



WOMEN LEADERS, AGENTS OF CHANGE IN EUROPE

**14TH ELC CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS
BLED, APRIL 14 - 15, 2016**



Organized on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of IEDC-Bled School of Management, Slovenia, in cooperation with IEDC Coca-Cola Chair for Sustainable Development and under the patronage of Nova KBM.

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WOMEN LEADERS, AGENTS OF CHANGE IN EUROPE

Danica Purg

DIRECTOR, EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP CENTRE
AND PRESIDENT, IEDC-BLED SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Welcome

*Dear Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia,
Your Excellences,
Dear guests from 25 countries,*

Welcome to Bled and the IEDC-Bled School of Management, to the international conference “Women Leaders, Agents of Change in Europe”, which we are organizing on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of our school, together with the European Leadership Centre (ELC) and the Coca-Cola Chair for Sustainable Development at our school, under the patronage of Nova KBM.

I am very pleased that our conference has become even more international than the title suggests, as we have participants and speakers also from countries outside Europe: Mexico, the USA, and South Africa. And I would like to extend a special warm welcome to our male colleagues and leaders who are with us today.

We found the inspiration to organize this conference in the book of Prof. Susan Madsen, Women and Leadership Around the World, published in 2015. I am very glad that Susan is with us and that she will be our keynote speaker. Her book is not about the glass ceiling, but about women who sometimes take responsibilities and show leadership in the most difficult social and political environments. It is not a book with discouraging statistics and complaints, but rather with motivating and

*energizing examples of women leaders. She told me yesterday:
“I write because I want to make change for the better!”*

The title of this conference expresses our conviction that in many places, including Europe, women are playing an important role as agents of change, as mothers, teachers, medical staff, politicians, and managers. They often combine different roles at the same time.

My contribution today is an appeal to stop generalizing about the position of women. In every country, independent of religion, ideology, and level of welfare, we see women that are bringing change and are real agents of change! We see courageous female politicians in Germany, Spain and Turkey! We see courageous female entrepreneurs in the Emirates, in South Africa, in India, and in Afghanistan. We see women taking responsibility in all societies, and these are not only highly educated women! The struggle for life and survival is part of women’s nature, and I see that in difficult circumstances women are often more eager, more creative, and more entrepreneurial than men.

My advice is that we use this conference also to ask ourselves: Are we willing to utilize our positions and power in the private and public sector in order to enhance the presence of women at all levels in our society?

How can we destroy the present stereotypes, transform the existing corporate culture, and create new and innovative policies in order to break through the so-called glass ceiling?

This conference is an excellent occasion to ask ourselves whether we are prepared to become advocates and pioneers of change in our country or organization. What examples are we setting for the younger generations? What does the young generation of leaders and potential leaders think of these issues? What is men’s perspective? How can we be role models?

I am happy to see that at IEDC we have some positive signs about the ambitions of the young generation of women. Although

the percentage of women at IEDC's longer executive programs is still lower than the percentage of men (38.5 versus 61.5), we see a substantial increase of the percentage of younger women in our programs. In the Summer School Programs, dedicated to young people at the start of their career, the percentage of women has increased from 51 by 2006 to 68 in 2015.

I would like to use the opportunity to thank some exceptional ladies, the program committee members, who have helped us design the concept and put together the program of the conference: Mrs. Melanie Seier Larsen, principal at the Boston Consulting Group (President of IEDC Alumni Club Slovenia), Mrs. Ladeja Godina Košir, connector and managing director at Giacomelli media Ltd, Mrs. Mirella Visser, managing director of the Centre for Inclusive Leadership in the Netherlands, and Prof. Susan Madsen. I also thank the coordinator of the work done by the program committee, our head of corporate communications at IEDC, Mrs. Tonja Blatnik.

Finally, I would like to introduce to you Prof. Mollie Painter Morland, the moderator of our conference. Mollie is holder of the Coca-Cola Chair for Sustainable Development at our school and professor of ethics and organization at Nottingham Business School.

All these exceptional women inspired me to create my personal slogan for this conference: "Women are equal and make the difference".

Dear guests, welcome once again, I hope you will enjoy this event and find inspiration in these two days. Now I give the floor to the prime minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr. Miro Cerar, for his special address.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. B.', located at the bottom right of the page.

WOMEN LEADERS, AGENTS OF CHANGE IN EUROPE

Miro Cerar

PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Welcome

*Ladies and gentlemen,
Distinguished guests,*

It is my great pleasure to open this conference and wish you all the best on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of IEDC-Bled School of Management. I am delighted to be here today in our beautiful town of Bled, with no fewer than 100 female managers from 25 countries. Welcome to Slovenia, the country of equal rights and opportunities, and economic growth, a country open to new investment.

As we all know, women face several obstacles to participation in political and economic life all over the world. Structural barriers through discriminatory laws and institutions still limit women's options to run for office. Capacity gaps mean women are less likely than men to have the education, contacts, and resources needed to become effective leaders. From the local to the global level, women's leadership and political participation is restricted. Women are underrepresented as voters, as well as in leading positions in elected office, in civil service, in the private sector, and in the academia. This occurs despite their proven abilities as leaders and agents of change, and their right to participate equally in democratic governance.

Across the European Union, women are underrepresented in decision-making positions, particularly in politics and business,

even if the situation varies considerably among European Union countries. In the autumn of 2015, women accounted for 29 percent of the members of single or lower houses of parliaments in the European Union countries.

In Slovenia, during my mandate, we have the most female parliament members in the history of Slovenia. That is why I like to say that women got my party where it is today. And that is the reason that the head of our party's parliamentary group in the National Assembly is a woman. That really makes me confident and calm that everything will be done professionally and the results will surely follow.

On the other hand, in business leadership the situation is still pretty much disappointing as in October 2015 women accounted for just 22.7 percent of the board members of the largest publicly listed companies registered in the European Union countries.

The causes for the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes and positions are multiple and complex. They call for a comprehensive approach to tackle the problem. They stem from traditional gender roles and stereotypes, a lack of support for women and men to balance care responsibilities with work, and the prevalent political and corporate cultures, to name just a few.

Concerning women in economic decision-making in Slovenia, there is visible progress although one might argue that it is still too slow. According to the 2015 Gender Equality Index, Slovenia is among those European Union countries that have the highest gender equality. To be more precise, Slovenia is ranked seventh, behind the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden.

According to data in Slovenia, the proportion of women in chief executive officer positions is 10 percent, whereas their proportion as board members is 22 percent. Further, they account for 24 percent of executive directors and 22 percent of non-executive directors.

When investors inquire about a country's rating, they first consider its political stability. So I would like to let you know that our government is stable and has big plans. I am pleased with the way that we are carrying out reforms and improving our living environment.

There are also analyses of the representation of women in society and politics. Slovenia and the government that I lead have the largest number of female ministers in history. They are great experts in their fields. Every day, I learn a lot from them and they help us make big decisions. I am always thrilled by their ease in making those decisions and their great courage. We want to open the door to your business in Slovenia. I know that you are the ones who can make that decision. Your biographies confirm that, as well as the positions where you do your jobs every day.

As we can see, we still have some work to do on the reconciliation of gender gaps to balance the percentage of men and women in political and economic decision-making processes. The legal framework has already been provided by international law and fundamental rights have been given. The question is whether they are implemented and applied in the right way or not.

I firmly believe that this interactive conference can further raise the awareness that women leaders are powerful change-makers in Europe. By presenting the best practices in different fields run by women leaders (business, government, and NGO), we will encourage women to take over the most responsible positions and participate in the change for a better, more sustainable world.

Let me finish with a quote of Catherine the Great, the longest-ruling female leader of Russia: »I beg you take courage; the brave soul can mend even disaster«. Thank you for your attention.

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MEGATRENDS IN CEE AND THE SEE REGION WITH A FOCUS ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Melanie Seier Larsen

PRINCIPAL, THE BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

When Prof. Purg told me that she wanted me to talk at this conference, I first thought that it was going to be easy. But she called me later and asked me to discuss megatrends in CEE region. And then, she called me once again and asked me to talk about mega trends in the CEE region affecting women. I ended up having three challenges that I needed to speak about in 30 minutes.

I sat with some colleagues of mine, and we started thinking about megatrends. We came to a conclusion that if I was to cover all megatrends adequately, I would need to talk for about four hours and that would be just about enough for me to brush upon those megatrends. Therefore, I have to select only a few of them. I am going to mention five of them.

I would like to dwell briefly on the aging megatrend, as well as health and wellness, the war for talent, the new media, and the new innovation models. You might wonder why I chose precisely these five out of so many. One of the reasons is that I see that these trends are seen strongly in our region. Besides, many of my clients are also discussing these trends. That is why I think we need to concentrate on them. Second, these trends involve many successful women. In fact, many of them owe their success to them. Finally, I think that a lot of us can also enhance our careers in a similar way. I will tell you later what I mean by that.

Everybody used to be afraid of the aging trend but I see that this is changing and people are beginning to talk about it more positively. The reason for that is that we are going to live much longer than people used to live in the past. This means that we

will be able to enjoy the beauty of Bled and other things for a longer time. In 1950, the average lifespan was 47 years. Today, it is around 70. In 2020, it is going to be close to 80. Why is this important to businesses? It is important because we know that people over 50 years of age buy totally different products compared to those of the younger generation. They buy easier-to-use products and products that they believe in. You cannot simply package something nicely and expect that they will buy it. Of course, global companies are thinking how they can respond to this trend in their business strategies. I will discuss some very interesting cases a little later.

Another important fact is that the female population exceeds the male populations after the age of 29. At 85, there are twice as many women as men. This means that women should consider this a great opportunity. This is important for our region because the median age is already about 40. The median age in the US is 37, whereas worldwide it is 30. This means that the Central and Eastern European region is older.

How does this relate to business? Let me give you just a couple of examples that show how women, as well as businesses, can capitalize on these trends.

There is a company called Kaiser. By 2007, it had become quite popular in Berlin. They started out with a special store for elderly consumers. The first reaction of the citizens of Berlin was quite negative. People said that there was no need for a specialized store for old consumers. Yet, that store was so successful that it was constantly crowded and the shelves were picked clean.

What did they do differently? They had special shelves and special platforms for old people to step on and reach for products that were too high up. Everything was different from things in a normal store. And they did some research and found that old people do not like stores where the places of products change all the time. Kaiser decided to keep things in the same places. If something absolutely needed to be moved, customers would be informed in advance.

Another interesting thing is that the staff tried to know by name as many people as possible. That is how they personalized the customers' experience.

Another good example of using the aging trend is provided by BMW. They did not design cars for the elderly population but they tried to change some things in order to adapt to that population. In 2012, they set up the first BMW factory for old people. They realized that their experts were older than 60 whereas the junior employees were not as good as the senior. As a result, they changed the production platform. They decreased the speed of the production line by 30 percent and created special places for older people. The latest research at BMW shows that nobody wants to retire. I think that this is something that many businesses in Central and Eastern Europe can learn from.

There is another trend that is more directly related to women: the health and wellness trend. This has become a real boom in recent years. It is not just about food. It encompasses a wide range of products, including medicine, clothes, and cosmetics. Since 2009, this segment has been growing 30 percent faster than classic segments. This is an interesting phenomenon and a potential source of income for many companies. Of course, this segment is growing from a low base. Nevertheless, the trend is noteworthy and the growth rate is increasing each year.

This is important because women are very much concerned about health and wellness. Some become consumers of ecological food whereas others buy cosmetics. The point is that all women are engaged in this trend one way or another.

I wanted to choose some brands that have been made famous with the participation of women, such as Kellogg and Coca Cola. These are called traditional food-and-drink production companies. But they have come to realize that they would lose market share and their sales would fall unless they started launching health products. These companies now have special units and dedicated teams that deal with health and wellness issues. Many of these units are led by women and that is hardly a coincidence.

There are many women who start their own businesses because of various frustrations that they experience. A woman once created a new brand of cosmetics for children. Today, this is a huge company. We see similar cases in Central and Eastern Europe. I am mentoring a young woman who does not only have a job but has children to take care of. She is building a healthy cosmetics brand and it is beginning to look like a success. This is not a single case. In Slovenia, we have several women who are setting up health and wellness businesses. There are even more in Central and Eastern Europe.

The third trend is the war for talent. This is a topic that we need to talk about a lot. Large and medium-sized companies are investing a lot in a search for talent. They are not looking specifically for female talent but for talent in general. After the big crisis, companies almost stopped searching for executives but they have now resumed this activity and are hiring experts again. This is good news.

Another good thing is that companies are talking about the gender balance. I am stressing the word »talking«. That is a good start. Unfortunately, although I work with quite a lot of companies, I do not often see a gender balance strategy implemented by the human resource management departments. I am sorry to say this in public but it is true and it is an issue that we need to discuss. Unless we talk about it, nothing will change. It is good to talk, but it is also necessary to take action.

However, it is not enough to set up the right strategy and give equal rights to both genders. A 2010 study in Europe revealed that when a global executive search company decides to approach a specific woman, they need to call her approximately eight times before she allows them to give her name to the company that they would like to connect her to. In contrast, it takes about two calls when the executive is a man. This demonstrates that our decision process is a bit too long. We need to change something in our attitude if we want to be more successful.

The latest statistics show some positive trends concerning women in executive and non-executive positions. In Western countries, women account for up to 70 percent of the employees in those positions. Yet, in Central and Eastern Europe the situation looks less good. In the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Romania, these percentages are about 10-12. This is something that we cannot be proud of.

Companies that are trying to implement a good gender balance are investing a lot in mentorship and sponsorship. I have collected some cases from industries that are not women-specific. One such company is E.ON. They are having problems attracting talent because the energy sector does not seem attractive to young talent. Young people do not want to live on a platform in the middle of the ocean. That is not an attractive environment. Of course, they also have a huge problem attracting women. Because of that, E.ON has rolled out a female-talent program and they have convinced managers at all levels to act as sponsors and mentors to women. That was important because the female employees of E.ON needed to see that the company supported them and recognized their efforts. It was good for the company's public image because people realize that it is possible for a woman to have a good career at E.ON.

