

REPORT

# How To Drive Gender Parity in Your Workplace



# Executive Summary

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Create a Sense of Urgency	4
Use Data to Power the Conversation	8
Promote Women Into Positions of Power	12
Address Unconscious Bias Head On	17
Be Adaptable: One Size Does Not Fit All	20
Conclusion	24

The majority of large companies in corporate America recognize that Employee Resource Groups (ERGs, also sometimes called Affinity Networks) are crucial components to creating inclusive workplaces. In fact, [90 percent](#) of Fortune 500 companies have ERGs, with many of these being women's networks. Yet while ERGs exist at companies across industries, the efforts of these groups are disparate and uncoordinated. If ERGs continue to exist in isolation from one another, there's a missed opportunity to leverage them as a means of driving gender parity.

That's why [Fairygodboss](#), the largest career community for women, created our signature event GALVANIZE: Making Women's Resource Groups Powerful. Georgene Huang and Romy Newman founded Fairygodboss in 2015 on the premise that, through greater transparency, we can improve the workplace for women and achieve gender equality. To help identify and discuss possible paths for expedited progress, Fairygodboss annually convenes hundreds of top executives, diversity professionals and women's ERG leaders to facilitate collaboration.

At the 2018 event, held October 15-16 in New York City, more than 250 speakers and attendees spoke candidly about the obstacles hindering our path toward gender equality, and they also shared actionable strategies for using women's ERGs as a tool to accelerate change.

Here are five imperatives identified at GALVANIZE 2018 that every business leader should consider to increase the effectiveness of women's networks and drive equality in the workplace:

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1. Create a Sense of Urgency
2. Use Data to Power the Conversation
3. Promote Women into Positions of Power
4. Address Unconscious Bias Head On
5. Be Adaptable: One Size Does Not Fit All



# 1. Create a Sense of Urgency

## **FINDING 1:** Create a Sense of Urgency

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According to the World Economic Forum, it will take an estimated 217 years for women to achieve parity in the workplace. Yet, study after study shows that a gender diverse workforce positively impacts a company's bottom line. "If we are ever going to shorten that 217-year timeline, we need to take radical steps," Fairygodboss President and Co-founder Romy Newman told attendees during GALVANIZE's opening. "It's about collaboration and it's about cooperation. The No. 1 goal here is for you all to talk to each other."

Throughout the two-day summit, leaders from across the U.S. shared information and collaborated in an effort to identify strategies that will help us more quickly achieve workplace gender parity.

## **CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

What gets measured gets managed. Without periodic check-ins — formal and informal, and at all levels — we'll fail to forge the allyship needed to effect lasting changes in the workplace.

As Cindy Robbins, President and Chief People Officer of Salesforce, pointed out, "There's a level of accountability that starts at the CEO level." She explained how gaining Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff's support allowed her and Leyla Seka, another top executive at Salesforce, to conduct the company's [landmark equal pay audit](#), which publicly held Salesforce accountable for addressing its pay inequity. Robbins shared one tactic that's helped Salesforce maintain a sense of ongoing urgency: "We hold our leaders accountable to [gender equality progress] every single quarter when they walk into a management meeting."

Bethany Poole, Director of Ads Marketing at Google, shared a story of how publicly recognizing male allyship helped instill accountability in her colleagues for accelerating positive change. At a recent company offsite, she recalled, the Senior VP of Marketing asked everyone who was mentoring a woman or a person of color to stand up. "There weren't that many people in the room who stood up. It was very public," Poole said. "And so she said, 'OK, a year from now, I want to see everyone

## **FINDING 1:** Create a Sense of Urgency

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standing up.” While this was an informal exercise, Poole said it was “a very good way to recognize the people who were doing it and encouraging it to happen more.”

GALVANIZE keynote speaker Nicole Anasenes, CFO and COO of Squarespace, also spoke about how transparency can help accelerate progress. For companies, she said, what’s “particularly helpful with underrepresented groups is clarity [and] transparency. Those structures need to exist as a foundational element.”

