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Held in association with the British Library, this competition aims to celebrate the best of management books published or distributed in the UK, from Held in association with the British Library, this competition aims to celebrate the best of management books published or distributed in the UK, from the most inspiring to the most useful. ...more One hundred years ago the suffragettes marched in the streets, fighting for women’s rights and equality. Since that time, a lot has changed. The glass ceiling has cracked in many industries. Yet, this world is still ruled by men.Of the 195 countries, only 17 are led by women. Only 4% of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women. And women still get paid less. What would the suffragettes say?“Lean In: Work, Women, and Will to Lead” by Sheryl Sandberg is a book about blatant inequality women still face in the modern world, providing advice on how this can be changed.Sandberg, a Chief Operating Officer at Facebook and an ex-Vice President of Global Online Sales and Operations at Google, shares stories from her own career. Exposing vulnerable moments, she hopes that her example will empower women to lean in and achieve their full potential. Here’s our chapter-by-chapter summary of “Lean in.” Chapter 1. The Leadership Ambition GapJust like men, women have the skills to be leaders. Look at the statistics. In the United States, girls earn 60% of master’s degrees and 57% of undergraduate ones. In Europe, 82% of women completed upper secondary education, compared to 77% of men.However, the number of women in top jobs haven’t increased. The reason is that career progress requires taking risks and the ability to stand up for oneself. And women are usually discouraged from demonstrating these features.This is why, if a job involves having power and lots of responsibility (which is typical of leadership positions), it will probably be taken by a man.Stereotypes about women in the workplace are strong. “He is very ambitious” is a great compliment. “She’s very ambitious” has negative shades of meaning. These stereotypes are introduced in childhood – from early years, girls are treated differently. When a little girl is trying to lead, she’s called bossy. Boys are rarely called bossy – because they are expected to be bosses.These stereotypes put serious social pressure on women. While it’s assumed men can have both a successful professional life and a happy private life, it’s not the same for women. Women are told they have to choose.But women can participate in multiple roles. They can be both competent professionals and good mothers. Sandberg says that a crucial step in this direction is to get rid of fear. Fear is at the root of so many of the barriers that women face. Fear of not being liked. Fear of making the wrong choice. Fear of drawing negative attention. And the holy trinity of fear: the fear of being a bad mother/wife/daughter. Chapter 2. Sit At the TableSandberg opens this chapter by telling us a personal story. Once she hosted a meeting for the Treasury Secretary at Facebook, inviting 15 executives for breakfast. The men took their food and sat at the conference table. The women also took their food - after the men - and sat in chairs at the side of the room. Even after Sandberg welcomed them at the table, they stayed in their seats.This incident helped her realize an unpleasant truth – that besides dealing with social obstacles, women fight with obstacles coming from within.Women seriously suffer from the impostor syndrome, Sandberg explains. This phenomenon means that people who are actually capable of doing things doubt themselves, feeling undeserving and guilty. This is why women often attribute their success to external factors. They say they just got lucky or someone helped them, or that they worked hard. In any case, they diminish their capabilities.But women need to be more confident. To be successful, one has to take opportunities. And opportunities are rarely offered – they have to be seized. There is no time for feeling like a fraud.Women have to learn to keep their hands up, because when they lower them, even managers with the best intentions might not notice. Chapter 3. Success and LikeabilityThe perceptions about men and women in the workplace are greatly illustrated by the results of an experiment run by Frank Flynn, a Columbia Business School Professor, and Cameron Anderson, a New York University professor.Flynn and Anderson assigned some of their students to read a real story of a successful venture capitalist Heidi Roizen. The second half of the students read the same story, but the name “Heidi” was changed to “Howard”.The students had to share their impressions. Even though they recognized the competency of both Heidi and Howard, they liked Howard more. Unlike him, Heidi was described as selfish and a person whom they wouldn’t hire or want to work with.The conclusion was clear: successful men are liked, and successful women are not.The problem here is, again, stereotypes. Women are expected to be caregivers and sensitive by nature. Heidi violated that stereotype and acted like a man. As a result, people disliked her.This leads to more problems. Feeling that their success might be frowned upon, women are afraid to ask for promotions. Similarly, they don’t negotiate for themselves – as Sandberg ironically points out, for women negotiating is like “trying to cross a minefield backward in high heels.”To make things easier while advocating for yourself, Sandberg recommends two things:Use “we” instead of “I”. For example, say “we had a great year” instead of “I had a great year.” Your request will be better received.Justify your request. Mention that you’ve been encouraged by a senior (“My manager suggested I talk with you about my compensation”), or that the industry standards allow you to ask for more. Chapter 4. It’s a Jungle Gym, Not a LadderCareers are typically compared to ladders. But this metaphor is limiting: it means people can move only up or down. And there is only one way to get to the top.This is why Sandberg prefers another metaphor – the one of a jungle gym. A jungle gym offers many ways to get to the top. You don’t have to plan your career from the start. A jungle gym lets you try different ways and explore.Sandberg explains how this worked in her case. After graduation, she had a vague idea of what she wanted to do. She knew she wanted to change the world. Her first job was at the World Bank, whose mission was to reduce global poverty. Then she took a risk and started to work at Google. And then she took a risk again, and got a job as a COO at Facebook – even though other companies offered to hire her as a CEO. Why? Because she believed in fast growth and was open to opportunities.Women are often risk-averse. And being risk-averse leads to stagnation. Women tend to play it safe and avoid challenges, and this way, they limit themselves. When female managers move up, they usually stay in the same company. And when they apply for open jobs, they do it only when they think they meet 100% of the criteria – unlike men, who apply when they meet 60% of it.Carol Frohlinger and Deborah Kolb describe such a phenomenon as the “Tiara Syndrome” – a belief that if you work hard, someone will notice and will put a tiara on your head. But life isn’t like that. You will win only if you challenge yourself, ask for promotions, and take risks.Do not wait for power to be offered. Like that tiara, it might never materialize. And anyway, who wears a tiara in a jungle gym? Chapter 5. Are You My Mentor?Mentorship is important for career progression. Both men and women with mentors have more chances to get a pay raise or a stretch assignment. But to tell people, especially women, “get a mentor and you’ll excel” is a mistake.This is the wrong message. It teaches women that they depend on someone else. Young girls believe that if they just wait for a prince on the white horse, they will live happily ever after. Adult women believe that once they find a good mentor, they will build a great career.First of all, it’s hard to get a mentor. The mere phrase “Be my mentor” makes a person feel uncomfortable. It puts a lot of pressure. This is why a typical answer is “no”.But Sandberg says that there is another way around it – excel, and then a mentor will find you. According to the studies, people invest in those whose talent and potential are obvious.However, lower-level employees also get mentorship. It’s simple – just pick a moment after a meeting to say thank you and ask for advice. This way, a person will get involved in your problem.A good way to fix the mentorship problem is to introduce formal programs or, as an alternative, ask peers to help: There is a saying that “all advice is autobiographical.” Friends… may actually provide more current and useful counsel… Peers are also in the trenches and may understand problems that superiors do not. Chapter 6. Seek and Speak Your TruthHonesty is very important in the workplace. It’s the basis for effectiveness. Unfortunately, people often avoid being honest to protect themselves. Since many companies have a hierarchical structure, people are scared that an honest remark will negatively affect the perception of someone at a higher level. As a result, many issues stay unresolved.For women, it’s even more difficult. Because they are already in a lower position, they risk being called a bad team player or just negative - more often than men. Sandberg mentions the following things that can make honest communication easier, for both women and men:Find the sweet spot where your opinion is just delicately, and not brutally, honest.Remember that there isn’t absolute truth. Your opinion may seem the only right one, but let other people express theirs.Ask directly. Do not guess.Give and get feedback. But remember that feedback, like the truth, is not absolute – it’s a subjective opinion based on personal observations. Be ready that it may hurt. Yet, it’s still better than blissful ignorance.Sandberg also underlines that we should never undermine the impact of personal lives on professional ones. She believes that sharing emotions and talking about personal situations is very useful – this can explain many work-related decisions.Fortunately, the tendencies in leadership encourage honesty and imperfection. And this shift is good for women, who often get accused of excessive emotionality.Recommended reading: The Power of Psychological Safety in Building a Supportive and Safe Workplace. Chapter 7. Don’t Leave Before You LeaveLeaving the workplace, women rarely make one big decision. When a woman plans to start a family or have a child, she already makes sacrifices and accommodations that, in their opinion, will be required later. This way, she holds herself back. And leaves before actually leaving.How does this happen? She refuses to take a management role. She refuses to look for business partners. In other words, she rejects opportunities.But women forget that by making plans for the future, they still have time to fulfill goals in the present. Even if they get pregnant immediately, which is not always the case, they still have nine months. So instead of wasting this time, they can use it wisely, to not come back to a place that is drastically different.What I am arguing is that the time to scale back is when a break is needed or when a child arrives – not before, and certainly not years in advance. The months and years leading up to having children are not the time to lean back, but the critical time to lean in.Women should also look differently at child care. Yes, it’s very expensive. If a woman who’s had a baby comes back to work, her salary may hardly cover the childcare expenses. But Sandberg says that it will pay off, in the long run.If women continue working, their income may become much higher. So it makes sense to measure the cost of childcare against their future, not current, income. Chapter 8. Make Your Partner a Real PartnerAnalysis conducted in the United States showed that in couples where a husband and wife are fully employed, a woman still does 40% more childcare and 30% more housework. But this is a choice. And it can be rearranged.Equal partners must be equal in everything. Women must be more empowered at work. But men must be more empowered at home - and being too prescriptive around exactly how homecare and childcare activities need to be completed can make some feel discouraged. Another unhelpful habit is assigning tasks to husbands – because in this case, a man is doing a favor, and not sharing responsibilities. The woman remains the "project manager" of the home, taking on the mental load of prioritizing and delegating chores.Despite the popular opinion that successful women are single and lonely, facts show something different. The majority of successful female business leaders have partners. And, vice versa, as the results of a 2007 study, many professionally educated women left the workplace because their husbands didn’t actively participate in childcare and didn’t help with domestic tasks.When it comes time to settle down, find someone who wants an equal partner. Someone who thinks women should be smart, opinionated, and ambitious. Someone who values fairness and expects or, even better, wants to do his share in the home. Chapter 9. The Myth of Doing It AllTo "have it all” sounds aspirational – but it’s impossible. Aiming for perfection in everything leads to paralysis and frustration. This often results in leaving one of the things you try to excel at. “Done is better than perfect” is a wiser approach.Sandberg also notices that we should distinguish between what’s really necessary and what’s not, to save our time. However, people often overwork. They do it out of fear that if they use the opportunity of flexibility, they will be seen as less committed. Unfortunately, they are not wrong – peers really see them as less committed.Technology doesn’t make it any easier. The ability to work online often means that a workday is extended. Besides, people get work emails late at night, and that blurs the line between work and rest.The new normal means there aren’t enough hours in a day. And that’s a big problem for everybody, especially for mothers. A woman can plan her projects at work. She cannot plan things at home that easily, though.Sandberg says that the only way out here is to accept chaos, quoting Nora Ephron’s Wellesley commencement speech:It will be a little messy but embrace the mess. It will be complicated, but rejoice in the complications… and don’t be frightened: you can always change your mind. I know: I’ve had four careers and three husbands. Chapter 10. Let’s Start Talking About ItAll of us are biased. We believe that we are objective, but we are not. There is such a thing as a “bias blind spot” – overconfidence in our own objectivity that prevents us from correcting the bias, this way making things worse. For this reason, we are all susceptible to gender bias, admit it or not. Of course, this does influence our interactions at work – and the role of women in the workplace in particular.That’s why gender-blind evaluations are better for women – but, unfortunately, most jobs require a face-to-face interview.Pointing out gender bias is an uncomfortable experience. If you tell someone they’re biased, most probably, people won’t like your comment. They might insist on their opinion, or just get defensive.So is there anything we can do about gender bias? Yes, there is. Sandberg provides an example of Harvard Business School. In 2010, Nitin Nohria was appointed dean, and decided to close the gap between male, female, and international students.Associate Dean Moon and Professor Frances Ferei spent the first year studying the school’s culture. This meant they visited each classroom and discussed the challenges that women and international students had to deal with.Then they introduced small adjustments like paying attention to the language used. Also, they held students accountable for their behavior. The next year, they encouraged collaboration between students who usually don’t work together.Consequently, a performance gap disappeared. Male, female, and international students received honors proportionally, and overall student satisfaction went up. As we can see, it’s possible to fight bias – but you’ll have to start talking about it. Chapter 11. Working Together Toward EqualityIt sounds absurd but women in power often become obstacles for other women who try to get power. This is an unpleasant truth. Women get ignored, sabotaged, and undermined by other women.There is even a term for this – “queen bee” – which describes women in a leadership position who use their power to keep other “worker bees” down. One reason for that is self-preservation. But the second reason is caused by discrimination. Realizing they live in the men’s world, “queen bees” do not want to associate themselves with women.This leads to the following problem. A negative perception of a female coworker is taken objectively, and not as a gender bias – because it’s considered that if a woman criticizes another woman, she cannot be biased. But, in fact, she can.On the other hand, women are expected to be warmer and more supportive at the workplace, and that’s also an issue. Reaching out to a woman, another woman hopes to form a connection. And when this doesn’t happen, she gets frustrated. It’s a double standard situation, since this is not expected from a man.In any case, Sandberg says that women should help each other. Stay-at-home mothers should not judge women who work out of the house and vice versa. We need to learn to respect any choice – and be supportive.As former secretary of state, Madeleine Albright once said, “There is a special place in hell for women who don’t help other women.” Not all women want to be leaders. But more female leaders will bring about fairer treatment to all women. This will mean less sexism and discrimination. This will also mean more flexibility and access to child care and parental leave. And it will give a chance to build an equal world – a better world, improved by talents that have been hidden so far. If you want to learn more about building a healthy, equitable team that brings out the best in everyone, you may enjoy: How to Become a Healthy Team (All You Need to Know in 30 Minutes) Jump to ratings and reviewsNominee for Readers' Favorite Nonfiction (2013)Sheryl Sandberg’s Lean In is a massive cultural phenomenon and its title has become an instant catchphrase for empowering women. The book soared to the top of bestseller lists internationally, igniting global conversations about women and ambition. Sandberg packed theatres, dominated opinion pages, appeared on every major television show and on the cover of Time magazine, and sparked ferocious debate about women and leadership. Ask most women whether they have the right to equality at work and the answer will be a resounding yes, but ask the same women whether they'd feel confident asking for a raise, a promotion, or equal pay, and some reticence creeps in. The statistics, although an improvement on previous decades, are certainly not in women's favour – of 197 heads of state, only twenty-two are women. Women hold just 20 percent of seats in parliaments globally, and in the world of big business, a meagre eighteen of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women. In Lean In, Sheryl Sandberg – Facebook COO and one of Fortune magazine's Most Powerful Women in Business – draws on her own experience of working in some of the world's most successful businesses and looks at what women can do to help themselves, and make the small changes in their life that can effect change on a more universal scale. 