

Entrepreneurship Summit: The Future of Work is Flexible: Changing our Workplaces to Meet the Needs of our Workforce: Short Communication- Mona Andrews, Stay in the Game, USA

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Short Communication

Our current workforce has evolved significantly in the last several decades. However, our workplaces have remained stagnant, based on a society that no longer exists – one in which being a stay-at-home mom was the expectation for women. As Shelley Zalis explains, “The rules of work were written 100 years ago, for men and by men, because women simply were not in the workplace.” Our workplaces, in large part, still cater to men. They do not challenge biases or invest in mentorship or support that would welcome women and encourage them to pursue leadership roles; they still assume talent looks like a man. This status quo is not sustainable; we must evolve our workplaces to match our workforce.

Today’s organizations are failing women. According to the Mercer Report, we are actually moving backwards in trying to achieve gender equality in the workplace. Recent findings from the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report show that at our current rate of change, the economic gender gap will not close for another 170 years; that’s 52 years longer than the previous report projected. Reasons for this backslide include a gap in pay for women and persistently small numbers of women in senior leadership positions. Women represent more than half of our nation’s PhDs, business school applicants, college graduates, and valedictorians; yet there are more CEOs named James than women. If women equally participated in the global economy, they could generate additional GDP worth \$28 trillion by 2025. This year, LeanIn.org released the findings from their fourth annual study on the state of women in corporate America. In the four years of this study, women’s progress in the workplace is stalling.

At each corporate level, women fall further and further behind, despite women earning more bachelor’s degrees than men. Women hired to entry-level positions are 18% less likely than their male counterparts to be promoted to the next level.

Top-performing companies surveyed by this study were found to be promoting men and women to manager at comparable rates. If women were promoted at the same rate as men, the number of women in leadership roles would double across corporate America. The study concluded that meaningful change begins with treating gender diversity as a business priority: “The benefits of diversity are proven: new ideas, better results, and happier employees.”

Mona Andrews offers practical, proven solutions for affecting meaningful change in the outdated architecture of today’s workplaces. Her company Stay in the Game is a completely remote workforce, offering flexible employment opportunities designed to keep women and caregivers in the workforce. In this session, Ms. Andrews will address both how to effectively manage a remote workforce and the benefits a company can realize from offering employees the flexibility they need.

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