The fourth interesting trend is the new media. We often hear that the media industry is changing a lot. It is even becoming difficult to come up with a good definition of that industry. It is hard to understand what wikis and tweets and suchlike are and how they are used. But the young generation is using all these creatures that you can get on your phone. As a result, everybody in every industry will have to adapt to the new media. It is also noteworthy that online advertising is growing much faster than traditional advertising. Today, it is second only to TV advertising and is therefore something that must absolutely be taken into account. Last year, an interesting study was done of European Union parliament members. It revealed that female members used all those things that I mentioned really well. It was also noted that these devices helped women get fan clubs. But these gadgets are also dangerous as one wrong move can spell your doom. Still, it

is clear that some women know how to handle the new media because they have become millionaires precisely by using the new media. Interviewed about their life styles, they said that they did not want to live in the old system, reporting to a boss and getting up early in the morning. They preferred to do something out of home. Thus, they created their own companies and some of them succeeded enormously thanks to their media platforms.

The last trend that I would like to talk about has to do with new innovation models. Again, this is very relevant in our region because it creates many job opportunities if it is tackled properly. A study that we did in 2015 showed that innovation is one of the three most important topics for every European chief executive officer. This is not just about inventing new products. It could involve new operation models or distribution channels. Whatever it is, it is always on the minds of the chief executive officers of large European companies. Companies that pay most attention to innovation are usually the best financial performers as well. Companies that have dedicated budgets are those that succeed in the long run.

In the past three years, there has been an increase in the number of registered patents in Central and Eastern Europe. There was a time when patent numbers were actually falling in our region but three years ago this trend started reversing. This means that the positive trend of innovation has reached our region as well.

But what does this have to do with women? There is a link between business success, innovation, and gender balance. Successful innovative companies are usually gender-balanced. I would say that this is a big opportunity for women.

What is the big message of this story? Aging affects everybody. Men and women are in the same shoes. We may not like it, but it is a big business opportunity and the best companies are thinking how they can address this issue so as to improve their performance. These are opportunities for all of us, regardless of our gender, but I think that women are going to have an advantage. This is so because women consume far more health

and wellness products than men. Also, over 90 percent of purchasing decisions about groceries, vacations, and homes are made by women.

It is also important to note that women these days have an unprecedented opportunity to achieve professionally whatever they want. If you work for a company that cares about the gender balance and tries to implement it, this gives you an excellent opportunity to climb to the top. The amount of money and effort spent on this issue at present is unprecedented and it may not be seen in the future. Now is the moment that we have to use. The best opportunities for entrepreneurship are in the new media. Women have wonderful opportunities in this field. That is so because they are innovative and creative, and seek job opportunities that give them flexibility.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Maria Dunavolgyi

DIRECTOR, CORVINUS UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

Can you share with us examples of women in top positions that have produced a positive effort on organizational culture and best practices?

Melanie Seier Larsen

This is not an easy question. There are both positive and negative examples of female and male leadership. I would not say that when a company is led by a woman, everything is fine whereas men lead poorly. I have observed female leaders in Central and Eastern Europe, and I would say that their leadership style had a positive effect on their companies. One of the things that I have observed is that communication is better when a woman is at the helm. Women tend to focus more on consensus rather than

give orders. This is important because in our region we still have a lot of autocratic leadership. Women who rely on consensus are usually much more successful than autocrats.

Anastasia Sideri

If there is so much money available and so much effort is being made to promote women to the top, why is there so little progress? What is the problem in your opinion?

Melanie Seier Larsen

This is the one-million-dollar question. The reason is that businesses are still mostly talking about this rather than doing something tangible. However, when people start talking about something it usually happens. It is just a matter of time.

There is another reason as well. It may sound radical but I have to share it with you. It is also our fault. I can think of a lot of examples of women who were approached about a leading position but they were not sure if they could do it, if they could achieve a good work-life balance, and if they could have children. Meanwhile, during all this deliberation, the job offer was gone. Women need to wake up. It is not just men that need to change their attitudes.

Mollie Painter-Morland

I wonder if there is something that companies should do in this respect or is it all just up to us?

Melanie Seier Larsen

As I said, the change needs to come from both sides. I am not saying that women should put on men's suits and start acting like men. That would be artificial. We need to believe more in ourselves. And companies should start acting instead of just talking. The least that they can do is to implement management and leadership sponsoring programs in order to identify talent and keep it.

THE LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE; PANEL WITH BUSINESS AND POLITICAL LEADERS

Pierre Casse

LEADERSHIP CHAIR, IEDC-BLED SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, SLOVENIA, AND
PROFESSOR, THE MOSCOW SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, SKOLKOVO, RUSSIA

If you want to get promoted, it is not enough to be effective in your job

I am privileged to be here, and I hope that we are going to have an exciting discussion.

I am going to start with a bit of background. Then, I will turn it over to the panel members. The session will end with 20 minutes of questions and answers.

In the past 10 years, I have conducted a series of seminars on women and leadership at the Kellogg School of Management in Chicago. I would like to share with you some of the questions that came out of the discussions with female leaders. This could be a platform for further discussion.

There are seven questions that these ladies, coming from all over the world, shared with each other and with me. The first question is whether there are significant differences between men and women as leaders. And if there are such differences, where do they come from? Is it biology or culture? Or both? That is a question that came up in almost every session.

Another question is if women are really interested in climbing the corporate ladder and whether they are ready to pay the price for that. To be honest, quite a few women say, "No. It is too costly. I am not ready to invest so much time and energy in a career.

I am much more interested in having a balanced life than fight to get a promotion".

How come so many women do not want to work for women? This came up in almost every session. I think it is a very interesting issue.

Next, is it true that many women reject the idea of quotas? Many of them say that they should climb the ladder because they are good, not because of regulations (in most cases set up by men).

Are women ready to play the power game that exists in every organization? We had exciting discussions on power. Do women perceive power in an organization the same way as men do? The typical answer is "Not quite. We have a different perception of power".

Do we see young ladies these days coming up the ladder, thinking differently in comparison to the older generation? Do they also behave differently in the corporate world? Do we see major differences not only between men and women but also between women?

Finally, is it true that women have to prove their potential to be promoted, whereas men have nothing to prove as they are capable anyway?

These are some of the questions that I would like to have this panel think about. But you do not have to answer them one by one. Maybe we can return to them during the question-and-answer session at the end of our Round Table.

Anna Elisabeth Prinz

AMBASSADOR, EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF GERMANY IN SLOVENIA,
GERMANY

The gender differences of the past are mostly irrelevant

I have lived in several countries where I was a representative of my country as a diplomat. I am a mother of four but I have never stopped working. My husband is also working. Before coming to Slovenia, I worked as an ambassador, travelling to many countries to promote internationalization of science and research, which was part of my job in the foreign ministry in Berlin. This was very important and interesting because research and development is going to determine our future and cannot be done at the national level only. This is where Europe is comparatively advanced and where we can compete as our main natural resources are “brains” and men and women have equal opportunities.

Before Berlin, I worked in Tokyo as a deputy head of mission. I observed many cultural differences also at my postings in Indonesia, Romania and Sri Lanka.

As you want a personal statement from my experience I will share my personal thoughts about leadership. I think for our discussion today we should focus on the framework conditions for leadership.

Leadership is important when change is needed and change is never easy. Leaders have to go “against the grain” of tradition with new ideas. This hurts as there are people who lose and win after changes. How can people be reassured to trust and follow a leader into a better future? A team spirit alone will not help to bring about changes. If you prefer a comfortable, complaining, middle of the crowd feeling you are no leader because you do not burden yourself with the responsibility for decisions. Team spirit however is needed in a sense that you have to convince and build on friends to go forward together and should not try all the time to appease opponents.

Concerning differences between men and women, I think that we have to take into account underlying structures and programs in our brains which were important for survival thousands of years ago and have not disappeared completely. Research shows that men are more oriented toward finding a place in a hierarchy and to be the strongest leader to harvest advantages. They struggle at the beginning to obtain a high rank but once they have found it, life becomes easier for them, as their leading position is accepted without constant discussion and challenges. Women in all countries I lived in were traditionally more oriented towards protection of their children for which a team effort and avoiding risks was the road to success.

Today, we live in a completely different world. The gender differences of the past are mostly irrelevant. We have technical means to overcome weaknesses. We have established democracies which legitimize decisions by elected leaders. Power and hierarchy in politics have to be accepted by women if we do not want to waste our time in endless discussions and struggles to determine, who is leading. In my experience in Japan and Germany in particular high rank for women helps to lead as there is no constant struggle for position only struggle among people of the same rank. That is why I am in favor of quotas that give access for women to leadership roles because their good ideas are only then taken into account for better solutions.

But we really have to have courage to lead and struggle for our ideas and to support the best if we want to support necessary changes.

If I work with men and women, the first task is to build trust, taking into account a male hierarchy approach and female team approach in decision making.

We cannot go forward without trust and we have to show this trust and credibility to followers by good examples. We have to motivate them and show them that we know where we are going and we know that our proposal is going to work. We have to make sure people go along with us and give us their support and should make them part of the success story.

I admire Slovenia because it is one of the best countries if you

look at criteria such as equal payment for women and men, better than Germany and you can even lead with high heels and feminine dresses without having to adopt a male dress code to be taken seriously.

We are coming from various European countries. I wish us all courage and power for change.

Anastasia Sideri

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, COCA-COLA CENTRAL & SOUTHERN EUROPE, GREECE, AND CHAIR OF THE WOMEN IN BUSINESS COMMITTEE OF AMCHAM, GREECE

Women make 90 percent of the purchasing decisions

I am happy to be here, representing not only my company, Coca-Cola, but also the professional women of Greece as I happen to be their chairperson.

I started my professional career as an engineer and then I became a marketer. I have 30 years of professional experience and I have spent the last 15 of those as professional communicator. I am proud to be here among these women that have proven that female leadership can make a difference. Nevertheless, the numbers are not in our favor. I am going to quote some numbers just to give support to my point.

Women make 90 percent of the purchasing decisions that matter to everybody. They are 60 percent of all university graduates, and 75 of those who achieve top grades. Still, we account for only four percent of the chief executive officers and 10 percent of board members or any other structure whose decisions affect the whole population. We are also getting paid 20 percent less than men. According to some estimates, it will take 118 years to close these gaps. Even my granddaughters, if I happen to have any, will not witness this change. Why is that so?

I think that it starts with us. We have to account for the fact that we have some beliefs that do not allow us to seek top positions. We are risk-averse and we lack the confidence that men have. I do not know if the roots of this are primarily biological or social. But it is a fact that we face hurdles created by society: our parents, our schools, the media, and the whole world around us.

We have heard of nice efforts to implement quotas, provide flexible hours and mentoring for aspiring female managers, and other good initiatives. But skills and will also matter. At least 43 percent of women who enter the job market state that they want to have a career and they feel fully equipped. But only five years later, this percentage falls to 16.

I would like to spend a couple of minutes telling you my own story. I think I was a lucky girl because of my parents. I was born in a very conservative environment in Athens in the 1960s, after the civil war. Nevertheless, my parents never treated me and my brother differently and taught us the same values. They told us both that we should become the best that we could. They let me learn languages, practice karate, watch football, and participate in political discussions. And they encouraged me to do engineering.

I took a job with Procter and Gamble. They persuaded me to go into marketing and gave me a great mentor. She became my best friend and taught me to follow my dreams. I changed career paths many times. I changed geographies and companies. I am very happy where I am now. I have been with Coca-Cola for 15 years. My company has a great understanding of women and it makes great plans for them. Things may not be perfect but they are good enough.

I learned that I have to trust myself. I have to trust my female part. In the beginning, probably because of my engineering background, I relied more on my male part. We all have two parts and we can rely on both. I also had to compete with a lot of men. Even the dress code was different. Gradually, through the mentorship that I received and through trial and error I gained

trust. And it paid off. It helped me make more effective teams of males and females.

I have noticed three differences between men and women that do not seem to be biological but probably have to do more with the way that we are brought up. One of these is intuition. We trust our gut feelings more than men and we have a stronger intuition than they. We do not need too many facts to understand something. When there is a problem in a relationship, we just sense it. I speak from experience because I have had a divorce already. I did not have to wait for the facts to find the mistress.

Another thing is empathy. We are care-takers. Traditionally, we took care of our families, our children, and our parents. We always find the time to listen, guide, and support. We care for our environment and our society. Women care for the long-term future, not just for the next quarter results.

Last but not least, I think men can focus better than we do. They find their single road to success and walk on it more effectively. We juggle multiple roles and we are quite successful at that at home, in the community and at work. There are studies that show that we are faster and more effective when we handle multiple tasks.

My advice is for us to use our female part and complement what men do. Make it at least to the company board. If you really want it, you can make it to the top. This is not just for us, but for our children as well.

I would like to finish with a little story that I read in the plane on the way here. Artemisia was a commander of a squadron of warships of the Persian king Xerxes. He had decided to invade Europe through Greece. I am sure you know that the Persians lost the battle of Marathon. Then, a large Persian fleet sailed to Piraeus, the port near Athens. They were confident that they would win this time because they vastly outnumbered the Greeks. Xerxes convened a meeting with all his admirals and they discussed the strategy of the upcoming battle. Everybody

shared ideas. Artemisia was the only one who dared say that the Persian navy should not engage in that battle because it would lose it. Yet, the king did not listen to her. Had he listened, the history of Europe would have been very different. After the lost battle, Xerxes decided to leave Europe. And he entrusted Artemisia with his children and asked her to take them back to Persia.

We need to trust ourselves so as to persuade everybody else that we can complement men.

Ljerka Puljić

ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT, THE AGROKOR GROUP, CROATIA

Women are not very good in the power game

I have always been a believer in gender equality. However, at this stage of my personal experience, I can tell you that we are not equal as we are not the same biologically. We are different. Men and women are different. And these differences help us complement each other and form a perfect partnership in families, in business, in leadership, and in society.

I was the second child in my family as I have an older sister. Throughout my childhood I have had to compete with many competitors. And then I never viewed my career as something in which I have to beat the men. I had to beat my competitors, no matter what sex they were.