13456 people are currently reading243695 people want to readSHERYL SANDBERG is chief operating officer at Facebook, overseeing the firm's business operations. Prior to Facebook, Sheryl was vice president of Global Online Sales and Operations at Google, chief of staff for the United States Treasury Department under President Clinton, a management consultant with McKinsey & Company, and an economist with the World Bank. Sheryl received a BA summa cum laude from Harvard University and an MBA with highest distinction from Harvard Business School. Sheryl is the co-author of Option B: Facing Adversity, Building Resilience, and Finding Joy with Wharton professor and bestselling author Adam Grant, which will be released April 24, 2017. She is also the author of the bestsellers Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead and Lean In for Graduates. She is the founder of the Sheryl Sandberg & Dave Goldberg Family Foundation, a nonprofit organization that works to build a more equal and resilient world through two key initiatives, LeanIn.Org and OptionB.Org (launching April 2017). Sheryl serves on the boards of Facebook, the Walt Disney Company, Women for Women International, ONE, and SurveyMonkey.Displaying 1 - 30 of 14,476 reviewsDecember 4, 2013Read this book if you want to get inside the head of a power elite. Read this book if you want to hear about all of the things that women do wrong, to make sure you don't make the same mistakes. And then, read this book if you want to read all about why Marissa Mayer should be supported and treated as our hero, as opposed to our oppressor.I really wanted to like this book. As a working Mom who has leaned into opportunities, even with a child, I felt the message would resonate with me. And at some points, it did. When she recommended we work our tails off up to the point of giving birth, I agreed. When she said we should demand job security when we take our maternity leave, I agreed. And when she said that we must demand more from our partners, I also agreed. But there was just too much about this book that I did not like. By the time I got to the last chapter and had to hear all about how great Marissa Mayer is, I stopped reading. Are you kidding me? She is great? Taking off two weeks is great? For who, exactly? Her? So great that she had to build a private nursery next to her office to accommodate her childcare needs? This book does what every feminist diatribe does - fails to give recognition to the great job a women does - motherhood. Why don't women want to be feminists? Because of this. I am a professional who is excelling up the career ladder, but I also embraced the most important part of my life, which is being a Mom. I forced myself to take 7 months off, most of which I loved, but some of which was harder than working a job, and I did it for my child. I am sorry, but there is nothing that can replace the importance of this. Not a Nanny, not a Dad. And why do we have to act like this is an anti-woman position? Because if you do, you'll lose respect and fall off the career ladder. B.S. Not true. I would read about the first half of this book and then stop. The rest is just garbage. Reading about a powerful woman dressing her kids in school clothes at night to save 15 minutes, brilliant says Sandberg. Really? Sounds like selfish child abuse to me. But some of the message is good. Push yourselves women to do better. Don't take yourself off the ladder (or jungle gym) until you actually give birth, not before. There is no reason to. And find your own mentors without asking. Put yourselves out there. But then stop at that. Because I truly believe that the job of motherhood is way more important than this woman gives credit to, and you can and should treat motherhood as important as your quest for power and recognition.March 14, 2013I highly recommend this book. As a single mom near the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, the negative reviews would have led me to believe 'Lean In' wasn't for me and that only an elite few could relate. To the contrary, I found that Sandberg lends a clear, relevant, necessary voice to issues of leadership and equality for women and men and understanding for parents working in and out of the home.It's a quick yet engaging read. She's the first author I've read who shared what may be our generation's earlier view of feminism - yep, good, done, thanks - and the fear I always had of being labeled a feminist. But I am.The issues she raises are important. The inequality, far reaching. Sandberg makes excellent points on this being an issue of equality for both sexes. I have a son in college - I want his options wide open. Several years ago I had to start from scratch, to put my public university master's to work waiting tables and then claw to get back into a professional position. Somewhere in there, I chose to lose my voice. I became afraid. I need this job. But what would I do if I wasn't afraid? It's an excellent question. My choices have been different from Sandberg's yet the book still resonated with me. I look forward to participating and taking a seat at the table.Lean In is a call for leadership, an invitation to participate in creating a society that values women, mothers, men, fathers, and in which women value and support each other and ourselves. Bravo, Ms. Sandberg, and thank you.I'm Leaning In.2013 motivational nonfictionDecember 4, 2013Lean In... Oh Lean In... the book of the moment. There are some large complaints about this book. That it should be men who change their behavior at work. That this book undermines the need to make structural changes in work to diminish barriers to women. That women are to blame for the inequality at work. All of these are important, but they aren't what the book is about. This is a book about how women can change their individual behavior to help them succeed in business as it currently exists. Maybe this isn't the best way to reach equality and maybe it's not the most important thing, but that is what the book is about. And, to be fair, Sandberg does talk about the need for structural and cultural change as well as that men should change their behavior. The author talks about how getting women into positions of leadership will help to change structure and culture, which is probably true. What bothered me about this, it the author's blindness to her own privilege. She casually notes that she has a nanny. She talks about how, when she was a new mother, she and her husband had two year period where he worked in LA and she in the bay. It was resolved when he became CEO of SurveyMonkey and moved the company from Portland to San Francisco in order to be closer to his family. (Uprooting or firing how many people in this process!) She shares an anecdote about taking her children with her on the eBay private jet. It's not that she took her children with her, but that a non-elite would have to pay for two plane tickets for his or her children to do something. Wealth makes a huge difference in constructing a life that balances the desires for a career and a family. She does not appreciate this. Couple of other thoughts:1. The book gets more annoying as you read it. It you want the best that it has to offer read the first three chapters, then give up.2. Sandberg shares an anecdote about a friend who devised a test to see whether a guy was worthy to date. Step 1: cancel first date for a made up business meeting and see how he re-acts. If he is not bothered, then proceed to date. Step 2: ask him to come to Sao Paulo for a date. Both of these are designed to test how accommodating the man is to her career. Yes, this is a good way to start a relationship, by testing the person and lying. Also, a date in Sao Paulo! Another example of Sandberg's complete obliviousness to wealth. 3. Last thought. Towards the end of the book Sandberg is trying to say that the choice to stay at home with children is as valid as staying in work. The main way that she makes this point is by saying that women who stay at home can volunteer in all of these different ways, benefiting the world. Which sugests to me that justification for a personal decision is only valid to the degree that there is some social benefit. I'm committed to trying to improve the world, but doing that makes me happy. People are justified in making decisions that increase their joy in life. It doesn't matter how much their decision benefits society. For most of us there is some overlap between doing good in the world and feeling good about that, but there doesn't have to be. The decision to stay home or work is justifiable to the degree that it is the right decision for the individual. March 13, 2013I feel sad that so many people criticize Sheryl's book WITHOUT reading it. When I told my husband that I was reading "Lean In", he said, "Oh..., but people say it's for only rich elite women who can afford full time nannies." That is a result of malicious rumors.I'm not a businesswoman and my background is very different from Sheryl's, but I agree with almost everything she says in this book. I have struggled with the same things for the last 50 years. I'm not competitive and I never wanted to become a big shot. But, I wanted to work and when I did a good job I wanted to be recognized. I wanted to continue working after I had a baby even though my husband made 5 times as much as me and financially didn't make sense to hire a nanny. I thought I was selfish to feel sad about not working. I became depressed for a long time. Now I have a great work (even though it doesn't pay well) because my husband understood my needs and started to support me full-heartedly. Wouldn't that be better if it happens to every woman?I believe that's the reason Sheryl wrote the book. We have to help change the world so that our sisters and daughters don't need to go through the same thing. Men will also benefit from women who are happy because they can fulfill their desire to work and achieve.This book is a great conversation starter. You might want to read it with your partner, and talk about the issues you have always wanted to bring up and couldn't. August 14, 2013Little story: In my previous department we all got nicknames, all of them meant to be very descriptive of the person but also really positive. They were brainstormed and then voted on, which actually was a really fun team-building. But while most people did indeed get some amazing nicknames, my final one was… ‘Ms Bossy’.After hearing that, I remember heading to the toilets for a good cry, which is something I hardly ever do (when there are no books/movies or music involved that is). Of everything that I am, they picked Bossy as my most descriptive quality, thought it was funny and in some twisted way thought they were doing me a favour as well. So when I read the following quote, I was already sold: ”When a girl tries to lead, she is often labelled bossy. Boys are seldom called bossy because a boy taking the role of a boss does not surprise or offend. As someone who was called this for much of my childhood, I know that it is not a compliment. The stories of my childhood bossiness are told (and retold) with great amusement. “ I had many mixed feelings while reading this book. On one hand it is ridiculously sad that society is still where it is, and on the other hand I kept nodding so hard and sometimes I felt like I was hit by alien attack. That's the impact some chapters had on me. Aliens, here, right now, in my head!Similarly to Quiet by Susan Cain, I just felt that it was important for me to read this book. Not that I have CEO ambitions (far from it, I actually really dislike managing people, which makes the whole ‘bossiness’ an even bigger conundrum!) but as a working woman it still struck a chord with me. What i liked about this book, is that it isn't a let's-sit-all-together-and-whine about the situation. Sandberg gives you some insights into our own brain, and how we are often doing this to ourselves as well. For me, she did so especially in the first few chapters. The later chapters are more about families and kids, which is a bit less applicable to me now. Nonetheless, she made me think, and made me realize a few things about myself I didn’t really know. There were many alien lightning attack moments, but the most striking one for me was the paragraph about ‘feeling like a fraud’: “She explained that many people, but especially women, feel fraudulent when they are praised for their accomplishments. Instead of feeling worthy of recognition, they feel undeserving and guilty, as if a mistake has been made. Despite being high achievers, even experts in their fields, women can’t seem to shake the sense that it is only a matter of time until they are found out for who they really are – impostors with limited skills or abilities.” So true. No matter how many good performance reviews, no matter how often peers tell me they like me on their project because they’ll know that it’s in good hands with me – I still think I will be ‘discovered’ some day for the imposter I am.Sometimes when people to ask me to send an old study to them, there is a part of me that doesn’t want to. Not because I don’t like sharing, but because I’m convinced it’ll be wrong. I would love to re-look at all the data just to make sure I didn’t do anything stupid in the first place. How silly is that?I sometimes even feel like that on Goodreads. It’s is a mystery to me why people would follow me, or ask to friend me out of the blue, or like my reviews. Really, I’m not a smart person and I don’t understand literature at all, I’m just a robot who puts random words behind one another and somehow so far I have regularly managed to trick people into thinking that my review makes sense.Aren't I lucky?March 23, 2013This is a great start on this particular conversation, but Sandberg leaves out two large groups of women; women of color and women who are not wealthy. While many women want to sit at the table and lean as far in as the rest of those at the table many women are not invited and/or do not have the means to take the risk. When you are worried about how you are going to pay for today, it is difficult to take the plunge especially if you have others who are dependent on you. I applaud Sandberg for writing this book in the most authentic way she may know, but in order for me to give her a standing ovation I need to feel included. December 4, 20132.5 stars to be more precise. Sandberg is far more likeable than I expected and I appreciated her self-deprecating sense of humour, honesty about her insecurities and enthusiasm for supporting other women. I nodded along quite a bit when she talked about crying at work (been there, done that) and was happy to see her dismantle the guilt-trip fallacy that is "women having it all". Sadly, Lean In is corporate feminism with an extremely narrow focus that excludes most women. Corporate feminism is the idea that if we put enough women in CEO positions then that'll trickle down to the rest of the gender. Sadly, it just doesn't work that way. Sandberg is at least self-aware enough to acknowledge how privileged she is but that still blinds her a little. Her focus is narrow & ignores costs of education, childcare, women in part-time work, lack of mentors, sexual harassment in the workplace, the exclusion of women of colour from business and discrimination in the workplace, etc. Some of these issues are briefly touched upon, and I emphasise "briefly" a lot there, but it's just not enough. For example, Sandberg talks about finding good mentors because studies have proven how effective they are in maintaining morale, seeking promotion and so on, but no solid solutions are provided. I don't expect Sandberg to do so because that's tough enough for any one person to do, but it's disappointing to see this book going on the right track then suddenly swerve off course.It's clear that Sandberg understands, or is at least aware of racial issues in the corporate machine and the huge disparities in race and gender present in CEO and COO positions. Her frequent use of footnotes backs that up. That's what makes it all the more aggravating when she just doesn't go into these issues further. She makes a lot of sensible points, particularly the issue of internalised patriarchy and how women are more prone to doubting their abilities than men, but once again, the solutions are few and far between. I wish it was as easy as just bucking up and demanding my seat at the table but the numbers aren't in my favour. I'm not COO of Facebook, nor did I go to Harvard Business School and get mentored by Larry Summers. Sandberg acknowledges her privilege but doesn't seem to understand that not all women can lean in because we're leaning on too many other women to help us deal with the load. She praises Marissa Mayer, who became CEO of Yahoo whilst heavily pregnant then built a daycare centre for her son in her office, and declares that we must band together and support other women instead of criticising them like Mayer was. She does this will conveniently omitting Mayer's decision to ban working from home and demanding everyone come into the office to work. These women weren't given the option of personal daycare like Mayer allotted for herself, and remember the USA is the only country in the developed world without fully paid maternity leave. Childcare costs, one of the big barriers to women remaining in the workplace, was totally ignored in favour of the "sisterhood" argument to support Mayer. Feminism doesn't need to suck up to women in power; it needs to hold them accountable and make sure we all get a fair shake. The book isn't bad, it just feels like an extended TED Talk, which it essentially is. It's a disjointed but readable mish-mash of memoir, feminist tract and business guide, and there are admirable points in there. I just can't support a fallacy that claims if we support the women at the top then soon we'll all benefit. Real life doesn't work that way.EDIT: Downgrading my rating because I don't like hypocrites. in, Sheryl! Right on top of all those unpaid interns who must come from privileged families in order to be able to afford such an opportunity. Because it’s not as if women of lower classes are shut out of positions like this based on their social standing. This is why corporate trickle down Lean In feminism is a con. Unfortunately, most of us can’t lean in because we’re not even allowed to sit at the table.December 4, 2013This book is terrible on all levels. It is written at a level beneath anyone who might hope to achieve the type of success she discusses. And the message is wrong. I consider myself a woman who is successful in the workplace, but not because I act aggressive like a man-- rather, because I recognize my strengths and weaknesses and behave accordingly. That should be a human way to succeed--not man vs. woman. I don't want advice from a woman who is so oblivious of her actions that she supposedly needed her executive assistant to tell her that she should own her accomplishments, not belittle them. And, all of the obvious statements in her book are lifted from headlines we have all read in the past 2 years; putting then in sentence form and then publishing doesn't make it new or compelling. And the main problem with this book: she is blatantly promoting herself, constantly. I could go on and on, but I've wasted enough time with this thing. What a joke.April 21, 2013While this book by the COO of Facebook is ostensibly about women in the workplace, it's really about subconscious cognitive biases. A majority of Americans may consider women and men to be equal on the surface, but the fact that women still lag significantly behind men in both pay and leadership positions points to the fact that there is something else going on.In this book, Sandberg does an excellent job at shining light on exactly what is standing in the way of full equality. She offers many examples, both personal and from referenced studies, that highlight why women who start even slightly ahead of men out of college rapidly fall behind when they enter the workforce. Some of these are systemically entrenched gender biases that favor men, such as identical resumes being rated as more qualified when they had a man's name on them than they were when they had a woman's name on them, while others are ways women limit themselves as they make choices about their careers.I suspect those who criticize Sandberg as blaming women for not being more successful have not actually read this book. While she does tackle head on behaviors she's seen women engage in, such as failing to apply for promotions at the same rate as men because they rate themselves as less qualified even when they aren't, choosing to take on less responsibility to leave time for a family they hope to have someday, and draining energy on the judgment battles between moms who work and moms who stay home, she also addresses the jaw-dropping sexism she's battled from her time in government to meteoric rise in the tech industry. Even the New York Times was guilty of minimizing her accomplishments when they attributed her success to luck and mentoring, factors that impact men just as much but are hardly ever mentioned when male success is profiled.This book is a manifesto designed to get both women and men to recognize that women's equality has badly stalled and how we are all the worse off for it. Despite that, it is not remotely preachy or militant in tone. Sandberg is immensely approachable, laying her own struggles bare as examples and making it clear that one of the most powerful businesswomen on the planet is fighting the same insecurities and doubts as the rest of us. Her personal stories are some of the richest parts of the book; she gives stress a new definition as she relates the tale of bringing her two children onto the Ebay corporate jet along with a bunch of other Silicon Valley execs only to discover mid-flight that both her kids had lice.In addition to outlining the problem and addressing the multiple facets of it, this book is also full of actual, practical solutions. Becoming aware of subtle gender biases can go a long way towards eliminating them, and she gives numerous examples of how institutions who are committed to changing the status quo have made a real difference in this area both in general behavior and also corporate policy such as family leave. In addition, she provides women with a wealth of insight about how we can help create these changes by actively "leaning in" and taking a seat at the table at work, and being willing to expect more from our partners at home rather than assuming we have to (or are the only ones who can) take care of that front.Changing such deeply entrenched dynamics is not going to be easy - the fact that Sandberg herself was caught engaging in a subtle form of gender bias while giving a talk on gender bias shows how pervasive the problem is. But by choosing to tackle the problem head on in such an approachable and pragmatic fashion, Sandberg is providing an excellent example of of just how it can be done.December 4, 2013Putting aside critiques of her belief in corporate feminism, Sandberg's book reeks of unspoken privilege. Her message for women to transcend difference in the workplace through top leadership positions leaves behind many women who do not have the social agency, time, education, or good health to follow her example. The whole time I was reading this book, all I could think of was, "Who is her nanny? Does she have the agency to do the things Sandberg talks about? Can her nanny afford a nanny to take care of her children?"The applicability of Sandberg's book is intentionally selective. By only focusing on upper-class (white) educated women with substantial support networks, the book's recommendations are easy: bust ass, get a calendar to schedule home and work, and place the burden of childcare on your nanny. For anyone else outside this spectrum, it creates a path to success