

Conference 2017

Re-imagine Leadership for a World Unimagined

A TalentNomics-TiE Conference



RE-IMAGINE LEADERSHIP FOR A WORLD UNIMAGINED

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY ARVIND SUBRAMANIAN, CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISER TO GOI

- Credits his daughter with challenging and sensitizing him in his thinking about women's issues
- Believes the elephant in the room is patriarchy and its assigned and accepted social norms
- Asks how we can make a dent in this system and address the root of the problem
- Emphasizes the need for cultural reform, along with government efforts to improve gender-based parameters
- Believes that organizations like TalentNomics are helping to bring about much needed cultural change.



FIRST PANEL:

THE WORLD WE WANT: MILLENNIAL PERSPECTIVE

Shweta Anand Arora, Director, Education Alliance

Ritvik Lukose, Co-Founder & CEO of VAHURA - Legal & Governance
Recruitment Specialists

Romana Shaikh, Director, Training and Impact, Teach For India

Aditya Gupta, Co-Founder & CEO, People for Parity

Moderator: Ilma Hasan, Correspondent, India Today Tv & Aaj Tak

We need leaders to:

- Resist the pressure to mimic “masculine” leadership styles and stay true to themselves; feel comfortable about demonstrating “feminine” traits, like being collaborative, caring and inclusive. These help leaders to connect better and make for more successful leaders than established cold and uncaring attitude.
- Feel comfortable being vulnerable & sometimes making mistakes, rather than always needing to be in control and therefore less open to un-learn and re-learn in seeking creative solutions (“they are human, they should be human”)
- Provide personalized attention to team members to elicit their best output
- Change the narrative on the norms and expectations of leadership, starting at home with family and friends, and especially with children, our future leaders (“if we give them space, they will find ways to lead”)

Support teachers, who have powerful but neglected role in nurturing the next generation of leaders – by actively engaging with students. The teachers should of course always question their own biases as they guide the students.

SECOND PANEL:

SUCCEEDING AMIDST CONSTANT CHANGE: LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES IN SOUTH ASIA

Ann Florini, Professor, Singapore Management University,

Rajdeep Endow, MD, APAC, SapientRazorfish

Sanjay Kathuria, Lead Economist, The World Bank Group

Anita George, M.D, South Asia, CDPO

Moderator: Saurabh Srivastava, Leading Entrepreneur and Institution builder

In times of unpredictable geo-political shifts and high connectivity – when technology and big data seem the new oil – India and China are growing the fastest, with the advantage of a large working age population. The opportunities and dangers inherent in the new world order call for a different mode of leadership, and women are best equipped to provide it.



What should South Asian leaders do?

- Adapt and work collaboratively; Partnership and collaboration are the hope to harness the change. Women have the natural DNA⁺ for this
- Train young talent to move away from the old authoritarian model of leadership.
- Provide exposure across different realms of expertise, for example, business as well as public policy, because big problems cut across sectors, and leaders in government, business, and social sectors need to understand one another to connect the dots; it's no longer enough to train business leaders in just business, or government leaders in just public policy.
- Anticipate and aim to provide the educational needs of emerging leaders in the context of unprecedented global change
- Encourage purpose and motivation; passion is the new "vessel" for leaders, within which their particular skills and talents can flourish
- Given that creating "shared value" – connecting a company's economic success with social progress – is becoming increasingly mainstream, women leaders can use their natural advantages in acting responsibly and compassionately
- Address violence against women and how it impacts their ability to work far from home; seek answers beyond public legislation
- Value "ability to learn" over knowledge"
- Challenge and break down barriers with the help of technology.



