and adaptable to alternative approaches when engaging on a professional level. Her "think personally, act communally" approach to business promotes this concept.

At the end of the day, gender has little to do with work. Of far more importance are the unique contributions we offer as individuals and our learning how to present these contributions in ways which will be well-received.

Lean in the next time you're given the chance and see the difference. 

Kristin Zehnder, CHRP is director of human resources for Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa.



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Changing the Mind Space of the Workplace



By **Pam Paquet**

While the HR world focuses on benefits, policies, programs and compensation, the goal is to treat employees well and meet their living needs to improve success within the workplace.

Given the emphasis on empathy and people skills, is it any surprise that women are predominant in HR? Case in point, the membership of our Human Resources Management Association (HRMA) is over 70 per cent female.

The numbers speak for themselves, but do they also infer women are better for HR than men? Of course not. Beliefs like these reinforce stereotypes and pigeon-hole by gender for particular tasks, roles and jobs.

Stepping Up From Stereotypes

Unfortunately, they are historically engrained in the workplace. Consider the “men at work” philosophy that has been present since industrial times and the historical male hierarchies of business. Times have changed. On paper, women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities. There is even legislation in place to address bullying and all forms of workplace harassment.

Over the decades, women have been shifting their talents, expertise and experience from their well-run homes and families and bringing them into the workplace, bringing co-ordination, prioritization and organization and nurturing to businesses large and small.

From the surge of women into the workforce during WWII to the growth of professional opportunities alongside Human Rights legislation in the 1970s to the proliferation of technologies and new careers with no adherence to gender—the equity framework has evolved.

Reframing the Big Picture

However, it is only a framework; the space within is the opportunity available for every organization to create its own big picture.

It is one thing to challenge these assumptions in challenging times, it is another to shift the mind space of the workplace on an ongoing basis. Most obviously, if efficiencies and productivity are to be maximized, it is necessary to go past gender and focus on differentiators indicative of leadership, innovation, engagement and motivation.

Purdys Breaks the Mold

To achieve that mind space, some companies and HR leaders are doing more than just dealing with gender models. Carmen Grant, VP of human resources and chocolate aficionado with Purdys Chocolatier, described the stir she created over 10 years ago; at the time, Purdys was even more predominantly women-dominant and Grant hired the first man in HR.

Grant reports that while women still far outnumber the men at Purdys retail stores (80-85 per cent) and in the factory (65 per cent), five out of eight at the executive table are men. She describes a shift from the traditional part-time female worker bringing in a bit more for the household to a new, full-time female focus on financial independence and career growth.

“Non-traditional is becoming the new traditional.”

Some Assertiveness Required

She sees women showing up more and more with a confidence in their ability and learned skills to push past the “old boys club.” In her HR role, Grant feels a certain level of assertiveness is needed to show that the old ways can not stand—and more personally, Grant will not allow it.

Non-traditional is becoming the new traditional. Grant herself comes from a home where her husband cooks and she is more focused on building things and manual tasks; both of them follow their passions rather than gender stereotypes. She relates this to the mind space of the workplace where we should ask, “Does it have to be a man to do this task?”

Learning 'Lean' to Lead

Purdys fosters an openness to people taking on new challenges, outside of the gender stereotype. Grant provides a great example of her own professional growth. She had a desire to learn the Lean process, requested the challenge, took it on and became Lean Sigma Six Canada certified.

Moreover, Grant had the opportunity to go to Japan and witness it firsthand so implementation would be successful. She stresses how learning and opportunity can benefit confidence, ability and drive.

Most importantly, she recommends more organizations make the shift to fresh mind space beginning at the hiring process. Nowadays, people can be anything they want without barriers due to gender, age, culture or other obvious characteristic.

An Abundance of -isms to Overcome

Unfortunately, a triumph over gender issues may unearth other latent or blatant differentiators subject to judgement and assumptions. Take for example, different generations. Finger pointing between generations is alive and well, but it is not as simple and straight forward as "he" versus "she" as it involves four generations (or even five in family based businesses) duking it out to be "right" and get things done "my generation's way."

Another differentiator subject to judgement and even full blown stereotyping is technology. The mindset around comfort level and appropriate usage amounts can be as different as day and night. The younger people need, love and could not live without technology, while older people (except the youngers X's)

think technology is overused, reduces personal interaction and communication and is more trouble than it's worth to learn (much less master).