that is not only impossible to follow, but shaming to those who cannot.It is badly written - an undercooked combination of autobiography, bad feminism, watery statistics, and career advice written from the 1%. If you're looking for a good weekend read, pass this one up.January 9, 2014If you are the daughter of two professional parents, have two siblings who are doctors, attended an Ivy League university and a prestigious business school where one of your professors was a future director of the World Bank and a Cabinet member, and you aspire to lead several world-class organizations, then this is the book for you. You'll learn that you should speak up at meetings, get your partner (who of course is male because lesbians don't become the CEOs of anything) to ideally stay home with the children but at best make their school lunches each morning, and that if you're in the upper echelon of your company and can fly to conferences on the private jet of the CEO of eBay, it's okay to occasionally cry at a meeting.If you're anyone else, keep on keeping on.March 18, 2013I went into the office today to find that one of my female managers sent this book to me as a surprise gift along with a thank you note for being a role model and mentor to her in her career over the years. She has two young girls like I do, and in my career field that is still rare. She and I have shared the trials and tribulations of having a career and simultaneously loving and hating it, traveling, being married, being soft but hard as nails when needed, and love, love, loving being a mommy too. I am so touched by her gesture today and grateful to be surrounded by her and the rest of my leadership team who are willing to grow and transform our business with me, along with our inner selves where the real power resides to keep the journey in life fun, xo.March 13, 2013Lean In is being bizarrely mischaracterized. It has issues but it isn't a harmful book to women from any walk of life, not by any stretch of the imagination. The biggest issue with this book is that there's nothing new here, but the retread is blandly interesting. Full review forthcoming,December 4, 2013Interesting that I chose to read this book right around the time when I decided to lean OUT big time. Prior to March 2013, I had a great job doing interesting work for (mostly) wonderful people, but that job happened to exist in NYC - aka the most expensive city in the country - and for all the job's plusses, "financially rewarding" it was not.Post March 2013, everything changed. I had my first baby - a sweet, adorable bundle of baby boy joy - and upon crunching the numbers, I realized that post-tax and post-nanny, it didn't necessarily pay (financially, at least) for me to work. I knew we could live on my husband's salary alone without changing our lifestyle significantly (yes, my salary was that paltry), and I knew that if I were to continue to work, the cost of a nanny would have eaten all but about $5,000 of my post-tax income. Would you work full-time for that amount of money? Would $5,000 get you out of bed every day and help you overlook crowded smelly subways, meetings with people you kind of want to punch in the face, losing PowerPoint presentations when your computer crashes, having no flexibility to your life from M-F, 9am-6pm...$96 a week. $13 a day. No thank you.That, paired with a rather inconveniently timed move to Boston, left me a stay-at-home mom who now spends her days singing "The Wheels on the Bus" at baby music class, playing with the parachute at baby-and-me class and doing downward dog while blowing kisses at baby yoga class instead of going to meetings, writing proposals and managing budgets. It'd be nice to end that previous paragraph with a "...and I wouldn't have it any other way," but the truth is, I miss work. I miss the brain power involved, I miss being around adults, I miss solving problems...but the flip side of that truth is that if I were at work, I would miss my boy. What's a young professional gal to do?!Sandberg acknowledges that having approximately $1,000,000,000 in the bank makes it a little easier to cover the childcare and other household help that greatly, greatly simplify the life of a working mother. Still, her message isn't one of an out-of-touch, idealistic celebrity boss - she's not Gwyneth, and this isn't Goop. The stats in Lean In aren't anything that someone with an interest in women's studies wouldn't have encountered, but they're upsetting to read, particularly given how numerous they are. (Most interesting to me is the case study where a successful woman was profiled, and a focus group gave her horrendous ratings on things like "would I be friends with this person," "I'd like to work with this person," etc. The exact same profile was given to another focus group, only this time the woman's name was changed to a man's. You probably aren't surprised to hear that this fictitious man got rave reviews for his business savvy, his drive, his success...all the things the woman was critiqued for.) I think Sandberg's admonishment to "lean in" is exactly what women need to hear, and her book should be required reading for anyone in the workplace, particularly for those who think being a feminist is bad and/or that things already are equal because the women's rights movement already happened. (These are also the people who don't think racism is a problem anymore, either.) This book made me imagine what my life would be like if I don't go back to work - and if I do.So, while I can see myself running board meetings and accepting Time's Person of the Year award, I - and millions of others - struggle with the reality of what life would be like with two parents working, and the thought of it makes me hyperventilate. The chaos! I am emphatically not a fan of chaos. After a long day of work, household duties still would need to get done, and while it's not glamorous, someone has to be sure that a healthy dinner is on the table every night and that all members of the household are bathed on a somewhat regular basis and that the dirty laundry gets washed and folded. Since my husband works crazy long hours, that someone would be...me. How some people do it, I have no idea. One of the women I respect most from my job is a C-level executive, has three great kids, works out, always looks impeccable in super chic clothes, cooks AND reads (and is on Goodreads!). For the life of me, I don't know how she does it.I'm no closer to arriving at the answer - my answer, the one for me and my family - than I was when I started this "review," which is more a blog entry than an actual assessment of the book. I suppose, being a businesswoman, Sandberg can appreciate that economics necessitates that either choice - staying home or working - will result in the diminishment of something else, be it family time, a skyrocketing career, sleep...something's gotta give. I'm just not sure what I want that something to be yet.August 16, 2015Question: When is a book not a book? Answer: When it has 37 footnotes by the 24th page.Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead by Sheryl Sandberg is nothing more than a thesis paper thinly disguised and marketed by the publishing company as the next "it" book for women. Well...not all women; at least in my mind.

surrounding this book is a good thing and will inspire more women to try and crack the glass ceiling.My rating: 3.5 stars rounded up to 4daily-show nonfiction sociology-psychology March 30, 2013How do you say anything about the most reviewed book of 2013? Sheryl Sandberg's call for women to lean in and take control of their careers has been roundly and lengthily discussed on newspaper sites and blogs, often at a level I find to be unhelpfully and personally focused: who does she think she is, a multi-millionaire with options in Facebook and painfree childcare, telling us how to live our lives?Only, she's not. Sandberg comes across as warm and driven, brave and vulnerable, self-aware and occasionally oblivious, smart and self-conscious. Her message, to my ears, is one of personal responsibility and motivation that sits well with me. When Sandberg quotes figures about the lack of women on boards and in leadership positions, my first thought is "Well, I can help fix that. I can be one of those people."As I read through the book, I realised how familiar Sandberg's points had become to me. Impostor syndrome. That successful women are often seen as unlikable - in a way that men aren't. That women tend to apply only for jobs they feel fully qualified for, whereas men are happy to apply for jobs they are not. As one of my friends - one of the most competent and smartest people I know - said to me recently, he feels like he's making it up every day. Me too. I have to admit my interest waned as I moved through the book; for other people, the opposite will be true. Chapters of balancing parenting and partnerships with demanding and rewarding jobs are pretty much irrelevant to me. The last chapter - a generic call to arms to change the world - is a bit of a whimper finish. But two early sections spoke particularly strongly to me.The first is the chapter on mentoring. This turned on a whole bunch of lights for me. Sandberg writes about women who will come up to after a speech and ask if she will mentor them. Searching for a mentor has become the professional equivalent of waiting for Prince Charming... Now young women are told that if they can just find the right mentor, they will be pushed up the ladder and whisked away to the corner office to live happily ever after. Once again, we are teaching women to be too dependent on others.... Because it is harder for young women to find mentors and sponsors, they are taking a more active role in seeking them out. And while I applaud assertive behaviour, this energy is sometimes misdirected. No matter how crucial these connections are, they probably won't develop from asking virtuals strangers "Will you be my mentor?".Good mentoring relationships, she says, grow from a "real and often earned connection". Mentors select proteges on the basis of performance and potential. They must be focused, use their time well, and be open to feedback. Approach a potential mentor with a tailored questions, she advises. Ask for early input and actionable assistance. Sandberg also addresses how senior men can be reluctant to mentor junior women "because of how it looks", and gives examples of how this can be dealt with (one business leader, for example, who only does breakfasts and lunches and never dinners). Sandberg also writes about the value of peer mentoring. I certainly get the best advice from people who have met similar challenges to the ones I am facing in recent years. Advice from those 30 years older than me - while often valuable, appreciated, and sometimes hilarious - is often coloured with a "back in my day" or a "I see myself in you" tone that makes it into an emotional rather than informational exchange.The second was Sandberg talking about crying at work. Ina speech to Harvard Business School last year, she saidI don't believe we have a professional self from Mondays through Fridays and a real self for the rest of the time. That kind of division probably never worked, but in today's world, with a real voice, an authentic voice, it makes even less sense.I've cried at work. I've told people I've cried at work. And it's been reported in the press that Sheryl Sandberg cried on Mark Zuckerberg's shoulder, which is not exactly what happened. I talk about my hopes and fears and ask people about theirs. I try to be myself. Honest about my strengths and weaknesses and I encourage others to do the same. It is all professional and it is all personal, all at the very same time.In her book, Sandberg expands on this. In moments of high stress at work - usually, when she feels betrayed (a strong word, but given her startling career, I daresay she's felt this way a few times) - she has gone to a senior colleague to talk about the situation and ended up in tears. It has tended to bring her closer to these people - and not have undermined their professional relationships. She doesn't quite argue that when people know what is going on in your personal life it can make your professional life easier. She does argue for the value of authentic communication.I've had an experience along these lines just this week. My husband died exactly a year ago. He was an art curator at New Zealand's national museum. He killed himself. I started a new job, as director of an art gallery, five months ago. Only a few people in my workplace knew my husband, but they all knew my backstory. This backstory carries with it a certain amount of doubt and curiosity - but it is something I very rarely talk about.This week, the museum opened a major new art exhibition. It was the last show my husband worked on, leading the conceptual development. On Wednesday I went to both the staff blessing and the official opening. It was a hard day. On Monday, I told my team that I would be taking Wednesday off to do this. I told them I thought it would be hard, but that I thought it would be okay. I told them I was looking after myself, but would tell them if I needed help. Telling my team - being vulnerable - was the best thing to do. Instead of insisting on being strong and isolated, I let them care about me. I gave them the information and the emotion, and they could act on it. They knew what was going on, and they could be part of it. It was a much better way of dealing with things - even if it made me feel exposed. I guess I'm learning.One thing puzzled me. Throughout the book, Sandberg refers to her decision to finish work at 5.30pm every day in order to have dinner with her family. She hid this for years - going to the extent of having her PA book meetings outside the office at the end of the day so other Facebook staff would be less likely to see her leaving. When she finally spoke about it at an internal event, she felt exposed. Sandberg frequently refers to this decision, and it is obviously a major decision and tipping point for her. When she joined Facebook, she already felt like "the old person" in the office, and it was an engineers culture of late night and hackathons.But fuck me. Really? Finishing work at 5.30pm in America is such a big deal? She takes a couple of hours with her family and then she's back on email. How sick - or more to the point, how homogeneous - is Facebook's culture that this is a big deal. Is this what working in America looks like? For years, I have actively encouraged my teams to GO HOME at the end of the day. I would rather they are balanced and refreshed than putting in empty hours to prove to me how valuable they are. If they can't get their work done in 40 hours a week, there's a problem with (a) their workload (b) their ability or (c) prioritisation of work - none of which are well addressed by working 60 hours a week. If achieving work-life balance in the States really means finding a way to work 60 or 80 hours a week and not feel guilty, I'm staying put.March 13, 2013One of the most effective things about Sheryl Sandberg's new book is that she followed the principles of KISS--keep it short and simple. In less than 175 pages, Sandberg puts forth a manifesto for a new generation of feminists--a generation that may not even be comfortable calling themselves feminists. Women are smart and capable, and while we face very real obstacles (pay inequality, gender discrimination), it is the our internal obstacles that may be what is truly holding us back. Sandberg provides copious statistical evidence in this well-researched book that support her idea that women are holding back rather than leading in, taking ourselves out of the game rather than getting on the field. Rather than coming from a position of judgment, she comes from a place of empathy. Her personal stories of insecurity and fear lend amazing credibility to her ideas. She readily acknowledges that she is in a better position that many women in the US and most women around the world to take on more challenging roles in her career. Her point, though, is that until all women lean in--whatever that means for them--she will remain relatively alone in the C-suite. Rather than telling women to pursue their careers at the expense of their personal and family lives, she puts forward some very real ideas of how women and men can work together to make balance more possible and acceptable for people everywhere. My great hope is that all women, but especially young women, will read this book as soon as they can. I am glad to have Sandberg's advice now; I would have greatly benefited from having this advice 20 years ago.May 23, 2013I give a lot of kudos to Sheryl Sandberg for bringing up a lot of topics that I think are important, under-discussed, under-recognized, and in some cases, did not really have a voice (at least not all in one work). This isn't necessarily a "how-to" book (like 'how to become an amazing woman leader') but more of a book on how to recognize certain traits, characteristics, and behaviors that both men and women possess, and the impact it has on women in the workplace. I applaud Sandberg for stepping outside of her own comfort zone, as she writes early in the book, to bring these issues to the table. She is correct in that the women's movement has somewhat stagnated and that the movement has become complacent, and more women struggle with the "work-life" balance in their careers. I thought her discussion of the topics were fresh, engaging, and insightful. I could have done with less copious praise of Facebook throughout the book, but overall I got a lot out of it - more than I admittedly thought I would. I hope that it truly does spark a larger conversation.I had to go back and change my rating from a 4 to a 5 - because since I have finished reading this book, I have kept talking about it, thinking about it, and attempting to put the concepts into practice.August 26, 2021Sheryl Sandberg stresses the need for collaborative approaches and teamwork because both strategies lead to greater success and gender equality in business. She then takes that idea a step further and ventures to say that if this collaborative model could be applied both on the job, in relationships, and at home that this could change the world.It probably could. I'm certainly willing to give it a try.The part of Lean In that I was most receptive to was the discussion about the Queen Bee syndrome of females in upper management and how, sometimes, women keep other women down because of the attitude that "there can only be one".Probably because of my background, I've always approached friendships with other women with the mind set of a "world family" and do my best to help others with their needs in whatever capacity I can. I have rarely found a friend or business associate who responds with the same level of support. I suspect that this tendency in life to look out for number one is caused by the lack of unconditional love that a supportive family unit provides first developmentally as a child and then into adulthood. It is no wonder that women, if made to feel inferior to other family members at home, react in an aggressive way when "competing" with other females on the job rather than reaching out a hand in welcome.I was fortunate to grow up in an all female household (plus Dad) so gender equality wasn't an issue that I ever had to consider until I had a child of my own and had to make decisions about work and childcare. My sisters and I weren't compared to brothers or ever told that we couldn't have something that we wanted or be successful simply because we were female.In fact, my mother's father was on the forefront of the integration of females into the Air Force. He gave his daughter a male name (Allyn) because his thinking was that gender equality was going to shift to a more equal stance during her lifetime. But, it was going to take some time for attitudes to change. In the meantime, he wanted her resume and career to be judged and advanced on its merits, which, he figured, would be smoother and avoid all the pitfalls of sexism if recruiters thought she was a man.Clever Grandpa and hooray for me that my mother had a positive, feminist role model for a father.I'm also lucky in that, because of my many female siblings, I have a ready-made "sisterhood" of support. Many of the issues that Sandberg discusses in Lean In, I've encountered, but I was lucky enough to have solutions for in the embodiment of my family. I know that not everyone has that type of support in their career and personal life, and I fully appreciate that I'm spoiled in my lifestyle.If you enjoyed Lean In, I'd suggest Spinster: Making a Life of One's Own (a discussion of feminist issues in relationships and marriage) and Artemis: The Indomitable Spirit in Everywoman (a feminist dissection of a few mythological archetypes to empower women through the exploration of the subconscious mind).business feminism non-fictionMarch 8, 2017I have written this book to encourage women to dream big, forge a path through the obstacles, and achieve their full potential. I am hoping that each woman will set her own goals and reach for them with gusto. And I am hoping that each man will do his part to support women in the workplace and in the home, also with gusto. As we start using the talents of the entire population, our institutions will be more productive, our homes will be happier, and the children growing up in those homes will no longer be held back by narrow stereotypes.What irks me is how uninclusive this is to women - the book's very intended audience. Sheryl Sandberg seems to be painfully unaware of her own privileges, casually mentioning from nannies and frequent flights to relocating[!] your workplace. Most American women do not have the resources to be able to do so, and while Sandberg is a successful businesswoman and has every right to her earnings, writing about this without further commentary certainly doesn't resonate well with working women.Remember that mom who pointed out that my son should be wearing a green T-shirt on St. Patrick's Day? She is a tireless volunteer in the classroom and our community. So many people benefit from her hard work.Is Sandberg suggesting that the only beneficial thing that could come out from being a stay-at-home mom is volunteer service? Feminism means giving women choice - and these women damn well have the right to choose to spend time with their child, choose to save money from childcare, choose to embrace motherhood, and choose not to "benefit society" every moment that they are breathing.tl;dr: pseudoinspirational bullcrap, like those motivation quotes on Facebook. 