## **TIE DIVERSITY INITIATIVES TO BUSINESS IMPERATIVES**

Without buy-in from executives, ERGs risk a lack of support at a company culture level and, even worse, a lack of power to change policies or create any lasting change. Moreover, gender diversity will not be prioritized until CEOs and other top executives are proactively working to accelerate change.

But before requesting buy-in from an executive, come armed with data. As Chief Capital Officer of Lending Club Valerie Kay put it, “If I’m asking for more money [or support], if I can tie it to a business need, it always makes it easier for an executive to say yes.”

Amy Philbrook, Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Fidelity Investments, emphasized that you have to “embed an ERG in the actual business practice to actually have an impact on advancing diversity.”

GALVANIZE keynote speaker Sheri B. Bronstein, Global Human Resources Executive at Bank of America, agreed, reinforcing the idea that data helps businesses see the value of inclusion efforts. Her company invested in data analytics because she was able to make the case that these numbers could help illustrate what was driving employee turnover. “When the business understands that we can better predict what’s happening or what’s the root cause, it’s very helpful,” she said.

## **FINDING 1:** Create a Sense of Urgency

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### **EMBRACE THE #METOO MOMENTUM**

The momentum created by the #MeToo movement has further catalyzed the need to address gender inequality across industries. As Arianna Orpello Lewko, SVP at TD Bank, put it, #MeToo and Time's Up have placed "renewed focus and urgency" on issues of workplace discrimination, harassment and inequality.

Heather von Zuben, Managing Director at Goldman Sachs, suggested that in order for ERGs to be effective, leaders need to ask themselves what is impactful. "What's actually going to move the needle, however you define that?" she said. "The challenge of these things is deciding where to invest your resources." She advised being intentional and choosing "an area that's going to make the most impact [...] know where you're going and what you're trying to do."





## 2. Use Data to Power the Conversation

## **FINDING 2:** Use Data to Power the Conversation

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In this era, anyone looking to engage a corporation in making real change will need to research and present hard data to articulate where inequalities exist. While anecdotes are important, concrete data must be the foundation for all ERG and diversity initiatives. Until now, many companies have been afraid to look under the hood at things like how compensation compares between men and women. As Monica Boll, Managing Director at Accenture, put it: “Data doesn’t lie.” When a company does not believe a problem is present, data can provide the truth.

For organizations, tracking data provides an impetus to:

### **ARTICULATE GENDER INEQUITIES IN QUANTIFIABLE WAYS**

The case for diversity is always better made when there is sound, data-driven evidence of discrimination or bias, as was observed by nearly every speaker at GALVANIZE. While companies can sometimes be wary of delving into the data, the reality is that deep analysis of internal data is likely to reveal some very concrete truths about the progress of gender diversity within a given organization.

At the Boston Consulting Group, Jenn Garcia-Alonso, Global Women@BCG Director, noted that data helped her company uncover the root of a female talent retention issue. This data, she said, showed women were leaving BCG because they were being coached on communication skills when they neither wanted the coaching nor found it helpful. Women@BCG discovered that the origin of this “coaching” was actually rooted in unconscious bias. Those providing the coaching were intent on fixing or correcting the women’s communication style because it was different from their own – but different, of course, does not automatically mean worse.

“We used the data to prove that bias was happening,” Garcia-Alonso explained, noting that her group began educating senior employees to help them understand that different communication styles can be equally effective.

**FINDING 2:** Use Data to Power the Conversation

**COMPARE POLICIES, INITIATIVES, AND OTHER EFFORTS TO PROMOTE EQUALITY**

Benchmarking against other companies’ diversity efforts can influence and inform organizations’ own policies and drive the initiative for change. For example, at Bloomberg, Deputy Chief of Staff Kiersten Barnet and her colleagues built a [Gender Equality Index](#) (GEI) framework to correlate gender diversity statistics and initiatives with stock performance. The index includes factors such as the number of women who receive promotions, the percentage of women in IT roles, company policies like parental leave and gender reassignment coverage, and leadership initiatives. Participating companies voluntarily disclosed their information to Bloomberg, which scored the information and developed the index.

The GEI was testing a hypothesis that companies with the most women-friendly policies would outperform others in terms of stock price. After gathering and analyzing the data, Barnet said Bloomberg found this was indeed true, and that the difference women-friendly policies made was significant.