Dig a little deeper into characteristics that are not so physically obvious and socioeconomic status and birth order can be added to the list of generalities that hinder the evolution of the mind space.

Add in the judgement of well to do (the haves) as opposed to the lower earning families (the have nots) and the mind space is often muddled further—all despite the Canadian Labour Standards and HR recruiting practices having emerged and evolved to clarify the concept of equal opportunity.

From C Suites to Front Lines

Regardless of the existing challenges, gone are the days when certain professions and business sectors were relegated to one specific gender. From C suites to heads of state and laboratories to front lines, women have been redefining leadership and opportunities for some time now.

By simply being open to diversity of all kinds, an organization's comfort zone expands—and a perspective shift occurs that creates the mind space needed to allow innovation and opportunity to flourish. **P**

Pam Paquet, MEd is a master level facilitator and principal of Pam Paquet and Associates (www.thepossibilities.ca). Speaking internationally, she is an instructor with BCIT and certified with the Canadian Counselling Association.



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Social Media: A Woman's Touch Required?

By **Andrew Woods**

WITHOUT A DOUBT, WE LIVE IN AN ERA OF UNPARALLELED communicative potential. Moreover, as our technologies continue to evolve, all prior preconceptions of 'boys and their toys' have been firmly put out the window. This holds particularly true online where women have more openly explored their digital options and embraced the realms of social media.

Women Lead the Social World

As pointed out by Facebook's COO Sheryl Sandberg, "The social world is led by women." Traditionally depicted as the more social of the sexes, perhaps it is unsurprising women have taken the pole position in social media.

Case in point, female Facebookers have eight per cent more friends. More applicable to the medium's collaborative potential, females also represent 62 per cent of the network's sharing. Another statistic from Porter Novelli shows that 65 per cent of women access social media once a week compared to 51 per cent of men.

Moreover, eight of the 10 Twitter users with over 10 million followers are women according to recent Park Associates Research. So, while Malcolm Gladwell might very well be correct in stating that 500 Facebook friends does not mean you have five close friends, these kinds of numbers are telling. In terms of interest,

reach and potential impact, the proverbial 'woman's touch' is changing the online world in which we live.

He Said vs. She Said

A recent U.K. article in *The Guardian* explored the possibility that the reason social media is such a natural domain for women boils down to four basic differences in communication styles between the sexes.

Report-talk vs. Rapport-talk—Communication for men is an accounting of fact, while women use communication to build rapport.

Voice-male vs. Voice-female—While men prefer to begin with the bottom line, women prefer more context before settling on the brass tack talk of the bottom line.

Hint vs Literal—Women make more use of subtle communication skills, while men tend to be more direct.

Global vs Compartmental—Women think globally, connecting one conversation forward into the next while men tend to compartmentalize conversations, discussing specific topics without connections.

How do these differences translate into social media? Put simply, women enjoy the community participation, sharing of information and online conversation that much more than their male counterparts.

"The social world is led by women."

However, as prior PeopleTalk articles and a wealth of ongoing observation have pointed out, social media—still in its relative infancy—is not without flaws.

Fewer 'Real Life' Friends?

We may “friend” more people on Facebook, but we may have fewer real friends. That’s the conclusion made by Matthew Brashears, a Cornell University sociologist who surveyed more than 2,000 adults from a national database and found that from 1985 to 2010 the number of truly close friends people cited has dropped—even though we’re socializing as much as ever.

The rise of social media promised to connect us together, to unite us in sharing our personal and business lives through Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Foursquare, and more. However, social media’s effects are not always that social. It poses a larger question. Are we losing the ability to communicate face-to-face and form deeper business and personal friendships?

Nurturing Networks to Advantage

Not necessarily so, according to Vancouver-based social media consultant Monica Hamburg. When asked if social media was reducing the human touch in our personal and business lives, she looks to the bigger picture.

“It’s always challenging to find the time to meet businesses contacts and friends, but that is an issue of limited time, not the medium of social media,” Hamburg says. “On the whole, we haven’t sacrificed all that much—and we have gained tremendous potential efficiencies and an unprecedented ability to make

connections and stay in contact.”

