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## WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: BREAKING BARRIERS AND SHAPING THE FUTURE

While women's representation in leadership is set to grow in the coming decades, meaningful progress will remain slow without transformative action. LinkedIn's 2024 data highlights a persistent leadership gap: while women make up 42% of the global workforce, they hold just 31.7% of senior leadership roles.

Expanding women's leadership roles is crucial for organizational success as it unlocks substantial economic value while cultivating diversity and adaptability. Encouragingly, more organizations are recognizing the value of gender diversity in leadership and actively implementing initiatives to promote and support women in these roles. While gender parity remains a work in progress, significant strides have been made in breaking traditional barriers and creating environments where women can thrive at every stage of their careers.

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The World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Gender Gap Index highlights that while no country has achieved full gender parity, 97% of economies have closed at least 60% of their gender gap up from 85% in 2006. However, persistent challenges such as unconscious bias, limited networking opportunities, and work-life balance concerns continue to hinder progress, further proving the need for sustained efforts to achieve true gender equity in corporate leadership.

In this regard, organizations today are implementing policies such as flexible work arrangements, mentorship programs, and leadership training specifically designed to support women in their career progression. Additionally, adaptive measures like second career opportunities, sabbatical policies, and part-time schedules, as well as work-from-home options are offered when needed.

As part of our efforts to propel women employees into top roles, we at Mphasis have developed a flagship mentoring program called LeadHER. This program is designed to identify and nurture women for

leadership positions, encouraging them to break stereotypes and advance in their careers through mentoring and guidance. LeadHER enables participants to embark on a journey of self-improvement, helping them uncover their leadership potential and empowering them to climb the corporate ladder.

Women in leadership not only inspire more women to join the workforce but also drive inclusive growth, innovation, and enhance balanced decision-making within organizations. Research shows that companies with greater gender diversity in leadership outperform their peers financially, demonstrating higher profitability and improved decision-making. Women leaders also bring diverse perspectives and leadership styles that are invaluable to the company's overall progress, which can be the differentiating factor that sets them apart from competitors. It is therefore important that organizations understand the importance of achieving true gender parity, put in the required efforts to break stereotypes, invest in leadership development, and create inclusive workplaces.