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Ms.Chandra Vadhana
Ms.Parvathy Menon
THE BEST MAN FOR ANY

ORGANISATION IS A WOMAN

Why and How?

We live in a world where women empowerment and gender equality have been featured as a buzzword in newspapers, digital media and even daily soaps! Women are natural leaders when it comes to managing the needs and wants of her family and children. She possesses a multitude of traits and adorns multiple hats during their lifetime. Though we have tried our best to keep the discussions on these lines active, have we understood the impact of women leadership and the paradigm shift it would bring in the real-world organizations work culture? And that women are best suited to meet the challenges of the modern marketplace.

According to 20-first, a gender consultancy firm, women hold 17% of senior management roles in America’s 100 largest companies. The equivalent figures for Europe and Asia are just 11% and 4%. OECD projections, based on current trends, show that women will account for two out of three graduates across advanced economies in 2020. A recent chit chat with a multi-million-dollar IT company head revealed that despite having up to 65% women in entry roles, the progression from middle to senior level paints a dismal picture. He was literally lamenting over the figures, despite having a flexible time schedule and women friendly benefits.
Why is it that we have less women leaders?

• This thought and further reading has culminated in this article. I have restricted my discussion to top 3 issues that I think women and organisations need to understand closely and manage effectively.

• 1. Confidence: Women do fear of other women or men getting the best out of them or the role. It could be because of their innate tendency to hold what they love and care for closer to themselves and be anxious about it. If women are clear on their purpose and on what they are trying to achieve, I see nothing that could stop them from achieving what they want. In a patriarchal society as ours; women exuberating confidence is often equated to arrogance. As a result, women tend to be submissive in their actions and behaviour. Organisations need to provide women with ample opportunities to slowly build their confidence through cross functional engagements, by assigning small tasks and appreciating her efforts. In common meetings, greater importance and encouragement should be for women to express her opinions and ideas.

Reluctance to speak up can be overcome through broader reading and understanding of the context. Organisations should be open to send women employees for leadership programs and international assignments to nurture themselves and gain perspectives. The more experience you have, the more your confidence builds! 2. Avenues to be treated equally: Most women in entry level or middle level leadership roles choose to quit leadership roles due to gender parity issues or due to feeling lonely at the top. Glass ceiling effects prevent women to get the support to march atop to higher leadership roles. Some women quit leadership because of being unable to manage family responsibilities along with work pressure of being a leader. Treating women equally and understanding their capabilities is therefore very critical in ensuring women leadership.
What’s in for the board as take away?

Organisations need to ensure that there is more than one woman in board rooms or meetings. Women need to be nominated for leadership roles in equal or the best possible ratios. Her innate submissive behaviour might require a little bit of hand holding from peers around. Have in place a women friendly atmosphere and rigid mechanism to ensure women safety including setting up of the POSH mandates. Men should be encouraged to take up parenting as a responsibility and could be acknowledged within the organization.

3. Opportunities vs Responsibilities: Many women quit career during their entry level / mid-level positions due to family reasons, marriage or maternity. Launching 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.

Organizations can conduct specific recruitment drives to bring back old employees who had quit due family reasons. Also provide leadership mentoring and coaching to help them slowly enter leadership roles. Work from home / flexible work and similar facilities can be provided. Child care facilities and safe travel are other needs for women which if taken care by corporate could be of great measure to ensure equal participation of women in economy.

A recent report from the world economic forum, quoted that ensuring gender parity at workplace could lead to rise of up to 27% in GDP. According to the worldwide survey, conducted by Pittsburgh-based human resources consulting firm DDI together with non-profit business research group The Conference Board, in the companies that have the top 20% of financial performance, 27% of leaders are women. Among the bottom 20% of financial performers, only 19% of leaders are women.

Want a better performing company with efficiently managed deliverables? It is high time to let women join the race and let them fight it out with competency and skill for the roles. Women don’t require sympathy but empathetic involvement from her family, friends, peers and the organisation she works for.