Social media strategist Helen Nowika penned a much-discussed piece on the topic, *Men are from Foursquare, Women are from Facebook*, that goes to the heart of both the matter and the divide around the purpose of social media. In short, “women are using social channels to reinforce existing social connections and interact with friends and family, while men are primarily interested in social media as new ‘tool’ and means of displaying status.

For me it boils down to something more universal—appreciation. Social media makes showing gratitude easier than ever. If you appreciate someone’s company and time you can make an effort to demonstrate that to them, in short or long form. Social media (and technology, in general) makes that easier to do than ever.

Moreover, it represents the extent of communicative freedoms, which we often forget are not quite so universal. So rather than feeling technology is making us lose our personal touch, perhaps it shows us who is willing to go that extra distance to stay in touch, say thanks or simply pass congratulations.

For the many negatives attributed to the technologies we wield, it is important to keep in mind that what we do with them is what matters most. Social media will only continue to transform in coming years and how that impacts the workplace is a question to be resolved by all of us—most likely with women leading the way. **P**

Andrew Woods, MBA is a professional speaker, trainer and author of *BOOM! Engaging and inspiring employees across cultures*.

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CCHRA Releases CHRP Competency Framework

By **Kelly Mills**

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF HUMAN Resources Associations (CCHRA) recently released its 2014 CHRP Competency Framework, providing employers and the public with a realistic and detailed outline of the skills, knowledge and professional conduct they can expect from an individual with the professional CHRP (Certified Human Resources Professional) designation. The full CHRP Competency Framework document can be found at www.chrp.ca.

“As organizations compete for success in an ever-changing environment, they are looking to human resources professionals to help them effectively manage talent,” said Cheryl Newcombe, chair of CCHRA. “The CHRP Competency Framework provides employers and the public with a summary of the core competencies of an individual with the CHRP professional designation.”

Framework Builds Upon PPA

The CHRP Competency Framework details the pathway to the CHRP designation. It is built upon the results of the evidence-based process undertaken in the 2013 Professional Practice Analysis (PPA.) Conducted by a third-party research firm (Castle Worldwide), the 2013 PPA surveyed or interviewed more than 1,000 HR experts and professionals from across the country about their workplace tasks. The 2013 PPA describes the body of knowledge that HR professionals were actually using at the time of the survey to accomplish their work.

The results from the 2013 PPA indicated that more HR professionals in Canada are using strategic planning and financial knowledge in their jobs. In response to this shift towards greater use of strategic and financial knowledge, CCHRA re-organized the manner of describing the HR body of knowledge, adding strategy and financial management to the previous seven functional knowledge areas.

Nine Functional Knowledge Areas

The CHRP Competency Framework outlines 44 professional competencies

organized into nine functional areas of knowledge that candidates must know to earn their certification. The framework also outlines five enabling competencies that complete the professional’s skill set. It also specifies the proficiency level at which each competency is to be demonstrated and how it will be assessed. The competencies and proficiency levels detailed in the Framework, represent the minimum requirements to meet CHRP certification.

Based on a dual-competency model, the 2014 CHRP Competency Framework encompasses the technical and general skills, abilities and knowledge necessary to effectively practice human resources. It establishes nine functional areas of knowledge in the HR field, including two expanded areas of expertise:

- Strategy
- Professional Practice
- Engagement
- Workforce Planning and Talent Management
- Employee and Labour Relations
- Total Rewards
- Learning and Development
- Health, Wellness, and Safe Workplace
- Human Resources Metrics, Reporting and Financial Management.

All HR professionals seeking the CHRP designation must demonstrate their proficiency in these competencies by writing the CCHRA’s National Knowledge Exam (NKE) and demonstrating three years of professional experience in HR. While the NKE is currently held twice a year in June and November, the revised competencies will be assessed for the first time on the June 2015 exam.

Five Enabling Competencies

In addition, and as part of the dual-competency model, the CHRP Competency Framework also outlines five enabling competencies that complete the CHRP professional’s skill set. These enabling competencies are not tested in an exam, but rather are demonstrated by those

seeking the CHRP in an assessment of experience. The five enabling competencies necessary for many professionals, including those in HR, are:

- Strategic and Systems Thinking
- Professional and Ethical Practice
- Critical Problem-solving and Decision-making
- Change Management and Cultural Transformation
- Communication, Conflict Resolution and Relationship Management.

