

"As a business leader, you have the opportunity to change your workplace every day, and this should be your playbook."

—Dominic Barton, Global Managing Partner, McKinsey & Company

# WE

**MEN, WOMEN, AND THE DECISIVE  
FORMULA FOR WINNING AT WORK**

**RANIA H. ANDERSON**

**WILEY**



# Praise for *WE*

"In a hypercompetitive business environment, gender parity is essential to success. Rania Anderson delivers the evidence-based framework for frontline managers to senior executives who are serious about improving the workplace through a commitment to action and rewriting the gender playbook. Gender partnerships that leverage the collective strengths of men and women will be the hallmark of the modern workplace designed for economic prosperity. By taking action together, *WE* can succeed in creating an equitable workplace where everyone wins."

**–David G. Smith, PhD, Associate Professor of Sociology, National Security Affairs Department, United States Naval War College, coauthor of *Athena Rising: How and Why Men Should Mentor Women***

"This book is a must-read for all male leaders looking for guidance on how to work more effectively with women. *WE* sheds light on what to DO versus what not to do. Leveraging her deep experience as an executive business coach, Rania Anderson shares intentional, proactive, and research-based actions to retain and advance women in the workplace."

**–Jeffery Tobias Halter, President of YWomen, corporate gender strategist, author, thought leader**

"One of the classic challenges in gender equality work is engaging men. In this book, Rania Anderson provides a concrete plan for how to take it to the next level – *WE 4.0* offers men a vision of why and how they must get onboard and contribute to gender equality in ways that make the work all of us do count for even more. Engagement at the top has always been important, but this book shows us how to create engagement throughout an entire organization. I'll definitely be recommending this to organizations that know they need to change – and to those that don't!"

**–Curt Rice, PhD, Leader of Norway's Committee on Gender Balance and Diversity in Research and President, Oslo Metropolitan University**

“For entrepreneurs, finding the right talent is a significant challenge, especially in the gritty early years. That’s precisely why startup founders – 65% of whom are male – can’t afford to overlook the insights and contributions that women will make to the growth of their firms. Rania Anderson provides a compelling, well-timed roadmap for entrepreneurs to leverage the strengths of a gender-diverse team, work effectively together, and produce better outcomes for everyone.”

**–Wendy Guillies, President and CEO,  
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation**

“The majority of leaders are men. They can drive change on gender equality. I have studied men in senior leadership and middle-management positions to find out how men can create gender-inclusive environments. Anderson drills down into these practices and provides the reader with a playbook guiding what to specifically say and do, so that men and managers can no longer claim they don’t know what to do!”

**–Elisabeth Kelan, PhD, Professor of Leadership,  
Cranfield School of Management**

“Rania Anderson’s WE quite rightly challenges the pervasive and damaging ‘myth of meritocracy.’ She argues that men need to be more reflective and take action to change their work environment. As she points out, only then can we get closer to a truly level playing field.”

**–Adam Quinton, Founder/CEO of Lucas Point Ventures and Adjunct  
Professor at the Columbia University School of International  
and Public Affairs**

“I have always said that women don’t need men to stand up for them; women need men to stand beside them in the battle against inequality. I’m really glad there is now a book that highlights key business cases for individuals and organizations to learn from.”

**–Khalid Alkhudair, social entrepreneur, Founder and CEO of Glowork,  
an employment organization for women in Saudi Arabia**

WE



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*For the two men who support me the most,  
my husband, Lance, and my son, Nick.  
And for my Dad, my first male champion.*



# Contents

## **Foreword** xiii

*Dominic Barton,  
Global Managing Director, McKinsey & Company*

## **Introduction** 1

*You want to get to the next level in your career or business. You're one of the good guys. You see opportunities. You like to win and are not afraid of competition. You want to work well with women and support equality. You wonder why, with all the investments made in educating girls and developing women, we still have all these "women's" issues.*

## **1 Why Care About Gender Balance at Work?** 34

*Diversity = dollars. The business case for "why men and women" and the facts, presented in a way you haven't thought of before. Your objections and skepticism addressed. Why the only way to win is to win together.*

**2 The WE 4.0 Framework 54**

*Four actions that maximize your own success and business results when men and women work equally together. How you can individually effect change where you are now regardless of what's happening around you.*

**3 Eliminate 66**

*What to stop. Horror stories, hero stories, and techniques the savviest leaders use. Specific ways to interrupt unconscious bias and improve your work environment so that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.*

**4 Expand 92**

*What to increase. How you can recruit, retain, give direct feedback, and network with women. Be a sponsor, not just a mentor. Develop female talent and improve your own results.*

