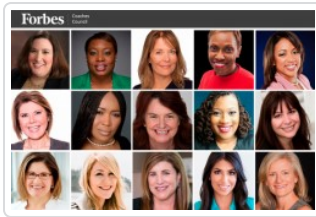


15 Biggest Challenges Women Leaders Face And How To Overcome Them

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Via [Forbes](#) : 15 Biggest Challenges Women Leaders Face And How To Overcome Them

While the world is evolving, women are still lagging behind when it comes to leadership roles in business. Today, only 26 women are in CEO roles at Fortune 500 companies, making up 5.2% of the female population, according to a report by Pew Research. The stats stay virtually the same for women CEOs of Fortune 1000 companies at 5.4%, showing that there is little movement of women making up

these high-ranking positions as company leaders.

With women still pushing to reach the top, they are faced with a range of challenges that many of their male CEO counterparts don't have an understanding of. It is these issues that are preventing many women from achieving their goal of becoming a leader at their company and diminishing their ability to get ahead in business.

Below, 15 members of Forbes Coaches Council share what the biggest challenges their female clients are currently facing and provide advice for women leaders everywhere.

1. Being Treated Equally

One of the biggest challenges my female clients are currently facing is equality in the workplace. My advice for women leaders everywhere is to go for what they want in their careers and not to give up. Hone the skills necessary to give you those opportunities, such as your communication skills, leadership development, and emotional intelligence. Raise your hand in meetings. Speak up, and be heard. – Valerie Martinelli, Valerie Martinelli Consulting, LLC

2. Building A Sisterhood

The biggest challenge my female clients face today is garnering support from other women. My advice to women worldwide is to support and empower each other, starting with our basic principles of who we are — our morals, values, integrity. We must be just. Be humbled, show togetherness, passion, excellence and enthusiasm toward laying the foundation for our progress through our work. – Nadidah Coveney, CTM Consulting Group LLC

3. Generating Revenue

One of the biggest challenges my female clients currently face is growing their revenues. Money solves everything; it gives you freedom and choices. My advice is to focus on what generates revenue wherever you are. After all, if you don't have revenue, you don't have a business. For entrepreneurs, that's called a hobby. – Christine Hueber, ChristineHueber.com

4. Being Confident

One of the biggest challenges I see when I speak with females is their confidence. I tell them they need to get comfortable knowing that people will always try to take you off of "your game" or dislike you for no apparent reason. But if you go in knowing this, if you are clear on your purpose and on what you are trying to achieve, then you will be successful in getting what you want. – Francine Parham, FrancineParham & Co.

5. Speaking Up

It's not enough to be in a role or to sit at the table. One must also speak confidently, regardless of odds faced. Women leaders fear being ostracized or rejected; however, respect comes when one's voice is heard. I coach leaders to share their voice and perspective because it can help shape policy, the workforce and perspective. Make your presence known as a leader and collaborator for good. – LaKisha Greenwade, Lucki Fit LLC

6. Building Alliances With Decision-Makers

My female clients come to me because they've been put down, pushed aside, or told they don't belong at the table. It's not easy to be bullied, but there is a way to get past it. I suggest women build healthy relationships with advocates, create a strong personal brand, establish guidelines before each project, position themselves as experts in their field, and communicate with confidence. – Christina Holloway, Christina Holloway

7. Becoming A Member Of The C-Suite

Women everywhere are making auspicious moves in the workplace. They are taking more risks and preparing themselves to take on more challenging roles. That said, one of the greatest obstacles they face is making their way to the C-suite. My advice is that they take the bull by the horns: Know what you want and be relentless in your preparation. Equivocation will always be your worst enemy. – Karima Mariama-Arthur, Esq., WordSmithRapport

8. Asking For Money

For over 32 years, I have led women entrepreneurs to their next levels in business, and often the challenge is sales and anything related to income — not charging enough, being afraid to ask, underpricing, marketing, promoting, "bragging" to establish authority, and giving away services for free. My advice is to learn to master sales and get confident in your skills so you price properly and gain respect. – Tracy Repchuk, InnerSurf Online Brand & Web Services

9. Standing In Their Success

Some women leaders shy away from speaking on their accomplishments for fear of being boastful or conceited. Women tend to think that it's needed to shrink themselves to seem non-intimidating. I advise clients to gain the confidence to know that if they're in the room, that means they deserve to be there. Shrinking does nothing but delay your voice from being heard and taken seriously. – Niya Allen-Vatel, Career Global

10. Tackling Imposter Syndrome

The biggest challenge my female clients face is an inability to internalize their accomplishments. We first get to the root of why this belief exists, then adjust their locus of control by making accurate assessments of their performance, then get feedback from other leaders to confirm their strengths. By tackling imposter syndrome, they are able to better develop their leadership. – Loren Margolis, Training & Leadership Success LLC

11. Overcoming Perfectionism

Many of the women leaders I coach get paralyzed by their perfectionist tendencies. I often recommend reflection for clients when they get really stuck. It might be a shorter pause, such as a few deep breaths or short meditation, or a longer activity like a walk, journaling exercise, or a Brené Brown book excerpt or TED Talk. All of these approaches have worked well to help manage perfectionism. – Jill Hauwiler, Leadership Refinery

12. Trusting Their Own Voice

In conversations with leaders, there is one recurring theme that haunts me. It is the virtually inaudible question I hear women asking themselves too often: "Who am I to...?" What I tell my clients is that right now, they are among the wealthiest, most educated and powerful women on the planet. They have not risen to their current title by accident. They must trust and use their own voice! – Susanne Biro, Susanne Biro & Associates Coaching Inc.

13. Shifting Their Word Choice

Women share the challenge of reconciling an internal conflict between being perceived as a respected leader versus a bossy woman. Professional women can resolve this issue and own the respected leader role by shifting from judgmental to neutral words. This subtle transition positively influences the way a listener digests the message and perceives the speaker's authority and leadership. – Elaine Rosenblum, J.D., ProForm U®

14. Dealing With Negative Thoughts

One of the biggest challenges my female clients face is they allow for the negative thoughts that arise in their mind to take control of their life. My advice for women everywhere is to take control of their thoughts by becoming consciously aware of them and to either replace them with more positive and encouraging thoughts or to accept them and decide to move forward despite them. – Pam Ortiz, Pam Ortiz International LLC


15. Re-Entering The Paid Workforce


Relaunching a career after a long hiatus as a full-time caregiver for children or aging parents is challenging. It requires combating ageism, rebuilding confidence, reconstructing a network, dusting off old skills or developing new ones, and catching up on technology. Women leaders — help these relaunchers advance themselves, even if your path was different and didn't include a career break. – Carroll Welch, Carroll Welch Consulting

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