

Happy International Women's Day: Now's Your Time to Speak Up



Wendy Glavin, Founder & CEO, [Wendy Glavin Agency](#)

The theme of this year's International Women's Day is #PressforProgress, a strong call to motivate and unite friends, colleagues and communities to think, act and be gender inclusive.

Purple is the official color of International Women's Day, founded more than a century ago after some 15,000 women marched in New York City to demand better working conditions and voting rights.

Campaigns like, "HeforShe," initiated by the UN, Times Up, #MeToo, The Women's March, Poverty is Sexism, and others have raised these issues to the point where newsmakers and people are discussing them every day. For the millions of people who have worked for decades, it's an opportunity to make your voice known, without fear of reprisal.

Today, leaders, like [Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg](#), are taking their own measures to ensure gender equality is achieved in the workplace. Sandberg launched the #MentorHer campaign with [LeanIn.org](#) to help fill the mentorship void that many women experience. Through this campaign, men will be provided with tips on how to be an effective mentor to a female

colleague, as well as insights on why mentoring is important.

“People with mentors are more likely to get promotions – yet women are less likely than men to be mentored, and women of color get the least support of all,” said Sandberg.

Melinda Gates kicked off 2018 by proclaiming “it’s time for a new era for women” in a [Time magazine](#) op-ed. “With a new focus on women’s economic empowerment, connecting women to markets, making sure they have access to financial services, and empowering them to help themselves, we aim to help tear down the barriers that keep half the world from leading a full life,” Gates wrote in an [op-ed for Quartz](#) published Monday.



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“Change doesn’t happen overnight,” [said Audra Jenkins](#), chief diversity and inclusion officer of Randstad North America. “To move the needle in a meaningful way, it is the utmost responsibility of corporate leaders to invest in programs that will help retool and empower women for future success.”

Women’s equality was a hot topic this week at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where global business and government leaders gather annually to discuss pressing social and economic issues.

Dozens of panels and events have been held on gender, diversity and inclusion, and two specifically focused

on [sexual harassment](#). This year's gathering was the first to be [chaired by all women](#), including IMF chief Christine Lagarde and IBM CEO Ginni Rometty, and featured the biggest ever percentage of female attendees, though still in the minority at 20 percent.

"What we need to do in government and in business, and in every aspect of our lives, is to continue to make sure that we create an open environment for this to be discussed and that we continue to shine the bright lights on these issues wherever they still exist. Companies should lead by example," said Christopher Nassetta, CEO of Hilton.

This last year has been rough with new accusations of sexual harassment and assault. Contracts are being canceled, careers are being ended and new investigations are being launched. Others are coming forward to condemn or defend the accused or the accuser.

"The good news is that with all this attention, we have a profound opportunity. It is truly our time to make the difference. Our focus needs to be on the actions and attitudes we can adopt that will change the environment so that true gender equality becomes a reality.

In an environment where men and women have equal power we will have shifted the norm, where sexual harassment is a rarity and is not used for power and control, " reported [Forbes](#), February, 2018.

About the Author: Wendy Glavin is Founder and CEO of Wendy Glavin, a NYC full-service agency. Wendy is a 20-year veteran of corporate, agency, consulting and small business ownership. She specializes in B2B2C marketing communications, PR, social and digital media. Her website is: <https://wendyglavin.com/>. Contact her at:

wendy@wendyglavin.com.