<b>KEY ATTRIBUTES OF OVER-PERFORMING COMPANIES IN THE BLOOMBERG GEI</b>	
<b>Representation Drivers</b>	<b>Culture Drivers</b>
Women on corporate boards	Employee resource groups for women
Women in the top 10% compensated group	Paid parental leave
Women in revenue-producing roles	Unconscious bias training
Multicultural women in the workforce	Formal employee development programs

Courtesy of Bloomberg

The [Bloomberg GEI data](#) is some of the most compelling because it reveals a true return-on-investment for gender diversity initiatives. As Barnet said, “Without data, our pulse on gender equality is purely a hunch.”

## **FINDING 2:** Use Data to Power the Conversation

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### **USE DATA TO DRIVE CHANGE**

Cindy Robbins, of Salesforce, discussed how she and her colleague Leyla Seka used a combination of data and anecdotal evidence to show Salesforce's CEO that the company was not where it needed to be in terms of women's pay equality. "The power is really in the data and how you pool all the streams of data," she explained in her keynote. "We exposed the data at a very senior level." Ultimately, Robbins and her team effected the kind of change that really makes a difference: Salesforce has spent nearly \$9 million to date to address pay inequities within its workforce.

Sheri B. Bronstein, of Bank of America, uses data to identify where the problem lies and determine what tactics will help the company improve. Her data also shows which efforts are working: "We see really strong promotion and retention rates, but we need to work on lateral recruiting," she explained in her keynote. "That's where the data's helped." Bronstein also noted that she and her team have found a correlation between participation in an ERG and increased retention and job satisfaction.

Data, of course, is not a finite story. Once businesses have identified that a gender inequality problem exists within their organization, they must continue to check the numbers and use them to refine their approaches. "Set the goal, be intentional about it, and use data to track it," said Leanne Pittsford, Founder of Lesbians Who Tech.

After all, change doesn't take place in a vacuum, and companies must continue to hone and track their efforts to determine whether change is taking place, how it is happening, why it is happening, and whether more can be done to further the organization's goal.



## 3. Promote Women Into Positions of Power

### **FINDING 3:** Promote Women Into Positions of Power

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We hear a lot about mentorship in the workplace, but a constant theme of the conversations at GALVANIZE 2018 was that sponsorship is just as — if not more — important.

Keynote speaker [Carla Harris, Vice Chairman of Global Wealth Management at Morgan Stanley](#), put it plainly: “In the late ’80s, everyone was just starting to talk about mentorship. But I figured it out... that it wasn’t about finding a mentor, it was what I called a sponsor [...] the kind of person who will advocate for you.”

As Harris said, “You don’t get to be in the room when someone decides whether you get promoted.” She recalled that early in her career, when she was first involved in meetings where she and her peers discussed the potential advancement of the class coming up behind them, no data was used to evaluate individuals. For the most part, discussions were based on subjective measures offered by gentlemen around the room. “The weight of the voice in the room [carried] the day,” Harris said. “I thought, ‘Who is going to speak for me?’”

While mentorship is still important — and Harris emphasized the need to engage peer mentors during every career stage — sponsors serve as champions, rather than sounding boards for advice or guidance. Getting women a seat at the table is key to advancing gender equality, as women can, and must, advocate for one another as sponsors once they’re in a position to do so.

For Lending Club’s Valerie Kay, when she joined her company’s women’s network, LC WIN, in 2016, she found there was no one leading the group; it was run by a committee. “There were strong, talented women on the steering committee, but after about six months, I said I would like to try to run [the group] because I felt like it needed more structure,” she said, adding that ERGs should be leveraged to sponsor the next generation of women leaders.

At LendingClub, for instance, there’s a program in place to elevate women into leadership roles. “We’ve handpicked about 30 women who we think are the next

### **FINDING 3:** Promote Women Into Positions of Power

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people to be promoted to senior director or VP; this is our next generation of future leaders,” Kay said. “We’re investing time and money in them to help them figure out how to go up the ladder and elevate themselves.”