Two weeks ago, I gave a big presentation to 600 students. At the end, some girls asked me what advice I would give them so that they could achieve professional success. I asked them if they were better students than the boys. They said that they were. So, I told them to keep being better after they have completed their studies. Do not lose the drive that you have. And have faith in yourself. A lot of girls hear men say that they are stupid or incapable. At some point they start believing that and lose their confidence

and end up thinking that they are worth less than men. Our duty as top managers is to help young females regain their self-confidence. They must believe that they are capable of success.

Men believe that they have potential and all they need to succeed is an opportunity. That is a good approach. Self-confidence is good. You should not wait until you have achieved something and somebody has noticed you and rewarded you. You may wait forever. You have to struggle and be brave. You have to ask for a reward. Otherwise, nobody will give you one. Perhaps some human resource manager will spot you but how much decision-making power do they have? They are rarely involved in decision-making.

I work for a company that has 65,000 employees. We are the largest company in Southeast Europe. So, I have seen a lot and can tell you that I believe in quotas for women, as that is a good way to promote the best. We cannot wait for 100 years for complete gender equality to take place. I am afraid that despite the ongoing increase in life spans, few of us will live long enough to see that equality. For that reason, I think that we could speed up that process through quotas.

Our company has been built on a lot of enthusiasm. Our reward is success. That is our company culture. We are financed through international financial markets and we have formal corporate governance. Two years ago, our chief executive officer appointed a supervisory board in which 40 percent were women. That was a very nice surprise.

Initiatives of this kind are good. When I was young, I thought that the way to be successful was to prove that you are one of the best. But then I discovered that it was not enough and it was not working well. Women are not very good in the power game. We believe that we must be honest and do everything right and then somebody will recognize our effort. There is no need for lobbying and internal networking. It is enough to be good. But after many years of professional experience, I would advise you to do some internal networking. You need a group of colleagues

to share ideas and opinions with. They will be your promoters. That is how men succeed. They have good networking skills. They go out together after work and drink together and have fun. And then, when it is time to promote somebody, they will tell you that one from their group should be preferred. And they will support him. Women are not so good at this game.

Women often believe that they need to write long analyses. The longer, the better. So if you can add another page to the document that is good. Do not do that. Nobody will read your whole document. They will look only at the first page. And they will say that they are absolutely sure what the right decision is because they have already discussed the idea among themselves and have made up their minds without your analysis. Do not waste too much time. While you are wasting your time, they are networking. You come to the meeting with a pile of papers but the men have already discussed the situation with the boss.

Sasha Bezuhanova

FOUNDER, THE CIVIL MOVEBG, AND FORMER GENERAL DIRECTOR,
HEWLETT-PACKARD, BULGARIA

Being a smart, young woman in a male environment can be an advantage

Thank you, Danica, for inviting me to this forum. After everything that has been said, I will try to approach this topic from a different angle.

I am an exception. I became a general manager at the age of 26. I managed Hewlett-Packard Bulgaria for 11 years. During seven of those years, I was the only female general manager of our company in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. During my time at the helm of Hewlett-Packard Bulgaria, we designed seven projects that were incorporated in the company's world portfolio. We also proved that Bulgaria was a good place for a very important investment. Today, the company employs 6,000 in Bulgaria and is one of its four strategic centers. I have proved

that I can be successful in Bulgaria and I wanted to try if I can be equally good on the international stage. I became Public sector manager for the Central and Eastern European operation of Hewlett-Packard, including Slovenia and most of the countries that you come from and did that for three years. After that, I became a manager of two business lines for the world Growth Markets covering 67 countries.

Many people think that information technologies are a business environment for men. Indeed, that is the case to some extent. But, being a smart, young woman in a male environment can be an advantage. Of course, there are prejudices, and networks, and political games. But if you are good, you have much better chances of being recognized and having your ideas accepted. As a woman, you will have a somewhat different view on how to motivate people and how to make teams. If you feel discriminated against, I urge you to think of yourselves as people carrying different weapons.

I have more good news for you today. The world is changing and this change is fundamental. We are going through a transition that is difficult to understand today. It is not taught at business schools and there are no handbooks on it. Nobody can teach you how to navigate through modern times. I think that all the economic and political turbulences that the world is experiencing amount to a transition from competition to collaboration, collectivity, and sharing. Female attitude in leadership, management, solutions to crises, and structuring teams and communities are much more adequate in such times. I do not accept the forecast according to which full gender equality will be achieved in 100 years. Nobody can forecast anything 100 years from now. Let us think what role we can play today so that we stimulate this process. I think that women are perfectly positioned to do so.

Three years ago, Bulgaria went through turbulent times. I was working on big projects throughout the world like the educational system of the Emirates or innovative schooling at

Skolkovo University. I was sitting in a plane from Jakarta to Europe, thinking about this. It occurred to me that if all capable people left Bulgaria to work abroad we would soon start feeling the consequences. There are almost two million Bulgarians abroad today.

During that flight, I decided to abandon my career and return to Bulgaria. I founded an organization called MoveBG. It is a platform for what I call the "creating people". No matter what political preferences or professional expertise they have, those are the people that share common fundamental values and can contribute to the positive development of Bulgaria. We do a lot of things to support the community. We stimulate a debate on Bulgaria's future. Pragmatically, we try to define the country's long-term economic trajectory. We are also building a culture of shared values that is a foundation for success. We use all sorts of modern methods, including everything that is available on the Internet. It helps us to become less ethnocentric and more global. I believe in networks, not in political parties.

We see a new generation of young ladies carrying fewer prejudices from the past, such as the idea that girls have to marry by the age of 25 because things become critical after that. I work with young women who feel free to make choices in accordance with their personal wishes. They have the opportunity to pursue their own path to happiness which is everybody's ultimate life goal. They are starting their own businesses, conquering the world out of Sofia and Ljubljana and Bled.

I work a lot for women. I am the chair of the European Center for Women and Technology. We have a chapter in Bulgaria as well. In 2010, I was named the "digital woman of Europe". As I believe that when you get something you have to give something back, I founded my own prize competition called "Entrepregirl" whose goal is to stimulate an entrepreneurial spirit and culture in young women. It is an annual online competition in entrepreneurial ideas coming from young ladies, aged 16-23. At that age, they are still less influenced by the stereotypes and

the seed for starting their own business in the future, if they wish to, finds better ground. The prize is education and mentorship as well as membership in the Bulgarian Center for Women and Technologies.

However, the prize is not the most important thing. It is important to stimulate entrepreneurial culture. We do that by having young women place their ideas on the Internet and letting the world know what they are capable of. We do a lot of webinars, networking, and mentorships. All these are important things that make an impact.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Linda Pacolli

RISK MANAGEMENT OFFICER AND MARKET LIQUIDITY,
BANKA EKONOMIKE, KOSOVO

We talked a lot about leadership today and there is a question that has been bothering me all day. I would like to know why women, as well as men for that matter, are afraid of feminism. When people hear that word, they react negatively: "No, no, I am not a feminist". Why is that so? I do not understand. The definition of feminism is the belief that men and women must have equal rights. What is wrong with that?

Ljerka Puljić

When I was much younger, feminism was fashionable. By now, we have achieved official equality. From a legal perspective, we are equal. There is no equality in salaries, though, so there is still a lot of room for improvement. Feminism has acquired a negative image and a lot of people today would not like to be seen as feminists. The reason for that is that at least in this part of the world, men and women are equal before the law. If you continue your feminist campaign, people will ask you what exactly you want to achieve.

Linda Pacolli

Do you think that this has to do with cultural upbringing and the idea that men should work whereas women should take care of the home? And that men should earn more than women?

Ljerka Puljić

I think that in Kosovo, where you come from, it is still an issue. It is a very traditional society. That is one of the explanations of the fact that people in your country have a negative view of feminism. In Kosovo, there is still a traditional perception of the role of men and women. Therefore, feminism seems to go against the mainstream.

Sasha Bezuhanova

I think that in our part of the world, feminism has a negative connotation because of the way that it has been practiced. First of all, a lot of people do not understand what it is about. A lack of knowledge leads to incorrect interpretations.

Second, feminism is associated with segregation. Female feminists are viewed as emphasizing an identity contrast between men and women. Very few feminists have involved men in their campaigns. Obviously, this has created tension in society.

Danica Purg

Last week I was in Turkey at the Euro-Asian conference. A Kosovo minister was in attendance, a very clever lady. She shared a beautiful story with us. She had worked together with a group of men struggling for the independence of Kosovo and she was the only woman in that group. And when independence was

achieved, the men started distributing roles and functions and left her out. However, she did not give up and became a minister.

Bojana J. Jacobsen

ADVISOR FOR STRATEGIC PROJECTS, FUNCTION FOR STRATEGY AND PLANNING NIS A.D., SERBIA

I am involved in the elaboration of a strategy for the promotion of women at my company. We are struggling to identify talented women and keep them in the company. As part of that, I read a study from 2013 that found that a woman on average needs to be twice as qualified as a man, and twice as experienced, to get a job in Serbia.

I heard a lot of talk here about the need for women to believe in themselves and I agree completely. But can you imagine going through that funnel in which your competition gets tougher and tougher and you have to be twice as good as them? I think that a woman must be a superhero to stay confident in these circumstances, seeing men getting promoted who are at best as good as her, not more.

I have worked in three countries in three totally different industries. I have lived in Scandinavia and I have to tell you that they have the same problem. I would like to hear what, in your view, are the best and worst approaches to a solution to this problem.

Anastasia Sideri

If you are not happy with your employer go work for somebody else. There are enough employers out there who believe that women are equal to men. I am sure that this is the case even in Serbia.

What is the worst strategy that I have encountered? To put something in writing and do nothing to enforce it. For example, there may be quotas for women, but they are not always applied. You have to walk the talk, not just check boxes.

As for the best approach, you have to understand what your women really want. A lot of companies in Greece do in-depth surveys these days, sitting down with women and talking to them, trying to accommodate their needs. That is one of the best practices that I know of.

Anna Elisabeth Prinz

Let me take a look at the crystal ball and try to see how things will look in a decade. A lot of things will change. Look at Berlin, Tokyo and other big cities today. Fifty percent of the households consist of one person only. My own children have international networks of friends but they do not think much of marriage because they know that half of those who get married also get divorced. They want long friendships and shared values.

Networks will become increasingly more important in the future.

Pierre Casse

We have to conclude this session keeping one thing in mind. We heard quite a lot of good advice. One of the interesting observations is that men are not afraid of bluffing whereas women do not like that very much. Women like to be authentic. If you are not good, you admit it. But men do not.

Also, we heard that the power game is absolutely critical. The critical factor if you want to get promoted is not to be effective in your job. You must be good at networking. You have to make sure that the right people know the right things about you at the right time. It is as simple as that. The research is clear about it. Many women think that if they are good somebody will come to them

some day with a nice promotion on a silver plate. That is a naive thought. Things do not work that way.

But is it not true that quite a few male leaders are afraid of successful women? According to my own research, there are three main reasons for that. The first one is that women work harder. Number two, women are more demanding. They want excellent quality. And thirdly, women are more reliable. Men look at women and get scared. They perceive women as a threat to their careers.

CLOSING COMMENTS OF THE DAY

Mollie Painter-Morland

MODERATOR OF THE CONFERENCE

COCA-COLA CHAIR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT IEDC-BLED SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, SLOVENIA, AND NOTTINGHAM BUSINESS SCHOOL, UK

Women outscore men on 9 out of 10 essential leadership attributes. But they score lower on vision.

I would also like to share some concluding remarks. Women have some false beliefs. Pierre mentioned some of them: we think that it is more important to be competent than well networked, to perform than to have a potential, that we are not good enough on our own and need teams. We are also risk-averse instead of being bold. We believe that feminism is about segregation and activism. We are afraid to ask for a pay raise. We believe that we should be authentic and not bluff. And we also think that it is impossible to be beautiful and smart at the same time. That is why men are afraid of us.

Let me share one of the false beliefs that I had to address in my career. According to an article in the Harvard Business Review, women outscore men on nine out of 10 essential leadership attributes. But they score lower on vision. This made me think what exactly is meant by vision. What is vision and do women score low on that? The problem is that we do not articulate our own ideas but prefer to seek advice. We call our team together and brainstorm. And when we achieve something, we do not ask for a reward for it. But there is something else as well that somebody articulated here and it is one of our strongest assets. That is intuition. The definition of vision does not include intuition. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that this is wrong.

Thirty years ago, Danica Purg had an intuitive vision that her plans for this school would work. Then, she did the networking to make it work. She came to the conclusion that the existing beliefs about management education are not necessarily right. You can have arts in management education. I think it was pretty visionary.

SPECIAL DINNER ADDRESS

Jernej Močnik

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,

NOVA KREDITNA BANKA MARIBOR D.D., MAIN SPONSOR

I feel like a lucky winner, having been invited to give a speech at a women's conference. I would like to thank Prof. Danica Purg and her team for organizing this event and inviting us to it.

I have to tell you that 70 percent of the managerial positions at our bank are held by women. We are really proud of that. One of the benefits of that is that decisions tend to be based on consensus which is not the case when you have only male managers. We also benefit from the women's negotiation skills, especially in sales. Also, our bank is capable of running multiple projects at the same time since women have an ability to carry out several tasks at the same time.

In conclusion, I would like to share an adage with you. I read it a couple of days ago and I liked it. Please do not take the animals in it literally. "An army of mice led by a lion will beat an army of lions led by a mouse."

Dear ladies, find the lions in you. I wish you a pleasant evening.