**5 Encourage 128**

*How to support. Discover what most men and managers miss in meetings and what to do about it. Take simple steps to make women and their contributions more visible. Unlock opportunities for yourself, women, and your company through your support and encouragement.*

**6 Engage 152**

*How to participate. Leave “loudly,” get in on “work-keeping,” and learn the secrets of leaders who transform work environments and champion equality. Be the example. This isn’t your father’s workplace.*

## CONTENTS

<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>167</b>
<i>WE 4.0 cases in action. Be the transformational leader your son, daughter, wife, sister, colleague, and business need you to be. It's about the opportunities you want for yourself, and those you care about.</i>	
<b>WE 4.0 at a Glance</b>	<b>174</b>
<i>Easily refer to the WE 4.0 Actions when you need them: before a meeting, when you have a job opening, when you have a performance review, all the time, and anytime.</i>	
<b>WE 4.0 Checklist</b>	<b>178</b>
<i>Use this checklist regularly to determine if you are consistently taking WE 4.0 actions.</i>	
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>Resources</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>206</b>
<b>About the Author</b>	<b>214</b>



# Foreword

*Dominic Barton, Global Managing Partner,  
McKinsey & Company*

The two most important words in Rania H. Anderson's indispensable book are "you" and "specific."

The "you" is any leader – but perhaps especially men – who works with or supervises women. This is not a book about what *institutions* should do to become more inclusive and diverse. It is about what *you* can do to make your workplace more inclusive and diverse – and, in the process, more effective, more profitable, and more successful.

That's important, because it's up to *you* to take the steps needed to ensure gender parity in your workplace. Your heart may have been in the right place for years, and you may well regard yourself as an enlightened manager. But are your top jobs occupied disproportionately by men? Are you sponsoring women the way you sponsor men? Are women

commanding equal salaries? Good intentions don't matter. Actions do.

I am the first to admit that leading change in this area can be challenging, and progress can be maddeningly slow even when an organization does all the right things. That said, the sad fact is that many managers have been too slow to even try to maximize the potential of what Anderson aptly calls "the most underutilized asset the world has" – women.

At a moment when companies are turning themselves inside out to become more agile and innovative, can you really afford to reward old behaviors that stymie half of your potential workforce? When you're constantly surveying the horizon for new competitors, can you really afford to sideline people whose experiences can expand your vision? When women control \$20 trillion of purchasing power, when they drive 70–85% of all consumer purchasing decisions and even buy more cars and consumer electronics than men, can you afford to sit by as your company's women fail to rise to leadership roles? The answer to each question, of course, is "No." As Anderson puts it, "Just as we can calculate a return on equity, we can also calculate a return on equality."

As a business leader, you have the opportunity to change your workplace every day, and this should be your playbook.



That's where the book's other critical word – "specific" – comes into play. Many well-intentioned leaders simply don't know how to drive gender parity. You may not be sure how to begin the process of changing the nature of your workplace so that women have the same opportunities as men. That may seem like such a daunting task.

The specifics in this book demystify the process. Anderson does this in many ways. She explains with great precision the research on what women want from their work and workplace. She creates a framework, called *WE 4.0*, for how women and men can work equally, share leadership, and succeed together. She gives you a vocabulary and questions to ask to examine your existing practices for signs of unconscious bias. Most importantly, she describes the actions needed at the individual level to build diverse, high-performing teams and equitable work environments. Each chapter includes an invaluable self-assessment checklist, a set of tasks to get you started, and examples from people who have tackled this problem in their own workplaces.

Anderson's examples are drawn from her extensive work helping leaders around the world with their efforts to create workplaces where women can thrive. The examples are unique and yet relatable, like the

Jordanian investor who stands out by backing companies run by Arab women; the GE leader who sponsors a female employee by throwing the most critical tasks her way; or the one woman in a four-partner group who finally insisted that the men share in the administrative tasks they kept unconsciously passing off onto her. I found that many of her examples highlighted complicated work scenarios similar to ones I have encountered during my own career, and I'm sure you will as well.

Gender equity has been increasing on the agenda of many companies over the past several years, thanks in part to women (and some men) calling out the biases – and sometimes egregious behaviors – that have prevented many women from reaching their full potential. This book takes what too many leaders see as an intractable challenge and provides clear, step-by-step recommendations on how to address the underlying issues.

I hope that Anderson's readers will lead the process of truly changing our workplaces into gender-equal environments. Sure, it's time, and sure, it's the right thing to do. But as someone who regularly engages with the CEOs of the world's most valuable companies, I see the real cost of the status quo: an enormous waste of economic, intellectual, and innovative potential.

