

# PRESIDENTIAL

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## The US Presidential Service Center



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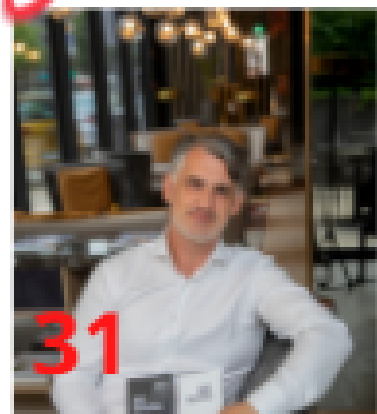
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Publisher: Herrington Publications Worldwide, Pty Ltd.  
info@herringtonpublications.com  
The USFSC: magazine@presidentialservicecenter.org



Herrington Publications Worldwide, Pty Ltd. Suite 28,  
9 Bayview St, Runaway Bay, 4216, Queensland,  
Australia +61 452520841

The United States Presidential Service Center 301  
Cleveland Avenue, Greer, NC 28073 United States of  
America +1 704 917 2940



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www.presidentialservicecenter.org



# CELEBRATING WOMANHOOD AS A SYMBOL OF LEADERSHIP

Think of the  
"Leaders" you  
admire & respect for  
who they are and  
how they show up.

As I go down my own  
journey as a Global  
leader, these "5  
Leadership Mantras"  
stand out in most  
successful leaders  
who inspire through  
their being.



The 5 LEADERSHIP MANTRAS that we will reflect on are based on my own learning and experiences, working with multicultural teams, leaders, and entrepreneurs.

1. Leaders who WIN Never GIVE UP
2. Leaders always LEAD by EXAMPLE
3. Leaders who matter are AUTHENTIC
4. Leaders understand VULNERABILITY is COURAGE
5. Leaders always TRUST themselves & TRIBE

***"Certainly, in the next 50 years, we shall see a woman president, perhaps sooner than you think. A woman can and should be able to do any political job that a man can do."***

**President Richard M. Nixon**



Now, as we focus on reflecting on the inspiring & aspiring "Women" we are all surrounded by, I see a set of unique patterns & traits they show up with. These are their natural gifts & talents that make them who they are and represent "Woman Hood."

- A Doer
- A Guide
- A Fighter
- A Multitasker
- A Role Model
- A Problem solver
- A Patient listener
- A Pillar of strength
- A Soft at heart, Strong in mind
- A Creator, Nurturer & Caregiver
- A Compassionate heart centred on a human who trusts



As we explore the role of women in "leadership" roles and, more importantly, as a living symbol of "womanhood," it is important to understand what these two words literally mean and how best can we explain their confluence in meaning, intent, and more importantly what we see around us yet sometimes stays in the realm of the "unsaid & unseen."

Merriam-Webster defines leadership as "the power or ability to lead other people". ... Leadership- is the ability to direct me and influence those around me, role model expected behaviours, and leverage strengths, so everyone feels fulfilled and valued.

# Definition of Womanhood

1a: the state of being a woman.

b: the distinguishing character or qualities of a woman or womankind.

Let me now take you all through a journey we all are familiar with, but it is essential to set the context to what is important to understand about the traits of a "Woman" who reflects her true abilities as a "Leader".

Think of any woman you have seen & been within your life, as a Mom, Partner, Co-Worker, Sibling, Friend, Boss, or any other role through which she would have impacted your life.

She is a born leader, a giver, a creator and nurturer of the human race right from carrying the human race in her womb to nurturing it and being the caretaker; she is in heart and soul a leader who never gives up trusts her instincts and those she cares for, & is a role model who always leads by example. Isn't this true?

She is a guide & a teacher who builds foundational values in our being and allows a safe, supportive trustworthy space for open & fearless conversations not only with children but with partners, friends & colleagues as a compassionate, trusted confidante.