BUILDING, BRIDGING AND BLAZING PATHWAYS FOR WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP

Susan R. Madsen

THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER OF THE CONFERENCE

UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY, WOODBURY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, USA

I have been a leadership scholar for many years and have loved studying various aspects of women and leadership. Eleven years ago, I decided to start interviewing high-profile women leaders. There are many leadership books out there, but my niche is quite different. I wanted to learn from these women how they developed their leadership throughout their lives. I decided that I would explore the influence of their fathers, mothers, siblings, and relatives, as well as the influences around them in elementary and secondary schools. I was interested in all of the different experiences they had to strengthen themselves, such as participation in sports, speech and debate, and yearbook; things that helped them get where they were when I interviewed them, whether it be a US governor, university president, CEO in Dubai, and so forth. My interest has always been: how do we raise more girls in our societies who have voice and strength and want to lead and influence others? I spent many years exploring top women's childhoods, adolescences, young adulthood, professional careers, career paths, and the non-work related elements of their lives as well.

I do a lot of work in different parts of the world but also in my home state of Utah. I have had people say to me, "Why do you do all this women's work? Do you not like men?" My answer, of course, is that I love men! I am married to one, and I have four children, three of whom are male. I love them all!

Others wonder if I work on women's issues because of my family background; I have been asked if I was raised with a bunch of sisters. I actually have six brothers and no sisters. Believe it or not, I still play racquetball with one of them every week. I also golf with my brothers. They are great men and have been such profound influences in my upbringing, along with my wonderful parents.

I was raised with voice and choice. Some of my brothers recently told me that I still scared them a little. And a few years ago my father told me that I was the most aggressive of his children. This gives you a little bit of background on the influences in my own life that had an impact on the development of leadership throughout the years.

For some reason, I feel a call to do the work that I am doing. A year or two ago, I gave a keynote at a conference in Northern England. I was asked to speak on female leadership and calling. Calling can be religious, and I happen to be religious so calling to me comes from God. However, you also feel called just because you feel "made" to do the work or service you do. It does not have to be religious. I believe my calling is to work with girls and women and inspire them to want to have voice and confidence. I want to help them to step forward and meet their challenges courageously. We have so many challenges today in our homes and societies. In fact, you have unique challenges in Central and Eastern European country that I may not even know about. I also have my own challenges.

In the past, we would say "Maybe she has the skills to become a leader. Let us develop her". Then we would ignore the development of others because we thought only a few people should be leaders. However, I just do not believe this anymore, and I have my own theory. I have worked with many non-profit organizations. Just last month, I spoke to 300 survivors of domestic violence. I see a lot of work that needs to be done. I do not think that we have the luxury anymore to say, "Maybe we should develop you and not someone else". I believe that we need every girl and every boy, every women and every man to become leaders. We need everyone to develop leadership and be

able to step forward and do the good things that need to be done in this world. I am very passionate about that. We must all work to build, bridge, and blaze pathways for women and leadership around the world.

Today I will answer five questions: (1) Where are we in terms of women leaders? (2) Why do we need more women leaders? (3) What unique strengths do women bring to leadership? (4) What challenges do women face in becoming leader? To be able to move forward we need to acknowledge the existence of barriers. And, (5) what strategies and initiatives may help?

First, sometimes people think that we have “made it” in terms of gender equality. We have not. We see from the existing research that we need to keep up the urgency for equality because when the dialogue decreases, we all retreat to our comfort zones. More continue to choose men as our leaders. I have to tell you that even the countries that are at the top of the gender equality lists have quite a lot of work left to do. There are a number of good reports out there that share the details of where various countries are ranked in terms of women in senior management and politics. For example, Grant Thornton’s report titled “Women in senior management: Setting the stage,” provides some helpful insight. In 2013, the global average of women in senior management was 24%, with countries ranging from China at 51%, Poland at 48%, down to Japan at 7% and The United Arab Emirates at 11%. We were at 24% globally in 2007 and then dropped and recently we are back to 24%. It takes continuous work. The Global Gender Gap Report (2014) also has some interesting data on various countries in terms of economic participation and opportunities, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. These reports and others demonstrate that there is still much to be done in countries around the world to strengthen women.

Second, many people do not understand the business case for women leaders. Why do we need more women on corporate boards and in top leadership positions? Just because I call it a “business case” does not mean that it is restricted to business.

We also need to get more women's voices in politics, non-profits organizations, churches, and all sorts of leadership roles.

I looked at close to 100 studies on the benefits of having women in top leadership and condensed the findings into a research and policy brief. What did these studies report about the benefits or advances of having more female leaders on boards and in leadership teams? My brief highlighted five areas that can impact organizations: to improve financial performance, to strengthen organizational climate, to leverage talent, to increase corporate social responsibility (CSR) and reputation, and to enhance innovation and collective intelligence.

To improve financial performance: The statistics show that, generally speaking, you can improve financial performance if you have more women on your board or in leadership teams. The tipping point seems to be 30 percent, and this applies to both corporate boards and leadership teams. A variety of studies have shown better financial results, increased profitability, higher operating results, better economic growth, faster debt reduction, lower risk of insolvency, and more. Other studies have shown that when women are included in leadership, companies make less risky bids, have better stock growth, have better corporate governance and oversight, and improved corporate sustainability. Again, studies have found these benefits when organizations have women and men working together.

To strengthen organizational climate: Studies have found the following advances when more women are in leadership roles: decreased turnover intentions, higher employee satisfaction, more women hired for pipeline, smaller gender pay gap, increased employee engagement, increased productivity, higher customer satisfaction, lower corporate fraud, reduced groupthink, higher team performance, more considerate team members, and more ethical choices & decisions. The latest research on corporate fraud shows that women embezzle less often than men. But, when women do embezzle, they take less. I love the benefit mentioned previously that says when women are in leadership, there are “more considerate team members.” That is very nice.

To leverage talent: Studies have found that women are better

holistic thinkers. They seek win-win solutions and are more process-oriented. They also ask different questions. A few months ago, I spoke to 400-500 junior and high school girls about how they can strengthen their confidence. I asked them if it matters that we do not have many women in our state legislature? They were not sure. I said, "It matters!" Men and women ask different questions. We have different experiences. We were raised differently. The research is clear that, specifically in the political process, states, countries, and regions have less women voices in their political bodies, have less funding for social programs, healthcare, poverty-reduction efforts, and education. Sometimes we call these "soft issues". I do not care what we call them, but they are important—they are critical!

The research is also clear that women pay more attention to non-verbal cues. When people are bored, we can see it a little bit better than men. Some men are also good at this too, and not every woman is brilliant at this. But, generally, we pay more attention to non-verbal cues. Women also focus more on inclusiveness and nurturing. We excel at developing others as well. Some people disagree but I think that these are wonderful benefits. Studies also show that women make more ethical decisions, have higher integrity and honesty, and focus on self-development more than men.

To increase CSR and reputation: Some research studies have found that when women are on boards and in top leadership roles have increased CSR, higher-quality CSR initiatives, greater social responsiveness, better engagement with society, greater philanthropic responses, improved corporate reputation, better corporate social performance, and increased social performance indicators. So, companies with women on their boards tend to give more to their communities. I love that.

To enhance innovation and collective intelligence: When you have more women on your team, you have better problem-solving and more innovation. I talked about this on a radio talk show once and I was asked if decisions were made faster. I said, "No it does not". Actually, when you have a lot of ideas on the

table, it can take a little longer. But is it worth it? Absolutely. There is not only better problem-solving but also increased knowledge formation and higher collective intelligence. Do we need that today? Think of all the crises that we are living through: the refugees and the wars around Europe and the Middle East. These are big issues, but there are smaller issues all of the time around each of us and with organizations as well. Do we need better problem-solving and collective intelligence for those too? We do. And to achieve that, we need more diverse voices around the table, including women. If we had only women, we would not get the best solutions, either. I hope you are following me. The studies demonstrate unarguably that we need diversity. People who refuse to talk about this are not well informed. The research is clear that what we need in order to move forward more successfully in business and society is to include women and other diverse voice in leadership positions. So who benefits when women are leaders? Everyone!

Recently, Jimmy Carter said, "The biggest challenge facing our world today... is based on the presumption that men and boys are superior to women and girls". Sheryl Sandberg, in her book "Lean In", said the following: "The laws of economics and many studies of diversity tell us that if we tapped the entire pool of human resources and talent, our collective performance would improve." She also said, "Legendary investor Warren Buffett has stated generously that one of the reasons for his great success was that he was competing with only half of the population. The Warren Buffetts of my generation are still largely enjoying this advantage. When more people get in the race, more records will be broken (Sandberg, 2013, p. 7).

Third, what are some of the unique strengths that women bring to the table? Have any of you read *Athena Doctrine: How Women (and Men Who Think Like Them) Will Rule the Future?* It is a solid book, written by two men. There is some fascinating research behind it. The authors surveyed 64,000 people from 13 countries. The respondents classified 125 behavioral traits as masculine, feminine, or neutral. They found that many of the qualities of the ideal leader today are more feminine than

masculine. People all over the world felt that women are more likely to wish to make the world a better place to live. They were also seen as more nurturing. But the fascinating thing was that the respondents felt that the world would be a better place if men thought more like women. The researchers found that 66 percent of adults, including 63 percent of men and 65 percent of millennials agreed with this view. That is interesting. The majority of people want feminine traits in leaders: cooperation, nurturing, selfless, patient, empathetic, expressive, and working for a better world.

There is another study that I love. It was published in the Harvard Business Review a few years ago. It was a large-scale study at IBM, with over 20,000 respondents. It found that it is not true that men are better leaders than women. I also hear that women are better leaders than men. That is not true either. Both can be exceptional leaders in the right context. Nevertheless, many people still assume that men are better leaders. This Zenger Folkman study (2011) found that females have slightly higher scores when ranked of 15 of the 16 competences that top leaders exemplified most. Things like takes initiative, practices self-development, displays high integrity and honesty, drives for results, develops others, inspires and motivates others, builds relationships, and more. Men were higher in only one category, which was “develops strategic perspectives.” All scores were very close, however, between men and women.

Overall I want to say something that is important to understand about the research. Overall, men’s and women’s leadership styles do differ in statistically significant ways, but the differences are small. A lot of what we do is the same despite some significant differences in some areas. I want to stress that to make sure that we all understand it.

Fourth, what are some of the challenges that women face? Women often talk about problems, difficulties, and even trials that they have to go through. For one of my books, I interviewed 10 of the 20 women governors of the United States. So that was a good sample size. They used the word “challenge” much more often than “problems” or “trials”. When I ask them about the

difficulties that they have to deal with, they have a bit of a smile on their faces. They refer to these as challenges. I remember one saying, "I was interested to see just how sturdy my constitution was!" That was a typical reaction rather than "Woe is me! I have to hang in there". Do you see the different attitude?

I live in Utah, a state with a lot of mountains. Some of them are close to my home and I see them from my porch. My husband and children used to look at the snow-capped peaks and wish they could climb them (which they did many times). But I know people who will never climb a mountain. They see that as a trial rather than a challenge. Yet, some people look at hard things and consider what they might learn or what it might feel like to conquer something so difficult.

Now, there are two types of challenges: external and internal. There are people who blame their failures only on outside or external challenges and others may say the fault with few women leaders is the women themselves. However, what is clear from the research is that we need to work with organizations and society and change things—including laws and policies—(external) but we also need to work with ourselves and other women (internal).

It is important to acknowledge the glass ceiling, pay inequity, organizational practices that may not be fair (e.g., recruiting, hiring, career development, training, promotion), others perceptions (likeability, attractiveness, discrimination), and the lack of opportunities, unconscious bias, and the effect of socialization. I sometimes hear company representatives say "We have done everything that we can. We are now equal. We do not really talk about these things because we do not need to". Red flag right there! If there is no talk about these issues, that does not mean that things are good. If there is no talk about it, it probably means that there is a lot of unconscious bias in that environment. We all have unconscious biases in our judgments of ourselves and each other. Unless these unconscious biases surface, the organization has not done enough. I hope I have not offended anybody, but when an organization is sweeping these issues under the rug, that is a red flag for me.

The topic of attractiveness came up yesterday. Last year, a study was published that found that, the better looking a man is, the greater his advantage in terms of leadership. If you are a woman, you are expected to be middle-of-the-road or a little bit above. If you are too good-looking you lose credibility. It does not seem fair, does it? It is an external barrier that we cannot control at all. We need to do more work with our organizations and our societies on these hidden biases.

Recently, I was ready to board a flight when two female pilots walked by. I was startled. And then I started wondering why I had reacted like that. Did I expect that to fly a plane you need muscles? I keep a journal and that day I noted my unconscious bias.

Now to internal barriers: Sheryl Sandberg (2013) said that, “In addition to the external barriers erected by society, we are hindered by barriers within ourselves. We lack self-confidence and do not raise our hands enough. We lean back when we should be leaning in. We internalize the negative messages that we get during our lives. These messages tell us that it is wrong to be aggressive and powerful. We lower our own expectations of what we can achieve. We continue to do most of the housework and childcare. We compromise our career goals to make room for partners and children that may not even exist yet. Compared to our male colleagues, fewer of us aspire to senior positions.” Many studies have supported these findings.

Some time ago I did a search on Microsoft clips to see what a “leader” meant. It turns out that it is about muscles and winning, win-loss rather than win-win. Women prefer a win-win situation. If leadership is about win-lose, we do not see ourselves there. We cannot envision ourselves as leaders if we think “leadership” looks a certain way—most often examples of leaders are men. A lot of girls and women opt out of leadership because they feel they do not see examples of leaders who look like them—in more ways than one.

Other challenge relates to confidence. Research suggests that women are less self-assured than men and have more self-doubt. They have more anxiety in leaving their comfort zones, and keep

hurt feelings longer than men. They overthink and don't let go of defeats or mistakes as fast. They have hurt feelings longer than men and just themselves harder than men. They take longer to get started again after failure and don't use failure to learn as well as men (beat themselves up). Is this shocking to you? I am being sarcastic, of course. I know it is not shocking. The research has found that self-confidence in girls drops between age 10 and 13. Boys and girls are pretty much equal until aged 10-13. And then things change.

It is clear that differences between men and women are a mix between genetics, socialization, and our own choices. The best news is that, according to the latest research, awareness, confidence development, and leadership development work! There is some real hope there. We can achieve a lot by working with men and women in order to have them understand these things. Girls and women can become more confident, and confidence with women can look different than it does with men.

