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Consider Yourself

Dear <<First Name>>,

Gender Diversity and the Stupid Curve

Today I spent the morning reading reports on gender diversity in the workplace. Did you know that women comprise over 45% of the workforce but only 10.7% of senior executives in the private sector. On its own this statistic is fairly disappointing.

Compare it with Norway at 32%, South Africa at 25.3%, Sweden at 24%, Bulgaria and Latvia at 21%, Finland at 19%, Canada at 16.9%, the United States at 15.7% and the United Kingdom at 12% and it's even more disappointing. It's also stupid. And that's not just little ol' me having a whinge. Former US Deloitte boss, Mike Cook, referred to this illogicality of hiring 90% of senior executives from only 50% of the talent pool as the Stupid Curve. And, utilising the female talent pool isn't just smart from a recruiting perspective, it also positively impacts an organisation's bottom line, which has been demonstrated in several research studies.

There are many reasons for the lack of women at senior levels and they may be different in different organisations. Further, some organisations are better than others at recognising the importance of the issue and at acting strategically to tackle it. As a coach, I often talk about playing above or below the line. When we play below the line, we act as the victim, whereas when we play above the line, we take responsibility and see ourselves as having control. In the sphere of gender diversity, we may not have complete control, but if you are one of the many women who would like to succeed at a senior level, is there anything you can be doing to play above the line? One idea is to overcome the fear of failure, lack of confidence or self-belief that you need to be an expert at something before you raise your hand, and instead put yourself out there. Raise your visibility at work, take risks, and go for opportunities even if you can't tick all of the boxes for the skill set required.

Have you had an an experience where you had an opportunity to put yourself forward for something? Did you let self-doubt stop you or did you go for it? [Please share your stories](#). I'd love to hear them!

Warmest regards,
Janice

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