

From the Desk of Ronia Kruse



International Women's Day - #EmbraceEquality

Today we celebrate International Women's Day worldwide. This anniversary is a wonderful reminder of how far women have come in forging gender equality, but there is also the realization, sadly, of how far we still need to go.

In October of 2022, McKinsey published their annual report of women in the workplace, and the results show that we are facing a tremendous problem. Since the pandemic, women at all levels, including those in leadership positions, are leaving the workforce and continue to do this well into 2023. The momentum and forward progress we've made has been halted. We are regressing. How can we solve the problem? Where is the disconnect?

There are a number of factors that come into play but the biggest one that impacts women is having a choice in how they work. According to McKinsey, "Women employees who can choose to work in the arrangement they prefer—whether remote or on-site—are less burned out, happier in their jobs, and much less likely to consider leaving their companies." Giving women a choice is incredibly important.

As a women-owned business leader, I am frequently asked what companies can do to make progress toward gender equality. I always suggest the following places to start: giving your team a choice of how to work and creating programs and career tracks to get more women into leadership roles. Start with the women currently working in your firm. Survey them, talk to them, poll them. Ask them what their career goals are and help guide them to reach those. It may be suggesting they become involved in an association committee that will later lead to a board position. It may be offering additional training or it may be giving them the hybrid schedule they desire. Small steps can lead to big results.

We must push harder and continue to speak-up and speak-out for a gender equal world. I invite you to take the pledge with me to #EmbraceEquality for a world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Join us in forging the same path for yourself, for your daughters, your sisters, and your wives. We believe strongly in moving forward. Let's continue to move forward together.