1 star.american ebook female-authors-2017 July 27, 20173.5 StarsAt times this books was encouraging and dazzling and made me shake my fist in camaraderie. At other times, I found myself rolling my eyes at Sheryl's life and trying to imagine her ever living an ordinary life, working her way up the corporate ladder with no white privilege. Alas, I must do what Sheryl tells me to and support her as a woman. We have enough people trying to hold us back and crush us down, women must support other women in every aspect of their lives. A book filled with statistics and wonderful anecdotes supporting the message to lean into your life and take more control of your future. Woman can accomplish anything that their male counterparts aim to achieve, we just need to exude more confidence, and take a stronger demeanor to get it done. Overall a good book, with a strong message.2017 audiobook non-fiction March 17, 2013This is a very inspiring book for women from all walks of life. I think the first impression that I had was that all women need to Lean In to job opportunities. However, Sheryl emphasizes that every woman has different aspirations. If staying at home with your children is fulfilling, then you should Lean In to the opportunity; likewise if you want to pursue a career. However, the true point is that as women, we should work together and lift each other up. The negative views of women who work and leave their children at home versus women who leave work to take care of their children need to end. We must appreciate each other and work together to make all opportunities and choices available so that we may succeed and push ahead- for women of all nationalities, ethnicities, creeds, etc.August 25, 2013When I first started seeing ads promoting this book it was really the subtitle "Women, Work and the Will to Lead" that grabbed me. I looked around the Internet and found Sandberg's TEDTalk which raised some interesting issues but it didn't leave me bowled over like a lot of other people. Having seen some phenomenal TEDTalks in the past I figured hers would be on par. Well the ideas were but the delivery didn't make me go "wow" --but it did make me get the book and good thing I did because it definitely made me go "wow" and more than once. The book is very well-written and everything she says that could be questioned is backed up by proof with succinct and easy to follow endnotes so she's not just throwing around grand ideas she's actually gathered ideas from far and wide and brought them together in a concise and very thought provoking way without sounding condescending or ivory tower like. She comes across as a regular smart woman who has the same concerns and worries as other women and mothers which was what I found made the book a very accessible and interesting read. She didn't come across as the COO of Facebook that you would imagine to be a slave to her job, has tons of cash so it's easy to say "be more involved in your work" because someone else is looking after your kids at home. She was a normal woman with normal fears, career setbacks, mishaps and OMG I am a spaz stories and that in itself was wow for me.Her main message is that often women don't get fully involved (lean in) enough when they choose to do something out of fear of not being liked or coming off as too smart or thinking that they can't really do it instead of just trying or winging it plus a myriad of other reasons. It's a damned if you do and damned if you don't situation. She gives examples from her life and other successful women's lives that if you really give it your all you can succeed and happily too. Her three main questions were basically:*Why aren't you leaning in? *Why aren't you sitting more at the table instead off at the side? *What would you do if you weren't afraid? Now this sounds a bit too "rah rah rah come on girls we can do it" but it's not at all like that. The questions in context ring very true. When I first read those few lines I thought "whatever" but she gives example after example of why women don't do enough of these things and that it has to stop because everyone would benefit and she clearly shows how for all walks of life. You might want to get to the top at work or maybe as a volunteer in your community or maybe at home and you can without feeling guilty. She makes a good case about how the women's movement of the 60s was supposed to give women choice not guilt which is what several women feel when they stay home to raise their children or go out to work. This is far from the kind of book I'd ever think to read but I'm very glad I did because it really encourages you to get up and give it a shot when really you have nothing to lose and that's something that both women and men can benefit from. The ending especially was excellent and had me tear up for how you feel like she's really speaking to the reader and says come on and just try and you can start by something as simple as leaning in wherever you are. Sheryl Sandberg is definitely a fresh and strong voice for women and men together. It's win win all around the way she tells it and if anything you go away from the book thinking hey maybe I can --and while I'm at it let me go tell my friend because I know she can too and my other friend because he needs a new perspective too and suddenly you have a whole new movement. It's very "wow" the way something so simple can be so powerful and profound. December 9, 2014If Sheryl Sandberg's Lean In was a person, it wouldn't be the CEO of a Fortune 500 company: it would be that overbearing middle manager everyone loves to hate. The one that spends Monday morning talking way too loudly around the coffeepot about the higher-ups he rubbed shoulders with that weekend. The one with a sports car and a wife too young for him who tries desperately to be "with it." The one whose greatest joy in life is boiling down complex problems to a platitude you could fit on a desk calendar. This is a caked-over mess of schmaltz and self-promotion, with just enough girl power quotes sprinkled throughout that hungry young people in thankless entry-level corporate helljobs will use them to decorate their cubicle walls for the next decade. Lean far, far away.2014 fauxgressive hooray-for-overdriveAugust 8, 2020There are few internationally known and respected female business executives today (or ever) so Sandberg's exploration of "Women, Work, and the Will to Lead" may be the only best-selling motivational business book by a woman explicitly for women. I generally dislike business books - I think they go on for too long and are typically poorly written and edited and have few unique or helpful ideas - but since Sandberg's book has become such a part of the zeitgeist and because a number of my friends had read it and wanted to discuss it I decided I needed to see what I was missing.First impression: where is the evidence of Sandberg's business acumen? I am struck by the role of luck in her rise to the top. I do not mean to diminish the hard work it took to get into Harvard (side note: her PhD mother became a SAHM when Sheryl was a child; I'd like to know her story of Leaning Out) and to do well at Harvard. But had Larry Summers not been her thesis advisor would she have gotten the World Bank research assistant job? And then Summers became Secretary of the Treasury and Sandberg became his chief of staff. When Summers left government Sandberg had her pick of job offers. She chose Google - luckily for her she didn't go with AOL, pets.com, Enron, Lehman Bros, or any host of hugely successful companies that later crashed. Were those companies' female employees less deserving of success than Sandberg or just less lucky?Perhaps Sandberg worked harder than anyone else at Google and perhaps consequently she chose to postpone marriage (besides the 1-year starter marriage when she was 24). There isn't much written about her personal decision-making in this phase of her life. What she does write is enlightening: she was offered the CEO position at LinkedIn and she passed because"I was 37 years old and wanted to have a second child....I had to pass because I didn't think I could handle both a pregnancy and a new job." And herein lies the rub. What, Ms. Sandberg, do you propose educated, motivated, ambitious women - who happen to be breeders because our partners cannot bear our children - DO to succeed in today's business world? She advises that we LIE.It's not presented so baldly in her book, but her stories are revealing. After her baby was born her assistant would cleverly obfuscate Sandberg's calendar so that first and last meetings of the day were offsite "to make it less transparent" when she was actually arriving or departing. In my last job I honestly noted pediatrician appointments, class plays, and parent-teacher meetings for all of my colleagues to see and was advised by the company president to LIE about my whereabouts because my female office mates resented my absences.I am 42 years old and for all of my sentient life I have been told that women can be anyone and can do anything. But the facts remain that American women do not earn what men earn for the same jobs, that we do not have equal representation in government, and that only 5% of Fortune 500 CEO's are women. And what does Sandberg suggest about changing corporate or public policies to address these imbalances? Not one thing. And what female-friendly or family-friendly policies has Sandberg championed at Google or FB? None are mentioned in the book. Instead she starts checking emails at 5:00 am, before her newborn is awake. Then once he is down for the night she is back at work. (Personal note: In a previous job I juggled a newborn with managing a team of young men and women. I took maternity leave and nursed my baby while obsessively checking emails and voicemails. I worked while she slept. My reward was to come back to work and be told that I was being replaced by a man, one of my direct reports, whose wife stayed at home with their kids so that he could concentrate on his job and spend evenings and weekends at the office. I was successful in fighting that change and having that manager demoted but when the next man was brought in to run the office I heard the same proposal and quit. I realized that I couldn't change this billion dollar, publicly traded company's culture.)What female business executive does Sandberg feature as a good role model? Yahoo's CEO Marissa Mayer, who cut off her employees' abilities to telecommute (disproportionately affecting the employees who are mothers) while building her own private nursery to abut her office suite. As a reviewer I am unable to read "Lean In" objectively. I will leave that to others. Instead I bestow my first one-star GR review to Ms. Sandberg because of the inconsistencies and contradictions that I find downright insulting and infuriating. Her advice is to be "competent and nice" but Mark Zuckerberg tells her that her "desire to be liked" by everyone would hold her back and that "Mark was right." Wait a second - which is it? And do you really advise that I practice "an hour of forced smiling... pretending that [I] feel confident" or do I drop "some kind of fake 'all-work persona,' [because] I think we benefit from expressing our truth"? Don't cry at work! Except that when Sandberg did it Zuckerberg hugged her and it was a "breakthrough moment" for them.Last note: check out the 7 and a half pages of Acknowledgements. Oprah and Arianna Huffington are thanked, along with countless other Big Names. Where's the nanny, the house manager, and other assorted help? I guess they've all Leaned Out of the spotlight and are immaterial to Sandberg's success.11/20/2018 addendum: addendum: Co-writer Nell Scovell is funny and accomplished and though she does not mention anything about her experience with "Lean In" or Sandberg, this podcast interview is worth listening to for her takes on being a female writer in an overwhelmingly male writing world. ... August 23, 2022I love seeing women excel in their professional environments breaking through barriers and ‚glass ceilings' paving the way for other women and men, especially young talents. Sheryl's story is inspirational and encourages women to feel equal in a male-dominated corporate world. Looking at Sheryl's career, I acknowledge her achievements and celebrate her success, which served as a great example to many working women. However, I simultaneously acknowledge that she has an undeniably unique backbone with her education and strong network that helped her excel in her career. What you know and how you apply your knowledge and skills can indeed make a difference with whom you know. Overall, a fantastic share of experience and best practices based on well researched facts and statistics.business-leadership literary-fiction novellaDisplaying 1 - 30 of 14,476 reviewsGet help and learn more about the design. One hundred years ago the suffragettes marched in the streets, fighting for women's rights and equality. Since that time, a lot has changed. The glass ceiling has cracked in many industries. Yet, this world is still ruled by men.Of the 195 countries, only 17 are led by women. Only 4% of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women. And women still get paid less. What would the suffragettes say?"Lean In: Work, Women, and Will to Lead" by Sheryl Sandberg is a book about blatant inequality women still face in the modern world, providing advice on how this can be changed.Sandberg, a Chief Operating Officer at Facebook and an ex-Vice President of Global Online Sales and Operations at Google, shares stories from her own career. Exposing vulnerable moments, she hopes that her example will empower women to lean in and achieve their full potential. Here's our chapter-by-chapter summary of "Lean in." Chapter 1. The Leadership Ambition GapJust like men, women have the skills to be leaders. Look at the statistics. In the United States, girls earn 60% of master's degrees and 57% of undergraduate ones. In Europe, 82% of women completed upper secondary education, compared to 77% of men.However, the number of women in top jobs haven't increased. The reason is that career progress requires taking risks and the ability to stand up for oneself. And women are usually discouraged from demonstrating these features.This is why, if a job involves having power and lots of responsibility (which is typical of leadership positions), it will probably be taken by a man.Stereotypes about women in the workplace are strong. "He is very ambitious" is a great compliment. "She's very ambitious" has negative shades of meaning. These stereotypes are introduced in childhood – from early years, girls are treated differently. When a little girl is trying to lead, she's called bossy. Boys are rarely called bossy – because they are expected to be bosses.These stereotypes put serious social pressure on women. While it's assumed men can have both a successful professional life and a happy private life, it's not the same for women. Women are told they have to choose.But women can participate in multiple roles. They can be both competent professionals and good mothers. Sandberg says that a crucial step in this direction is to get rid of fear. Fear is at the root of so many of the barriers that women face. Fear of not being liked. Fear of making the wrong choice. Fear of drawing negative attention. And the holy trinity of fear: the fear of being a bad mother/wife/daughter. Chapter 2. Sit At the TableSandberg opens this chapter by telling us a personal story. Once she hosted a meeting for the Treasury Secretary at Facebook, inviting 15 executives for breakfast. The men took their food and sat at the conference table. The women also took their food - after the men - and sat in chairs at the side of the room. Even after Sandberg welcomed them at the table, they stayed in their seats.This incident helped her realize an unpleasant truth – that besides dealing with social obstacles, women fight with obstacles coming from within.Women seriously suffer from the impostor syndrome, Sandberg explains. This phenomenon means that people who are actually capable of doing things doubt themselves, feeling undeserving and guilty. This is why women often attribute their success to external factors. They say they just got lucky or someone helped them, or that they worked hard. In any case, they diminish their capabilities.But women need to be more confident. To be successful, one has to take opportunities. And opportunities are rarely offered – they have to be seized. There is no time for feeling like a fraud.Women have to learn to keep their hands up, because when they lower them, even managers with the best intentions might not notice. Chapter 3. Success and LikeabilityThe perceptions about men and women in the workplace are greatly illustrated by the results of an experiment run by Frank Flynn, a Columbia Business School Professor, and Cameron Anderson, a New York University professor.Flynn and Anderson assigned some of their students to read a real story of a successful venture capitalist Heidi Roizen. The second half of the students read the same story, but the name "Heidi" was changed to "Howard".The students had to share their impressions. Even though they recognized the competency of both Heidi and Howard, they liked Howard more. Unlike him, Heidi was described as selfish and a person whom they wouldn't hire or want to work with.The conclusion was clear: successful men are liked, and successful women are not.The problem here is, again, stereotypes. Women are expected to be caregivers and sensitive by nature. Heidi violated that stereotype and acted like a man. As a result, people disliked her.This leads to more problems. Feeling that their success might be frowned upon, women are afraid to ask for promotions. Similarly, they don't negotiate for themselves – as Sandberg ironically points out, for women negotiating is like "trying to cross a minefield backward in high heels."To make things easier while advocating for yourself, Sandberg recommends two things:Use "we" instead of "I". For example, say "we had a great year" instead of "I had a great year." Your request will be better received.Justify your request. Mention that you've been encouraged by a senior ("My manager suggested I talk with you about my compensation"), or that the industry standards allow you to ask for more. Chapter 4. It's a Jungle Gym, Not a LadderCareers are typically compared to ladders. But this metaphor is limiting: it means people can move only up or down. And there is only one way to get to the top.This is why Sandberg prefers another metaphor – the one of a jungle gym. A jungle gym offers many ways to get to the top. You don't have to plan your career from the start. A jungle gym lets you try different ways and explore.Sandberg explains how this worked in her case. After graduation, she had a vague idea of what she wanted to do. She knew she wanted to change the world. Her first job was at the World Bank, whose mission was to reduce global poverty. Then she took a risk and started to work at Google. And then she took a risk again, and got a job as a COO at Facebook – even though other companies offered to hire her as a CEO. Why? Because she believed in fast growth and was open to opportunities.Women are often risk-averse. And being risk-averse leads to stagnation. Women tend to play it safe and avoid challenges, and this way, they limit themselves. When female managers move up, they usually stay in the same company. And when they apply for open jobs, they do it only when they think they meet 100% of the criteria – unlike men, who apply when they meet 60% of it.Carol Frohlinger and Deborah Kolb describe such a phenomenon as the "Tiara Syndrome" – a belief that if you work hard, someone will notice and will put a tiara on your head. But life isn't like that. You will win only if you challenge yourself, ask for promotions, and take risks.Do not wait for power to be offered. Like that tiara, it might never materialize. And anyway, who wears a tiara in a jungle gym? Chapter 5. Are You My Mentor?Mentorship is important for career progression. Both men and women with mentors have more chances to get a pay raise or a stretch assignment. But to tell people, especially women, "get a mentor and you'll excel" is a mistake.This is the wrong message. It teaches women that they depend on someone else. Young girls believe that if they just wait for a prince on the white horse, they will live happily ever after. Adult women believe that once they find a good mentor, they will build a great career.First of all, it's hard to get a mentor. The mere phrase "Be my mentor" makes a person feel uncomfortable. It puts a lot of pressure. This is why a typical answer is "no".But Sandberg says that there is another way around it – excel, and then a mentor will find you. According to the studies, people invest in those whose talent and potential are obvious.However, lower-level employees also get mentorship. It's simple – just pick a moment after a meeting to say thank you and