

How to Authentically Celebrate Women's History Month at Work



In March, people around the world celebrate Women's History Month. This celebration includes International Women's Day on March 8, which the United Nations designated as a day dedicated to women. During the month and throughout the year, your organization can meaningfully recognize the contributions of female achievements.

Here is how to celebrate Women's History Month authentically in the workplace.



Recognize Women Face Inequality

To make the most of Women's History Month, it's celebrating the accomplishments of women who have paved the way for women in the workplace today while recognizing there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to achieve equality in the workforce.

Women continue to face gendered pay inequality in the market. In fact, the wage gap currently sits at women only making 82 cents for every dollar a man makes for the same position and experience. While some progress has been made since the issue was first addressed decades ago, there is still a long way to go until women are paid equally for the jobs they do. Companies can take steps to close the gender pay gap by being transparent about salaries, awarding raises based on performance, and implementing policies that give women employees equal career opportunities as male peers.

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Additionally, women tend to face greater inequality in the workplace when it comes to balancing their careers and being a caretaker compared to their male counterparts. The decision to choose between a career and family is a choice many women will face at some point in their professional life. Working mothers are often criticized for not being fully focused on their workload or taking time away to attend to family matters far more harshly than their male coworkers. Typically, women are more often pushed into caretaker roles for aging or ill family members over men, which can delay their career aspirations. Organizations should implement policies that support working mothers and caretakers, such as providing flexible scheduling and comprehensive benefits, including LGBTQIA+-affirming healthcare and expanded paid time off.

Promote Healthy Work-Life Balance

The Great Resignation and the Pandemic disproportionately impacted women in the workplace. Women experienced a more significant number of job losses than their male counterparts. In a survey from May and June 2020, one in four women who were unemployed during the pandemic reported the job loss was due to a lack of childcare. Due to this discrepancy and the fact that women are more likely to be the primary caregiver for children and those with aging family members, work-life balance is a critical issue that affects all workers today.

Women are often expected to wear many hats – working full-time jobs while managing their homes, spouses, and kids simultaneously, but this often leads to burnout or a lack of career advancement. As an organization, you can support women by offering programs to help them manage stress to find a healthier work-life balance. One way to help women employees is allowing them to ease back into their jobs after extended leave; this may include a re-entry plan that ensures they're comfortable and confident when returning to their roles. Additionally, focus on increased workplace flexibility, including accommodating work schedules or access to wellness programs that can help women prepare for their future plans.

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Support Women's Charities

During Women's History Month, businesses can support charities empowering women. The National Women's History Alliance is a nonprofit organization encouraging educational initiatives about women's stories and issues. Global Fund for Women provides funding for economic justice, freedom from violence, and sexual rights and health. Lastly, Women For Women International helps female survivors of war rebuild their lives. To find a non-profit that might have special significance for your business, the National Women's History Project website offers additional resources.

Workplace giving can take many forms, such as donating 5% of sales in March or allowing employees to take paid hours to volunteer for women-focused organizations or events. If your company is not in a position to give financially, this month would be a great time to promote awareness about important issues facing women today while showing employees how much they're valued and appreciated.

During Women's History Month, it's essential to recognize women's contributions to your company and their importance to its success. Companies can show their appreciation for their women employees by taking steps to close the gender pay gap and promoting a healthy work-life balance. In addition, you can raise awareness of issues women face in today's society, support charities by donating, or give your employees a chance to volunteer this month. Most importantly, celebrating and valuing women should go beyond the month of March, but taking the time to recognize and act now, will show your team you truly appreciate them.



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