As a person, I refer to women being the best "circus artist", a juggler of many hats, and a joker who has emotions hidden deep down in her skin but shows what is needed & important to those she selflessly cares for and loves. I want us to think about this simple yet obvious observation to recognise the inborn "Leadership" traits that "Women" show up with across continents and roles.

As we see through these roles and journey of a woman we all have experienced in our lives in some form or the other, some things that stand out for me and worth highlighting are her natural leadership qualities, abilities, and gifts that she lives day in and day out without even realizing that they all are being manifested through her being the "woman" she is. Womanhood is a truly a symbol of Leadership, heart-centred, servant leadership which comes to every woman naturally, it is for them and for us to see the "unseen" and start acknowledging the "unsaid".

***"A woman is born to lead and shows up with her instincts and qualities to create, build, nurture, motivate, guide, support, evolve, and be a listener, problem solver, and above all, a role model who never gives up on those she trusts."***

Questions that come to my mind and I want to bring out here for us to introspect within.

Are these not what True leaders do and learn and strive to evolve through as what "Womanhood" brings to women as their natural gift?



Are leaders failing to recognize lessons available to us from “womanhood,” or can women not recognize their leadership potential as the first step to showcase their unique gifts?

The interesting part here is that women have been successful but have made a mark to stand out and stand apart whenever they have done what they know best. “Lead from the heart in the best interest of those they impact.” Another question this throws open for us to explore further is that women's leadership is just symbolic as their numbers are still low. Is the world missing out on the opportunity of change and evolution as is reflected by the success whenever women leaders have led and excelled? The Fact check sourced from unwomen.org & The Mckinsey Women in Workplace 2020 study only shows the reality on the ground.

Women in executive government positions.

- Women serve as Heads of State or Government in only 22 countries, and 119 countries have never had a woman leader. At the current rate, gender equality in the highest positions of power will not be reached for another 130 years. (Source unwomen.org).

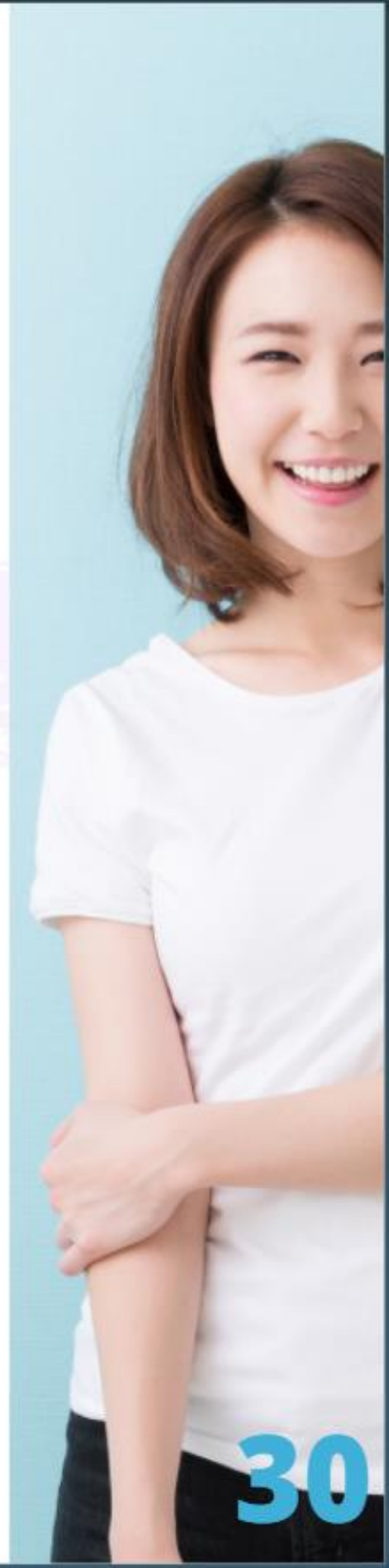
Companies can't afford to lose women leaders. As per the Mckinsey report:

- The financial consequences could be significant. Research shows that company profits and share performance can be close to 50 percent higher when women are well represented at the top.
- Beyond that, senior-level women have a vast and meaningful impact on a company's culture. And they're more likely to mentor and sponsor other women: 38 percent of senior-level women currently mentor or sponsor one or more women of colour, compared with only 23 percent of senior-level men.