Framework Captures CHRP Value

“For those with the CHRP designation, the CHRP Competency Framework is a valuable tool to describe the details of their designation to employers,” said Newcombe. “Communicating the rigour of our designation helps inform all audiences, especially business leaders, of the details of our designation and the value and service that individuals with a CHRP can bring to an organization.”

“As the needs of organizations change and the profession evolves and adapts in response, we will continue to evaluate and elevate the CHRP designation,” added Newcombe. “This is critical to ensuring Canadian HR professionals continue to provide the best possible service to their employers and the public.”

In addition to helping employers and the public better understand the value of CHRPs and define expectations, the CHRP Competency Framework will be useful to professors and instructors developing post-secondary course curriculum and HR profession-specific programs, as well as for those interested in pursuing an HR career and earning the CHRP designation.

Those currently pursuing the CHRP will be informed by their provincial member associations of any changes to the certification process that may affect them or may make contact with their association at any time for further details.

For more information about the CHRP Competency Framework, please contact Doug Smith at CCHRA, d.smith@cchra-ccarh.ca. 

Hollow Shuffles vs Constructive Dismissal

By **Graeme McFarlane**

EMLOYERS MUST BE CAREFUL WHEN implementing reorganizations. This holds particularly true when it comes to transferring managers into new roles. If not done properly, the company may face significant liability for constructive dismissal.

Jodoin v. Nissan Canada Inc.

In the decision of *Jodoin v. Nissan Canada Inc.*, the court was faced with a situation where the company had unilaterally moved a district sales manager into a newly created position of senior manager of the vehicle participation program. The employee kept the same pay, but had no reports and no program budget. Furthermore, the company advised the employee that he would have to leave his office and move to a cubicle.

After receiving news of this transfer, the employee sought information about the new position. In particular, he requested a job description and an overall understanding of how the company sought to integrate his skill set into the company's objectives for both the short and long term. He also requested that he keep an office. The company did not respond in a meaningful way, and instead provided him with vague communications about his new job. Approximately two weeks after learning about the transfer, his replacement arrived, displacing him from his office to a cubicle.

What Constitutes Constructive Dismissal?

A month after his replacement arrived, the employee wrote to the company's president and advised him that in the employee's view, he had been constructively dismissed. The president did not respond and nor did any of the other managers who had been copied on the initial correspondence.

However, the company's director of human resources did respond. She denied that the employee had been constructively dismissed and stated that the company

"was not satisfied with [his] performance in [his] previous role and believed that this reassignment would provide [him] with the opportunity to take advantage of [his] core strengths." The letter ended with the comment that there was no plan to exit the employee from the organization and that this was not a constructive dismissal since his pay and benefits had not been changed. The employee's claim for severance was denied.

"with a bit more planning this outcome could have been avoided"

The employee stayed on for approximately one more month before he resigned. He then brought an action for constructive dismissal. The court agreed and awarded him \$102,198 in damages which represented lost remuneration for the period of employment that followed his resignation.

Beware Altering Essential Terms of Employment

The judge in this case applied the test as set out by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Farber v. Royal Trust*, 1997 CanLII 387 where she considered "whether the unilateral changes imposed by the employer substantially altered the essential terms of the employee's contract of employment," based on the perception of "a reasonable person in the same situation as the employee."

Based on the facts of this case, she decided that the continuation of salary and benefits was not enough given the other changes. Indeed, that preservation was the only essential element that was

maintained. The title of "senior manager of VPP" was a hollow title as the employee had nothing to manage. The court held that an objective perception would be that the employee had been essentially demoted. He was moved out of his office, held no budget, managed no employees and had no job description.

The court further examined whether the employee had failed to mitigate his damages by resigning rather than accepting the modified position. It held that he was not obliged to stay with the company given the fundamental nature of the reduction in responsibility and status.

Care Essential to Internal Changes

This case is important to note because it illustrates the care an employer must take when making internal changes to its managerial structure. While the employer does have the right to arrange its business operations as it sees fit, it must tread carefully so as not to attract potential liability for constructive dismissal. In this case, it is clear that the employer attempted to avoid this liability by keeping the employee's salary and benefits the same. However, it so diminished the employee's role that the court concluded (rightly in my view) that the restructuring was a sham and the role illusory.