THIRD PANEL: BREAKING BARRIERS COLLABORATIVELY

Anuranjita Kumar, MD & Chief Human Resources Officer, Citi, South Asia and Sandeep Kataria, Director Commercial, Vodafone
Lopa Shah, IFC and Sandeep Bapna, Country Director, India, Khan Academy,
Moderator: Anjali Bansal, former MD & Partner TPG Growth

As gender-based stereotypes, obligations, and expectations change, gender balance itself is slowly changing, both in the workforce and in the home. Each parent is becoming full service parents. Working parents are leveraging their personal and professional network to raise families and meet their work commitments. Marriages based on shared passions are found to be the most rewarding, creating a home environment that naturally helps all members to:

- Move away from traditional norms to models that can lead to greater fulfillment for all.
- Not be intimidated in the workforce, remaining mindful of one's value and contribution, rather than one's gender
- Find their inner drive and make choices without regrets, which is especially important for women, given their particular burden of social expectation.

Five requirements to break barriers and challenge stereotypes:

- A championing spouse, more than just a supportive spouse
- Passion and purpose, believing in what you do
- A gender-blind approach that does not limit itself to stereotypes within a gendered framework
- Great mentors
- The company of positive people.

TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Facilitated by Binoo Wadhwa, HR Consultant, Shilpa Bharadwaj, Executive Coach, Franz Henne, Senior Projects Officer, IMF

Topic 1: What would leadership look like in the new world?

The discussion on the first three tables focused on the importance of mentors in this changing world. Leaders aren't just born; they draw from their surroundings and evolve, and the guidance of mentors is crucial to help them learn how they can be bigger than the problem at hand.

Key points:

- The environment has changed to become more complex, volatile, and unpredictable
- The leadership skills required have also changed, calling for more complex and adaptive thinking
- The methods to develop leaders haven't changed much, with a continued reliance on conventional methods
- The majority of managers rise from on-the-job experience, training, and coaching/mentoring, all of which are still important, but leaders are not developing fast enough to meet the needs of the new environment
- This is no longer just a current leadership challenge but a pipeline challenge, in terms of how to grow leaders of tomorrow.



Topic 2: Breaking the barriers collaboratively

These three tables focused on defining workplace barriers for women. Barriers do not exist in a vacuum, they draw on larger social and cultural attitudes, and deconstructing them can show possible paths to their removal. Equal opportunity for all is an essential requirement to move in this direction.

Key points:

- Deconstruct the problems causing barriers we need to understand ourselves before we can break barriers
- Collaboration is the need of the hour, both between and across genders, to break the barriers
- Competition creates space for creativity, so provide more opportunities for competition
- Workplace surveys should be used as a routine tool to understand how women and men feel about their work environments, providing organizations the opportunity to understand and eradicate specific barriers
- Excellence also drives equality. One who is excellent in his/her field doesn't really need much but his/her excellence.™

Topic 3: Accelerating gender parity at corporate and policy level

The problem of unequal access to security, freedom, resources and opportunities persists, despite extensive evidence in the literature to support the economic case for gender parity in organizations and in countries. The earliest research demonstrated the significant multiplier effect of investment in female education on fertility rates, infant mortality rates, maternal mortality rates, and women's labour force participation and income. To address the problem efficiently, it is important that we measure the magnitude of the issue, set benchmarks, and track progress against targets.

How can we quicken the closing of the gender gap? The first place to look is the will to change in the leadership. Organizations should also review and implement the most appropriate policy design choices, including mentorship, quotas, targets, financial incentives, parental leave benefit, child care facilities, and taxation.

Key Points:

- Sponsorship rather than mentorship. Mentorship takes very long to build but sponsorship can be promoted more efficiently in an organisation. This will help women to move up the ladder faster.
- Organisations are reluctant to reveal the numbers of their female employees. What cannot be measured cannot be improved. This should be regularly audited to ensure equal opportunities for women in a corporate setup.
- Women fail to promote themselves and raise their hands for what they believe they deserve. Women need to be more confident to talk freely about important issues, such as suitable assignments, promotions, and harassment.