### **ENGAGE EXECUTIVES AND MALE ALLIES**

For women seeking to reach C-suites and boardrooms, advocates help guide the way and ensure a more fair playing field for the outnumbered. If we all agree that gender diversity is a core business priority, it’s incumbent on every manager to think about how to advocate for people who are underrepresented in management. As Liji Thomas, Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Southern California Edison, said, “Inclusion is the leadership conversation of the 21st Century... the business case around women's advancement is absolutely non-negotiable.”

As men still hold the significant majority of top leadership slots at Fortune 500 companies, gaining their support is a critical step in achieving gender parity in workplaces. Salesforce’s Cindy Robbins testified to this, saying, “I had advocates, champions and mentors. They were all men... not that I wasn’t trying to seek a woman, but sometimes you just can’t find one.”

While many male colleagues already support gender equality on a theoretical level, there are specific steps leaders can take to catalyze that support into a culture of more urgent change — and it’s also up to women to be proactive and articulate their needs. Marcie White, AMS Relationship Director at Hewlett Packard Enterprise, advised women to “ask for what you need in a male influence; I’ve had as many male allies as female allies, and I make the help that I need very clear.”

Hayley Tabor, VP of Global Industries at Dell, weighed in, saying: “It’s one thing to be a mentor, but we have to help men with those programs...[we] need to understand what the real issues are and translate that to a training program for men.”

### **FINDING 3:** Promote Women Into Positions of Power

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During the event's panel on [Men as Allies](#), several male panelists echoed the need for clear communication around how men can help. "Talk to me; talk to us. Create an environment for a frank and open conversation," said Herb Johnson, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer at Michelin North America.

Similarly, Stephen Orban, General Manager at AWS Marketplace, asked the crowd to be willing to "coach" men. "Continue to hold me accountable and hold my feet to the fire," he said. "I'm sure there are biases I need coaching on... it's unconscious until it's conscious."

Darius Smith, Director of Talent Marketing and Employee Engagement at Brother International Corporation, also encouraged women to continue engaging and coaching men, even when it might get difficult or uncomfortable. "Stay in the fight with me, even when it gets tough," he said.

### **ENCOURAGE A CULTURE OF SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY**

Like men in leadership roles, once women assume a seat of power, they have a duty to wield it to improve the workplace for other women. "I think the thing that will speed this up [is] being intentional about how to use that power," Carla Harris, of Morgan Stanley, said. "Support someone else to get to the seat. [You] have to be intentional about it."

Harris recognized that she's at the level where she can effect change, and asked that others do the same. "I make sure that I use my power, because I feel strongly that there's no point in having power, or as I like to call it currency, if you can't spend it and if you don't spend it," she said.

Herb Johnson, of Michelin North America, also spoke about the importance of women elevating each other: "I would encourage women to continue to be courageous and then grab another one and take them along," he said.



### **FINDING 3:** Promote Women Into Positions of Power

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## **BUILD WORKPLACES THAT ENABLE PARENTS**

The most competitive corporations are rethinking how they support women by offering best-in-class benefits like flexible working, extended paternity leave, and career coaching. At American Express, for example, leaders have realized that employees are most productive when they can take advantage of flexible and remote work options; in fact, in 2017, nearly half its U.S. employees had a flexible work arrangement. Tammy Yee, Vice President of Benefits and Mobility at American Express, noted that “American Express has a long history of supporting women,” but that doesn’t mean they can’t do even more. Part of women being their own agents, she said, includes “leveraging the support and benefits around them.”

And when women feel supported, their increased engagement benefits the company, too. Southern California Edison’s Liji Thomas summed it up during a GALVANIZE panel on ERGs and lasting impact: “When women lean in, the rest of the company is leaning in.”

Goldman Sachs has also invested in benefits that support parents; employees with kids can take advantage of onsite childcare centers that provide full-time and emergency backup care, as well as mother’s rooms and programs for parents returning from parental leave. These resources — which enable new parents to more seamlessly juggle their careers and families — can hugely impact employee retention.

Sometimes, though, a lack of adaptability can result in magnified consequences, not just for individuals, but for teams as a whole. That’s what Google’s Bethany Poole found. She described that the company’s parental leave policy, though generous, was not enough for a mother of two young children. A male colleague took on Poole’s responsibilities and ultimately moved out of her group because of the situation. “It was bad for both of us,” she acknowledged.