Chandra Vadhana R & Sreejith Menon
AFRICA INDIA MENTORSHIP
EXCHANGE PROGRAM (AIMEX)

We learn when we exchange ideas, thoughts, perspectives and information. Exchange programs are a cool way to learn about another culture and other people. AFRICA INDIA MENTORSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAMME- AIMEX was conceptualised as part of the International women's day. Prayaana’s Educational Experiment- No 2 was thus an interesting experiment on Online Career Coaching and Startup mentoring for women in India and Africa.

Full video available in the link given below:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeNMOYf3x3w
CAREER QUEEN
SUMMIT 2019

On the International Day for Women, Prayaana conducted for the second year, its Mega Career Queen Festival 2019, at the new Integrated Startup Complex, Kerala Startup Mission premises in Kalamassery, Kochi.

Titled “Career Queen Summit 2019” Prayaana’s next step in the journey of Life for Women, was to launch new options in a varied spectrum. The event highlights achievements by women from various spheres of life, especially women achievers from Kerala. The Malayali pride, The Missile Woman of India and renowned scientist of DRDO, Ms. Tessy Thomas is the awardee for Career Queen this year, along with the World record winner in Thiruvathira, Smt.Malathi Menon and the Malayalam film actress, Ms. Aiswarya Lekshmi. They received the Career Queen Awards in the category, “The Achiever Queen”, “The Empowering Queen” and “The Bold and Beautiful Queen” respectively.

The event comprised of keynote speeches, panel discussions and talks. A contest for girl students named as “Campus Career Queen” was also conducted on the same day. As a Pre event, we also had arranged a special international mentoring workshop from South Africa for the contestants. After many exciting rounds where intelligence, common sense, confidence and smartness are tested, the Campus Career Queen where adjudged by a group of judges. Apart from this, An exhibition of women led businesses and startups were also arranged at the venue.
CAREER QUEEN SUMMIT 2019
CAREER QUEEN SUMMIT 2019

Winners of Career Queen Contest

Ms. Neha of RIT was crowned as Career Queen 2k19
First Runner up - Anagha Jacob (Marthoma College)
Second Runner up - Arunima C R (Govt. Politechnic, Wayanad)
Third Runner Up - Maria Ann Toms
Prayaana Fellowship Training at SPIC, Tuticorin.

Prayaana Fellowship Training was conducted for Women leaders of SPIC, Tuticorin who were mentored on leadership skills and in developing a better worklife. The two day workshop also led to the formation of Prayaana SPIC hub where these women leaders undertake developmental projects in township in due course. The workshop was held on Feb 27-28.
WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

MARTHOMA COLLEGE
Ayoor, KOLLAM

Bhavan's Adarsha Vidyalaya , Kakkanad
Navangana 2018, held by KSWDC

Chief Guest at EY, Trivandrum
Other Events during Feb - March

An evening lecture of TMA about Happiness at work was organised on World happiness day, March 20, where our CEO spoke about Happiness at work - some research inputs and what I learnt about adopting "being happy at work"

Remember.. happy people are successful and happy companies are 20% more successful and profitable than others. This is a new concept in India and highly relevant since we have now been ranked 140 in the world's happiest countries.

Entrepreneurship Orientation Program at an Orphanage near Aluva
Experiential Learning - Management skills, Munnar
STARTUPMAZA #1

4TuneFactory Prayaana #StartupMaza is the name of this 3 day Workshop on Entrepreneurship. The 3 day workshop was organised by Kerala State Productivity Council And sponsored by Cochin Shipyard. The program was led by our CEO, Ms.Chandra Vadhana. Ms.Roopa George, MD of Asian Kitchen and TokyoBay inaugurated the session. Ms.Sheela Kochouseph, MD of VStar garments was the Chief Guest for the Valedictory Session. We also had guest speakers, Ms. Sreedevi (CEO, Processhub) and Mr.Subilal (CEO, Devagyan business) and Ms.Hanan (Student Entrepreneur) sharing their stories and expertise. It was indeed great to see the ladies smile with confidence on the third day - ready to embark on a new journey. These hitherto housewives will now have the real StartupMaza!

