

MIAMI TODAY

Advancing Women's Leadership—Multinational Firms Rise to the Challenge

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At the end of May, *Fortune* announced the 2026 edition of the Most Powerful Women in Business list, recognizing 100 of the world's most influential women in business across finance, technology, health care, telecom, retail, energy, and other industries.

Closer to home, Influential Executive Women (IEW), a nonprofit organization that advances its mission of elevating and celebrating women in leadership, will be naming the top 100 influential women in Florida. According to Lindse Murphy, CEO of IEW: "South Florida's business community is strengthened by influential women leading across healthcare, technology, finance, real estate, nonprofit, and entrepreneurial sectors, collectively influencing billions in economic activity and regional growth annually."

With a multinational corporate presence of over 1,400 firms, South Florida is a vitally important laboratory for supporting and advancing women's leadership. We have the good fortune of having women in senior leadership positions in multinationals such as RCCL, GSK, L3Harris, Visa Chubb, and Aon.

The advancement of women into senior leadership positions within multinationals is driven by multiple interconnected forces. Research demonstrates that gender diversity in leadership yields substantial competitive advantages, with companies in the top quartile for gender diversity showing 25% higher likelihood of above-average profitability.

The economic rationale for advancing women has become increasingly compelling. McKinsey research reveals that achieving gender parity could boost global GDP by over 20%, while companies with more than 25% women on executive committees realize profit margins of 16%—more than ten times higher than companies with no female board members. More multinationals are now prioritizing gender diversity as a strategic imperative rather than merely a social responsibility initiative.

Technological and educational advancement is another factor. The expansion of educational opportunities for women in STEM fields and digital fluency training has broadened the talent pipeline for technical and executive roles. Women with advanced digital skills show 35% increased

likelihood of advancing to management positions and 280% greater probability of reaching senior management/director levels.

Two excellent examples of corporate leadership development programs stand out—Deloitte and Procter & Gamble. Deloitte’s Women's Initiative (WIN), established in 1993, is one of the longest-running corporate women's advancement initiatives. Since its inception, WIN has grown to include over 1,000 women partners, principals, and directors at Deloitte. The initiative has significantly impacted gender diversity statistics, with 20 women (33%) promoted to partner at Deloitte UK in 2024, increasing total women partners to 421 (31%).

Procter & Gamble’s gender equality programs have achieved substantial progress toward gender equity, with women representing almost half of management roles and approximately one-third of senior leadership positions. The company's 2017 employee survey showed 89% favorable ratings for overall gender equality, ranking as the second-highest scoring category across the organization. P&G's support for women scientists and innovators has strengthened product development, with diverse teams driving superior innovation across the company's portfolio.

Research and case studies confirm that multinational firms need to take concrete steps to support the advancement of women leaders. Among the most important are:

1. Establish Measurable Goals with Executive Accountability

Organizations must set specific, time-bound targets for women's representation at each organizational level. Companies should implement the "40 by 2030" framework—achieving 40% women in leadership roles by 2030—as recommended by the UN Global Compact Forward Faster initiative

2. Design Flexible Work Policies That Support Career Progression

Research demonstrates that 87% of women with flexible work arrangements report higher job satisfaction and productivity, with companies offering flexibility retaining up to 95% of female talent.

3. Implement Succession Planning That Intentionally Includes Women

Succession planning must extend beyond C-suite positions to encompass director and vice president roles, creating a robust pipeline of women prepared for senior leadership opportunities.

4. Promote Pay Equity Through Transparency and Regular Audits

Organizations should conduct comprehensive pay equity reviews every two to three years, comparing compensation across gender, race, and other demographic categories for employees performing substantially similar work.

5. Measure, Monitor, and Report Progress Transparently

Organizations should establish comprehensive diversity metrics that track women's representation across all organizational levels, promotion and retention rates.

In sum, advancing women into senior leadership positions within multinational corporations represents both a moral imperative and a strategic business opportunity. The research evidence is compelling: gender-diverse leadership teams deliver superior financial performance, enhanced

innovation, better decision-making, and stronger organizational cultures. Multinational corporations can build robust pipelines of diverse talent, close persistent gender gaps in leadership representation, and unlock the full potential of their workforce to drive innovation and growth in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

South Florida needs more influential executive women. Many will come—in fact, should come—from our extensive network of multinational firms. Let’s hope that those corporations aggressively reach out to cultivate and reward female talent, to the benefit of all.

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