

Leveraging your gender network to create real change

OUR TOP FIVE EVENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2022



INTRODUCTION

According to a 2021 study¹ by McKinsey & Co. and LeanIn.org, about 35% of companies have added or expanded their support for Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) since the start of 2020 and many ERGs are now refreshing their purpose and programmes to consider:

- How to welcome in gender allies, at the same time as providing a trusted and safe place for women (cis and trans) and non-binary folks to connect
- How to be more inclusive, recognising everyone's varied experience.

If managed effectively, gender networks can amplify their impact through harnessing the collective intelligence in your organisations. As they evolve, we want to share our recommendations for programme events that will engage and support all participants, as well as ensuring that host organisations achieve the full potential of their gender ERG.

GENDER NETWORKS: A PLACE TO BELONG, PROGRESS AND SEED CHANGE

90% of Forbes Fortune 500 companies have ERGs, "have a solution to gender equality but aren't utilising it."² A Conference for Women study³ concludes that participants in women's networks and their events benefit from:

Increased financial outcomes; pay raises and promotions

- The likelihood of receiving a:
 - promotion doubled
 - 10%+ pay increase tripled.

Increased intellectual outcome; optimism, lower stress levels and a feeling of connection

- 71% of the attendees said that they "feel more connected to others" after attending.

Another study² found that 86% of respondents believed participating in their corporate women's ERGs benefitted them and their career. And 70% said their women's ERG had helped to create policy changes at work.

In 2020 the impact of a global pandemic has set back gender equality by a generation, yet we know that gender networks are a critical resource for closing the gender gap.

High value gender networks deliver value through:

Belonging

Creating a safe, high trust environment where shared experiences create connection, understanding and inclusion.

Progression

Enabling the progression and retention of key talent through leadership development initiatives including strategies to overcome stereotypes and bias in the workplace.

Seeding change

Evaluating the collective voice of women leaders, providing the insights to influence specific and impactful change in policy and culture for gender equity.

OUR 2022 GENDER NETWORKS EVENT RECOMMENDATIONS

For many businesses, retention and progression of under-represented talent remains a key priority and ERGs have a critical role to play. Targeted high impact events are at the heart of an effective network experience however, to attract, engage and energise participants, topics need to be highly relevant to our times.

Our top five event recommendations are guided by what women leaders cite as their priority needs for 2022. In partnership with you, we design and facilitate virtual or hybrid gender intelligent, bespoke events based on the needs of your network. Our recommendations:

1. #breakthebias

Feedback is where many experience the negative impact of gender bias, and it's also a valuable, yet under utilised, leadership development tool. Getting proactive about feedback sidesteps bias and step changes careers.

2. Be a gender ally

We're all biased and we can all be allies. Unpacking gender bias and learning the skills and mindset of an ally offers the practical tools needed to create positive change together.

3. Ethical influencing and political savvy with purpose

Authenticity and politics can go hand in hand. However, a fresh perspective on ethically influencing is needed for women leaders to leverage these skills to achieve purpose lead impact in organisations.

4. Thriving through change

Relentless change is the new norm. Applying the psychology of change leadership supports the well-being of self and other colleagues and prevents burnout.

5. Create your visibility plan

Overcome the blocks to becoming more visible. Leveraging your own personal brand amplifies the influence and impact you want to have.

Reference points

- 1 McKinsey & Company study; Women in the Workplace, 2021
- 2 Forbes.com article; 90% Of Fortune 500 Companies Already Have A Solution To Gender Equality But Aren't Utilizing It
- 3 HRB Review; Do Women's Networking Events Move The Needle On Equality?

Our insights underpin our Gender Equity Leadership programme that has engaged participants from 15 countries across the private and public sector. Participants enrolled in our four module programme accelerate their career progression through our online multimedia classroom, network and integrated executive coaching (individual and group) experience.

Our WDI Consulting gender equity programme is designed to address the challenges organisations face and advance a gender equal recovery. Clients return to us year on year because it leads to tangible business results.

The highly rated programme has been delivered to cohorts from 10-100. Programme results include: 90% of participants rating the programme as excellent, and 100% highly likely to recommend the programmes to others.

You can download our Insights report on "[Creating a gender equal recovery \[pdf\]](#)" where we summarise the latest research on addressing the gender gap and provide our response to the three key challenges we see organisations facing right now. We share data, challenges and our gender intelligent response to enable progression towards a gender balanced pipeline – a core part of our purpose at WDI.

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