#Prayaana #StartupMaza#1
Entrepreneurship Training at DCSMAT, Wagamon

Educational experiment #3 by Prayaana was conducted at DCSMAT, Wagamon by our Trainers Ms. Chandra Vadhana R and Ms Keziah Thomas.
Women Empowerment Program Conducted for Federal Bank Employees By Prayaana Trainers

Women's Day Program for Federal Bank was designed and led by our corporate training division. Prayaana Trainers Ms.Sajitha Rasheed, Dr.Vineetha , Dr.Meera ,Ms. Meena Baiju led the sessions simultaneously at Trivandrum, Calicut, Kottayam and Kochi. There was also a self defence and physical fitness workshop led by Fitness Trainers, Ms.Sharanya, Mr.Anas Anwar, Mr.Afthewab and Mr. Jithin .The program objective was to give the lady bank managers a session on assertive behaviour and self management.
THE FUTURE LOUNGE #1

THE FUTURE LOUNGE #1 was held on 30th of March at NASSCOM, Infopark. The meet consisted of two sessions. The first one was "Introduction to Web Technologies" by Progate and the second one was "Tech Careers for Engineers in Japan" by Silver Peak. Students from several colleges as well as graduates attended the event including both boys and girls. They found the session to be very fruitful and informative.
BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL QUEEN AWARD

Prayaana honored Ms. Aiswarya Lakshmi with Bold and Beautiful Queen Award for the year 2019 for her contribution to Malayalam Film industry.
HUB Events

Prayaana campus hubs at ToeH, KMEA and RIT conducted various skill programs at their campuses in the months of February and March.

Department Of Computer Science
Presents

Introduction To Web Technologies

29-03-2019
CCF Lab
@2:00pm
MEDIA COVERAGE

Career Queen

By JEENA JAYARAMAN

The time is 9 am and the workplaces around Kochi are just waking up, but the office of Prayana—an employability, entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem for women—is already a hub of activity. At the centre of all the buzz is Chandra Vadana R, the heart and soul of the initiative.

Chandra’s efforts in women empowerment brought her the prestigious Empretec Women in Business Award 2018—a special recognition for social enterprises, instituted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). She was shortlisted from 120 applicants from around the world and became the first and only Indian to win the honour in the decade-long history of the awards.

The path to this recognition was no bed of roses. "I had a career break and then wanted to start something on my own, so began an HR consultancy which sadly shut shop within a few months. I met a number of people, especially women, in the course of managing the HR consultancy and I realised many like me were struggling to get back to their mainstream careers. That was the birth of Prayana," she says.

In India there is a major chunk of employable women workforce that remains unproductive because they have had career breaks or are not in careers suited to them. The mission, she says, is 'to bring back women to careers'. "We held interaction sessions in many cities in Kerala and found that many women, sometimes highly qualified, remain as homemakers, but are keen to start a career," says Chandra.

Prayana has a two-pronged approach in empowering women: First, for women who have had career breaks, an assessment is done on their job prospects and then they are skilful up to meet the industry requirements. The organisation has tie-ups with prospective employers and the candidates get placed back in the industry according to their competencies. Second, they concentrate on skilling up the college students; they are given career counselling and internship opportunities.

They have also developed a programme called the Prayana fellowship, where women are given assistance to embark on a career. The efforts of Prayana have been recognised by the Kerala Startup Mission and are supported by the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre. Women who are keen to become entrepreneurs are given training and provided with support to work towards accomplishing their dream.
MEDIA COVERAGE
Valentines day Celebration at office

Happy Valentine’s Day

Love is just a word until someone comes and gives it meaning

Employee of the Month

Mr. Midhin P.K. Media Head
MOMENTS OF THE MONTH
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NEVER ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS THAN YOU DESERVE. REMEMBER, YOU TEACH PEOPLE HOW TO TREAT YOU