ask for advice. This way, a person will get involved in your problem.A good way to fix the mentorship problem is to introduce formal programs or, as an alternative, ask peers to help: There is a saying that "all advice is autobiographical." Friends… may actually provide more current and useful counsel… Peers are also in the trenches and may understand problems that superiors do not. Chapter 6. Seek and Speak Your TruthHonesty is very important in the workplace. It's the basis for effectiveness. Unfortunately, people often avoid being honest to protect themselves. Since many companies have a hierarchical structure, people are scared that an honest remark will negatively affect the perception of someone at a higher level. As a result, many issues stay unresolved.For women, it's even more difficult. Because they are already in a lower position, they risk being called a bad team player or just negative - more often than men. Sandberg mentions the following things that can make honest communication easier, for both women and men:Find the sweet spot where your opinion is just delicately, and not brutally, honest.Remember that there isn't absolute truth. Your opinion may seem the only right one, but let other people express theirs.Ask directly. Do not guess.Give and get feedback. But remember that feedback, like the truth, is not absolute – it's a subjective opinion based on personal observations. Be ready that it may hurt. Yet, it's still better than blissful ignorance.Sandberg also underlines that we should never undermine the impact of personal lives on professional ones. She believes that sharing emotions and talking about personal situations is very useful – this can explain many work-related decisions.Fortunately, the tendencies in leadership encourage honesty and imperfection. And this shift is good for women, who often get accused of excessive emotionality.Recommended reading: The Power of Psychological Safety in Building a Supportive and Safe Workplace. Chapter 7. Don't Leave Before You LeaveLeaving the workplace, women rarely make one big decision. When a woman plans to start a family or have a child, she already makes sacrifices and accommodations that, in their opinion, will be required later. This way, she holds herself back. And leaves before actually leaving.How does this happen? She refuses to take a management role. She refuses to look for business partners. In other words, she rejects opportunities.But women forget that by making plans for the future, they still have time to fulfill goals in the present. Even if they get pregnant immediately, which is not always the case, they still have nine months. So instead of wasting this time, they can use it wisely, to not come back to a place that is drastically different.What I am arguing is that the time to scale back is when a break is needed or when a child arrives – not before, and certainly not years in advance. The months and years leading up to having children are not the time to lean back, but the critical time to lean in.Women should also look differently at child care. Yes, it's very expensive. If a woman who's had a baby comes back to work, her salary may hardly cover the childcare expenses. But Sandberg says that it will pay off, in the long run.If women continue working, their income may become much higher. So it makes sense to measure the cost of childcare against their future, not current, income. Chapter 8. Make Your Partner a Real PartnerAnalysis conducted in the United States showed that in couples where a husband and wife are fully employed, a woman still does 40% more childcare and 30% more housework. But this is a choice. And it can be rearranged.Equal partners must be equal in everything. Women must be more empowered at work. But men must be more empowered at home - and being too prescriptive around exactly how homecare and childcare activities need to be completed can make some feel discouraged. Another unhelpful habit is assigning tasks to husbands – because in this case, a man is doing a favor, and not sharing responsibilities. The woman remains the "project manager" of the home, taking on the mental load of prioritizing and delegating chores.Despite the popular opinion that successful women are single and lonely, facts show something different. The majority of successful female business leaders have partners. And, vice versa, as the results of a 2007 study, many professionally educated women left the workplace because their husbands didn't actively participate in childcare and didn't help with domestic tasks.When it comes time to settle down, find someone who wants an equal partner. Someone who thinks women should be smart, opinionated, and ambitious. Someone who values fairness and expects or, even better, wants to do his share in the home. Chapter 9. The Myth of Doing It AllTo "have it all" sounds aspirational – but it's impossible. Aiming for perfection in everything leads to paralysis and frustration. This often results in leaving one of the things you try to excel at. "Done is better than perfect" is a wiser approach.Sandberg also notices that we should distinguish between what's really necessary and what's not, to save our time. However, people often overwork. They do it out of fear that if they use the opportunity of flexibility, they will be seen as less committed. Unfortunately, they are not wrong – peers really see them as less committed.Technology doesn't make it any easier. The ability to work online often means that a workday is extended. Besides, people get work emails late at night, and that blurs the line between work and rest.The new normal means there aren't enough hours in a day. And that's a big problem for everybody, especially for mothers. A woman can plan her projects at work. She cannot plan things at home that easily, though.Sandberg says that the only way out here is to accept chaos, quoting Nora Ephron's Wellesley commencement speech:It will be a little messy but embrace the mess. It will be complicated, but rejoice in the complications… and don't be frightened: you can always change your mind. I know: I've had four careers and three husbands. Chapter 10. Let's Start Talking About ItAll of us are biased. We believe that we are objective, but we are not. There is such a thing as a "bias blind spot" – overconfidence in our own objectivity that prevents us from correcting the bias, this way making things worse. For this reason, we are all susceptible to gender bias, admit it or not. Of course, this does influence our interactions at work – and the role of women in the workplace in particular.That's why gender-blind evaluations are better for women – but, unfortunately, most jobs require a face-to-face interview.Pointing out gender bias is an uncomfortable experience. If you tell someone they're biased, most probably, people won't like your comment. They might insist on their opinion, or just get defensive.So is there anything we can do about gender bias? Yes, there is. Sandberg provides an example of Harvard Business School. In 2010, Nitin Nohria was appointed dean, and decided to close the gap between male, female, and international students.Associate Dean Moon and Professor Frances Ferei spent the first year studying the school's culture. This meant they visited each classroom and discussed the challenges that women and international students had to deal with.Then they introduced small adjustments like paying attention to the language used. Also, they held students accountable for their behavior. The next year, they encouraged collaboration between students who usually don't work together.Consequently, a performance gap disappeared. Male, female, and international students received honors proportionally, and overall student satisfaction went up. As we can see, it's possible to fight bias – but you'll have to start talking about it. Chapter 11. Working Together Toward EqualityIt sounds absurd but women in power often become obstacles for other women who try to get power. This is an unpleasant truth. Women get ignored, sabotaged, and undermined by other women.There is even a term for this – "queen bee" – which describes women in a leadership position who use their power to keep other "worker bees" down. One reason for that is self-preservation. But the second reason is caused by discrimination. Realizing they live in the men's world, "queen bees" do not want to associate themselves with women.This leads to the following problem. A negative perception of a female coworker is taken objectively, and not as a gender bias – because it's considered that if a woman criticizes another woman, she cannot be biased. But, in fact, she can.On the other hand, women are expected to be warmer and more supportive at the workplace, and that's also an issue. Reaching out to a woman, another woman hopes to form a connection. And when this doesn't happen, she gets frustrated. It's a double standard situation, since this is not expected from a man.In any case, Sandberg says that women should help each other. Stay-at-home mothers should not judge women who work out of the house and vice versa. We need to learn to respect any choice – and be supportive.As former secretary of state, Madeleine Albright once said, "There is a special place in hell for women who don't help other women." Not all women want to be leaders. But more female leaders will bring about fairer treatment to all women. This will mean less sexism and discrimination. This will also mean more flexibility and access to child care and parental leave. And it will give a chance to build an equal world – a better world, improved by talents that have been hidden so far. If you want to learn more about building a healthy, equitable team that brings out the best in everyone, you may enjoy: How to Become a Healthy Team (All You Need to Know in 30 Minutes) Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead (2013) is a nonfiction book written by Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg. Drawing on both research and her own experiences, Sandberg describes how and why gender inequality continues to operate in the modern workforce, and offers advice for women seeking to balance a career and family. Ultimately, Sandberg argues that full equality will only come about when women "lean in," pushing past their own fears and misgivings to demand equal opportunity and treatment.Before launching into her argument, Sandberg sets the stage with an overview of women's status in both the United States and(to a lesser extent) the world at large. Despite considerable progress, Sandberg says, women remain largely excluded from the highest levels of government and industry. While this is in part the result of systemic barriers, Sandberg also feels that women unintentionally hold themselves back by absorbing sexist attitudes from the culture that surrounds them. Sandberg therefore claims that "reignit[ing] the revolution" requires "internalizing the revolution": letting go of biased and unhelpful beliefs (11).In each chapter following the book's introduction, Sandberg presents a sub-argument that feeds into this larger claim. Chapters One and Two deal particularly explicitly with the nature of the "internal barriers" women face: reluctance to pursue positions of power, and self-doubt that exacerbates this passivity and tentativeness. All of this, Sandberg argues, is a reflection of internalized gender norms rather than reality; women are neither less ambitious than men nor less capable, but they grow up in a world that encourages them to be agreeable and pretty rather than successful and intelligent. As a result, they don't learn the assertiveness and confidence they need in order to thrive in demanding career paths.In Chapter Three, however, Sandberg acknowledges that it is not enough for women simply to resolve to be more assertive: because of the way society perceives gender, women who behave "like men" may face negative consequences. Nevertheless, Sandberg argues that it is possible for women to strike a successful balance, particularly if they are willing to be flexible with their career plans (Chapter Four) and open about their thoughts and feelings (Chapter Six). Having a mentor can also help, though Sandberg cautions women against becoming overly dependent on the help of others (Chapter Five).In Chapters Seven, Eight, and Nine, Sandberg moves on to discuss strategies for balancing work and family life. Sandberg suggests that many of the problems women face in this regard are, again, the result of internalized biases: women hear that achieving both personal and professional success is impossible and alter their expectations in response, ultimately setting themselves up for failure. However, since it is true that women bear the brunt of housework and child care, Sandberg recommends that women be proactive about seeking support from their partners, as well as be willing to compromise on their goals when life becomes too overwhelming.Sandberg wraps her argument up by urging women to speak out about gender inequality when they encounter it, and to support the choices their fellow women make. Returning to a claim she made near the beginning of Lean In, Sandberg says that when women finally achieve parity in the most powerful levels of society, they will put in place new, female-friendly policies to help ensure that "this next wave [of feminism] can be the last wave" (172). Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. One hundred years ago the suffragettes marched in the streets, fighting for women's rights and equality. Since that time, a lot has changed. The glass ceiling has cracked in many industries. Yet, this world is still ruled by men.Of the 195 countries, only 17 are led by women. Only 4% of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women. And women still get paid less. What would the suffragettes say?"Lean In: Work, Women, and Will to Lead" by Sheryl Sandberg is a book about blatant inequality women still face in the modern world, providing advice on how this can be changed.Sandberg, a Chief Operating Officer at Facebook and an ex-Vice President of Global Online Sales and Operations at Google, shares stories from her own career. Exposing vulnerable moments, she hopes that her example will empower women to lean in and achieve their full potential.

ran half our countries and companies and men ran half our homes.“Key Takeaway: You can’t do everything perfectly all the time. And that’s okay. Perfection is not the goal.“Done is better than perfect.”Key Takeaway: Talking about gender issues at work matters. It creates awareness, change, and opportunity.Key Takeaway: This isn’t just a women’s issue—it’s a human issue. Real progress requires allies of all genders.“In the future, there will be no female leaders. There will just be leaders.”It’s empowering, practical, and wildly relevant. If you’ve ever held yourself back from applying for a job, speaking in a meeting, or sharing a big idea—this one’s for you.In 2025, this message applies more than ever. Opportunities may unexpectedly appear, and you have to be brave enough to grab them and “swing sideways.” What to Read Next? How to Start a Business as a Woman in 2025Giving and receiving feedback is still a critical skill for female leaders in 2025 – embrace it and use it to catalyze your career. The conversation has evolved in 2025, but the message remains – let’s keep talking, even if the conversation has changed – it creates awareness, opportunity, and change.While Lean In lit a fire in 2013, the world—and the conversation—has evolved. What’s missing now isn’t ambition. It’s intersectionality, burnout recovery, redefining leadership, and pushing for systemic change. Redefining success beyond job titles and 60-hour work weeksLeading with empathy, not just efficiencyHow to lean in when you work remotelySystemic change, and the root causes of gender inequality, such as discrimination and lack of affordable childcare, which stops women from leaning in. Marginalized voices, this book neglects the experiences and challenges of women of color, single moms, and those with disabilities. What to Read Next? The Most Underrated Career Advice for Women in 2025Sheryl Sandberg wrote Lean In in response to her viral TED Talk on why we have too few female leaders. Since its publication, it has become a cultural sensation. “Lean in” is often thrown around candidly in a girls’ group chat. Today, we still hear about the popular business book for women. Sheryl Sandberg is one of the most inspiring women in business. Sandberg was the first woman to serve on Facebook’s board of directors and wants to help other women embrace their ambitions. She also founded LeanIn.Org, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping women achieve their goals, and created the popular networking groups for women, Lean In Circles. Sheryl is considered a good leader because of her ability to inspire, mentor, and empower others. She’s known for setting high expectations, recognizing talent, and pushing for growth, both personally and professionally. She is a pioneer in the feminist movement and unapologetic about her own ambitions and advancement. What to Read Next? The Best Leadership Books for Women Who Want to Lead Like a CEOYes—but read it with 2025 eyes.Lean In is not a perfect book. Our lean In book summary shows a few chapters are missing in 2025. It doesn’t speak to all women’s experiences, and it’s been critiqued for a lack of intersectionality. But it started a conversation that needed to happen—and still needs to grow.Read it. Reflect. Push it further. Then pull other women up with you.What to Red Next? 20 Top Women in Business Podcasts That You Need to Download in 2025That women should be empowered to pursue their ambitions and leadership goals—without fear or apology.Yes, though the conversation has evolved. It’s still a foundational read for understanding workplace gender dynamics and sparking action.Sit at the tableDon’t leave before you leaveShare responsibilities at homeConfidence countsDone is better than perfectLean In explores the challenges women face in leadership, the internal and external barriers holding them back, and how we can collectively build a more equal world – starting by leaning into our own potential.Recommended Reading: Why Women Need to Stop Playing Small in Business December 8, 2016January 27, 2023 Niklas Göke Career, Communication Skills, Culture, Economics, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Management, Self Improvement, Society, Work 1-Sentence-Summary: Lean In explains why women are still underrepresented in the workforce, what holds them back, how we can enable and support them, and how any woman can take the lead and hold the flag of female leadership high. Read in: 4 minutes Favorite quote from the author: One of Germany’s biggest political debates over the last few years has been about gender quotas. As of January 2016, we at last passed a law that states 30% of board seats of the country’s biggest companies have to be held by women. Historically, the quote was more along the lines of 10%, and now has risen to about 22% – because many businesses still ignore the rule. Does this help deal with gender inequality? I personally doubt it. Yes, this will give some women who really deserve it a break and make their lives easier. But at the same time, some women will end up on board seats, just because of the rule, and if you know anything about mass media, you can tell which of these two perspectives will dominate public perception of the matter. I’d love to hear Sheryl Sandberg’s take on this in Lean In. What I do know is that she thinks we can't just mandate and legislate our way to gender equality too. We have to substantially change our attitudes and behavior – both men and women! For now, use these 3 lessons to better navigate the working world as a woman: Treat your career like a jungle gym. Learn to strike a balance between ambition and appeal. Before you become a mother, lean into your career as much as you can. The working world is a tough place for women, no doubt about it. But it is what it is, so instead of crying, let’s see how you can make the best of where we’re at! Download PDF There’s a lot of talk about the career ladder and how it’s broken, rigged or leans against the wrong wall. Actually, there might be no career ladder at all. Just a career jungle gym. You know what that is? It’s one of those setups on a playground with monkey bars, that you can climb multiple ways to get on top. Today, careers develop like those jungle gyms. Think of yours as one huge, indoor, playground-like place for kids, with tons of ropes, wall bars and nets. How would you approach such a thing? You’d probably keep going higher, but you wouldn’t stress much about which route you take – because there are so many ways to get to your destination! If you treat your career exactly this way, you’ll advance a lot faster, all while staying calmer and happier. To do this, Sheryl suggests you plan both for the short and long term. Your long-term dream can help you decide what kind of work you’ll take on, even if it’s not entirely clear to you. When Sheryl thought about joining Google early in 2001, she ultimately chose based on whether she thought the job was meaningful and had potential for growth. Add short-term (aka 18-month) goals to that, and you have a solid sense of direction, without too much pressure. Lesson 2: Walk the razor’s edge by balancing your ambition with your appeal to others. For women to cultivate the right public image to advance their career is like walking on a tightrope. You can’t be too ambitious, because others will just perceive you as rude, which often happens when women are assertive and go for what they want. If you’re too nice though, people will put you into the “cute bucket” and not take you seriously, which is something you don’t want either. When it