

The Sponsorship Imperative: Critical Roles and Shared Responsibilities

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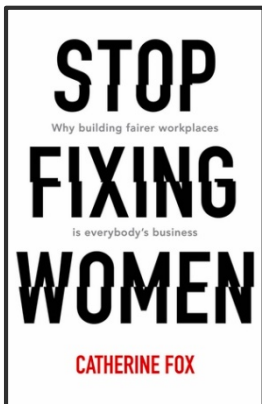
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Guiding Principles



**In Professor's Model:
Diversity = Excellence = Productivity**
Scott Page, Ph.D., U. of Michigan

Talent is Universal; Opportunity is Not
Nicholas Kristof, New York Times



Start fixing the system.
Catherine Fox, Journalist, Author

UT System Leadership 2018

Type of Leadership	% Women Represented
Board of Regents	22% (2/9)
UT System Executive Officers (excludes Chancellor)	36% (4/11)
Presidents:	
Academic Components	25% (2/8)
Health Components	0% (0/6)
Provosts	52% (29/56)
Vice President (academic & administrative)	43% (216/499)
Deans:	
All components	51% (221/433)
Medical Schools	16% (1/6)
Chairs: All components	26% (76/290)

Why are there so few women leaders?

- Unconscious bias
- Lack of commitment from the top
- Lack of broader efforts to change organizational culture
- 10+ years to make change

**Women Confuse
Supporters, Mentors & Role
Models with Sponsors**



“As you move up within an organization, it’s important to have the sponsorship of someone who has enough leverage in the organization to make things happen, otherwise it won’t be effective.

In most senior level jobs, you need sponsorship to make it to the very top.”

**Elizabeth J. Smith
General Manager
IBM Corporation**



Famous women: Who were their sponsors?



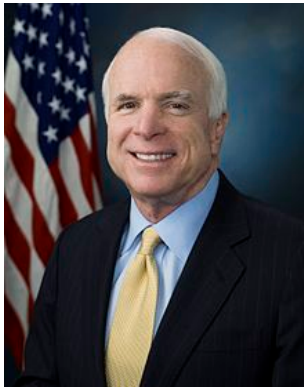
Sarah Palin



Elena Kagan



Oprah Winfrey



John McCain



President Obama



Maya Angelou

What is common to these relationships?

Power, Advancement, Public



What Does A Sponsor Do?