When I teach about confidence, there are many different things that we talk about. For example, when a woman is in a board room where most people are men, she will automatically talk 75 percent less. And women will tend to sit on the side, unless you bring this to their attention. But if men are among women, do they talk 75 percent less? No.

We tend to ruminate more, which means that we think a lot about things. If somebody says something unpleasant to a man and a woman, she is likely to think about it longer than the man. Sometimes this suppresses our confidence. It is important to learn more about things like perfectionism, attributions, rumination, asking clearly for needs, disclaimers, deflecting praise, qualification, negotiation, talking less, and more.

Fifth, in terms of strategies and initiatives, we need a restructuring of processes and systems. But we must also strengthen capacities in women. Both of those need to happen. There is a lot of research on the different things that need to be done. Let me give you some recommendations.

Here are a few ideas. First, create a pipeline of women leaders by strategically providing developmental opportunities to females identified as potential leaders. I want to make a mention here. Developing leadership potential in women without the presence of men is entirely different from an environment in which there are men. Bring just one man to the room and the entire conversation will change. The research on that is very clear. There are topics, such as rumination, that women do not like to discuss with men. There is value in women-only leadership workshops. However, mixed gender develop experiences are also important, so you don't want to have women only attend women-only training.

Second, educate and encourage top company leaders to become change agents for diversity.

Third, consider at least one woman for every director opening and ensure that your company has at least one woman sitting on your board. Unfortunately, we have women who do not support other women. That is just wrong. Women must support each other. Instead, some women can be very harsh and actually do damage to other women. Often they do not understand what they are doing and what negative impact they are producing. Fortunately, we do not see this as often as we used to, but it is still there and happens often.

Fourth, extend your pool of potential directors by looking beyond chief executive officers for external level candidates.

Fifth, examine your practices to see if you can make changes for better recruitment, promotion, and retention of female leaders.

I also have a number of recommendations for improving and strengthening the things that I say are more “internal” challenges and opportunities. For example, men will run for office or apply for a promotion when they have 50 or 60 percent of the necessary qualifications. They have been socialized to do so. They think that they have what it takes and they can learn the rest. Women believe they need to be 90-100% qualified to step

forward. Women are also socialized to think that it all depends on who you are already. So, if a girl gets an F on a math test, she thinks, "I am not good enough." That is the prevalent view instead of "I can learn and grow".

We need to do a better job selecting, promoting, and keeping women in leadership positions, but we also have to challenge our own assumptions, recognize and explore barriers, learn to reflect, accept and accept and give feedback.

No matter what we do, we must raise our aspirations and motivations—and help others do the same. If you do not aspire to be a leader and have voice, you are not going to do it. The existing research demonstrates that girls and women aspire less to be leaders and have voice. We need to work on that. Women struggle with envisioning themselves as leaders. We do not even see women in those positions. Our girls and young women need to see you. They need to see and envision. Women are significantly less likely than men to see themselves as qualified to be leaders.

I love the topic of perfectionism. Women like things to be perfect and that keeps them away from confidence. Confidence is different from self-esteem. Confidence is action. Unless you act, you do not get more confidence. You can think that you are great all day long. But unless you do something, you are not going to get more confidence. We need to "act" more to strengthen our confidence. We often think about acting but we do not act.

Women should seek opportunities to grow. I often hear women say, "I am not qualified. I am raising kids at home. I am qualified only for non-profit work. I am on the board of a non-profit organization but that does not count". Everything counts because it is a new experience. Women do not always understand that and unfortunately hiring agencies do not understand that, either. My oldest child is 28 and he was absolute hell to raise, right from the womb. They put me in a hospital for internal organ bruising. Two nurses said at different times, "This is a wild child". After he was born, he was crazy. He did not sleep. He is still crazy.

He flies off mountains, bikes, and snowboards. I saw him as challenging, and he was hard on my other kids as well. During my first women and leadership studies around 2005-2007, I asked the women leaders, "Did being a mother help develop you for leadership?" I ask that because people do not think that it does. But after I read the studies, I realized that my own child has actually been a gift to me. He has developed me so much it is remarkable! This child taught me about forgiveness. Every morning I woke up, forgave him, and loved that child. I learned about sibling rivalry and conflict management. I managed four teenagers. Is that not leadership? Even managing a husband sometimes is leadership. What I am saying is that women often do not give themselves credit. Women that I meet all over the world have no idea how amazing they are. They do not know how strong they are and what skills they possess. They have the ability to change lives and whole communities. They can change the world.

If you take time to look back at your life, you will realize that what has happened in the past can help you now. Warren Bennis (1989) said the following: "There are lessons in everything, and if you are fully deployed, you will learn most of them. Experiences aren't truly yours until you think about them, analyze them, examine them, question them, reflect on them, and finally understanding them. The point, once again, is to use your experiences rather than being used by them, to be the designer, not the design, so that experiences empower rather than imprison."

Let me finish with a quote from Robert Kennedy. "Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance". Maybe in your cultures you would not call it "oppression and resistance." But what I am saying here is that each of us, in looking at tomorrow, in looking at the future, needs to look at how we can have more voice and confidence. Let us look ahead.

How can we influence more girls and young women to find their voices and confidence, to want to influence, to want to lead, so that we can have stronger homes and churches and communities and countries? Let's change the world!

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ROLE MODEL SESSION

Being a Woman of Influence

Susan R. Madsen

THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER OF THE CONFERENCE AND THE MODERATOR
OF THE ROLE MODEL SESSION
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY, WOODBURY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, USA

We have a panel of wonderful women. I have a long list of questions for them and I would like to start with one. I ended my presentation with a recommendation for women to think back and reflect on their lives. I use that as a leadership development tool. So, I will ask you this. Think of one or two people in your life who helped you develop your voice and confidence. And think of some experience in high school or college that helped you gain confidence.

Gordana Kovačević

CEO, ERICSSON NIKOLA TESLA, CROATIA

I am chief executive officer of Ericsson Nikola Tesla, a leading information & communication technology company not only in Croatia but also in the entire region. I lead a team of 3,000 employees. Our board consists of women alone because I am, at the moment, its one and only representative.

We learn every day. We learn from our parents when we are very young and then we learn from our teachers. I had great parents. I have two sisters and all of us got fantastic support from our family. They encouraged us to study and share with other people. They taught us to put very high standards on ourselves. We learned from them that our voices needed to be heard. They also taught us that it does not matter if you fail as long as you learn from your failures.

I wanted to go to a mathematics high school, which was very male-oriented. My parents were very proud of that and supported me. They coached me and charged me with positive energy so that I believe that I could do anything because I was a special person. They also taught me that I should do the same to my children and encourage them to go beyond their expectations.

I started going to primary school at the age of six. Although I was the youngest child in the class, my classmates elected me to be president of the class. I was very proud of that. I felt a responsibility to coach the other children because some of them were not very good in mathematics, for example.

I believe that leadership is about learning and sharing. It is about learning from others but you should also have high expectations for yourself. And it is very important that you have complete freedom to demonstrate who you are. Each of us is unique and there is no need to copy others. You can learn from others but you also need to be yourself.

I chose to study electrical engineering and informatics. Throughout that time, I was surrounded by men. I was never scared of living in accordance with my own values and beliefs. I have always wanted to be a good person, which means sharing with others, and supporting others.

Danica Purg

DIRECTOR, EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP CENTRE

AND PRESIDENT, IEDC-BLED SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, SLOVENIA

I run two big organizations. One is the IEDC-Bled School of Management, the oldest management school in Central and Eastern Europe. We are celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. The other is CEEMAN, which initially stood for Central and East European Management Development Association. Today, it is a global organization and it has 220 business schools from 55 countries on

its membership list. I have led this organization for 24 years. I, too, have parents that played a very important role in my life. They made me very ambitious. They also allowed me to do what I wanted. I was born right after the war, in very difficult circumstances, in a village in the most underdeveloped region in Slovenia. Being the oldest child I had to help my parents at home. At the age of five I would go out, walk through a wood, and get some milk. I was afraid of rain and thunders, and I sang loudly as I walked through the wood so that I did not hear the thunders. This was a kind of self-development.

I started leading the children in school at a very early age. In first grade, the teacher canceled a trip to Maribor and I got mad and took five other girls with me and we took the train to Maribor on our own. There were other stories as well but this is the only one that I have time to share.

I was very independent already at the age of 14. I lived in Maribor on my own. My parents allowed me to do what I wanted. They just could not handle me.

I think that my leadership skills developed through stubbornness and frustrations. I was very frustrated as a young girl as I did everything for everybody but it was always somebody else who got the credit, and it was mostly men. I really hated that.

At the age of 18, I became commander of an international brigade in Montenegro. I enjoyed it very much but I remained frustrated for a long time, until I met my husband. He helped me overcome my frustrations and discover my qualities.

Then, I faced a real challenge: setting up this management school. That was a great opportunity for me to show what I was capable of. I realized that courage was one of my main qualities. I had to be courageous to set up a management school in the socialist period. You cannot imagine how many people were disturbed by the fact that I set up a management school. They thought that I was importing imperialism rather than professionalism.

This being said, being a women was an advantage. I went around the world of management education, which was totally dominated by men. Those men helped me a lot. A had a great mentor. I learned a lot of Aleksandra Kornhauser who was my role model. She was minister of science. Two days ago I met her grandson in Ljubljana and asked him how his grandmother was doing. He said that she was 90 and she had just relayed her position of a dean to another woman because she had other projects on her agenda. When I heard that I realized that I was not too old.

Tanja Fajon

MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, SLOVENIA

I do not come from the business environment. I am a politician but I had different jobs in the past. I am member of the European parliament. I am a very dynamic person and I travel a lot. For the last few years, I have hardly ever spent more than three or four nights in one place. I have to tell you that it is quite challenging.

I was a fairly shy child. When people came to visit, I often hid behind a table. You would have never guessed that I would always be up front today. This shows that it is possible to change.

People tell me now that I was a very demanding person even when I was very young. I was always telling the other kids how to play. I was their leader.

I do not have a real role model in my life but my parents were quite influential. My mother is still influential in my life and we are very good friends. This is very important to me as we do not see each other very often. My father, who passed away many years ago, was also a very influential figure in my life. He was an actor and a journalist, and a real role model in my life. Throughout your life, you can always find somebody who can serve as a role model to you.

I was a journalist for many years, working for different commercial radio stations. I always tried to find something new. I was extremely full of energy. One thing that left a mark on my life was a serious disease that I had 20 years ago. I had to fight for my life. I think that changed me a lot. I became a fighter. Problems that seemed big at that time seem to me small at present. After an experience like mine, you start appreciating life in a different way.

Danica was also influential in my life because she convinced me to do an MBA program. Until then, I had done studies in different areas, such as international relations and politics.

In my dynamic life I have traveled and studied a lot in the past 15 years. I shuttle a lot between Brussels, Strasbourg and other places and I really feel as a European. I travel around the world and I do not see my place just in Slovenia. I like the international environment and I like different cultures. I believe in mutual respect. That enables me to work in a truly international environment.

I like driving and underwater photography. Last year I climbed Kilimanjaro. I like all kinds of things that raise my adrenaline level. They give me energy.

Danica Purg

May I ask you what has been your greatest achievement in Southeast Europe since many of the people here are from this region?

Tanja Fajon

I just came from Albania. I spent a lot of time in the Balkans. I am in charge of visa liberalization for these countries. This is something extremely useful to them. The last time I was in

Bosnia, I attended a fantastic conference with young people and their prime minister. Those young people told me that I was their star and role model. This job is a great challenge but it is also extremely rewarding to see the tangible results for these people.

Susan R. Madsen

We are raised differently and sometimes you are not outgoing as a child but there are transformational moments. Five of the 10 governors that I interviewed experienced transformations when they had to defend their children.

I have another question for you. What do you see as opportunities and advantages of being a woman leader today?

Danica Purg

As I said, being in a men's world helped me a lot. I am very stubborn and I never give up. There is no closed door that I cannot go through. I got a lot of support from men and of course I also got a lot of problems from men.

I think that my greatest advantage was the fact that I have always looked for the best people who could help me.

In summary, I would say that being a woman is not necessarily an advantage for leadership in our region but you can turn it into an advantage.

Tanja Fajon

If you ask me how it is to be a woman in the political world, I can tell you that I am learning every day. It is an ongoing lesson and challenge for me.

I see that the rules in the political environment have been made by men. I often find that I am the only woman at the table and I even have this feeling sometimes that I am there only because they want some gender balance. That is not nice but it is the reality. As a journalist, I did not experience serious problems. But in the political environment, it is far more challenging. Approximately one third of the members of the European parliament are women. That is so because we have quotas. Without them, it would be even less. Of course we are equal and women can find their place among men if they wish to do so. But it is challenging. We have to be courageous. We have our ambitions and our voice and we think differently. We are probably more emotional in the sense that we can get hurt more easily than men. Still, I think that we can manage all that as long as we have courage.

I really like my work and the environment in which I do it.
I see I can deliver results and that is what matters.

Gordana Kovačević

Nowadays, we talk about the digital economy and how to use the latest technologies for a good purpose. We can transform ourselves but we also have the potential to transform others and society at large. This means that our voices, of men and women together, must be heard.

Men and women must choose the profession that they like. They must enjoy what they do. They should also work together as a team.

I would like to encourage young men and women to choose information technologies and STEM science as a preferred and exciting profession. You have to start this at a very early stage. We must not think of information and communication technologies as a male field of activity. Girls in primary school should be encouraged to think of a career in information and communication technologies because there are still fewer of them in this area that offers great opportunities for aspiring

leaders. It takes brains. It is about innovation and team spirit. Being a woman leader today is exciting as it enables one to implement changes that transform businesses and societies.

Susan R. Madsen

Thank you very much. I have another question. Through the years, what have been the most important abilities and confidences that you have developed that really serve you well in your position now?