gets down to the nitty-gritty, you have to be nice and feminine just enough to not come across as rude, while arguing for what you want without making it seem like you’re selling yourself too hard. To pull this off, try avoiding strong words and statements like “this is wrong,” “I want,” or “you should consider.” Instead, be nice and accommodating, but draw clear lines when you notice others approach them. It also helps to generalize and argue on behalf of a group, rather than yourself, as well as quoting other leaders and industry statistics and facts. Let’s hope these kinds of verbal and behavioral acrobatics won’t be needed one day, but for now, you’re better off just learning them and using them when you have to! Lesson 3: Lean into your career while you can and don’t dial back for motherhood before you have to. The one thing you should avoid at all costs is giving up before you have to, just because society tells you too. Look, I’m 100% in favor of having at least one full-time parent in any family. I really believe we need more dedicated moms and dads – it’s probably the most underrated job in the world. But even I don’t think you should sell yourself short way before it’s time to do that (especially if you’re a woman). Sheryl calls this leaning in, instead of leaning back. Your tendency might be to cut back and, for example, not take a promotion, because “you’ll have kids soon anyway,” but that’s exactly wrong, because it’ll lead you to make career decisions that are guaranteed to make you miserable by the time you actually have kids. Instead, go full throttle for as long as you can, take opportunities, give it a shot and by the time pregnancy rolls around – you’ll figure out that one too ☺ Lean In Review As I said in the intro, I think entirely regulating the playing field to “level” it 50:50 is not the solution to gender inequality. There will always be differences in men and women, and it’s a good thing there are. However, there are places where life is just plain unfair, and that will require big shifts to improve. I’m confident we’ll get there, but in the meantime, use Lean In to make the most of right now! Who would I recommend the Lean In summary to? The 16 year old girl president of the computer club, the 24 year old college grad, who’s about to enter the workforce and has to get herself some thick skin, because she knows she’ll enter a male-dominated industry, and anyone who complains about being disadvantaged because of their gender. Last Updated on January 27, 2023 This book has an average rating of 4.2 based on 5 votes. The Women at Work Collection is a free leadership curriculum designed to encapsulate everything we’ve learned about women’s leadership over the past decade. The curriculum features 18 videos and discussion guides on topics that are critical for rising women leaders and all employees who want to grow as leaders. Explore our leadership program tailored for women “Lean In” by Sheryl Sandberg is a non-fiction work that chronicles the struggles of women in the workplace – past and present – in facing the challenges and barriers that they encounter in the form of gender-bias. The author provides rich examples and anecdotes from her own career and experiences as well as those of female colleagues, staff members and friends and acquaintances. Sandberg also sites a number of research studies that back up the claims of gender-bias with the obvious conclusion that sexism is not the fantasy of women and that it’s alive and well in today’s workforce.Sheryl grew up in a stable home with loving parents who supported her and believed in her abilities. Yet her brother was more confident in his abilities than she was. She would sulk over a disappointment and blame herself, while her brother blamed circumstances for any setback and go off and play basketball. Even as a young girl, the difference between how she and her brother viewed themselves and the world was already setting in. Sheryl Sandberg is a successful business woman who rose to a leadership role at a young age at Google after having worked for the federal government in the Treasury Department. After six years at Google, she was approached by Facebook for an executive position. After multiple interviews with Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, she was offered the position of Chief Operating Officer. Her husband and brother-in-law urged her to negotiate. They would not take the first offer for such a high-level position. Zuckerberg would expect her to negotiate. But Sheryl reminded them that they were men and so was Mark. She was a woman and afraid to negotiate. What if he turned her down? She would have lost the opportunity of a lifetime. In the end, Sheryl reluctantly took her husband’s advice and turned down Facebook’s initial offer and made a counter-proposal. It was white-knuckle time at her house for a few days but Zuckerberg called and agreed to her terms. She was the new COO of Facebook a multi-billion dollar corporation that was new and still growing. One would think she would no longer have any doubts about her value or abilities, but that wasn’t the case. She was a woman in the hostile corporate world. Although Facebook itself was forward thinking and its policies reflected no gender-bias, rules and regulations do not erase the hard-baked sentiments of others. Sheryl still deals with gender-bias even from her lofty position.Sheryl Sandberg describes the bias that women in all levels of the corporate world face on an everyday basis. From their first interview, women in the workplace are treated differently than men, and as a result they behave differently. A woman feels qualified for a job if she has 100 percent of the requirements. A man is good to go if he has 60 percent of the requirements. During annual reviews, focus is on a woman’s likability and loyalty and on a man’s performance. Sheryl has often noticed at meetings that men interrupt and talk over women who are speaking. Sheryl, as COO, has had this same experience while speaking at company meetings. Although there are more women in entry-level positions, more men are elevated to management and executive positions. Women are more likely to have stagnant career or give up their ambitions and leave the work force. When a woman has a baby, it is a whole new set of challenges for women. Even though working men are the fathers of newborns, the events have no impact on their careers. The contrast between how women are men are treated in the workplace by colleagues, subordinates and managers exposes gender-bias in every element of their careers. Sheryl Sandberg ends her book with a plea for women, men, employers and families to all strive to eradicate gender-bias from the workplace. She urges women to aspire to leadership roles in the government and in all fields. Until that level of leadership is acquired by women, true change will not happen. When change finally happens, the world will be a better place for everyone. Book by Sheryl SandbergIn Lean In, Sheryl Sandberg examines the barriers women face in achieving leadership roles and offers compelling, research-based advice on what women can do to overcome these obstacles and achieve their full potential in both their professional and personal lives.Sign in to rateAverage Rating: 1 Despite the gains of the women's movement, progress for women in leadership has stalled in recent decades. Women have been 50% of college graduates since the 1980s, but their representation in top jobs has barely budged. Women make up only 21% of U.S. Senators, 41% of first-level managers, and 6% of Fortune 500 CEOs. At the current pace of change, it will take over a century to reach gender parity in C-suite jobs. We need to accelerate progress by encouraging more women to "lean in" to their ambitions.Section: 1, Chapter: 1From a young age, girls absorb the message that they should strive to be compliant, quiet, and helpful. Boys, in contrast, are expected to be strong, confident leaders. These gendered expectations carry into adulthood and the workplace. To break free, women must become more aware of the power of these ingrained expectations. Actively replace thoughts of "I'm not ready" with "I want to do that." Practice raising your hand in meetings and stating opinions confidently. Shift your thinking from "I'm lucky to have this job" to "I've earned this opportunity." Simply being aware is the first step to shedding limiting gender norms.Section: 1, Chapter: 1Many ambitious young women start limiting their careers, often subconsciously, years before having children. They turn down big projects, don't apply for promotions, and select careers with more flexibility - all to accommodate family demands they don't yet have. This is a mistake. Sandberg advises women to go full force in their careers in their 20s and early 30s. When you eventually have children, make that decision with your full earning and advancement potential. Pursue every opportunity until a major life change is imminent. Don't make sacrifices prematurely for a hypothetical future. Your options will be better if you've achieved more in the meantime.Section: 1, Chapter: 1The most important career decision a woman makes is who she chooses as a life partner. An equal, supportive partner at home makes all the difference in a woman's ability to follow her ambitions at work. Before committing to someone, look for indicators that they will actively support your career and share the load at home. Do they encourage you to take risks and reach for opportunities? Do they believe in equally dividing housework and childcare? The right life partner is a true equal and a critical ingredient to "leaning in."Section: 1, Chapter: 1Multiple studies show that women underestimate their own abilities, performance, and qualifications compared to men. In performance reviews, women consistently give themselves lower ratings than their managers do. Men are significantly more likely than women to rate themselves as ready for promotions. Men apply for jobs when they meet 60% of the qualifications, while women only apply if they meet 100%. This hesitation leads women to miss out on the experiences and opportunities that propel careers forward.Section: 1, Chapter: 2A talented Facebook employee was offered a big job managing a new business line. The role would involve a major leap in responsibility and travel. She confessed to Sandberg that she was unsure about taking it because she hoped to have a child in a few years. Sandberg convinced her to accept, explaining that being in an engaging, high-profile role would make her more, not less, likely to return to work after a maternity leave. If she had declined the promotion to a less demanding role, she would be more likely to quit entirely after starting a family. Turning down opportunities, even years in advance of starting a family, can become a self-fulfilling prophecy for eventually leaving the workforce.Section: 1, Chapter: 2Fear is the root of so many barriers for women. Fear of not being liked, of making the wrong choice, of drawing negative attention, of overreaching, of being judged. To combat this fear, practice identifying it and moving forward anyway:Section: 1, Chapter: 2Personal DevelopmentDecision MakingGiven the social penalties for successful, assertive women, many feel pressure to mute their accomplishments to be liked. But downplaying achievements at work doesn't serve anyone. Instead, women must master the "balancing act":Section: 1, Chapter: 3One subtle way women downplay achievements is through qualifying language:Strip qualifiers out of your speech. State your ideas without apologies or hedging. Accept compliments with a simple "thank you." Choose words that fully own your contributions and abilities.Section: 1, Chapter: 3When evaluating jobs, Sandberg recommends ignoring prestige and focusing on one factor above all: fast growth. Whether you're at a company or deciding between offers, look for the teams, projects, and businesses that are growing quickly. In a rapid growth environment, there are endless opportunities to take on responsibility and get promoted, often into newly created roles. Seek out the "rocket ships," even if the specific position is a step down. You'll rise faster than you ever thought possible.Section: 1, Chapter: 4Many people, especially women, strive to find the perfect job or await the perfect time to make a career move, have children, or make another big life decision. But there is no perfect job or time. Trade-offs are inevitable. Every choice involves sacrificing other options and possibilities. Sandberg herself turned down a dream job at LinkedIn because she was pregnant, only to get an even better opportunity at Facebook a few years later. Don't agonize over finding the perfect situation. Make the best choice you can in the moment and trust that the pieces will fall into place.Section: 1, Chapter: 4Many young women are advised to seek out mentors to advance their careers. But simply asking a virtual stranger "Will you be my mentor?" rarely works. The strongest mentoring relationships develop organically from real working relationships. Focus on doing excellent work and make yourself indispensable to senior leaders. While most people seek mentors at a much higher level, colleagues at your same level are often the best source of day-to-day support and advice. Especially early in your career, your peers may have more релевантная guidance than a senior leader far removed from your situation. A group of women at McKinsey formed a "Boom Boom" peer group to share struggles, give honest feedback, and champion each other's successes.Section: 1, Chapter: 5CareerPersonal DevelopmentThe best mentoring relationships benefit the mentor as well as the mentee. Research shows that mentors get promoted faster and earn more than those who don't mentor. By investing in a mentee's growth, mentors gain a sense of fulfillment and purpose. They also get exposed to fresh perspectives that can energize their own careers. When seeking mentors, look for ways to add reciprocal value for them. Offer your skills, connections, or insights to support their goals. Make the relationship a true two-way street.Section: 1, Chapter: 5Many workplaces unintentionally stifle honest communication, especially when there is an imbalance of power or status. Junior employees don't feel safe raising concerns or taking risks. Sandberg argues that leaders should actively create space for open, authentic conversations:These actions, especially when modeled by leaders, create a culture of psychological safety where people can be their true selves.Section: 1, Chapter: 6“But the upside of painful knowledge is so much greater than the downside of blissful ignorance.”Section: 1, Chapter: 6Too many women start quietly making career decisions based on a future family they don't yet have. They turn down opportunities, travel, and promotions - or choose more flexible paths - with an eye to kids they might want five or ten years down the line. Pursue your career as ambitiously as possible until those life-changing moments actually arrive. You'll have more options and resources at your disposal. Keep your foot on the professional gas pedal until the moment a big life decision is imminent. If you're offered a promotion while trying to conceive, take it. If you're considering a career change but also might want to get pregnant soon, make the change. Keep pursuing challenging, exciting opportunities until you have to make a concrete choice between paths. Don't opt out prematurely for a family you don't yet have.Section: 1, Chapter: 7Many new parents, especially mothers, worry that having a baby will derail their professional skills and advancement. But parenthood actually builds many abilities that serve people well at work:If you approach both roles with curiosity, you'll find many areas of growth to apply across domains. Becoming a working parent doesn't have to hinder your professional development. It can deepen and round it in unexpected ways.Section: 1, Chapter: 8Women will only achieve true equality in the workplace when men achieve equality in the home. Women still do a disproportionate share of child care and housework, even in households where both parents work full-time. This "double shift" of paid and domestic labor holds women back from fully committing to their careers. Making your partner a real partner means actively co-managing the household, not just "helping out" occasionally. Couples who split child care and chores equally have stronger marriages, better sex lives, and more successful careers. It's a win-win for everyone.Section: 1, Chapter: 8Many mothers feel intense pressure to follow society's unrealistic ideal of the perfect, selfless mom. But trying to meet this standard is exhausting and self-defeating. Let go of the guilt about not spending enough time with your kids or keeping an immaculate home. Kids don't need the "perfect mother" - they need a happy, fulfilled one. Letting your partner fully parent allows you to thrive in other areas of life without feeling inadequate. And seeing you as a multi-dimensional person is healthy for your children's development too.Section: 1, Chapter: 8The myth of "having it all" - a perfect career, family, body, marriage, and home - is not just unrealistic, it's destructive. No one can achieve perfection in every area of life simultaneously. Believing you should leads to inevitable feelings of frustration and failure. A more achievable goal is to do the things that matter most as well as you can. Reject the myth by embracing trade-offs:You can have a full, rich career and family life, but not if you try to do everything perfectlySection: 1, Chapter: 9FeminismPersonal DevelopmentFacebook has posters everywhere that say "Done is better than perfect." It's a reminder that perfectionism often impedes progress. Aiming for 100% every time leads to procrastination, missed deadlines, and diminishing returns on effort. Embrace the mantra that sometimes, done is better than perfect:Great is awesome. But sometimes good enough is just fine.Section: 1, Chapter: 9ProductivityPersonal DevelopmentTo combat the pressure to be always available, establish clear boundaries to protect your time:Boundaries only work if you commit to upholding them consistently. Doing so gives you more control over your time and energy to focus on what matters most.Section: 1, Chapter: 9Time ManagementPersonal DevelopmentTo make progress toward equality, we need to start speaking up about gender issues, even when it's uncomfortable. Point out when women are being marginalized or held to different standards. Ask managers what they're doing to advance women and hold them accountable. Share stories of bias from your own experience. Simply stating the facts can be a powerful catalyst. The more we discuss these dynamics openly, the more we can change them. Staying silent only preserves the status quo.Section: 1, Chapter: 10“We cannot change what we are not aware of, and once we are aware, we cannot help but change.”Section: 1, Chapter: 10Society frames the gender issue entirely wrong. The question is not whether women can have both a successful career and family. Many women already do. The real issue is that they're doing it against all odds, in a society and workplace culture still overwhelmingly built for men's success. The question we should be asking is, how can we change our organizations and culture so that everyone can thrive in both work and family life? Reframing the issue this way, as a social and structural challenge rather than a women's problem, is essential to making real progress.The goal of feminism is not for women to beat men or for anyone to "have it all." It's to create a society and work culture that allows all people to pursue the goals and lifestyle that matter to them without being hindered by gender. Equality is not a zero-sum game. When more women thrive professionally, it benefits their families and society as a whole. When more men get to be active parents and partners, it enriches their lives. True equality means everyone wins.Section: 1, Chapter: 11Children absorb gender roles from a very young age. If they only see Mom doing laundry and Dad mowing the lawn, or only male leaders at work and female assistants, they internalize that as normal. Be intentional about modeling egalitarian norms for the next generation:The small moments add up to shape what the next generation sees as possible and expected for both genders.Section: 1, Chapter: 11 Goodreads Support Local Bookstores! AmazonLearningEducationPsychologyPersonal Development One hundred years ago the suffragettes marched in the streets, fighting for women’s rights and equality. Since that time, a lot has changed. The glass ceiling has cracked in many industries. Yet, this world is still ruled by men.Of the 195 countries, only 17 are led by women. Only 4% of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women. And women still get paid less. What would the suffragettes say?