

CLOSING LEADERSHIP GENDER GAP IN RESEARCH, INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS.

ABSTRACT AND AIM

Main issue addressed is why women remain underrepresented in leadership and what we can do to raise the number of women leaders in research, industry and business. The aim of the workshop was not to solve the issues but to identify best practices to guide current and future leaders.

RELEVANCE

The background of this research is based on understanding the differences among male and female leadership. Female leadership has shown to be same or more efficient than male leadership, but there is a lack of acknowledgement in comparison to male leadership. There exist some aspects of the female character that can play an important role to implement innovation strategies.

WORKSHOP



PROMOTE THE FEMALE LEADERSHIP THROUGH ROLE MODELS ACROSS RESEARCH, INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS”

Organised in May 2016 by ITWIIN (Italian Women Innovators and Inventors Network), University of Bari, University of Salento, Marie Curie Alumni Association, Marie Curie Fellows Association, Business Professional Women and TECNOPOLIS Science Park. The gathering had been hosted by the University of Bari, Italy, with more than 50 participants among managers, engineers, researchers and technology leaders to share the success experiences in the scientific and entrepreneurial fields and to give lessons of female leadership through the Role Models.

METHODS

Traditional high-potential, mentoring and leadership education programs are necessary but not sufficient. Three additional actions companies can take to improve the chances for women to gain a sense of themselves as leaders: (1) educate women and men about second-generation gender bias, // (2) create safe “identity workspaces” to support transitions to bigger roles, // (3) anchor women’s development efforts in a sense of leadership purpose, rather than in how women are perceived.

RESULTS

The workshop recognized that the state of female leadership in research, industry and business is less than ideal when it comes to gender balance. Increasing the presence of female leaders and role models could give more young women the confidence to demonstrate strong leadership skills in a world where men still hold the vast majority of leadership positions. The roots of such challenges are tangled and run deep: key factors are culture, history and simple force of habit to be changed. Women do not have access to the same support networks of mentors and peers that men enjoy and their businesses and opportunities for professional growth are less likely to thrive and prosper.

CONCLUSIONS

Promoting female leadership across research, industry and business still being a task to do and using Role Models can be one way to reach more awareness for both genders.