

Gender Leadership: How to Get People to Show up as Top Talent

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Adapted from the book: The Talent Advantage: How to Attract and Retain the Best and the Brightest by coauthors Dr. Alan Weiss and Dr. Nancy MacKay, published by Wiley.

Top talent: passion + competence + need = extraordinary results.

Business Case: research shows (e.g., Columbia University, McKinsey, Catalyst) that having more women in senior positions and on boards means more financial success. Women earn 57% of all bachelor's degrees (1/3 of all business graduate degrees).

However, according to Statistics Canada, we have gone from 27% to 22% of women in senior positions over the past 10 years.

Gender Leadership: all leaders must understand and adapt to gender differences to get people to show up as top talent.

Three Key Gender Differences:

- A. **Emotional Intelligence:** Women score higher: interpersonal relationships; social responsibility; and empathy. Men score higher: self-regard and stress tolerance.
- B. **Decision-making approach:** Women are more open, inclusive and collaborative.
- C. **Flexibility over promotion:** Women choose flexibility over promotion more often. Generation X and Y choose flexibility over promotion more often too.

Here are five key strategies to enhance your ability to get people to show up as top talent:

1. **Create a culture of accountability for results and behaviours.**
 - Focus on defining outcomes and creating a culture of accountability for results and behaviours.
 - Clarify "Who has the D?"
2. **Foster a more flexible work environment.**
 - Use a tailored approach to flexibility to get people to show up as top talent.
 - Study your competition and listen to your employees.
3. **Be transparent and educate.**
 - Educate all employees on the business case for gender, age, ethnic diversity.
 - Be transparent about all strategies.
4. **Establish formal mentoring and sponsorship programs.**
 - Identify top talent and be strategic about assigning mentors and sponsors to accelerate development and retain talent.
 - Men still get more promotions than women.
5. **Use Power Language.**
 - Brevity, Action Verbs, Stories, Relevant
 - Be inclusive, avoid swearing and inappropriate humour and comments.