Tanja Fajon

I work mostly with migration and vulnerable groups. My greatest strength, and it is a strength that all of us share, is that I do things that I believe in. When you do such things, you follow your heart. That is what I do in my work. In politics you do not have many friends as you cannot rely on people. Everybody fights for some interests. When people try to win me over and be on their side, I instinctively do not trust them because I do not know what interests are behind this. My instincts prevail in my professional life. Even if I have a majority against me, I have an inner voice that may tell me that this is not what I believe in and I cannot do it.

Gordana Kovačević

We learn new things all of our lives. I think that my greatest strength is something that I have learned from my experience: I enjoy leading challenging projects. I always come up with some new ideas. I am not excited by repetitive jobs. One of the good things about the industry that I am in is that it generates a lot of challenges all the time.

The “can do” attitude is always welcome. It is also very important to have a vision. You have to have a dream and pursue it. You

have to share your dream with other people and work with them. Sometimes you fail in some aspects of what you are trying to achieve but you should not be afraid of that because even in those cases you learn a lot. Above all, you learn how to make that one-time failure into future successes. Thought leadership involves a lot of learning about your profession and what is changing in the environment. It is also about developing an innovation spirit in your company. It is about mind as well as heart, emotional leadership, and guts. You have to be brave and realize that you will always deal with risk. You have to accept risks but you also need to understand how to manage them. There is no static way of leading any organization or company that will get you from point A to point B. It is a process of constant renewal. You need to be flexible and open to different ideas and change all the time.

We live in a world of many paradoxes. We have to deal with globalization and localization. We need to simultaneously recruit global talent and local talent. We need to balance profitability with cost efficiency, innovation with growth. It is not about “or” but about “and”. We have to be good at all these different tasks at the same time.

Susan R. Madsen

Women like win-win situations and that is great. There is a study from the United States that found that almost 70 percent of female leaders were athletes in school or college. That helped them be leaders. And the most beneficial of all are team sports. Among other things, they teach you how to win and lose.

Danica Purg

Not all leaders used to be athletes. I avoided gymnastics and all sports. I would go to the doctor and try to get a certificate that would exempt me from playing gymnastics because I hated it. But I agree that you have to compete in something.

I have always had enough passion. What I have to learn is patience. I need patience with myself and with others who do not learn quickly and do not do quickly what I tell them to do. That is what I am trying to learn. I also need to learn how to transfer my passion to others, as well as my wish to contribute to society and implement change. I think that women need more of this skill. We also need a conviction that we are capable and we can achieve anything that we want.

Susan R. Madsen

We just need to have courage. All three of you have taken major risks. We do not like to fail and we are really nervous about that. We need to understand that some failure is inevitable. That is something that we have to work on.

In your life, and in your experience, what developmental activities - such as training and leadership programs, or just being in a new position - have you found to be most beneficial for you, particularly in your professional years? You all started out as good leaders. What helped you become great leaders?

Gordana Kovačević

Learning, learning and some more learning. We need to learn every day. If you think that you are a great leader and do not need to learn anything anymore, you will go down. If you are in a leading position, you need to have high standards. People are looking up to you and trying to find out what kind of leader you are. You have to show others that they need to learn continuously and the best way to do that is by learning yourself.

During my career I took different types of leadership programs. The goal of some of those programs was to prepare leaders for special roles in fast-changing and unpredictable environments. We also have a talent-in-management program at our company

that prepares employees for leadership positions. This is an opportunity for young people to move on to higher positions. One of the programs that I attended was a six-month program at the graduate school of business of Columbia University. It did not consist only of lectures. There was a strong practical component to it. We worked in teams of people from the whole world and we networked and shared knowledge. We talked about disruptive technologies and how the world would look in the future.

I also learned a lot as a coach. I am currently coaching two ladies from Stockholm. When they need some advice, they call me. They learn from me but I also learn from them.

We also have the Ericsson Academy e-Learning that enables you to connect to different leadership programs. We all need to understand what we need to develop further in order to become better leaders. Continuous learning helps you grow and acquire new competences. That helps you become a true leader. True leadership is not about a particular position. It is about knowledge and competences. You have to be confident with leading great teams whose members accept you as a leader because they believe in you.

Danica Purg

I think that a leader is a lonely person. You need a real friend who listens to you, shares criticisms with you, and asks you the right questions. Try to have at least one good friend.

Mentoring is very important. It is also good to have a friend from a completely different field who makes you forget your problems. My husband is very critical of many of the things that I do but he also has a lot of patience and he listens to me and helps me. I have also met some great people from my profession in my life. I can always call them and talk to them. It is very important to have friends like those.

Tanja Fajon

We all go through different education models. We all have different experiences. We make mistakes and we fail. And we learn from those experiences. But I learn most when I listen to people's stories. I was in the Greek islands in the past two weeks and I have seen many migrant centers in the last year. Whenever I go there, I see a completely different reality. I listen to stories of people who come from all over the world. That is how I learn. Schools can give me a lot and their theories are interesting but the reality is on the ground.

Susan R. Madsen

Here is another question. We need more women leaders, in Slovenia as well as in the whole world. What advice would you give to the participants here on how to prepare themselves even better than they are prepared now? What advice do you have for these women in the audience?

Gordana Kovačević

Invest in yourself. Choose a job that you like. If your job gives you a pain in the stomach, you should find a different one. I know that people need salaries but it is equally important to feel motivated by what you do.

You also need to network. Women can give good advice to other women, so I invite you to visit us at our company, feel the organizational culture and talk to young women about their careers. We also have interesting stories about how technology has changed lives.

Open doors and set up partnerships with employees, leaders, and society. At the same time, believe in yourself. Have self-esteem and be afraid of nothing. We have great opportunities

to transform this world. Our voices need to be heard. Use any opportunity. Call me, call Danica, who could help. We would be glad to help you.

Almost 80 percent of our revenue comes from export. We have strong research and development center recognized for quality and innovation in Ericsson Corporation. We have plenty of talented people. We have a new government in Croatia and its members often visit us and we tell them that even the best of strategies is nothing without implementation. They can learn something from us in that respect. Great ideas are just the beginning and what counts is putting them into action.

Danica Purg

I would say that you should trust yourself and be honest to yourself. Have high standards and invest in your employees.

Tanja Fajon

Life is short and precious, and unpredictable. And we are so small in this universe. If you want to make a contribution, do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you. Follow your instincts and be honest to yourself and everybody else.

Susan R. Madsen

These are amazing role models from politics, education and business. It is a wonderful contribution. Wonderful role models for us and for others. Thanks to our panelists.

PRESENTATIONS OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

1. Creative Workshop: Business Leadership and Diversity

Panelists:

Dianne Bevelander

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ERASMUS CENTRE FOR WOMEN AND
ORGANIZATIONS, THE NETHERLANDS

Kathrin Mihalus-Dianovski

DIRECTOR, FIELD SALES, COCA-COLA GERMANY

Maja Frelj

GLOBAL MARKETING MANAGER OTC, MEDIS, SLOVENIA

Rising up children makes you a better leader

Irena Prijović

PANEL LEADER SECRETARY GENERAL, SLOVENIAN DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION, SLOVENIA

We discussed that times of change and participation in risk projects can help women assert themselves and take leadership positions. We also talked about selection criteria and what is a common perception of leader. These should be more supportive of women.

We also mentioned the importance of the wording describing women in leadership positions and that we use to describe ourselves in general. We should build awareness and be careful in selection of words that support gender equality, appreciate gender differences and in no way discriminate women.

One of our participants told an interesting story. They formed a female-only team and climbed Kilimanjaro. That was great in terms of mutual support and team-building among only women that diminish the common perception of non-trust among women. It was such a successful initiative that many men envied the new female network being established.

We have also discussed gender quotas. There are arguments in favor of them and arguments against. Debates on quotas deflect our attention from attempts to do something real so that culture changes in favor of women. It was mentioned that quotas can be used to gear the speed of imposing women to leadership positions but as women we need to be aware that we are already ready for leadership and apply for these positions and don't wait for quotas.

Some participants said that we always have an option to do something that we want. We should be more mobile and willing to get out of our comfort zones in getting the jobs we want. We should accept risks (also of failure) rather than focus on what is a guaranteed outcome.

It was also observed that women get leadership positions in less attractive regions or sectors (like culture) and non-for-profit organizations with low budgets.

Finally, we noted that many women learn a lot from their children and rising up children makes you a better leader, too.

At last participants agreed that they like working in gender balanced environments.

PRESENTATIONS OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

2. Creative Workshop: New Sustainable Business Models with special focus on Digitalization

Panelists:

Edin Saračević

DIRECTOR, IT HUB 387, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Karmen Lužnik

DIRECTOR, RENDERSPACE, SLOVENIA

Medeja Lončar

DIRECTOR, SIEMENS, SLOVENIA

Simona Lampe

OWNER AND MANAGER, FASHION BRAND SIMONALAMPE, SLOVENIA

Gender division is artificial

Branimir Brkljač

PANEL LEADER

FOUNDING PRESIDENT, TERRA PANONICA, SERBIA

It was a very vivid and interesting discussion, so vivid indeed that we did not have time to write anything down.

The main observation was that the new realities and the fast-changing information technologies disrupt the existing business models. We had a fantastic representative of new business model development. We also noted that the biggest difficulty for corporations will be to change themselves from the inside. It is very dangerous to create boxes and stay in them. Gender division is artificial. The future belongs to those who can

overcome that division, rather than think in terms of male versus female. The question is how to support dynamic and brave people and have them to step up. Change will happen only when you step up, not when you hide in existing models, trying to keep the world in its present state. The only way to change the world is by accepting risks. Until recently, changes were driven by men but today we have to work together. That is the key message from our group.

PRESENTATIONS OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

3. Creative Workshop: Young Women Taking Leadership Responsibilities

Panelists:

Sanja Gardašević

STRATEGIC COPY-WRITER, ME-NET, MONTENEGRO

Tjaša Kolenc Filipčič

PRESIDENT, SECTION OF YOUNG MANAGERS, MANAGERS'
ASSOCIATION OF SLOVENIA

Anamarija Meglič

DIRECTOR, ZAVOD YPSILON, SLOVENIA

Dona Pavlin

MARKETING AND SALES MANAGER, CUBITON, SLOVENIA AND
STUDENT, THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Young people must step out of their comfort zone

Olga Veligurska

PANEL LEADER

DIRECTOR, CEEMAN, SLOVENIA

We had a very nice discussion in a very close-knit group. It was great that each member of our group had an opportunity to discuss some of the issues.

One of the key messages was that if you want to be a leader, there is nothing that can stop you. It does not matter if you are male or

female. If you have leadership potential and ambition, you will find a way to become a leader.

Of course, there are obstacles, and some of them are more specific to women. One of the bigger issues is the work-family balance. But, again, it all boils down to having a support network and it is also a matter of logistics: how you organize your life.

Some industries are still men's worlds. To succeed in them, you have to acquire some masculine characteristics. But it is important to remain yourself and build on your strengths. You have to learn how to be tougher.

It is crucial to recognize your potential and have others do the same. You have to be aware of yourself, be confident, and look for role models and mentors.

There are also some cultural biases and role expectations. These are more pronounced in some countries than in others. However, globalization is making these biases gradually disappear across the world. It is important not only to teach girls that they can achieve what men can but also to educate boys that the two genders are of equal worth. Young people must step out of their comfort zone, experience different cultures, and learn as much as possible.

The concluding message was you should not postpone anything, wondering whether to start a family or focus first on building a career. Women are great multitaskers. Just follow your dreams and ambitions and what feels right for you. Don't wait for anybody's permission - just do it.

PRESENTATIONS OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

4. Creative Workshop: Why the World Needs Women Entrepreneurs?

Panelists:

Klaus Schuster

MANAGER AND AUTHOR OF MANAGEMENT BOOKS, SLOVENIA

Nuša Pavlinjek

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, ROTO D.O.O., SLOVENIA

The answer for young, educated, and powerful
is: entrepreneurship

Marta Turk

PANEL LEADER

DIRECTRESS, CCIS REGIONAL CHAMBER LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA, AND
MANAGER OF INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY
AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP META, SLOVENIA

Our discussion was difficult but the conclusions are short. Why does the world need women entrepreneurs? The answer is that we need both men and women as entrepreneurs and we need to encourage women, especially young ones, to make decisions about their careers. We need ambitious entrepreneurs, men and women.

We spent quite some time discussing the problem of young, highly educated women. I think that we need female entrepreneurship especially for those women. They are young, educated, and powerful but they cannot get jobs. The answer for them is entrepreneurship. In that way, they can design their own career.

Of course, we discovered that the main issue in developing an enterprise is finance. What can you do when you are unemployed and do not have a bank account? How can you

approach a banker? The story goes that bankers will listen to you if you have a great idea and you believe in it. Then, the door will open up. But we know that really is different.

At our institute, we are starting a new entrepreneurship program for these young educated women. More than 200 of them will acquire enough knowledge. Then, we will ask banks if they will support their very good ideas.

PRESENTATIONS OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

Closing comments

Mollie Painter-Morland

MODERATOR OF THE CONFERENCE

COCA-COLA CHAIR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT IEDC-BLED SCHOOL
OF MANAGEMENT, SLOVENIA, AND NOTTINGHAM BUSINESS SCHOOL, UK

Women's issues are not something separate- women's issues are societal issues

It seems that one of the main conclusions is that some specific changes need to take place. We need to build the kind of trust that we need. Related to that, some people said that women's issues are seen as something separate. We need to rephrase these women's issues as societal issues. That, of course, means that we have to address certain cultural biases.

One of the ideas that we heard is that since we have children, we should start having new families in which gender equality is a matter of course. It does not have to be something that is fought for. We need our spouses and brothers and colleagues to help us with that so that we can have men with the right values. Eventually it simply becomes a matter of finding men and women to work together.

The fairy tale issue was interesting. Fairy tales sound particularly sexist and gender-laden. In a sense, they become disempowering stories for women. But what can we replace them with? What kind of empowering stories should we tell? Should we write new fairy tales? Should we have new forms of theater? I think all of that is possible.

Another thing that needs to be rephrased is this embarrassment about being emotional. Sometimes we feel that it is something that harms us. I think that the way to rephrase that is to start talking that we are passionate. That is obviously a positive thing. We have to turn our emotions into passion for what we do. It is a good thing to have passion for your cause.