# 4. Address Unconscious Bias Head On

#### **FINDING 4:** Address Unconscious Bias Head On

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Unconscious bias surfaced as a discussion point in nearly every conversation at GALVANIZE. Unconscious bias is, unfortunately, present in every workplace; thus, organizations must address it head on. In order to propel real, systemic change, leaders must make a point of looking for – and calling out – unconscious bias.

Matthew Richards, Director of Talent Acquisition at Cognizant, argued that “it’s going to take all of us” to work toward eliminating unconscious biases, and that we need to start doing the work. “I have a 17 year old, and I have to push back on him about some things,” Richards said, emphasizing the importance of educating people about their inherent biases. “That’s my job.”

Morgan Stanley’s Carla Harris told the audience that women can make a difference once they have a seat at the table by pointing out bias. She suggested that if a man is reviewing a woman for a promotion and says, for example, “Well, I don’t think she has presence,” an effective response might simply be: “Why do you say that?” Harris added that “sometimes, just asking the qualifying question is enough.”

While bias is often difficult to pin down or confront, GALVANIZE speakers identified ways we can actively spot and combat it:

#### **STOP IT FROM THE START: REMOVE UNCONSCIOUS BIAS**

Liz Gelb-O’Connor, Global Head of Employer Brand and Marketing at ADP, discussed how her company has dedicated resources toward managing bias in the [talent acquisition process](#). Some solutions include gamified assessments, blind resumes (eliminating information about gender), and video interviewing with AI.

Data can also help drive awareness around bias. Organizations can keep tabs on candidate numbers, from resumes all the way through to offer letters, to better build efforts toward an equal talent pipeline.

DK Bartley, Senior VP and Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Dentsu Aegis, shed light on the bias-related issues he’s seen during the recruiting process. “There’s a

#### **FINDING 4:** Address Unconscious Bias Head On

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preconceived notion of what the best candidate is,” he said, adding that he’ll often hear, “we’ll hire the *best* candidate” or “we can’t find diverse candidates.”

“We all know [that] is B.S.,” he said. To combat the idea that the candidate pool is the problem, Dentsu Aegis is now “very purposeful in the way we look for new employees,” Bartley explained.

### **TRAINING IS NECESSARY, BUT NOT SUFFICIENT – BIAS MUST BE ADDRESSED**

Many companies require employees to undergo unconscious bias training, which is an important part of the path toward equality. But the problem doesn’t stop when employees leave the classroom. Bias can be insidious and present in more areas than simply management and hiring.

Laura Zelenko, Senior Executive Editor for Diversity, Talent, Standards, and Training at Bloomberg News, explained that when it comes to addressing reporters’ biases, they found that “unconscious bias isn’t the *only* thing that might affect who we choose to interview, but what we found is that it is a factor.” Pointing this out to reporters, she said, has had a big impact: “We started looking at how often we were reporting women’s stories; the numbers were quite low. By making this a priority for news coverage, our numbers quadrupled this year.”

Stephen Orban, of AWS Marketplace, shared a similar example of taking concrete steps to confront and mitigate bias. He recalled a meeting in which a female executive interrupted the discussion of a female employee by asking, “Would you feel differently about this if she were a man?”

“There was an amazing lesson there, because I watched someone put themselves on the line to advocate for someone in a way that made everyone in the room uncomfortable,” Orban said. Now, he added, those kinds of questions are not unexpected or uncomfortable because he makes a point to pose them regularly.



## 5. Be Adaptable: One Size Does Not Fit All

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Fairygodboss Co-founder Georgene Huang put it simply: “One size doesn’t fit all when it comes to ERGs.” Indeed, building initiatives and furthering visions takes time, effort, and a willingness to recognize when there’s a need to change course or modify the approach.

For Rick Gomez, Vice President of Human Resources at Xandr (part of AT&T), it meant structuring the groups at his company in a different way. “Women were surprised that we set them up as nonprofits, but they’ve been really successful,” he said, noting that their women’s ERG has over 25,000 members.