“Lean In: Work, Women, and Will to Lead” by Sheryl Sandberg is a book about blatant inequality women still face in the modern world, providing advice on how this can be changed.Sandberg, a Chief Operating Officer at Facebook and an ex-Vice President of Global Online Sales and Operations at Google, shares stories from her own career. Exposing vulnerable moments, she hopes that her example will empower women to lean in and achieve their full potential. Here’s our chapter-by-chapter summary of “Lean in.” Chapter 1. The Leadership Ambition GapJust like men, women have the skills to be leaders. Look at the statistics. In the United States, girls earn 60% of master’s degrees and 57% of undergraduate ones. In Europe, 82% of women completed upper secondary education, compared to 77% of men.However, the number of women in top jobs haven’t increased. The reason is that career progress requires taking risks and the ability to stand up for oneself. And women are usually discouraged from demonstrating these features.This is why, if a job involves having power and lots of responsibility (which is typical of leadership positions), it will probably be taken by a man.Stereotypes about women in the workplace are strong. “He is very ambitious” is a great compliment. “She’s very ambitious” has negative shades of meaning. These stereotypes are introduced in childhood – from early years, girls are treated differently. When a little girl is trying to lead, she’s called bossy. Boys are rarely called bossy – because they are expected to be bosses.These stereotypes put serious social pressure on women. While it’s assumed men can have both a successful professional life and a happy private life, it’s not the same for women. Women are told they have to choose.But women can participate in multiple roles. They can be both competent professionals and good mothers. Sandberg says that a crucial step in this direction is to get rid of fear. Fear is at the root of so many of the barriers that women face. Fear of not being liked. Fear of making the wrong choice. Fear of drawing negative attention. And the holy trinity of fear: the fear of being a bad mother/wife/daughter. Chapter 2. Sit At the TableSandberg opens this chapter by telling us a personal story. Once she hosted a meeting for the Treasury Secretary at Facebook, inviting 15 executives for breakfast. The men took their food and sat at the conference table. The women also took their food - after the men - and sat in chairs at the side of the room. Even after Sandberg welcomed them at the table, they stayed in their seats.This incident helped her realize an unpleasant truth – that besides dealing with social obstacles, women fight with obstacles coming from within.Women seriously suffer from the impostor syndrome, Sandberg explains. This phenomenon means that people who are actually capable of doing things doubt themselves, feeling undeserving and guilty. This is why women often attribute their success to external factors. They say they just got lucky or someone helped them, or that they worked hard. In any case, they diminish their capabilities.But women need to be more confident. To be successful, one has to take opportunities. And opportunities are rarely offered – they have to be seized. There is no time for feeling like a fraud.Women have to learn to keep their hands up, because when they lower them, even managers with the best intentions might not notice. Chapter 3. Success and LikeabilityThe perceptions about men and women in the workplace are greatly illustrated by the results of an experiment run by Frank Flynn, a Columbia Business School Professor, and Cameron Anderson, a New York University professor.Flynn and Anderson assigned some of their students to read a real story of a successful venture capitalist Heidi Roizen. The second half of the students read the same story, but the name “Heidi” was changed to “Howard”.The students had to share their impressions. Even though they recognized the competency of both Heidi and Howard, they liked Howard more. Unlike him, Heidi was described as selfish and a person whom they wouldn’t hire or want to work with.The conclusion was clear: successful men are liked, and successful women are not.The problem here is, again, stereotypes. Women are expected to be caregivers and sensitive by nature. Heidi violated that stereotype and acted like a man. As a result, people disliked her.This leads to more problems. Feeling that their success might be frowned upon, women are afraid to ask for promotions. Similarly, they don’t negotiate for themselves – as Sandberg ironically points out, for women negotiating is like “trying to cross a minefield backward in high heels.”To make things easier while advocating for yourself, Sandberg recommends two things:Use “we” instead of “I”. For example, say “we had a great year” instead of “I had a great year.” Your request will be better received.Justify your request. Mention that you’ve been encouraged by a senior (“My manager suggested I talk with you about my compensation”), or that the industry standards allow you to ask for more. Chapter 4. It’s a Jungle Gym, Not a LadderCareers are typically compared to ladders. But this metaphor is limiting: it means people can move only up or down. And there is only one way to get to the top.This is why Sandberg prefers another metaphor – the one of a jungle gym. A jungle gym offers many ways to get to the top. You don’t have to plan your career from the start. A jungle gym lets you try different ways and explore.Sandberg explains how this worked in her case. After graduation, she had a vague idea of what she wanted to do. She knew she wanted to change the world. Her first job was at the World Bank, whose mission was to reduce global poverty. Then she took a risk and started to work at Google. And then she took a risk again, and got a job as a COO at Facebook – even though other companies offered to hire her as a CEO. Why? Because she believed in fast growth and was open to opportunities.Women are often risk-averse. And being risk-averse leads to stagnation. Women tend to play it safe and avoid challenges, and this way, they limit themselves. When female managers move up, they usually stay in the same company. And when they apply for open jobs, they do it only when they think they meet 100% of the criteria – unlike men, who apply when they meet 60% of it.Carol Frohlinger and Deborah Kolb describe such a phenomenon as the “Tiara Syndrome” – a belief that if you work hard, someone will notice and will put a tiara on your head. But life isn’t like that. You will win only if you challenge yourself, ask for promotions, and take risks.Do not wait for power to be offered. Like that tiara, it might never materialize. And anyway, who wears a tiara in a jungle gym? Chapter 5. Are You My Mentor?Mentorship is important for career progression. Both men and women with mentors have more chances to get a pay raise or a stretch assignment. But to tell people, especially women, “get a mentor and you’ll excel” is a mistake.This is the wrong message. It teaches women that they depend on someone else. Young girls believe that if they just wait for a prince on the white horse, they will live happily ever after. Adult women believe that once they find a good mentor, they will build a great career.First of all, it’s hard to get a mentor. The mere phrase “Be my mentor” makes a person feel uncomfortable. It puts a lot of pressure. This is why a typical answer is “no”.But Sandberg says that there is another way around it – excel, and then a mentor will find you. According to the studies, people invest in those whose talent and potential are obvious.However, lower-level employees also get mentorship. It’s simple – just pick a moment after a meeting to say thank you and ask for advice. This way, a person will get involved in your problem.A good way to fix the mentorship problem is to introduce formal programs or, as an alternative, ask peers to help: There is a saying that “all advice is autobiographical.” Friends… may actually provide more current and useful counsel… Peers are also in the trenches and may understand problems that superiors do not. Chapter 6. Seek and Speak Your TruthHonesty is very important in the workplace. It’s the basis for effectiveness. Unfortunately, people often avoid being honest to protect themselves. Since many companies have a hierarchical structure, people are scared that an honest remark will negatively affect the perception of someone at a higher level. As a result, many issues stay unresolved.For women, it’s even more difficult. Because they are already in a lower position, they risk being called a bad team player or just negative - more often than men. Sandberg mentions the following things that can make honest communication easier, for both women and men:Find the sweet spot where your opinion is just delicately, and not brutally, honest.Remember that there isn’t absolute truth. Your opinion may seem the only right one, but let other people express theirs.Ask directly. Do not guess.Give and get feedback. But remember that feedback, like the truth, is not absolute – it’s a subjective opinion based on personal observations. Be ready that it may hurt. Yet, it’s still better than blissful ignorance.Sandberg also underlines that we should never undermine the impact of personal lives on professional ones. She believes that sharing emotions and talking about personal situations is very useful – this can explain many work-related decisions.Fortunately, the tendencies in leadership encourage honesty and imperfection. And this shift is good for women, who often get accused of excessive emotionality.Recommended reading: The Power of Psychological Safety in Building a Supportive and Safe Workplace. Chapter 7. Don’t Leave Before You LeaveLeaving the workplace, women rarely make one big decision. When a woman plans to start a family or have a child, she already makes sacrifices and accommodations that, in their opinion, will be required later. This way, she holds herself back. And leaves before actually leaving.How does this happen? She refuses to take a management role. She refuses to look for business partners. In other words, she rejects opportunities.But women forget that by making plans for the future, they still have time to fulfill goals in the present. Even if they get pregnant immediately, which is not always the case, they still have nine months. So instead of wasting this time, they can use it wisely, to not come back to a place that is drastically different.What I am arguing is that the time to scale back is when a break is needed or when a child arrives – not before, and certainly not years in advance. The months and years leading up to having children are not the time to lean back, but the critical time to lean in.Women should also look differently at child care. Yes, it’s very expensive. If a woman who’s had a baby comes back to work, her salary may hardly cover the childcare expenses. But Sandberg says that it will pay off, in the long run.If women continue working, their income may become much higher. So it makes sense to measure the cost of childcare against their future, not current, income. Chapter 8. Make Your Partner a Real PartnerAnalysis conducted in the United States showed that in couples where a husband and wife are fully employed, a woman still does 40% more childcare and 30% more housework. But this is a choice. And it can be rearranged.Equal partners must be equal in everything. Women must be more empowered at work. But men must be more empowered at home - and being too prescriptive around exactly how homecare and childcare activities need to be completed can make some feel discouraged. Another unhelpful habit is assigning tasks to husbands – because in this case, a man is doing a favor, and not sharing responsibilities. The woman remains the "project manager" of the home, taking on the mental load of prioritizing and delegating chores.Despite the popular opinion that successful women are single and lonely, facts show something different. The majority of successful female business leaders have partners. And, vice versa, as the results of a 2007 study, many professionally educated women left the workplace because their husbands didn’t actively participate in childcare and didn’t help with domestic tasks.When it comes time to settle down, find someone who wants an equal partner. Someone who thinks women should be smart, opinionated, and ambitious. Someone who values fairness and expects or, even better, wants to do his share in the home. Chapter 9. The Myth of Doing It AllTo "have it all” sounds aspirational – but it’s impossible. Aiming for perfection in everything leads to paralysis and frustration. 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She cannot plan things at home that easily, though.Sandberg says that the only way out here is to accept chaos, quoting Nora Ephron’s Wellesley commencement speech:It will be a little messy but embrace the mess. It will be complicated, but rejoice in the complications… and don’t be frightened: you can always change your mind. I know: I’ve had four careers and three husbands. Chapter 10. Let’s Start Talking About ItAll of us are biased. We believe that we are objective, but we are not. There is such a thing as a “bias blind spot” – overconfidence in our own objectivity that prevents us from correcting the bias, this way making things worse. For this reason, we are all susceptible to gender bias, admit it or not. Of course, this does influence our interactions at work – and the role of women in the workplace in particular.That’s why gender-blind evaluations are better for women – but, unfortunately, most jobs require a face-to-face interview.Pointing out gender bias is an uncomfortable experience. If you tell someone they’re biased, most probably, people won’t like your comment. They might insist on their opinion, or just get defensive.So is there anything we can do about gender bias? Yes, there is. Sandberg provides an example of Harvard Business School. In 2010, Nitin Nohria was appointed dean, and decided to close the gap between male, female, and international students.Associate Dean Moon and Professor Frances Ferei spent the first year studying the school’s culture. This meant they visited each classroom and discussed the challenges that women and international students had to deal with.Then they introduced small adjustments like paying attention to the language used. 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Realizing they live in the men’s world, “queen bees” do not want to associate themselves with women.This leads to the following problem. A negative perception of a female coworker is taken objectively, and not as a gender bias – because it’s considered that if a woman criticizes another woman, she cannot be biased. But, in fact, she can.On the other hand, women are expected to be warmer and more supportive at the workplace, and that’s also an issue. Reaching out to a woman, another woman hopes to form a connection. And when this doesn’t happen, she gets frustrated. It’s a double standard situation, since this is not expected from a man.In any case, Sandberg says that women should help each other. Stay-at-home mothers should not judge women who work out of the house and vice versa. We need to learn to respect any choice – and be supportive.As former secretary of state, Madeleine Albright once said, “There is a special place in hell for women who don’t help other women.” Not all women want to be leaders. But more female leaders will bring about fairer treatment to all women. This will mean less sexism and discrimination. This will also mean more flexibility and access to child care and parental leave. And it will give a chance to build an equal world – a better world, improved by talents that have been hidden so far. If you want to learn more about building a healthy, equitable team that brings out the best in everyone, you may enjoy: How to Become a Healthy Team (All You Need to Know in 30 Minutes) “Honest and brave ... The new manifesto for women in the workplace.” —Oprah Winfrey “Lean In is an inauguration more than a last word, and an occasion for celebration ... Many, many women, young and old, elite and otherwise, will find it prescriptive, refreshing, and perhaps even revolutionary.” —Anna Holmes, The New Yorker “A landmark manifesto ... Fifty years after The Feminine Mystique ... Sandberg addresses 21st-century issues that never entered Betty Friedan’s wildest dreams ... Lean In will be an influential book. It will open the eyes of women who grew up thinking that feminism was ancient history, who recoil at the word but walk heedlessly through the doors it opened. And it will encourage those women to persevere in their professional lives.” —Janet Maslin, The New York Times Lean In poses a set of ambitious challenges to women: to create the lives we want, to be leaders in our work, to be partners in our homes, and to be champions of other women. Sheryl provides pragmatic advice on how women in the twenty-first century can meet these challenges. I hope women—and men—of my generation will read this book to help us build the lives we want to lead and the world we want to live in.” —Chelsea Clinton “I approached it wearing two hats—one as CEO [and] the other as the parent of a nine-year-old daughter. In both capacities, I feel that Lean In is a must read.” —Mohamed El-Erian, CEO of PIMCO, in Fortune “Inspirational ... Sandberg offers concrete suggestions on how to make our work and home life more satisfying and successful.” —Kare Anderson, Forbes “What Sandberg offers is a view that shows 20-somethings that choices and tradeoffs surely exist, but that the ‘old normal’ of blunting ambition so that you can fit in one category or another does not have to be the way it is. And that each of us has a say in what comes next. And that includes men.” —Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, The Atlantic “Sheryl Sandberg has done a tremendous service with this work. It offers a vital and sharp message, for women and men. We need great leaders in key seats spread throughout all sectors of society, and we simply cannot afford to lose 50 percent of the smartest, most capable people from competing for those seats. Provocative, practical, and inspired!” —Jim Collins, author of Good to Great “Sandberg recounts her own experiences and dilemmas with great honesty, making it easy for women across cultures and geographies to identify with her. She spells out much that is well known about the problems working women face, but rarely articulated ... In every word she writes, Sandberg’s authenticity shines through.” —Shweta Punj, Business Today“Lively, entertaining, urgent, and yes, even courageous ... Lean In is both a radical read and incredibly accessible ... While it’s obvious that women have much to gain from reading Sandberg’s book, so do men—perhaps even more so ... Lean In is the beginning of an important and long-overdue conversation in the United States—but it will only be a national conversation, and one that endures, if men do their part and lean in, too.” —Michael Cohen, The Guardian “Grade: A ... a rallying cry to working women ... Lean In is the most cogent piece of writing I’ve encountered that speaks to the internal and institutional forces that can trip up an ambitious woman, whether she has a baby on board or not ... The wisdom she shares here is a gift that all women (and all partners who support them, in the workplace or at home) should give themselves.” —Meeta Agrawal, Entertainment Weekly “If you loved Sheryl Sandberg’s incredible TEDTalk on why we have too few women leaders, or simply believe as I do that we need equality in the boardroom, then this book is for you. As Facebook’s COO, Sheryl Sandberg has firsthand experience of why having more women in leadership roles is good for business as well as society. Lean In is essential reading for anyone interested in righting the injustice of this inequality.” —Sir Richard Branson, chairman, the Virgin Group “Sandberg’s message matters deeply: it has a shot at bringing about a cultural change that would improve the lives of all women.” —Judith Warner, TIME “A muscular manifesto on the gender inequities of the professional world ... Sandberg is making a disruptive, crucial observation that puts her very much in