Another thing that came out was this fear-and-shame culture that we have. There is a fear of failure and a fear of being perceived as an entrepreneur because if you are one that means that you were not able to make it elsewhere. That fear needs to be rephrased into bravery.

Then, there are practical issues such as how to address finance and some of the legal constraints that we come up against. I do not think that we have found solutions to all of these problems. But, again, people like Prof. Purg can show you that it is possible to have a passionate idea and eventually end up with a building like this one. In my humble opinion, this is one of the most beautiful business schools in the world.

LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

Making Collaboration Among Women Work

Mirella Visser

MODERATOR OF THE ROUNDTABLE

MANAGING DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP,

THE NETHERLANDS

Before I give the floor to the other panelists, I would like to share my own experience with collaboration among women as well as my views on women changing society.

I have participated in many conferences but I never attended one that was opened by a prime minister. Usually, if a government official comes to a conference in the first place, that would be a low-ranking official. Not only did we have the prime minister of Slovenia here but he also stayed with us for a couple of hours. I have never seen that. It tells you something about Danica's exceptional networking skills.

Mr. Cerar spoke from his heart and he was very genuine. In the break after his presentation, I asked him, "What was your experience like, talking to all these women?" He said that he was very happy that he had been the first speaker. I wondered why. He said, "After I listened to the other speakers, I started wishing that I were a woman". That is what he told me. I asked him if I could publish this statement on Twitter. He said that I could do so, but he added that it was a joke, of course.

This is really wonderful. It is also wonderful that Danica organized this great event in beautiful Bled for the 30th anniversary of the business school. Let us thank her very much for that all together.

Now, I need to make a couple of important points. As some of you know, I am a great advocate of women's collaboration. My first job was at ING. I was the first female management trainee

there. I was the first regional director, posted in Hong Kong. My husband came with me and we had all those role reversal issues. Throughout that experience, I found myself isolated. I was the only woman around and often the youngest. So, I started looking for other like-minded women. I have been building women's organizations since 1993. I was one of the founders of the ING Women's Network. Later, in 2002, I became one of the founders and president (till 2010) of the European Professional Women's Network. Sometimes I worked two days a week on these non-profit networks. I did it because I felt isolated in my professional life and I felt a need to connect with like-minded women. This has been a red thread throughout my life.

As I told you, I am from the financial services industry. These days this is a dangerous thing to say as you risk getting booted out of the room. We are still suffering the consequences of the great crisis in 2007-2008. Women played an important role as change agents, but we don't know this.

Has anybody heard of a woman called Sheila Bair? She was head of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in the United States, which was a top position in the US financial system. After she took that position in 2006, she sounded the alarm because she saw the explosive growth in sub-prime mortgages. She said that the regulators' job was to protect bank customers, not banks. She was not heard. She was labelled "difficult". There were leaked minutes of disputes that she had with other regulators. She was portrayed as "the problem". Eventually, she resigned and she wrote the book *Bullies of Wall Street*. That said enough.

Have you heard of Brooksley Born? She was head of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. As such, she tried to regulate derivatives during the Clinton administration. Those of you who know something about the collapse of the financial system know that it was driven by derivatives that were not regulated. Brooksley Born tried to have them regulated for years. She went head to head with Larry Summers, the minister of Finance at the time, and a person who was not very much in favor of women, given his remarks later on as president of

Harvard. She also had a fierce opponent in Fed Chair Alan Greenspan. In the end, tired of this attitude, she resigned. At present, she is still an advocate for a new financial services sector.

The last woman I like to mention here is Madelyn Antoncic. She was global head of risk policy at Lehman Brothers just before the crisis. She spoke to the company's chief executive officer Dick Fuld and warned him that things were getting too risky; the company was too heavily exposed to commercial property. But she was not heard. And worse, actually, she was fired at the beginning of 2007 because of her remarks.

These three women were the only people in the financial services industry at top positions that saw that something dangerous was going on and spoke up about it. They wanted to make a change. They went to their (mostly male) boards and CEO. However, they were not heard and in the end they all parted with their jobs. I cannot help wondering what would have happened if these three women had had a better place to discuss these issues. What if they had met each other and teamed up? Maybe there were other women in the financial services sector who were also thinking about these issues. What would have happened if they had teamed up and collaborated? Would the crisis have been averted or at least alleviated? It is probably naive to say that the crisis would not have happened. But the fact is that the only three whistle-blowers from inside the financial sector were women. The whistle-blowers from outside were academics and politicians but they did not know what was really going on. These three women knew exactly what was going on.

One of the most important conclusions of this forum should be that women that act as change agents should be heard. We have to support them and create a system that allows these women to pool their forces. In that way, they could really make a change.

Now turning to the panelists, I am extremely happy that we have these three fantastic women here. They are all change agents in the organizations that they are leading. I will ask them to introduce themselves by telling you what has been their most

important lesson and most important gift in their career that they have received from other women. I asked them to bring with them an object that symbolizes this.

Malin Rogström

CONSULTANT, IMPLEMENT DIVERSITY AB, SWEDEN

- holding up a mirror -

During these two days we have been looking at a mirror. That is a very good way to find yourself. As little boys and girls, we look at our parents and at ourselves, and we compare. Then, we copy other people's behaviours. Later on we do the same with friends. We share our feelings, frustrations, and views on things with our friends. That is also how we understand how others perceive us. I think that is crucially important.

Role modeling is really crucial. We have been talking a lot about that these two days. We are role models and we have a responsibility to be good role models for younger generations but also for ourselves. To be a good role model for yourself, you need to know who you are.

Bola Olabisi

FOUNDER AND CHAIR OF GLOBAL WOMEN INVENTORS AND INNOVATORS NETWORK, UK

There are two words that have played an important part in my life: "not yet". I work with women inventors. The road of any female inventor is full of pitfalls. They get more no-s than yes-es. They are however very passionate about their inventions but the answer so often for their call for assistance is "no". There are many female inventors who simply do not take "no" for an answer. When they get to a stage where it is hard to carry on or they have received negative responses, they simply turn this around to mean "not yet". I started thinking what they mean by

that. This is their way of accepting that perhaps the environment or climate is not quite right for their idea at that given time however they become convinced that 'change' is inevitable therefore they carry on knowing that the environment and climate will change. It just takes time.

Sonja Lokar

PRESIDENT, WOMEN'S LOBBY OF SLOVENIA, AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY AND FORMER CHAIR OF THE STABILITY PACT GENDER TASK FORCE

- holding up a book -

When I was preparing for this session, I was asked to talk about a symbol that was important to me. When I was young, I lived in socialist Slovenia. Gender equality was high in the political agenda of former Yugoslavia. Most things related to gender equality were going in the right direction. But then the social system changed and I realized that what had been achieved was now under a big threat. Things could now go in the wrong direction. In 1994, Slovenia was getting ready to become a member of the United Nations. There was a big women's conference in Beijing. We prepared a book with a very telling title: Action for Equality Development and Peace. It is a symbolic book because it tells how Slovene women lived in 1992. If you compare their lives now, in 2016, with the situation in 1992 you can see clearly what had improved and what has not.

It is clear to me that none of the improvements have been given to us as gifts. They are all a result of the endeavours of women from different walks of life. And if anything has gone wrong, that's because our engagement has not been strong enough.

Mirella Visser

Can you now talk to each other and think of an object or statement or book that symbolizes women's collaboration?

Tamara Lah Turnšek

DIRECTOR, NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR BIOLOGY, SLOVENIA

-from the audience -

You are all aware of the sun and the moon as symbols of duality. Men and women embody the same duality. The sun is the male and the moon is the female. The moon reflects the light of the sun. They are different but equally important as the moon has a very important impact on ocean tides.

Mirella Visser

Very nice, indeed. Let us now return to the panel. Each of us has been asked to provide a quote that has been important to us. I am now going to ask the panelists to share their quotes with us. Here is Sonja's quote: "I see two crucial roles for women as agents of change: the role of decisive defenders of historical gains, as if we lose them women will lose twice as much as men, and the role of those who are educated enough, organized enough, and courageous enough to respond radically to radical changes and challenges of our times".

Sonja Lokar

We should not simply talk about how women can be co-opted. If they were simply co-opted, the world would remain as bad as it is now. We must always think about the new thing that they will

bring and change the world for the better. We are talking about what is technically known as transformative politics.

What are the three main things that need transformation in the modern world? The crisis is so deep that even an illiterate person can see the main problems of this world. I think that the main problem of this world is the growing inequality. At the moment, inequality is as large as it used to be before the First World War. We are 100 years behind! There is large inequality between nations as well as inside nations.

Peace is also in danger. We can see that each time we turn on the TV. We see thousands of people who have become refugees. We feel threatened by terrorist attacks. The big issue is how to restore and maintain peace.

When we talk about transformative politics and the role of women, we expect women, wherever they are, to address these three threats. These are the most urgent issues that we need to deal with. We also need to transform our production and consumption in such a way that the planet and life on it survive.

Unfortunately, women are still a political minority. Wherever we look on the political stage, we see that we are a political minority. Then, how can we cope with these serious threats? This is what we need to discuss.

Mirella Visser

Bola, your statement was "It is reasonable to argue that, irrespective of the sector, there is no doubt that failing to address the gender gap in leadership positions brings social and economic concerns". Why did you choose this statement?

Bola Olabisi

The key word in this statement is "irrespective of the sector". I think that sometimes we tend to focus on the biggest issues. But I wanted to stress the fact that action is needed in all sectors. Women are very diverse in terms of background and what we bring to the table. This is especially true when we are talking about women on boards. I get this feeling that you need to fit in a box before you can be considered a potential board member. As I told you, I work with inventors and innovators. And that is not restricted to technologies. There are young women out there coming up with social innovation. They bring something extremely valuable to the table. What about those small and medium-sized businesses? I think that we need to look at diversity in a big way. And we need to start with values. These are some of the issues that we do not talk about a lot. We need to value and recognize products, concepts, and processes that make an impact right across the world.

I was at an event in Malta not too long ago when a young woman came along and addressed a lot of women in the room. We started applauding until she said "Hold it! I would like to thank all of you, those that I consider my mothers and grandmothers in this room, as I am the youngest here. I really appreciate what you have done: getting women the right to vote, as well as enabling us to sit here and be who we are today. You are role models that we can aspire to be".

And then she said that there were not enough young women in the room. Even if there were some, they would not feel at ease. There is still this feeling that we have to work so hard to get where we are that we have not been able to embrace fully what young people can bring to the table. That may not be true but there is such a perception. That is one of the reasons that I made that statement. It is not just about getting women to become leaders. It is about diversity and appreciating everybody and everything valuable that has been brought to the table.

Mirella Visser

Malin, your statement is "Actually, I do not see gender equality issues only for women. We all need to be change agents for this to happen, men included". Can you please elaborate on that?

Malin Rogström

I started my career as a young journalist. I see a lot of similarities between my experiences and those of Tanja Fajon who also started out as a journalist and then became a member of the European parliament. I did not think that equality was an issue at all. We had a female chief executive officer and half of the members of the executive team were women. But then I went to Sandvik, a global manufacturing business based in Sweden. Boy, did I see a difference! Yes, I did, in both structure and in culture. I thought it was a stupid joke that men make decisions in the sauna. But it still happens.

I do not like the blame game. That does not work. But talk about men's daughters. What kind of world do men want for their daughters? What responsibility do we have to make this change? That is the way to get more men on the boat.

In business it is clear that we want to make more money. As we heard today, a lot of research shows that diverse groups outperform homogeneous ones. So, let us be in this together. Let us stop blaming men. There are a lot of good guys who really want to join us in our struggle. Let us work together with them.

Mirella Visser

Let us now look at your areas, the fields in which you work. Let us think about change and transformation of industries and women as innovators and change agents in companies. How can women be change agents and help transform company cultures? I would like to ask you why you think it is necessary for women

to work together to transform industries? How can we achieve that? Do you have any specific examples that can inspire us?

Bola Olabisi

Of course, since I have founded a network, I should say that networks are most important. But I can also tell you that we need to get re-skilled and re-educated. We have to invest in the knowledge exchange opportunities that we have so that we learn more and improve ourselves. As we know, the world is changing rapidly. The tenacity and determination to succeed does come with its challenges. We need to support each other and have a networking platform where we can appreciate each other. I think that we do not recognize and appreciate ourselves enough.

We have award ceremonies every two years which we launched at the European parliament. The launch was attended by nine members of parliament who supported the idea. It is important for us to pat ourselves on the back as nobody else will do it for us. Let us also blow our trumpets a little louder and re-educate ourselves. Let us look at other role models and see what they have achieved.

A role model that we can use is Julia Barfield, an architect and designer of the London Eye. It is amazing what she and her husband have been able to design. However her journey was not easy. It started as a very small business: two architects and a very small team. They had to think like entrepreneurs and look for money. It took them seven years and they lost almost everything in the process. But the true entrepreneurial spirit that they have helped them carry on. Very soon you are going to see their latest creation in Brighton. Instead of giving up, they have managed to create London's and Brighton's greatest tourist attractions. And the driving force behind this was a woman. This is certainly something inspirational.

Malin Rogström

I do not know what impression you have of Sandvik, the company that I worked for. I had the opportunity to work with the chief executive officer. He had understood the benefits of diversity. He joined the company in 2011 when the executive team consisted on middle-aged Swedish men, speaking Swedish. And that was a global company. The new chief executive officer immediately appointed four women. And, for the first time in the company's 150-year history, he appointed a female vice-president for one of the business areas. However, he did not announce that she had been appointed because she was a female. He simply said that they had appointed Petra Einarsson for her skills and business results. After her appointment, she received a lot of e-mails from people in the organization who wished to thank her for being a role model. She demonstrated that there was a career path for women at Sandvik and it was possible to break the glass ceiling.

The diversification process did not stop there. Executives were brought in from China and the United States and the executive team started speaking English. Isn't this a great way to get to know your competitors and customers in different markets? Of course, it is. I think that this is a brilliant example that proves the utility of diversity and role models.