Advocate

**Connect you
to senior
leaders**

**Identify critical
assignments**

**Focus on
career
opportunities**

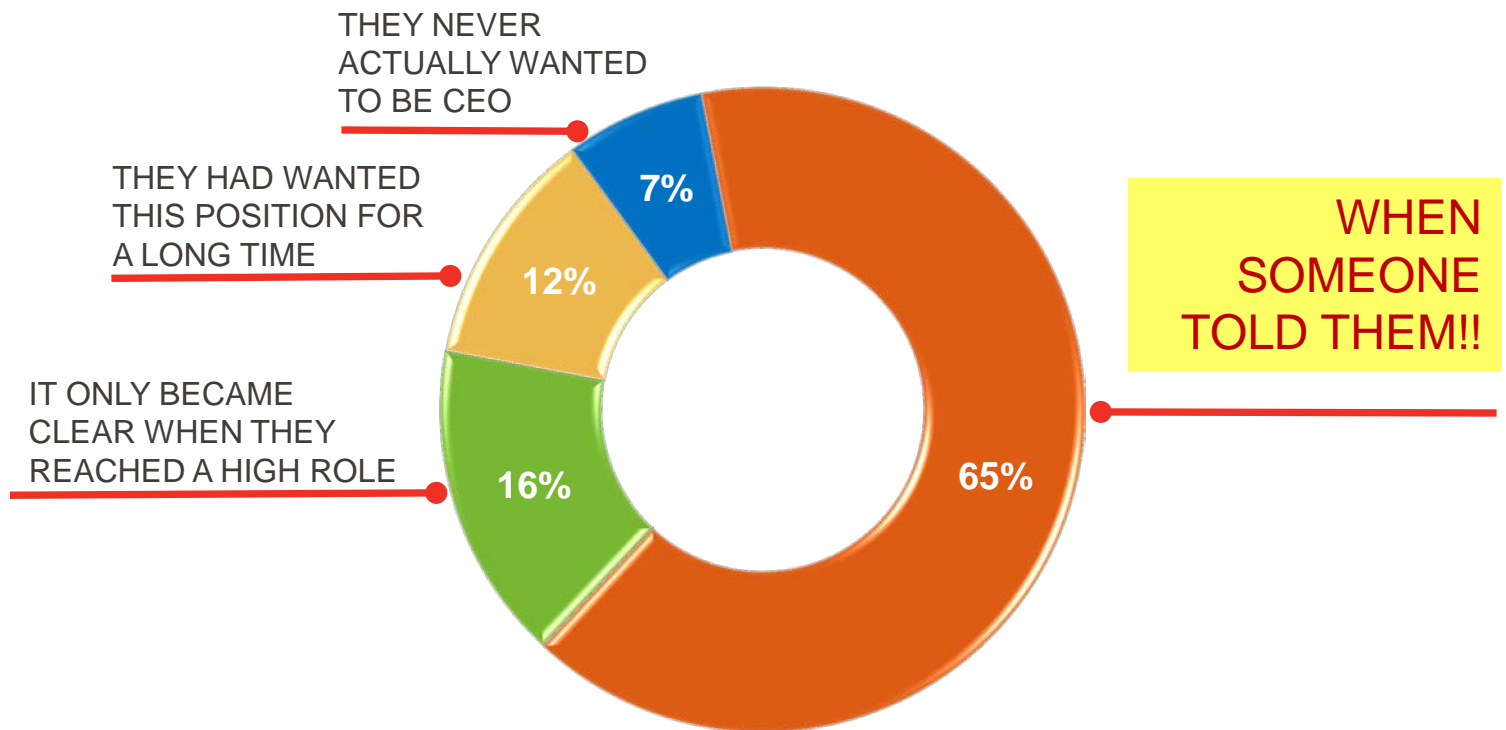
**Go out on
a limb**

**Use chips on
behalf of
protégé**

**Expand
career
vision**



When women realized they could be CEO



What does a protégé do?

**Demonstrate
trust**



**Promote
sponsor's legacy**

**Show
loyalty**



Sarah Palin



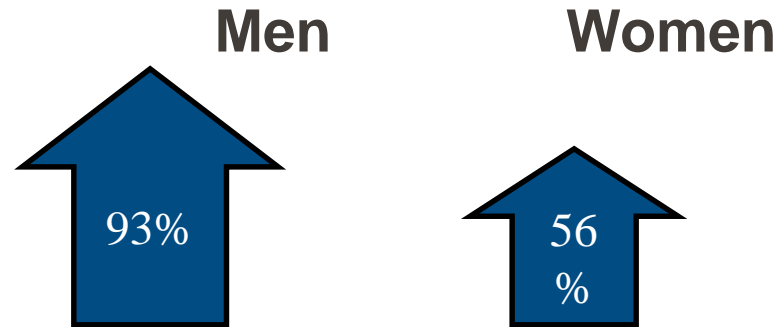
John McCain

**Contribute
110%**

What about mentoring?

Mentoring is necessary...

Increases likelihood for promotion:



But NOT sufficient...

More men promoted to leadership positions.

Men's mentors were CEO sponsors.

Sponsorship vs Mentorship

SPONSOR

MENTOR

Stick neck out, public

**Deans, provosts,
presidents**

**Directs/fuels the
relationship**

**Open doors for next
move**

**Expect loyalty and
stellar performance**

Behind the scene

Any rank or position

Driven by mentee

**Help envision next
move**

**Expect little in
return**

Advice

Guidance

*Make
introductions*

*Give
feedback*

Sponsors vs Mentors

Sponsors **ACT** Enable the dream

Mentors **ADVISE** Define the dream

Example:

A **sponsor** would
personally
recommend you to
the editor

A **mentor** would
advise you to
become a member of
the editorial board of
a journal

Protégé: **Proven performer**



Mentee: **Learner**



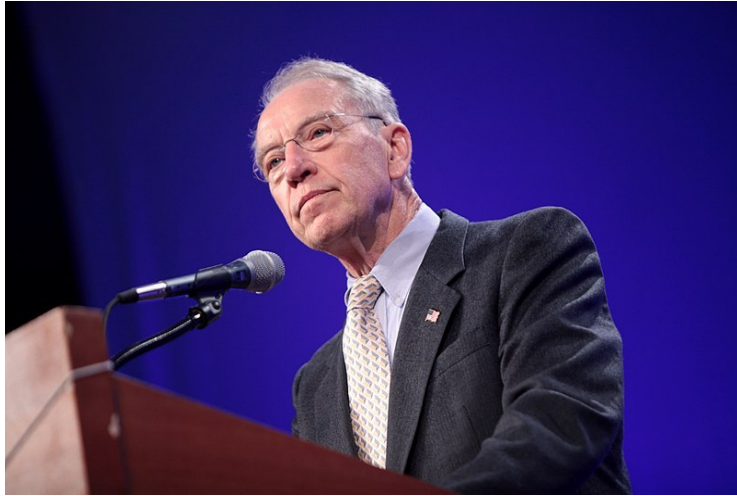
The Challenge...