Even long-established programs have kinks that require ironing out. Hayley Tabor, of Dell, noted that she decided to modify an ERG at her company when she realized that tweaking it would increase its success: “I wanted to expand the program and figure out how to customize it,” she said.

Regardless of the structure that works best for your ERG, remembering that individuals’ needs will differ is key. “Trying to put all women into one box frustrates me,” said Global Technology Executive Janeen Uzzell. One of her goals, she said, is “to link together women from around the world. When you can be the voice for different thought processes, it’s a powerful position to be in.”

Inclusivity must encompass many cases: Kathryn Montbriand, Director of Card Acquisition Operations at Capital One, for example, has made a conscious decision not to have children. “It’s important that the efforts of our ERG take the situations of all female employees into account,” she said. ERGs must remember that the women they represent, like Montbriand, have all different kinds of experiences and needs, and so these networks must be nimble and broad.

Charlotte Marshall, VP of Digital/Social Media and Employer Brand at Magellan Health, said that transparency — including within ERGs — can help “differentiate” companies as a space where all voices are welcome. People want to know “what’s in it for me and what’s in it for you,” she said. By recognizing that different groups will

## **FINDING 5:** Be Adaptable: One Size Does Not Fit All

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benefit in different ways, and having the adaptability to accommodate those differences, the value-add proposition for both the employee and employer can be made clear.

Shanda Hinton, Global Diversity Talent Attraction Leader at United Technologies (UTC), also shared how transparency has helped her company recruit women. She works in an industry that's traditionally dominated by men and has found that amplifying the genuine stories of diverse women working at UTC has helped attract female candidates. She's encouraging employees to be "much more transparent than they ever have before" in sharing their diverse perspectives.

## **ENCOURAGE AND EMBRACE INTERSECTIONALITY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION**

Beyond making space for all people's identities and experiences, embracing intersectionality also necessitates adaptability in situations where you find your company is being unintentionally exclusive.

Lesbians Who Tech's Leanne Pittsford discovered this need for flexibility early on. She wanted to create a sense of urgency around the need for a space where lesbian technology professionals take part in a community of like-minded people. But as the organization expanded, Pittsford realized it was lacking racial diversity. So, she set a quota to have 50 percent of speakers at their events be women of color. Often, she explained, meeting goals doesn't require a dramatic change. "If you're not hitting [your target], it's not because you're doing it wrong. It's because you need to make that 10 percent switch," she said.

Intersectionality also calls for representation across identities within your company's messaging. "It's about personalizing the message," said Amber Grewal, Corporate Vice President of Global Talent Acquisition at IBM. She suggested that when recruiting, communicating a message that appeals to a broad spectrum of people is crucial: "Ensure the content you're sharing is inclusive. Being more conscious of even the tone is very important."

## **FINDING 5:** Be Adaptable: One Size Does Not Fit All

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### **MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS**

It's also important to be adaptable with the expectations and narrative you have for yourself. That's what Tiffany Dufu, Founder and CEO of the Cru, found after giving birth to her first child. "I started dropping balls left and right," she said. "And Armageddon never hit."

"We all have these job descriptions," Dufu said. "When I became a mother, I needed to create a new job description. I had to get really clear on what matters to me, not just what matters to other people." Taking this approach allowed her to view herself and her role in a different light.

Being flexible with the expectations of one's own narrative doesn't mean not having goals and a vision of what success looks like, however. Nicole Anasenes, of Squarespace, described how career laddering structures, which provide a framework for how a professional enters the industry and climbs to the top, have helped her recognize when she needed to change certain behaviors.

"Earlier on in my career, I was much more introverted and not as direct," she said. "When I had to develop a backbone, it was jarring, but I knew what was coming. Career laddering structures help people develop, in their own time, what it means to be an impactful person in their role."

Even women whose organizations don't have career laddering can apply these principles to their own careers. "Have a clear grounding in where you want to go," Anasenes said. "Formulate a path that makes sense."

Monica Diaz, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer at Campbell Soup Company, reminded GALVANIZE participants that adaptability and a willingness to accept the unknown can lead to greater change and accomplishment. "If leaders are motivated by possibility, those are the visionaries," she said. "It requires different strategies to align different leaders."