In hindsight, with a bit more planning this outcome could have been avoided. Had the alternate position provided a platform where the company could have shown that he did not suffer an embarrassing situation, the employee would have likely been found to have caused his own damage by resigning.

A "real" job would have at least protected the company in terms of a mitigation defence. Even the provision of an office at the start would have greatly assisted. **PD**

Graeme McFarlane is a partner at Roper Greyell LLP, a firm focused on partnering with companies to find solutions to workplace legal issues.



Women in the Workplace: Then, Now and Tomorrow

By **Jock Finlayson**

THE GROWING ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE workforce and the broader economy arguably represents the most consequential socio-economic development of the past 50 years.

Women Drive Real GDP

As more women have entered the formal labour market, the productive capacity of the Canadian economy has been augmented and average household incomes have risen. Indeed, increased “labour input”—more people working—has been the principal factor pushing up real GDP in Canada since the 1970s. Women account for the bulk of that increase.

Today in Canada, women comprise approximately 48 per cent of the labour force, up slightly from 46 per cent in 1999, but significantly higher than their 37 per cent share back in the mid-1970s. Men are still more likely to be employed, but the male/female labour force participation gap has narrowed over time. Soon, more than half of all the jobs in the country are likely to be held by women.

Among women aged 15 and over, approximately six in 10 were employed in 2013; in 1976, the comparable figure was just 42 per cent. The population aging that is starting to bear down on overall labour force participation rates is affecting both genders, so the proportion of all women holding jobs will edge lower as the country becomes greyer. However, women’s contribution to the workforce will likely continue to increase over the next 10-20 years.

Women Still Clustered in Lower Third

Statistics Canada’s 2011 *National Household Survey* reports that women are most likely to be employed in three broadly defined occupational groups: sales and service occupations (27.1 per cent), business,

Top 15 Specific Occupations for Canadian Women (ranked by number of female employees, 2011)		
RANK	OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF EMPLOYED WOMEN
1	Retail salespersons	371,345
2	Administrative assistants	316,565
3	Nurses	270,425
4	Cashiers	260,190
5	Elementary school teachers	227,810
6	Administrative officers	201,320
7	Food counter attendants/ kitchen helpers	200,695
8	General office support workers	184,720
9	Early childhood education occupations	181,705
10	Nurse aides, orderlies, etc.	166,440
11	Retail/wholesale trade managers	151,605
12	Light duty cleaners	150,800
13	Receptionists	146,025
14	Food and beverage servers	142,400
15	Accounting and related clerks	131,160

Source: National Household Survey, 2011 Statistics Canada.

finance and administration (24.6 per cent) and education, law, and government/community services (16.8 per cent).

Despite gains in educational achievement, many working women are still

clustered in relatively low-paying occupations. This serves to dampen average compensation for female job-holders collectively; it also explains the continued male/female disparity in average hourly

pay. The top 15 specific occupations for women in Canada are listed in the attached chart. A significant number of these fall in the bottom third of all occupations ranked by hourly compensation; a number also lend themselves to part-time work.

Improving 'Human Capital' Faster Than Men

The impressive advances that women are making on the education front must be considered when assessing their employment and income prospects going forward.¹ Between 1991 and 2011, the proportion of employed women aged 25 to 34 holding a university degree jumped from 19 per cent to 40 per cent, compared to a more modest increase from 17 per cent to 27 per cent in the case of men.² In the language of economists, women are improving their 'human capital' considerably faster than men.

The trend of rising female educational attainment is set to continue, as women represent a growing fraction of both current university/college students and recent graduates in a range of disciplines

that often pave the way to high-paying jobs—including law, medicine, dentistry, architecture, business and finance.

“women are improving their ‘human capital’ considerably faster than men”

Women have registered smaller gains in engineering and computer-related fields, but here too they are making inroads. The data show that girls generally outperform boys in elementary and secondary school and this seems to be carrying over to the university and college level.

Skilled Trades, Open Opportunity

There are some areas of education and training where women still noticeably lag. One glaring example is the skilled trades.