We see on the ground and the data we get through research findings year after year vs. the noise we see on this ever-popular topic about “Women Leadership” reflects the GAP that exists between what is known and what needs to be acted on.

Another fundamental question that arises here for us to ponder is. The value of “Woman Leadership” is established by the results and their effectiveness, yet the acceptance is slow; the shift is happening. Is there any way to bring out the celebration from just being symbolic to becoming an institutional socially acceptable norm?

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What is happening is slow and maybe not enough. The shift needs to begin with our acceptance that it is no longer about equality and a preferred status because “Women” who matter and inspire and aspire to make a difference are not here to get a special status. They are here for being themselves & to be recognized for who they are, to be celebrated & acknowledged for their being the leader with the gifts and talents they are blessed with as they are “natural leaders” which they themselves, their fellow women and men around the need to start accepting more & only allow them to coexist and fly to achieve and live their dreams that they aspire to evolve into & positively impact humanity with their “compassionate servant leadership” they stand for. The momentum needs to shift towards celebrating womanhood as a symbol of leadership with concrete actions that leverages the natural leadership trait. SHE makes an impact as the:

**Mom who selflessly cares and nurtures a new generation of future humans to become leaders.**

**A head of government who leads her people with exemplary success through a crisis of war and the current COVID pandemic.**

**A CXO who leads her company fearlessly and successfully to profitable and stronger results, and yet is also available to listen, be vulnerable and be the shoulder to cry on for her partner, sibling, coworker, or friend.**

This is the multifaceted Celebration of Womanhood that I admire, adore and respect in every woman. To make a fair point, I am not choosing to be a feminist here. However, it is important to acknowledge that some men as partners who choose to recognize this and accept the power of equal participation and co-existence as equal partners, the impact of these traits of a woman only get up-leveled manifold by the supportive actions of fellow men. So a big shout out to such awesome men, and I invite more of us to accept and make this change and shift a REAL one. I am blessed and grateful to have been surrounded by some powerful, awesome women in my life, starting with my mom, who made me who I am to Be daring, caring & honest, which are the core values I strive to live, as I evolve and grow into a better being each day myself.

My wife, my two amazing daughters, and a lovely granddaughter allow me to celebrate womanhood each day and each moment as they all continue to surprise me with what they show up with as their “unseen & unsaid” potential to impact and make a difference. As I close this piece, the idea here is to bring about what many of us know, and some of us choose to ignore or overlook. I have also raised a few open questions to ponder about and express how best we can be part of the solution and bring about the change to evolve and make a meaningful impact. **JE**

This is a journey, and we all are part of it together as co-creators of a better social framework where biases and isms move away, and abilities, gifts, talents can be the means to celebrate success and growth and form the basis; of real "celebration."

Either way, the important point is that we need to ponder what can be done to hasten the speed of change to shift celebrating womanhood into meaningful, sustainable norms that make us a balanced and just social framework where equality is not why women need to grow. Still, for the fact, they are natural leaders, and we need to allow and support each other to get better leadership for the betterment of the human race over the next few decades faster than ever.

I sign off by saying kudos to women who aspire & inspire by their natural abilities and gifts, with a shout out to all those men who stand with them as partners who accept them for who they are. An invitation for us all together to make this celebration a reality faster and stronger for the good of the human race and future generations.

That is when we will truly celebrate womanhood in leadership slowly but surely.



**About the Author : Rajiv Handa**

**Global Business Leader & People Potential Catalyst  
Leadership Coach & Business Mentor  
Building Accountability Partnerships with committed Leaders,  
Entrepreneurs & Organizations Founder – SSCULPTT  
Co Founder - TheAllWeatherLeaders  
E: coachrajivhanda@gmail.com  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rajiv-handa>  
[rajivhanda.com](http://rajivhanda.com)**