# Conclusion

## CONCLUSION

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Advancing gender equality in the workplace requires several distinct efforts, both large and small. These efforts — and their impact — must be transparent to the rest of the organization in order to align and hold leaders and constituents accountable for their strategic goals. Creating these lines of communication can help foster the sentiment that it's a company-wide effort — and a best business practice — to achieve gender parity.

Companies must:

### 1. CREATE A SENSE OF URGENCY

The current 217-year timeline to reaching gender equality is simply unacceptable. To create real change in our lifetimes, we have to increase the pace of diversity and inclusion efforts by employing specific strategies, like instituting quotas or setting public goals to increase accountability. In the wake of #MeToo, there's increased scrutiny on how women can better be supported in the workplace. ERGs should capitalize on this momentum: as Leanne Pittsford, of Lesbians Who Tech, said, "We need to keep up the urgency and keep the pressure on these companies."

### 2. USE DATA TO POWER THE CONVERSATION

Data is king (or maybe queen?) in today's corporate culture. The opportunity exists to hone in on evidence of discrimination and drive progress like never before. Successful champions of diversity must harness the data and use it — along with anecdotal evidence — to get attention and change the conversation. "The easy part is that the data exists," said Salesforce's Cindy Robbins.. "There's no excuse not to look at it."

### 3. PROMOTE WOMEN INTO POSITIONS OF POWER

As the trickle-down effect has to start from an elevated position, promoting women to the C-suite and boardroom is necessary. Women can more effectively advocate for one another — and truly accelerate progress toward gender equality — once they have a seat at the table.

## CONCLUSION

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Moreover, organizations that fail to put women into leadership roles will have a hard time attracting female talent. As Morgan Stanley's Carla Harris explained, "As [baby] boomers, we were OK with being the only woman in the room because there was no choice. But millennials and younger generations need to see [women in leadership], because they have seen it their entire lives. That's what excellence looks like to them."

### 4. ADDRESS UNCONSCIOUS BIAS HEAD ON

In the workplace and beyond, it's time to start asking the hard questions that will change behavior on a larger scale, most notably at the hiring phase. Addressing unconscious bias requires that people in power — including hiring managers — make a concerted effort to identify biases, call them out, and correct the behavior. The problem many organizations have, said DK Bartley, of Dentsu Aegis, is that "like hires like." To find diverse candidates and combat those biases, Bartley stated that "you have to be purposeful about it."

### 5. BE ADAPTABLE: ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

An organization operating without addressing the needs of its constituents is doomed to fail. "One mistake we made early on [was thinking] one size fits all," said Belinda Harris, President of Women's Association of Verizon Employees. "Even though we were putting out all this content and opportunities, people weren't engaged."

To that end, many panelists highlighted the need to actively seek feedback from their ERG members in order to align goals and initiatives with the needs of their communities. Lending Club's Valerie Kay suggested [treating ERGs like a business](#). "We send out surveys and we send out questionnaires to find out what [the group's members] need and what they want — just like running any business," she explained. "Shaping the ERG's role in your organization requires matching expectations — members as well as top executives — to ensure continued success."



# GALVANIZE: Making Women's Resource Groups Powerful

## **GALVANIZE**

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GALVANIZE by Fairygodboss is our annual event that brings together 200+ executives and ERG leaders to identify actionable ways in which we can effectively address the most pressing needs of women in the workplace. The goal of the event is to collaborate and share ideas so we can accelerate the timeline for achieving parity.

### **2018 GALVANIZE PARTICIPANTS**

This year, GALVANIZE participants represented over 100 companies including:

<a href="#"><u>AbbVie</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Campbell Soup Company</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Gartner</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Accenture</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Capital One</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>GoCoach</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>ADP</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>CDW</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>GoDaddy</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>AIG</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>CFA Institute</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Goldman Sachs</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Alvarez and Marsal</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Charles Schwab</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Google</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>American Express</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Coca-Cola</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Greenhouse</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Applied Materials</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cognizant Technology Solutions</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Grubhub</u></a>
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