Sonja Lokar

I would like to share with you the main lesson that women have learned in the Balkans after the wars. Before the wars, the percentage of women in the parliaments of former Yugoslavia was approximately the same as in Sweden. After the first free elections, that percentage was like in the Emirates: two to three percent. That fall in the percentage of women in parliament was a clear sign to me that we were headed toward a war. Women were the only ones who tried to prevent or stop the wars. We organized a women's peace movement across the fire lines but we could not succeed. After the war was over, small groups of

women planted the seeds of future activities of women in this region. They became the core of the future Gender Task Force. It was set up on our request, not because some foreigners had decided that women were capable of solving problems. Women in this region said "Enough is enough. We want our place at the table". It was really hard to get a place at the table. The leaders of the countries that set up the Stability Pact did not think of women as agents of change. We had to break down the door and keep it down. Fortunately, this time we were successful. Today, many of our countries have 30 percent female deputies in their parliaments.

The most important lesson I learned as a politician is that no single political party can implement change on its own, no matter how big and powerful it is. Even if it achieved some success, it would not be sustainable. If you want a real change that affects the existing culture, you need to build a big coalition. It should be a women's coalition that cuts across party boundaries, and trade unions. You need this coalition to make sure that the consensus will be there even if the government changes.

But this means that we need to change our political culture. We have to learn how to work together and how to respect each other, how to forget the things on which we disagree and emphasize the things on which we agree. We have to learn how to fight against our own ego. A big coalition cannot be led by a woman from a political party. Everybody else would say "Sorry, I will not bring the water for you". But if there is a woman who is politically neutral, then everybody will be willing to gather around her. Things that seem simple are actually difficult to understand.

I do not believe in the story about women's subjectivity. But I believe that when women come together united by their common interests nothing can stop them. This is the main lesson from the Balkans after the wars.

Mirella Visser

These are fantastic examples and role models, are they not? We are now convinced that we need to collaborate more. Women in senior positions need to find each other. If those women in the financial sector that I told you about had come together, what would have happened?

Here is my next question for the panel. In the next five years, how can we scale up our initiatives and connect more? How can we break down the barriers that exist between women's organizations and political parties? How do we make sure that in five years that situation will have changed? I know that it is a difficult question.

Malin Rogström

I think that inclusion is crucial. We have talked about inclusion in different ways during these two days. Of course, we must address our own shortcomings. It all starts with me!

I would try not to categorize. We do that all the time unfortunately. Try to see not the category but the human being in front of you. That is a very important first step.

I also think that role models are crucial. As leaders, we have the opportunity to appoint skilled, competent females and communicate that in the company. But that appointment should not take place because of the fact that the person is a female. Show her business results. Tell people about her achievements. That is very important. That is the way to build role models. Do not forget the communication.

Then, I think that both men and women need to take responsibility for their own reactions. We often ask ourselves questions such as, "Why is this woman crying?" But you should also ask yourself why you are reacting to this. That can tell you something about yourself.

Bola Olabisi

I cannot stress the importance of diversity enough. If you are at a table where decisions are being made and you look around and you see that there is not enough diversity, you should take action. You should do whatever it takes to ensure diversity.

Some of you may be fans of the late Steve Jobs. There is one thing that I learned from him. He wanted to have as many different people around the table as possible to push the organization forward. He did not look only for men and women but he also took in historians, artists, high-technology experts, and even people with disabilities. He gathered people from different parts of the world. If we want to move forward, let us make diversity our number one item on the agenda.

Sonja Lokar

I would like to make a comparison to illustrate what I am thinking about. In Slovenia at this moment we have the highest-ever percentage of women in parliament and in the government. Nevertheless, this is the first time in our post-socialist history that parliament has accepted austerity measures. These have directly and disproportionately hit women. For example, maternity benefits were cut by 10 percent. A second child cannot go to a kindergarten free of charge anymore. In the public administration, 90 percent of the employees are women. Wages in that sector have been frozen for a very long period. All these austerity measures directly affect women. This was accepted by our parliament in which women are well represented. How is that possible? Why did those female deputies not sit down and discuss these measures before they were voted?

Then, we have the case of Serbia. It is a similar situation: women are much better represented everywhere than they have been ever before. Recently, Serbia's policies shifted from something that used to be center-left to something quite far right. And then, they adopted a very bad bill on gender equality.

Female activists protested, saying that it should not be voted into law. Women in parliament agreed that the bill was bad and it should not be adopted. As a result, the bill was withdrawn. Why did this happen in Serbia but not in Slovenia? The answer is very simple. In Serbia, women have a big coalition that acts in unison.

If we want positive change, we have to act together. Women in the business world are very important partners that we must work with.

Mirella Visser

I would like to close with something that is dear to my heart. One of the things that I learned from women who collaborate is that women have an intuition that enables them to do the right thing at the right time. They know where other women are and what they need to move on and be motivated for the next phase. I have a note on my desktop computer at home. It says "greatest fear". This is my symbol for women collaborating together. It is a quote from a poem by Marianne Williamson. I received a shorter adapted version of this poem from a dear friend in 1999 just before I became president of one of the women's networks that I founded and led. At that time, it was exactly the right poem that I needed. Since then, I have used it a lot, in training and coaching of young women. It is a poem that you can use anytime and anywhere. If you remember it every day, you will become one of the change agents that we need. I am going to read out my short version of that poem to you.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of the universe. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. <...> And as we let our own light shine, we

unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear, our presenceautomati-
cally liberates others".

CLOSING COMMENTS OF THE CONFERENCE

Mollie Painter-Morland

MODERATOR OF THE CONFERENCE

COCA-COLA CHAIR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT IEDC-BLED SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, SLOVENIA, AND NOTTINGHAM BUSINESS SCHOOL, UK

Let us take the we-me-world perspective

If I had to summarize adequately everything that was said at this conference, we would never have lunch. Therefore, I will conclude with only a few short comments.

I do not know how many of you have heard of this "me-we-world" model. It is the model that Coca-Cola uses to talk about sustainability. Let me use this model to summarize what I learned these two days.

I will remember the mirror exercise: looking at the mirror and asking ourselves why we have so many false beliefs about our competencies. Why do we think that we are not good enough? And why do we sometimes think that we are good without acting on it? Also, why do we sometimes think that our competencies hurt us? That is because we do not demand all the other things that are necessary for career progression and being at the top of an organization.

I encourage women to make all our unconscious beliefs conscious and verbal for each other. Let us articulate the problems and challenge the false beliefs. Of course, it is not enough simply to challenge what we believe about ourselves. I find it very inspiring that when we come together like this, we see that we are not alone. This is one of the main privileges of being in a group of women like this. This is an excellent networking opportunity, and I hope that we will repeat this event quite often.

We also need to build trust around each other. We have to make ourselves trustworthy partners and protect and support the other women in our organizations.

As for our male colleagues, we should not keep them out of our circle. We should come together and use the opportunity to do something new and exciting for all of us. That means that we have to move from challenging beliefs to rephrasing them. We have to rephrase what we believe about women and men and feminism. We need to rephrase this in positive terms.

Many exciting things were said about the way that we lead in our families and classrooms. We often do not view that systemic knowledge as an asset.

Let us celebrate all the social networks and social groups that we are part of and use them to build a systemic perspective. If we do that, we can take those megatrends that we heard about right at the beginning of the conference and turn them into opportunities because all those megatrends require systemic thinking. That is something that we are really excellent in.

Of course, we have to deal with the structural inequalities of pay and access. But I think that if we start acting on the systems, we can really succeed.

So let us take the we-me-world perspective and take courage from each other and be brave as we go out of this room.

Conference agenda

Day 1

Thursday, April 14

16:30 - 17:00

Registration

17:00 - 17:30

Welcome and Opening of the Conference

Prof. Danica Purg, President, IEDC-Bled School of Management, Slovenia

Dr. Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia

17:30 - 18:00

Megatrends in CEE and SEE Region with Focus on the Role of Women

Melanie Seier Larsen, Principal, The Boston Consulting Group

18:00 - 18:20

Stretch Break

18:20 - 19:30

The Leadership Roundtable; panel with business and political leaders, led by **Prof. Pierre Casse**, Leadership Chair, IEDC-Bled School of Management, and Professor, the Moscow School of Management, Skolkovo, Russia

Sasha Bezuhanova, Founder of the civil platform MoveBG and former General Director, Hewlett-Packard, Bulgaria

Anastasia Sideri, Communications Director, Coca-Cola Central & Southern Europe, Greece and Chair of the Women in Business Committee of Amcham, Greece

Ljerka Puljić, Advisor to the President, The Agrokor Group, Croatia

H. E. Dr. Anna Elisabeth Prinz, Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Germany in Slovenia, Germany

19:30 -19:45

Closing Comments of the day

Prof. Mollie Painter-Morland, Nottingham Business School, UK, and
Coca-Cola Chair of Sustainable Development at IEDC- Bled School of
Management

19:45 - 20:30

Reception

20:30

Dinner with Michelin stars Chef Andrej Kuhar, Vila Herberstein, Gorenje
Special Dinner Address by **Jernej Močnik**, Executive Director, Nova
KBM d.d., Main Sponsor
Piano: **Samo Ivačič**

Day 2

Friday, April 15

09:00 - 10:00

Building, Bridging and Blazing Pathways for Women and Leadership
Keynote speech by **Prof. Susan Madsen**, Utah Valley University,
Woodbury School of Business, USA

10:00 - 11:00

Role model session: Being a Woman of Influence, moderated by
Prof. Susan Madsen

Prof. Danica Purg, President, IEDC-Bled
School of Management, Slovenia

Gordana Kovačević, CEO, Ericsson Nikola Tesla, Croatia

Tanja Fajon, Member of the European Parliament

11:00 - 11:30

Networking over a cup of coffee

11:30 -12:30

Creative Workshops

Business Leadership and Diverstiy

Panel leader: **Mag. Irena Prijovič**, Secretary General, Slovenian Directors' Association, Slovenia

Prof. Dianne Bevelander, Executive Director, Erasmus Centre for Women and Organizations, the Netherlands

Kathrin Mihalus-Dianovski, Director, Field Sales, Coca-Cola Germany

Maja Frelj, Global Marketing Manager OTC, Medis, Slovenia

New Sustainable Business Models with special focus on Digitalization

Panel leader:

Branimir Brkljač, Founding President Terra Panonica, Serbia

Medeja Lončar, Director, Siemens, Slovenia

Karmen Lužnik, Director, Renderspace, Slovenia

Edin Saračević, Director, IT HUB 387, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Simona Lampe, Owner and Manager, Fashion Brand SimonaLampe, Slovenia

Young Women Taking Leadership Responsibilities

Panel leader:

Olga Veligurska, Director, CEEMAN, Slovenia

Sanja Gardašević, Strategic Copy-Writer, Me-net, Montenegro

Tjaša Kolenc Filipčič, President, Section of Young Managers, Managers' Association of Slovenia

Anamarija Meglič, Director, Zavod Ypsilon, Slovenia

Dona Pavlin, Marketing and Sales Manager, Cubiton, Slovenia and Student, the University of Vienna, Austria

Why the World Needs Women Entrepreneurs?

Panel leader:

Marta Turk, Directress, CCIS Regional Chamber Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Manager of Institute for Research and Development of Family and Women Entrepreneurship META, Slovenia

Nuša Pavlinjek, Director of Marketing, Roto d.o.o., Slovenia

Klaus Schuster, Manager & Author of Management Books

12:30 - 12:40

Stretch Break

12:40 - 13:20

Presentation of the Conclusions of the Creative Workshops

13:20 - 14.20

Making Collaboration Among Women Work

Leadership Roundtable led by **Mirella Visser**, Managing Director,
Centre for Inclusive Leadership, The Netherlands

Dr. Bola Olabisi, Founder and Chair of Global Women Inventors and
Innovators Network, UK

Sonja Lokar, President, Women's Lobby of Slovenia, and former
President of European Women's Lobby and former Chair of the
Stability Pact Gender Task Force

Malin Rogström, Consultant, Implement Diversity AB, Sweden

14.20 - 14.30

Closing comments of the Conference:

Prof. Mollie Painter-Morland

List of participants

	Name and surname	Function
1	Maria Anselmi	General Manager
2	Danela Arsovska	President
3	Klemen Babnik	Economic Adviser
4	Snježana Bahtijari	Marketing, communications and CSR Director
5	Snježana Bertoncelej	CEO
6	Dianne Bevelander	Executive Director of Erasmus Centre for Women and Organisations
7	Sasha Bezuhanova	Founder and Chairperson
8	Tomislava Blatnik	Procurator
9	Tonja Blatnik	Head of Corporate Communications
10	Olga Borissova	Head of Administration
11	Alenka Braček Lalić	IQA Director
12	Branimir Brkljač	Founding President
13	Svitlana Buko	Research Director
14	Leah Carter	Head of Global Events
15	Pierre Casse	Leadership Chair and Professor
16	Miro Cerar	Prime Minister
17	Uršula Cetinski	Director
18	Louise Chatwood	Advisor Editorial Staff
19	Tomislav Čorak	Principal
20	Nevenka Črešnar Pergar	Director
21	Tina Drolc	Editor
22	Maria Dunavölgyi	Director

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Terra Panonica	Serbia
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Cankarjev dom	Slovenia
The Slovenia Times	Australia
The Boston Consulting Group Slovenija	Slovenia
NP Consulting, d.o.o.	Slovenia
The Slovenia Times	Slovenia
Corvinus University of Budapest	Hungary

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26	Tjaša Ficko	Deputy Mayor
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47	Bojana P. Jacobsen	Advisor for strategic projects, Function for strategy and planning

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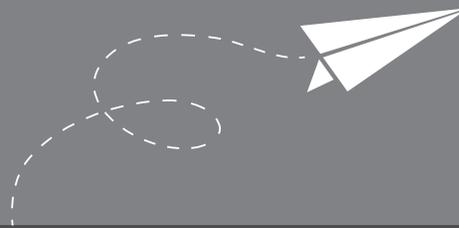
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