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Topic Essay 3: Workplace Analysis

There is no doubt that women have advanced very far in terms of being recognized for their efforts, whether regarding being able to vote or being able to work high-paying careers alongside men. Especially regarding the latter, in recent times, more women have been able to acquire higher education—college education, that is—and as a result of them obtaining their bachelor's degrees (or higher), subsequent efforts in entering the job market have been successful. Furthermore, the number of women advancing through the corporate world have been record-breaking but based on analyzing a few companies, questions have to be asked. Are women adequately represented in the workforce? Is the male-female ratio in the workforce close to at least 50/50? Knowing the answers to these questions will help us understand where and how far the progress is for women to successfully get into and be significantly represented in the corporate workforce.

The first question that needs to be asked regards the representation of men vs. women in upper-level management. Based on my findings, the number of women with roles in management/leadership in Microsoft, HP, Google, Apple, Facebook, and Sony are 4, 3, 4, 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Furthermore, on average, there are at least triple the amount of males in these positions for each corporation. This observation brings me to the question: do I feel that women are adequately represented in these positions? —to which I can obviously say no to. First of all, the sheer number of males alone basically says to me that the role of leadership (specifically as executive officers) and management (i.e. in technology) are mainly dominated by men. Second of all, when looked at all these companies, a common trait I found was that women were likely to

be put in positions such as marketing, commerce, and advertising. These positions are rather few among the top level offerings (which are mostly held by men) which in part does explain the low numbers of women in a corporate setting.

Upon establishing this fact, the conclusion I can come to for women in this particular workforce is that there are positions such as chief executive officer, technical infrastructure, and operations that have a sort of “tradition” or unwritten rule that require mainly men to go into. Since these positions require multiple people to handle them, men are typically the first ones to take those roles. Effectively, the remaining corporate jobs that do not require as much members are taken by women; this is the reason why the male-to-female ratio is low. However, despite seeing this trend among my findings, some companies actually do have women at the helm of top tier positions. For example, HP has a woman CEO and Microsoft has a woman chief financial officer whereas Google and Apple have males fulfilling these same jobs. Despite this, companies putting women into positions such as marketing, commerce, and advertising seems a bit restrictive and limited with regards to the gender roles that come to mind when hiring for positions; by not putting enough women as leaders, there lacks adequate representation in terms of equal footing with males in this regard.

Mentioning how some companies indeed have women performing duties that are typically held by men means that more companies should take the incentive to look into and hire more qualified women to take these positions. The reason for this comes from my observation in how women are underrepresented in upper level careers; the evidence cannot be any clearer than with companies like Apple (with at least 95% men) and Facebook (with at least 80% men). I

believe that companies can attract more women to fill positions by simply highlighting their achievements (and spreading the word of) as well as proactively seeking a closer ratio of men to women. Regarding the latter, this especially means that companies must put more women in positions that are otherwise dominated by men; positions such as CEO or Vice President of offices should have more representation of women. Some companies already have done this but for the time being, the numbers of males in these positions outnumber women.

In conclusion, I feel that women, like men, are capable to lead and operate in the corporate setting; the number of women pursuing higher education to meet the necessary requirements is still growing as is the talent. From establishing this fact, there is indeed potential for more women to be hired alongside men. Honestly though, I think that there is still a sociological and stigmatizing way of thinking that impacts the mindset of corporate employers that needs to be dealt with. I do think that as time goes by, we will be seeing more women rising above the ranks and with that, terms such as CEO can be used interchangeably between males and females alike.