

# Be the change you want to see

## Personal tips and strategies for building a gender-balanced business

The **role of a leader** goes beyond managing a business section, it's also about making their team members feel included and inspiring them to grow in their own unique career paths. Each leader has their own journey and should be encouraged to share their personal stories openly and authentically.

It's incredibly powerful for team members to be able to identify with their leaders and feel represented in the way they experience life at work and privately. When I was a young brand manager, my general manager shared how he balanced his professional role with being a dad and it made a huge impression on me.



**Miranda Prins**

General Manager Continental Europe



**Be a visible ally**, which means being open not just about your successes but about your struggles and your solutions. People must know they have space, so as a leader you have to stop covering up. For instance, if I'm not attending a meeting, instead of just declining it, I will be honest and say: 'It's my daughter's birthday and I want to be there' or 'I want to have dinner with my kids.' I leave loudly.

**I'm a people person:** I'm interested in them, and I know when to step into a person's journey. I understand what women feel when they go on maternity leave or they get a big promotion, and so I proactively reach out or make myself available to talk. Recently there was a team member who got pregnant after five years of fertility treatment and my first reaction was to send her a personal note saying: "take care of yourself first". When a baby is born, I congratulate the new mother or father, and I send a thank-you message to people who are covering for those on parental leave.



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In the case of a promotion, I send a note to say: 'I know from experience you can have a lot of insecure voices, so I want you to know **I believe in you 100%**. Don't doubt yourself.' I didn't use to do this for men, but over the past couple of months, I've started doing it. We are at 50/50 now, and I want men to be part of this inclusivity as much as women. We have personal development programmes for men and women, and I've learnt that men have almost 100% the same fears, worries, imposter syndrome, as women do. In my opinion, it's almost more important to discuss these things with men because they are less inclined to talk.

At Kellogg, **we have several initiatives to make our ED&I commitments tangible**. We have specific female leadership programmes, ensuring that our current 50:50 achievement lasts in the future. We also have business employee resource groups (BERGs) on gender, multiculturalism and LGBTQ+. It gives people a forum to meet up with others who feel the same passion. I'm a sponsor of one of these groups, and they bring to me what will make the biggest difference to them. It means I'm not expected to have all the answers myself, and policies get born that make a real change where people need it. I'm very proud that Kellogg recently introduced policies on menopause, pregnancy loss and fertility treatments. Not every leader knows about these issues, and policies give them a guidebook on what to do.

**I devote 10% of my time to ED&I**. That's how you get results because people know it's not just a 'blah blah' on a page. Data is so important to me: what gets measured gets done. All our teams have goals, and our dashboard shows us where we are on gender balance, the succession plate, and the marketplace (for example, the male and female top talents that have left us; salary increases divided by male and female). I check this dashboard once a quarter with business partners and every six months with the region. And in the meantime, if the HR team sees a deviation from where we as a company want to be, they will alert me.

**Women need to have profit and loss ownership**, and you can only get that where you drive gender balance. I want more women in IT, supply chain and sales; we have lots of targets for those areas. But it cuts both ways: I need a comms and marketing team that is diverse, not all-female, and so absolutely I focus on getting men into those jobs. Building a more diverse team is something every single person can do. If your company doesn't set you a target, set one for yourself. Share the commitment out loud and give yourself time to live up to it.



## Key takeaways

1. Be a visible ally, to men, women and non-binary people!
2. Make personal interventions when people need it most
3. Devote a substantial percentage of your time to ED&I
4. Get more men into traditionally female roles and more women into traditionally male roles



Miranda with CEO Steve Cahillane and the Iberian team in Madrid

Kellogg Company is a foundation partner of LEAD Network and has reached gender parity on their 833 managers in Europe and 3 years ahead of target.

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### About LEAD Network

LEAD Network is a non-profit and volunteer-led organisation whose mission is to attract, retain and advance women in the retail and consumer goods industry in Europe through education, leadership and business development.

LEAD Network is run by and for its members, women and men, and we value every individual for their unique perspective. With a primary focus on promoting gender equality, the organisation strives for the advancement of women of every race, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, educational background, national origin, religion, physical ability and lifestyle. Its vision is of a fair, diverse and vibrant industry where everyone can thrive. A diverse workforce where both men and women are enabled to contribute their full potential and lead their organisations to the next level of value creation. LEAD Network accounts for 18,000+ members – both women and men – from 81 countries.