

How Employers Can Empower Women Workers Every Day

(Not Just During Women's History Month)



According to a recent report by McKinsey & Company, one in four women are considering downshifting or leaving their careers altogether due to the impact of COVID-19. The sheer magnitude, and devastating impact if this occurs, cannot be over-exaggerated.

So, what can employers do? We created this infographic to help employers think beyond the basics to truly empower women in the workplace every day, not just during Women's History Month.

1 in 4
Women

How employers can empower All Women Workers

- ✓ Create a sustainable work pace to avoid burnout
- ✓ Establish a “new normal” around flexibility and working pace:
 - ✓ Structure days to minimize time spent in meetings or consider establishing set hours for meetings
 - ✓ Set clear policies around reasonable working hours
 - ✓ Leader-led work-life balance – demonstrating boundaries as a leader will help workers do the same
- ✓ Review performance expectations to see if appropriate in today's environment



- ✓ Show support for women in meetings
- ✓ Track outcomes for promotions and raises by gender to create transparency around pay and career advancement opportunities
- ✓ Track outcomes for layoffs and furloughs by gender to ensure fair treatment
- ✓ Provide professional and personal development opportunities
- ✓ Promote all benefits and resources to ensure women workers know what's available to them
- ✓ Encourage women to regularly celebrate one another's wins!



How employers can empower Women Leaders

- ✓ Establish an open dialogue about what your women leaders need to continue leading people in today's challenging environment
- ✓ Amplify women's voices at the top level
- ✓ Champion different leadership styles and individuality
- ✓ Equip women leaders with the flexibility to enable and empower their people as needed
- ✓ Encourage executive sponsorship of high-potential women
- ✓ Ensure your leadership pipeline includes a substantial percentage of women, particularly women of color
- ✓ Actively address capabilities gaps for all high-potentials through executive coaching and leadership development programs



How employers can empower Women of Color

- ✓ Acknowledge and address the distinct challenges that women of color (WOC) face at an organizational level
- ✓ Don't presume to know what support is needed; solicit input directly from WOC— How can the company do better?
- ✓ Publish a clear, explicit internal statement of support for WOC that outlines what it means for the organization and why it's important
- ✓ Develop an intentional approach with your leadership pipeline to increase senior-level representation of WOC



- ✓ Create senior-level advocacy and allyship to advance initiatives at the top level
- ✓ Create a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion by establishing a DEI function in the C-Suite (e.g. Chief Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Officer)
- ✓ Provide mentorship and sponsorship opportunities
- ✓ Promote dialogue between leaders and women of color when racial violence occurs—check on your team members to see what is needed and how you can support



How employers can empower Working Mothers

- ✓ Be approachable and start dialogues to explore what challenges working mothers in your organization are experiencing
- ✓ Encourage community among parents via virtual support groups
- ✓ Provide parenting resources such as homeschooling support
- ✓ Regularly challenge assumptions to bias - for example, a child playing in background does not mean a mother is any less committed to her job than her colleagues
- ✓ Create a policy or reintegration plan that provides a soft landing for new mothers to return to work once they're ready
- ✓ Develop re-entry plans with working mothers in mind—how will returning to the workplace impact their home lives? What resources will they need?



How employers can empower Exiting Female Employees

- ✓ Provide additional resources and heightened outplacement support
- ✓ Ensure departing women are matched with outplacement coaches who understand the nuances of job hunting for women
- ✓ Consider sharing key opportunities from within your own professional network
- ✓ Hire an outplacement firm that specializes in women in the workplace
- ✓ Address needs for reskilling or upskilling to help exiting women compete effectively in the job market
- ✓ Be as transparent as possible with exiting workers to help ease anxiety and provide a path forward
- ✓ Connect exiting employees with organizations you know are hiring



Empowering Women Workers Everywhere, Every Day

Empowering women workers requires a concerted, top-down effort, not just once a year, but **every day**. And it requires support from all team members, not just women. Incorporating even a few of these tips into your culture will help to build a culture of inclusivity, empathy, and mindfulness that will drive ROI in countless ways.