- A woman leader who is not being masculine but authentic and vulnerable is the leader we need now.
- It's important to develop leadership competencies that reflect feminine leadership competencies which are suitable for today's challenges.
- It's important to rate companies based on women's representation in its leadership.
- Dropout rates after maternity pose a major issue with working women and need to be addressed in a fundamental way. Policies can be developed to encourage these women to work flexibly, from home so that they are encouraged to continue.
- If they decide to drop out, they should enroll in higher studies or keep their skills updated in other ways so that re-entry to the workforce is easier.
- Performance appraisal should be based on the output delivered rather than the number of hours put in.



SHAHI EXPORTERS -- CASE STUDY BY ANANT AHUJA, HEAD OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

- Started by a woman 40+ years ago who did not want to just stay at home
- Now employs more than 100,000 women and has 56 factories
- 70% of the labor force is women and the organization supplies to all major retailers in the US and Europe
- It believes that empowering women not only helps them to improve their own quality of life and become leaders in society, but also makes them leaders at work, contributing to the company's overall productivity
- Two women supervisors shared their powerful stories of change before and after the PACE training that Shahi Exporters provides. Their stories of leading much more fulfilled lives proved that if organizations are serious about investing in empowering women, the women can overcome internal and external obstacles to become leaders at work, home and society.
- A research study of the organizational benefits gained by the PACE training program that empowers women was shared by the Head of Organization Development. It clearly showed very high returns on investment.



SUCCESS STORY OF A LEADER -- REEMA NANAVATY, DIRECTOR, SEWA

- This conversation session brought out the challenges faced by SEWA in empowering women from rural areas to become entrepreneurs, and the lessons that can be learnt by TalentNomics and the organized sector to expand women's leadership.
- When women showed their capacity to earn and the family enjoyed the benefits of working women in the household, the support for women entrepreneurs started growing. The resistant male members and the gram-panchayats slowly accepted and supported this movement. Economic empowerment is a powerful driver of change.
- SEWA, the largest organized cooperative of women entrepreneurs, follows a model of building leadership at all levels by empowering its members
- The new generation of entrepreneurs are using technology to build their business; recently SEWA collaborated with airbnb for rural stays and tourism.



INSIGHTS FROM EXPERIENCES OF RUBANA HAQ, MD OF MOHAMMADI GROUP

Rubana Haq is the MD of Mohammadi Group, a readymade garment exporter in Bangladesh. Her organization employs 4 million people, of which 3 million are women. Her foresight and commitment to developing women leaders is seen in the organization's policy to invest in the higher of education of its women employees. Employees who wish to pursue technical advancement are sent to AUW, for the course.

Rubana Haq spoke candidly about her struggles, and shared the following insights:

I have been in business for 20 years and still I am not able to shed my fears. She did not shy away from being vulnerable in a public place and talked courageously about the ups and downs in her life.

Life is management, and you choose how to manage. She understands the importance of harmony in life, and believes that "balance" alone is not a sufficient equilibrium, because life must have harmony.

Let's network tightly. Let's infect each other instead of making policies.

She also stated that equality is a social and corporate concept but to reach equality, one needs to interact, learn, and unlearn from each other. Effective policies are made through understanding the needs of the people the policies are made for.

Our interaction with her ended on a powerfully realistic note that also offered a great learning: "We all move incrementally and painfully: Yet We Are Moving."

RESOLUTIONS

This session, led by Saurabh Srivastava, Leading Entrepreneur & Institution Builder, Anjali Bansal, former MD and Partner, TPG Growth, & Geetika Dayal, ED, TiE Delhi- NCR, encouraged participants to share the personal resolutions they made to promote gender parity at work or at home. These included:

- Saurabh Srivastava: While evaluating entrepreneurs in the future, I will actively look out for women promoter/co-promoters, or women on Boards, and check on a company's policies for promoting gender parity
- Anjali Bansal: I'll devote time to helping TalentNomics India further its mission of creating an ecosystem to expand the number of women leaders
- Geetika Dayal: I'll focus more on encouraging and promoting women entrepreneurs
- Other participants: To mentor younger women, to find a mentor, to start a mentoring program in their organization.

