

# Game on for Women Leaders: A toolkit

The @Work Toolkit is a collection of additional resources and tips that might be useful when discussing the topic with your team.

## Did You Know

“(In 2020) just eight women served as coaches during the NFL season. This year (2021) the NFL has 12 female coaches, a record high for the league.”

Source: Sam Rapoport, NFL’s Senior Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## Further Insights

A 2020 report by the Women’s Sports Foundation titled “Chasing Equity: The Triumphs, Challenges, and Opportunities in Sports for Girls and Women” includes the latest data from hundreds of research reports and results from a national survey of more than 2,300 women in sports.

With regards to sports leadership, the report highlighted some notable facts:

— The increase of female sport participation over time coincided with the decrease in representation of women in sport leadership positions in some sectors of the industry, such as high school and college athletic departments, and the slow integration in other sectors, such as professional men’s sport leagues.

— Historically, the NBA has consistently had a better record in terms of hiring women than the NFL and MLB. For the third year in a row, when the

report was released, the percentage of women serving in positions as CEOs and presidents within the league has grown.

— Nearly 80% of athletic directors running college sports across all divisions (NCAA Division I, II, and III) are men (67% white; 8.1% Black; 3.8% other) with 20% being women (18% white; 2% women of color). Thirty-five percent of associate athletic directors and 34% of assistant athletic directors were women. When broken down by race, 6% of associate and assistant athletic directors are women of color.

Source: “Chasing Equity: The Triumphs, Challenges, Opportunities in Sports for Girls and Women”

## Tip: How to talk about gender and leadership

This week’s stories cover representation of women in sports leadership positions. As you prepare to have conversations about these stories, turn towards bigger questions about gender and leadership. Do a quick brainstorm: What are effective leadership characteristics?

After making your list, go one step further: What characteristics on your list are stereotypically affiliated with masculine qualities? Which ones are conventionally “feminine”? What might you deem “gender neutral”? Mark up your list. Choose one of your leadership qualities to discuss with a colleague. Talk about how the leadership quality may become affiliated with a specific gender stereotype. Finally, come up with one or two examples of how employees in your workplace defy gender stereotypes and embody these leadership qualities.

## Continue the Journey

Here’s how you can take action and learn more:

Women Leaders in College is an organization that develops, connects, and advances women working in college sports. Along with providing a platform to facilitate discussion on topics pertaining to women in intercollegiate athletics, the organization offers educational programs, networking and mentoring experiences, resources, and professional and personal development.

In operation since 1984, Women in Sport is a charity that provides impactful solutions to tackle gender inequalities in sports. The organization seeks to raise the profile of gender inequality in sports and develop concepts, policy positions, and identify solutions.

The Academy for Sport Leadership is a venue for training and mentoring young female athletes, a resource for professional and career networking, and a center of education and advocacy for women committed to sport leadership.

The Women's Careers in Football Forum helps the NFL identify women currently working college football to join its next generations of leaders. This program was started in 2017 and is credited with women reaching an all-time high of 38.2% of league office roles in 2020.