Put simply, you cannot win without a workplace where women and men have equal opportunities, equal input, and equal power. Anderson points out that creating such a workplace is a broader, more ambitious goal than creating a workplace where women “fit in.” But true gender equality is the goal we should all be striving for. In a world where women represent 50% or more of the outstanding talent, anything less is an abdication of your fiduciary responsibility.

Rania Anderson’s remarkably lucid book is a subtle gem. It is so straightforward, so honest, and, yes, so specific. The subject it tackles is enormous, global, and complicated. And yet, when I read this slender volume, the truly equitable workplace seems more of a possibility than ever, a vision within reach rather than an impossible dream. It’s a vision that won’t come to be without your active leadership and participation. Cracking open this book was a great first step. Good luck with the rest of the journey. With Rania Anderson as your guide, I’m sure it will be illuminating, productive, inspiring and, ultimately, profitable.

June 14, 2018



# Introduction

Would you turn down an idea to build a brand in a few years that results in more than \$200 million in revenue? What if you could hire someone who doubled, tripled, or even improved your results ten-fold? If there was a simple way to increase your market share, would you take it? What if you knew that a coworker, whom you largely ignore, knew something that would contribute to your rapid promotion to senior vice president? Would you pay attention?

These are real circumstances in which men found themselves. The smart and savvy ones saw the opportunity and grabbed it by listening, hiring, or working well with a woman.

You are one of these men. You're one of the good guys. You don't enjoy succeeding at someone else's expense. You are committed to fair play. You want to do the right things related to women in the workplace. You know you do. You see what's going on in some

companies. No one needs to explain how wrong it is to you. You are fed up. You are not part of the “bro culture.” You are embarrassed by the actions of some presidents, CEOs, and venture capitalists (VCs). You don’t want to be identified with them, or turn a blind eye any longer. Your wife, sister, mother, and/or daughter work, and they’ve told you about the difficult circumstances with which women deal in the workplace, and you don’t approve. You also want what’s best for your son. You want to be happier at work.

You respect women and know their value. You are well aware of the business case for why the presence of more women in the workforce, particularly in leadership roles, will help you, your company, and your family. You have and see job openings that are hard to fill. You know that more than 50% of university graduates globally are women. You see the war for talent that’s underway to attract and retain the brightest minds and the people with the best skills. You know that many of the brightest minds are women: Mary Barra, Chairman and CEO of General Motors; Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook; Indra Nooyi, CEO of PepsiCo; Safra Catz, co-CEO of Oracle; and Raja Easa Al Gurg, Managing Director, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group are a few examples. Think of the women you know, the women you work with and see regularly. Your highly talented coworker may be sitting in the cubicle right next to yours.

You are ambitious, and you care about your career. You want to win. You are not afraid that you will lose your job or miss out on a promotion you deserve if women are treated equitably. You cherish competition – bring it on! Competing against top performers elevates your game. You’ve never believed that there are a finite number of jobs or opportunities. Innovation and new job creation is all around you. And who wouldn’t want some of the women I just named on their team or leading them? Successful women leaders hire, develop, and advance men’s careers and businesses all over the world. Talent – in no matter which gender it appears – rewards those who leverage it.

You are doing your best. You are tired of being told that you have unconscious bias – and of course, everyone does! You recognize that more diversity will benefit everyone, not just the groups of people who were previously left out or discriminated against.

Furthermore, you don’t subscribe to outdated cultural/societal views of the role of women. You consider your wife/girlfriend as your partner, not your housekeeper, and you share household tasks and childcare duties with her. You enjoy life outside of work: being with your family, your children (if you have them), and your friends. You want the women you work with and love

to have work environments that are free of bias or discrimination and full of opportunity. You want your son to have all the career options he'd like to consider.

You want to do the right thing in your workplace and in society. But you don't know how to change what's been happening or make things better. You are afraid of saying or doing the wrong things, and you don't want to be afraid anymore. While you understand how the #MeToo outpouring occurred and admire the courage of women who came forward, you may also be worried and even a little anxious. You are worried about what the post-#MeToo work environment means for solid, professional relationships between men and women at work. You have female colleagues and clients and don't want your interactions with them to be strained. Will it still be possible to make a female friend at work? Are the days of meeting a future girlfriend or wife at work gone forever? And you are fearful because men and women can let private conversations sometimes go to places that later cause regret and harm. Who hasn't made this mistake?

You'd like to know more about how increasing gender diversity can specifically help you with your own career or business aspirations and not lead to fewer opportunities for you, other men, and your son. If you just knew what it all meant and what to do about it in simple, straightforward, actionable and pragmatic terms.