**Women and minorities are
over mentored and
under sponsored!**

**Men are 46% more likely to have
a sponsor**

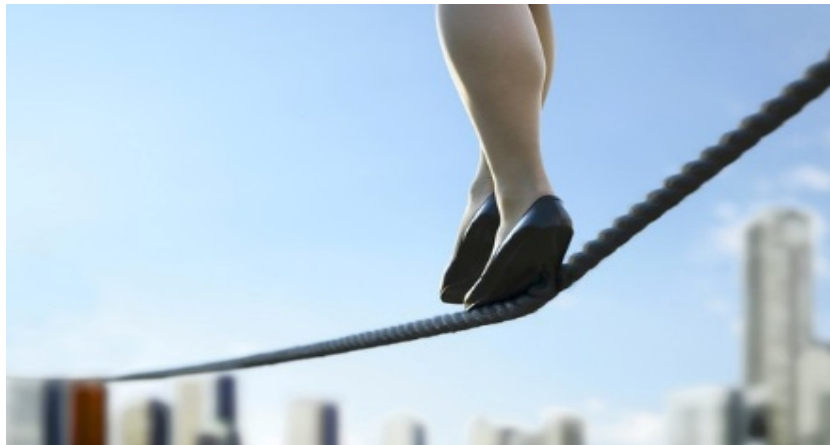
Why???

Implicit Bias is Alive and Well



“Women don’t want to work that hard” – Senator C. Grassley, 2018

**People choose people
who look like them**



**Women walk a behavioral
tightrope**





“...Sponsors look for **self-confidence** and **ambition** to get ahead...

04/14/2014

The reluctance of women and minorities **to promote themselves** and express their ambitions makes them less visible to potential sponsors.”



*Ida Abbott, J.D.
Sponsoring Women:
What Men Need to Know*

<http://theconfidencecode.com/confidence-quiz>



*If you done it, it
ain't bragging.*

WALT WHITMAN

But for women...



Form a Posse



Elevator speech-ALWAYS



Amplify



Network! Network! Network!

It's often not **who you know** but **who knows you** via informal networking



5 Take-Aways

- **Join networks with influential people**
- **Build trust**
- **Turn mentors into sponsors**
- **Sponsors are gatekeepers, not guidance counselors**
- **It's a transaction**

The Ideal protégé is:



Confident

<https://theconfidencecode.com/confidence-quiz/>



Risk Taker



Resilient



Committed



Loyal

Finally Sponsorship is EARNED!



High performer



Respected Colleague



Effective Communicator



Ability to Execute

Sponsors

**Developing high potentials is
an essential leadership activity**



You Have an Impact on Careers

Women with sponsors are more likely to:

- be satisfied with rate of advancement 30%
- ask for a pay raise 37%
- ask for a stretch assignment 20%

Keeps mothers on track:

- **85%** with sponsor vs. **58%** no sponsor

Boosts a diverse workforce:

- African Americans with a sponsor **>50%** more satisfied with rate of advancement vs. **35%** those who don't have one

Sponsorship in Action - Individual

Publicly

acknowledge talents/achievements.
support difficult/unpopular decisions.

Appoint

to internal/external high-level committees/task force

Nominate

for advancement, prestigious positions

Assign

roles that test new skills

Send as replacement

important meetings, speaking appearances and events.

Provide

opportunities to present to executive groups

Invite

women into your networks

Sponsorship in Action - Organization

Recognize

unconventional forms of leadership
women's second-shift responsibilities

Build

a sponsorship culture

- educate on importance/power of sponsorship
- include as part of leadership development program
- senior leaders serve as “sponsor evangelists”

Reward

senior leaders who are examples

View

program as active succession planning

Be intentional – *critical!*

set targets, track outcomes

Reflections on being a sponsor:

If you have sponsored a woman or a minority, how did it differ from sponsoring a man?

- What were the challenges?
- What was the outcome?
- What did you learn?

How did you benefit? Your protégée?

Is there anything you would have done differently?

What is the single most important piece of advice you would give to other sponsors?

Your Current Protégée

- 1. What are the target positions and career goals of your protégée (short-term and long-term)?**
- 2. What action steps will you take on her/his behalf?**
- 3. What is your timeline?**
- 4. How are you going to track progress?**
- 5. How will you define success?**

Sponsorship Risks and Benefits

Risk

- Use your “chips” wisely

Benefits

- Legacy of developing future leaders
- Personal/professional satisfaction
- Increased visibility
- Eye for talent



Talent is Universal

Opportunity is Not

Sponsors provide Opportunities!