

Harnessing female brain difference – the way forward for business

INDUSTRY VIEW

New discoveries in neuroscience demonstrate that our brains do their best thinking when we feel emotionally and psychologically safe.

The competitive business environment demands leaders who can thrive in tough circumstances. That's fair enough. However, many major companies lose the best of the brain energy they employ by seeking to extract from it rather than sustain it.

This is done unwittingly and without malice, but it creates feelings of inadvertent threat that we now scientifically know inhibits key leaders' brains from functioning at their full business

potential. Research shows that companies that have broken the glass ceiling and have more women in the boardroom produce share prices that outperform their peers, especially in tough markets. Women's brains are differently tuned from men's, and can contribute key factors that generate this sense of psychological and emotional safety at work.

Historically, work has been structured to suit the male brain. It is now time for male-brain oriented organisations to take a serious look at what needs to change to truly harness the best of both. This is not a "nice to do" – it is a "vital to do", if we want to create energetically sustainable businesses where new generations of men and women want to work. However, most companies are not set up to harness the difference – yet. In my research and practice,

I work with individual leaders (both men and women) and their organisations to help them understand and harness the energetic power that is latently available to them. This goes well beyond a simple appreciation of unconscious bias.

After 30 years in leadership, 15 in international business and 15 in leadership coaching and consulting, I see the game changing. My aim is to work with clients – women and men – applying neuroscience to reduce the loss of brain energy at work and to use each gender's strengths to maximise company performance.

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