

COMMENT

Diversity in workplaces needs to stop being just a buzzword

Gender-based gaps in workplaces are receding, but more can get done

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Mentoring and mapping out a career progress for more women are a must for today's corporate leadership.

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In the evolving landscape of corporate leadership, one truth remains constant: diversity breeds success. Across industries, initiatives promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion have proven instrumental in empowering women and driving organizational growth and innovation.

From mentorship programs to unconscious bias training, these initiatives bring a culture of respect and inclusion and unlock the full potential of diverse perspectives in leadership positions.

Over the years, there has been a notable rise in women leadership roles across diverse industries. However, there is still progress to be made, particularly in achieving gender parity at the highest levels of corporate leadership.

Achieving leadership diversity

Mentorship programs provide invaluable guidance and support to all professionals, offering them opportunities for skill development, networking, and career advancement. These programs pair experienced leaders with emerging talents, facilitating knowledge transfer and professional growth.

Leadership and development initiatives tailored for women equip them with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to excel in leadership roles. These address specific challenges women face in the workplace and empower them to navigate complex organizational dynamics and achieve their full potential.

By raising awareness of conscious or unconscious biases, organizations can create an environment where everyone has equal opportunities for success. It is vital to cultivate a culture of respect and inclusion where everyone's voice is valued, and diversity of thought is welcome.

Empowering

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of diversity, we have adopted a 'Diversity 360' approach. This harnesses a diverse range of talents and perspectives within our workforce, aiming to dismantle barriers, challenge biases, and pave the way for continuous learning, growth, and leadership.

In my capacity, I offer aspiring professionals the following advice:

- Embrace your unique perspectives and strengths with confidence.
- Prioritize personal and professional growth, seeking out opportunities for advancement at every turn.
- Surround yourself with supportive mentors and allies who can offer invaluable guidance for your progress.
- Extend support to fellow female professionals through coaching, mentoring, and recommendations.

Diversity: a catalyst for success

Diversity at all levels catalyzes organizational success and innovation by embracing diverse perspectives, experiences, and approaches to problem-solving. When the teams include individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences, they can draw upon a broader range of insights and ideas and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

As businesses operate in increasingly diverse markets, having leaders who reflect the diversity of their customers can provide a competitive advantage and enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

A diverse workplace also necessitates an inclusive approach to management, which creates a sense of ownership among stakeholders and ensures that corporate initiatives align with values and priorities.

Sustainability

Sustainability holds a profound significance at Hitachi Energy, anchored in four core pillars: planet, people, peace, and partnerships.

The people pillar includes a specific target - achieve a 25 per cent representation of female leaders by 2025.

Engagement from all stakeholders – from employees and colleagues to customers and partners – is key. For instance, I led initiatives to reduce energy consumption and plastic usage within our office, with the dual objective of achieving significant cost savings while enhancing our environmental footprint.

True commitment to sustainability necessitates more than just words – it demands us to take actionable steps towards diversity, equality, and inclusiveness. This entails championing innovative ideas, providing comprehensive training to deepen our collective understanding of sustainability, and leading by example by prioritizing a healthy work-life balance for all employees.

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