These are among the occupations that offer pathways to good jobs and the kind of middle-class standard of living that increasingly seems to be out of reach for young adults who lack any type of post-secondary qualifications.

According to Statistics Canada, women make up just three to five per cent of enrolments in registered apprenticeship training programs in the construction, electrical, industrial/mechanical, metal fabricating and motor vehicle and heavy equipment trades. That's not good enough. Employers, educators and unions need to do more to encourage young women to consider skilled trades occupations and to create a supportive environment for those who choose to follow this route. **P**

Jock Finlayson is the executive vice-president of the Business Council of BC.

¹ For details, see Martin Turcotte, "Women and Education," *Statistics Canada*, December 2011.

² *Statistics Canada*, "Changes in the Occupational Profile of Young Men and Women in Canada," April 2014.

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Fiona Ho: 2014 HRMA Rising Star

Hired fresh from UBC's Sauder School of Business in 2011 with a specialization in HR, Fiona Ho swiftly became recognized as a highly personable, driven and effective HR generalist by Fortinet Technologies (Canada) Inc. in Burnaby. A few years on, Ho has defined her own path to success and was recently recognized with the 2014 HRMA Rising Star award.

What attracted you to HR originally, and what do you think of the career opportunities the profession yields?

Back in high school when I knew I wanted to pursue HR, it was because I wanted to work with people, a passion that I realized very early on can be achieved in many professions. I now think back to what drives me, and that is when I uncovered my true attraction to HR.

When we ask how someone's day is, the response is often related to whether they had a good day or a bad day at work. People spend a lot of time at the workplace and so much of what goes on there impacts our personal lives.

HR has the ability to facilitate a work environment where people are able to showcase their strengths and deliver beyond their potential. When this happens, the business moves forward and people are engaged. Being part of this is what I find most rewarding in HR.

In my opinion, the career opportunities the profession yields are exciting given how technology has advanced the various realms of HR, and streamlined many manual processes. It would be interesting to see how technology would continue to evolve and shift the HR profession so that more time and resources can be dedicated to the most important asset of a business—the people.

Who or what is your original and/or ongoing HR inspiration?

There are two phrases that I live by, both professionally and personally.

My VP has been instrumental in shaping who I am today as a HR professional. She once told me to “never stop speaking up” and it stuck. It is a delicate balance, knowing when to speak up and when to listen, and for her to share that with me reaffirmed my belief that I have what it takes to be an effective HR professional.

Another phrase that I live by was shared with me by someone I respect in the HR community: “You can have it all; just not all at once.” This is a daily reminder for me that a happy medium in life can be achieved but it does not all come at once but rather in stages. Balance needs to be maintained so you can focus on doing each thing well and be proud of what you have accomplished. As an emerging HR professional, it is natural to want to get involved with and learn everything. I often have to take a step back and remind myself that opportunities will present themselves. What's important is to focus on what is in front of me and do those things well.

What milestone or challenge has defined the past year for you in HR and what lies ahead?

One of the highlights in HR for me this year is leading Fortinet's HRIS platform upgrade. This has been a huge learning opportunity, having to simultaneously see the big picture and the minute details of the upgrade. Working with our vendor and the various regions and internal departments is not an easy task as there needs to be an in-depth understanding of every aspect of the system and how each piece of

data is used. It is a big undertaking as the HRIS impacts all 2,500+ employees at the company. Migration is set for this fall, and what lies ahead includes post-migration clean-up, training for the global HR team, and the implementation of new features next year.

What advice do you have to offer those who are seeking to better define the business worth of HR in their organizations?

It is about aligning HR's objectives with the organization's objectives to make sure the business is moving forward. Start with understanding how your role contributes to the organization and why you are doing what you are tasked to do. Secondly, understand the business by asking questions. Together, this will establish the common goal and HR will be on the same page, working towards what the business wants to achieve.

If you were not a Rising Star in the world of HR, what would you be doing?

I would be selling pies and coordinating weddings, both of which I currently do on the side. Sharing homemade pies started off as a hobby and people wanted to buy them so sales started to happen. It would be a dream to open up a pie shop and be able to share these pies with others. As for weddings, I have been involved in many family and friends' weddings, and through referrals I became a 'day-of' coordinator and landed my first clients this year. 

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