and expects or, even better, wants to do his share in the home. Chapter 9. The Myth of Doing It AllTo "have it all" sounds aspirational – but it's impossible. Aiming for perfection in everything leads to paralysis and frustration. This often results in leaving one of the things you try to excel at. "Done is better than perfect" is a wiser approach.Sandberg also notices that we should distinguish between what's really necessary and what's not, to save our time. However, people often overwork. They do it out of fear that if they use the opportunity of flexibility, they will be seen as less committed. Unfortunately, they are not wrong – peers really see them as less committed.Technology doesn't make it any easier. The ability to work online often means that a workday is extended. Besides, people get work emails late at night, and that blurs the line between work and rest.The new normal means there aren't enough hours in a day. 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Not all women want to be leaders. But more female leaders will bring about fairer treatment to all women. This will mean less sexism and discrimination. This will also mean more flexibility and access to child care and parental leave. And it will give a chance to build an equal world – a better world, improved by talents that have been hidden so far. If you want to learn more about building a healthy, equitable team that brings out the best in everyone, you may enjoy: How to Become a Healthy Team (All You Need to Know in 30 Minutes) Lean In is a book written by Sheryl Sandberg, the chief operating officer of Facebook, and was published in 2013. The book aims to encourage women to pursue their goals and ambitions, and to "lean in" to their careers rather than pulling back or settling for lower expectations. The book also addresses the challenges that women face in the workplace and offers practical advice on how to overcome them. Chapter Summaries: Chapter 1: Lean In In the first chapter, Sandberg introduces the concept of "leaning in," which she defines as pursuing your goals and ambitions with passion and purpose. She argues that women often hold themselves back because of fear, lack of confidence, and societal expectations. Sandberg encourages women to take risks and pursue their goals with vigor. Chapter 2: The Confidence Gap In this chapter, Sandberg discusses the confidence gap between men and women. She argues that women are often less confident than men, which can hold them back in their careers. Sandberg offers practical advice on how women can build their confidence and overcome self-doubt. Chapter 3: The Importance of Mentorship Sandberg argues that mentorship is essential for women's career advancement. She explains how mentors can provide guidance, support, and advocacy for women in the workplace. Sandberg also discusses the importance of sponsorship, which she defines as someone who actively advocates for you. Chapter 4: The Loudness Gap In this chapter, Sandberg discusses the "loudness gap," which refers to the tendency for men to speak more frequently and assertively than women. She argues that this gap can hold women back in the workplace, as they are often not heard or taken as seriously as their male counterparts. Sandberg offers advice on how women can overcome this gap and be heard. Chapter 5: The Myth of Work-Life Balance In this chapter, Sandberg challenges the idea of work-life balance, arguing that it is an impossible goal for most people. Instead, she suggests that we should strive for work-life integration, where we blend our personal and professional lives to create a fulfilling life. Chapter 6: The Paternity Gap In this chapter, Sandberg discusses the paternity gap, which refers to the fact that fathers are often not given the same opportunities to take time off work to care for their children as mothers. She argues that this gap holds women back in the workplace, as they are often the default caregivers for their children. Sandberg offers suggestions on how companies can support fathers and encourage them to take an active role in parenting. See also Book Summary: What I Learned Losing a Million Dollars by Jim PaulChapter 7: The Ambition Gap In this chapter, Sandberg discusses the ambition gap, which refers to the fact that women are often less ambitious than men. She argues that this gap holds women back in the workplace, as they are often not as motivated to pursue their goals and ambitions. Sandberg offers advice on how women can become more ambitious and pursue their goals with passion and purpose. Conclusion: Overall, Lean In is a powerful and thought-provoking book that challenges women to pursue their goals and ambitions with passion and purpose. Sandberg offers practical advice on how women can overcome the challenges they face in the workplace, from the confidence gap to the ambition gap. Whether you are a woman looking to advance in your career or simply interested in the challenges facing women today, Lean In is a must-read book. Interested in reading the whole book? Buy the book "Lean In" on Amazon #1 INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER "A landmark manifesto" (The New York Times) that's a revelatory, inspiring call to action and a blueprint for individual growth that will empower women around the world to achieve their full potential. In her famed TED talk, Sheryl Sandberg described how women unintentionally hold themselves back in their careers. Her talk, which has been viewed more than eleven million times, encouraged women to "sit at the table," seek challenges, take risks, and pursue their goals with gusto. Lean In continues that conversation, combining personal anecdotes, hard data, and compelling research to change the conversation from what women can't do to what they can. Sandberg, COO of Meta (previously called Facebook) from 2008-2022, provides practical advice on negotiation techniques, mentorship, and building a satisfying career. She describes specific steps women can take to combine professional achievement with personal fulfillment, and demonstrates how men can benefit by supporting women both in the workplace and at home. One hundred years ago the suffragettes marched in the streets, fighting for women's rights and equality. Since that time, a lot has changed. The glass ceiling has cracked in many industries. Yet, this world is still ruled by men.Of the 195 countries, only 17 are led by women. Only 4% of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women. And women still get paid less. What would the suffragettes say?"Lean In: Work, Women, and Will to Lead" by Sheryl Sandberg is a book about blatant inequality women still face in the modern world, providing advice on how this can be changed.Sandberg, a Chief Operating Officer at Facebook and an ex-Vice President of Global Online Sales and Operations at Google, shares stories from her own career. Exposing vulnerable moments, she hopes that her example will empower women to lean in and achieve their full potential. Here's our chapter-by-chapter summary of "Lean in." Chapter 1. The Leadership Ambition GapJust like men, women have the skills to be leaders. Look at the statistics. In the United States, girls earn 60% of master's degrees and 57% of undergraduate ones. In Europe, 82% of women completed upper secondary education, compared to 77% of men.However, the number of women in top jobs haven't increased. The reason is that career progress requires taking risks and the ability to stand up for oneself. And women are usually discouraged from demonstrating these features.This is why, if a job involves having power and lots of responsibility (which is typical of leadership positions), it will probably be taken by a man.Stereotypes about women in the workplace are strong. "He is very ambitious" is a great compliment. "She's very ambitious" has negative shades of meaning. These stereotypes are introduced in childhood – from early years, girls are treated differently. When a little girl is trying to lead, she's called bossy. Boys are rarely called bossy – because they are expected to be bosses.These stereotypes put serious social pressure on women. While it's assumed men can have both a successful professional life and a happy private life, it's not the same for women. Women are told they have to choose.But women can participate in multiple roles. They can be both competent professionals and good mothers. Sandberg says that a crucial step in this direction is to get rid of fear. Fear is at the root of so many of the barriers that women face. Fear of not being liked. Fear of making the wrong choice. Fear of drawing negative attention. And the holy trinity of fear: the fear of being a bad mother/wife/daughter. Chapter 2. Sit At the TableSandberg opens this chapter by telling us a personal story. Once she hosted a meeting for the Treasury Secretary at Facebook, inviting 15 executives for breakfast. The men took their food and sat at the conference table. The women also took their food - after the men - and sat in chairs at the side of the room. Even after Sandberg welcomed them at the table, they stayed in their seats.This incident helped her realize an unpleasant truth – that besides dealing with social obstacles, women fight with obstacles coming from within.Women seriously suffer from the impostor syndrome, Sandberg explains. This phenomenon means that people who are actually capable of doing things doubt themselves, feeling undeserving and guilty. This is why women often attribute their success to external factors. They say they just got lucky or someone helped them, or that they worked hard. In any case, they diminish their capabilities.But women need to be more confident. To be successful, one has to take opportunities. And opportunities are rarely offered – they have to be seized. There is no time for feeling like a fraud.Women have to learn to keep their hands up, because when they lower them, even managers with the best intentions might not notice. Chapter 3. Success and LikeabilityThe perceptions about men and women in the workplace are greatly illustrated by the results of an experiment run by Frank Flynn, a Columbia Business School Professor, and Cameron Anderson, a New York University professor.Flynn and Anderson assigned some of their students to read a real story of a successful venture capitalist Heidi Roizen. The second half of the students read the same story, but the name "Heidi" was changed to "Howard".The students had to share their impressions. Even though they recognized the competency of both Heidi and Howard, they liked Howard more. Unlike him, Heidi was described as selfish and a person whom they wouldn't hire or want to work with.The conclusion was clear: successful men are liked, and successful women are not.The problem here is, again, stereotypes. Women are expected to be caregivers and sensitive by nature. Heidi violated that stereotype and acted like a man. As a result, people disliked her.This leads to more problems. Feeling that their success might be frowned upon, women are afraid to ask for promotions. Similarly, they don't negotiate for themselves – as Sandberg ironically points out, for women negotiating is like "trying to cross a minefield backward in high heels."To make things easier while advocating for yourself, Sandberg recommends two things:Use "we" instead of "I". For example, say "we had a great year" instead of "I had a great year." Your request will be better received.Justify your request. Mention that you've been encouraged by a senior ("My manager suggested I talk with you about my compensation"), or that the industry standards allow you to ask for more. Chapter 4. It's a Jungle Gym, Not a LadderCareers are typically compared to ladders. But this metaphor is limiting: it means people can move only up or down. And there is only one way to get to the top.This is why Sandberg prefers another metaphor – the one of a jungle gym. A jungle gym offers many ways to get to the top. You don't have to plan your career from the start. A jungle gym lets you try different ways and explore.Sandberg explains how this worked in her case. After graduation, she had a vague idea of what she wanted to do. She knew she wanted to change the world. Her first job was at the World Bank, whose mission was to reduce global poverty. Then she took a risk and started to work at Google. And then she took a risk again, and got a job as a COO at Facebook – even though other companies offered to hire her as a CEO. Why? Because she believed in fast growth and was open to opportunities.Women are often risk-averse. And being risk-averse leads to stagnation. Women tend to play it safe and avoid challenges, and this way, they limit themselves. When female managers move up, they usually stay in the same company. And when they apply for open jobs, they do it only when they think they meet 100% of the criteria – unlike men, who apply when they meet 60% of it.Carol Frohlinger and Deborah Kolb describe such a phenomenon as the "Tiara Syndrome" – a belief that if you work hard, someone will notice and will put a tiara on your head. But life isn't like that. You will win only if you challenge yourself, ask for promotions, and take risks.Do not wait for power to be offered. Like that tiara, it might never materialize. And anyway, who wears a tiara in a jungle gym? Chapter 5. Are You My Mentor?Mentorship is important for career progression. Both men and women with mentors have more chances to get a pay raise or a stretch assignment. But to tell people, especially women, "get a mentor and you'll excel" is a mistake.This is the wrong message. It teaches women that they depend on someone else. Young girls believe that if they just wait for a prince on the white horse, they will live happily ever after. Adult women believe that once they find a good mentor, they will build a great career.First of all, it's hard to get a mentor. The mere phrase "Be my mentor" makes a person feel uncomfortable. It puts a lot of pressure. This is why a typical answer is "no".But Sandberg says that there is another way around it – excel, and then a mentor will find you. According to the studies, people invest in those whose talent and potential are obvious.However, lower-level employees also get mentorship. It's simple – just pick a moment after a meeting to say thank you and ask for advice. This way, a person will get involved in your problem.A good way to fix the mentorship problem is to introduce formal programs or, as an alternative, ask peers to help: There is a saying that "all advice is autobiographical." Friends… may actually provide more current and useful counsel… Peers are also in the trenches and may understand problems that superiors do not. Chapter 6. Seek and Speak Your TruthHonesty is very important in the workplace. It's the basis for effectiveness. Unfortunately, people often avoid being honest to protect themselves. Since many companies have a hierarchical structure, people are scared that an honest remark will negatively affect the perception of someone at a higher level. As a result, many issues stay unresolved.For women, it's even more difficult. Because they are already in a lower position, they risk being called a bad team player or just negative - more often than men. Sandberg mentions the following things that can make honest communication easier, for both women and men:Find the sweet spot where your opinion is just delicately, and not brutally, honest.Remember that there isn't absolute truth. Your opinion may seem the only right one, but let other people express theirs.Ask directly. Do not guess.Give and get feedback. But remember that feedback, like the truth, is not absolute – it's a subjective opinion based on personal observations. Be ready that it may hurt. Yet, it's still better than blissful ignorance.Sandberg also underlines that we should never undermine the impact of personal lives on professional ones. She believes that sharing emotions and talking about personal situations is very useful – this can explain many work-related decisions.Fortunately, the tendencies in leadership encourage honesty and imperfection. And this shift is good for women, who often get accused of excessive emotionality.Recommended reading: The Power of Psychological Safety in Building a Supportive and Safe Workplace. Chapter 7. Don't Leave Before You LeaveLeaving the workplace, women rarely make one big decision. When a woman plans to start a family or have a child, she already makes sacrifices and accommodations that, in their opinion, will be required later. This way, she holds herself back. And leaves before actually leaving.How does this happen? She refuses to take a management role. She refuses to look for business partners. In other words, she rejects opportunities.But women forget that by making plans for the future, they still have time to fulfill goals in the present. Even if they get pregnant immediately, which is not always the case, they still have nine months. So instead of wasting this time, they can use it wisely, to not come back to a place that is drastically different.What I am arguing is that the time to scale back is when a break is needed or when a child arrives – not before, and certainly not years in advance. The months and years leading up to having children are not the time to lean back, but the critical time to lean in.Women should also look differently at child care. Yes, it's very expensive. If a woman who's had a baby comes back to work, her salary may hardly cover the childcare expenses. 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It will be complicated, but rejoice in the complications… and don't be frightened: you can always change your mind. I know: I've had four careers and three husbands. Chapter 10. Let's Start Talking About ItAll of us are biased. We believe that we are objective, but we are not. There is such a thing as a "bias blind spot" – overconfidence in our own objectivity that prevents us from correcting the bias, this way making things worse. For this reason, we are all susceptible to gender bias, admit it or not. Of course, this does influence our interactions at work – and the role of women in the workplace in particular.That's why gender-blind evaluations are better for women – but, unfortunately, most jobs require a face-to-face interview.Pointing out gender bias is an uncomfortable experience. If you tell someone they're biased, most probably, people won't like your comment. They might insist on their opinion, or just get defensive.So is there anything we can do about gender bias? Yes, there is. Sandberg provides an example of Harvard Business School. In 2010, Nitin Nohria was appointed dean, and decided to close the gap between male, female, and international students.Associate Dean Moon and Professor Frances Ferei spent the first year studying the school's culture. This meant they visited each classroom and discussed the challenges that women and international students had to deal with.Then they introduced small adjustments like paying attention to the language used. Also, they held students accountable for their behavior. The next year, they encouraged collaboration between students who usually don't work together.Consequently, a performance gap disappeared. Male, female, and international students received honors proportionally, and overall student satisfaction went up. As we can see, it's possible to fight bias – but you'll have to start talking about it. Chapter 11. Working Together Toward EqualityIt sounds absurd but women in power often become obstacles for other women who try to get power. This is an unpleasant truth. Women get ignored, sabotaged, and undermined by other women.There is even a term for this – "queen bee" – which describes women in a leadership position who use their power to keep other "worker bees" down. One reason for that is self-preservation. But the second reason is caused by discrimination. Realizing they live in the men's world, "queen bees" do not want to associate themselves with women.This leads to the following problem. A negative perception of a female coworker is taken objectively, and not as a gender bias – because it's considered that if a woman criticizes another woman, she cannot be biased. But, in fact, she can.On the other hand, women are expected to be warmer and more supportive at the workplace, and that's also an issue. Reaching out to a woman, another woman hopes to form a connection. And when this doesn't happen, she gets frustrated. It's a double standard situation, since this is not expected from a man.In any case, Sandberg says that women should help each other. Stay-at-home mothers should not judge women who work out of the house and vice versa. We need to learn to respect any choice – and be supportive.As former secretary of state, Madeleine Albright once said, "There is a special place in hell for women who don't help other women." Not all women want to be leaders. But more female leaders will bring about fairer treatment to all women. This will mean less sexism and discrimination. This will also mean more flexibility and access to child care and parental leave. And it will give a chance to build an equal world – a better world, improved by talents that have been hidden so far. If you want to learn more about building a healthy, equitable team that brings out the best in everyone, you may enjoy: How to Become a Healthy Team (All You Need to Know in 30 Minutes) 2013 book by Sheryl Sandberg Lean In AuthorSheryl SandbergPublished2013PublisherAlfred A. KnopfPages247 pp.ISBN978-0-385-34994-9OCLC813526963LC ClassHD6054.3 .S265 2013 Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead is a 2013 book encouraging women to assert themselves at work and at home,[1] co-written by business executive Sheryl Sandberg and media writer Nell Scovell.[2] The synopsis of the eleven chapters of the book is: The Leadership Ambition Gap: What Would You Do If You Weren't Afraid? – Anecdotes are given in which Judith Rodin questions why highly talented women choose to leave careers and become homemakers and Gayle Tzemach Lemmon gives her opinion that a double standard makes ambition be perceived as a negative quality in a woman when it would be positive in a man. Sit at the Table – Anecdotes are given about Peggy McIntosh stating that women are pressured not to accept compliments about their accomplishments, Padmasree Warrior stating that people should consider taking opportunities even if they do not feel qualified to execute them, and Ginni Rometty discussing how she took risks even staking personal failure. Also discussed is the theory that females more frequently than males display impostor syndrome concerns, and the concept of "fake it till you make it". Success and Likeability – A social experiment is summarized in which two résumés stating business success are presented to various people. The resumes are identical except that one names a female job candidate and the other a male candidate. In most cases, people found the success of the male candidate to be appealing and the success of the female candidate to be worrisome. Anecdotes are given in which Mary Sue Coleman states that in negotiation women in business are often "relentlessly pleasant" and Arianna Huffington acknowledged that she had to accept a lot of criticism. It's a Jungle Gym, Not a Ladder – A discussion reconsiders the concept of the "corporate ladder" suggesting that the climb to success is more like a jungle gym with multiple paths to the top. Anecdotes are given about Eric Schmidt's advice to take jobs in growing fields with advancement opportunities, even if they are less prestigious than more established positions, and how Lawrence Summers seemed to be critical with the author, then gave her more respect when she asserted herself. Are You My Mentor? – The advice is given that working professionals need a mentor but that the relationship between teacher and student cannot be forced. An anecdote is given about Clara Shih regularly asking questions in business that showed respect for her mentors' time. Seek and Speak Your Truth – As executive staff at Facebook, the author says that she along with others tried to make Facebook a non-hierarchical organization where everyone is free to speak their thoughts and criticism. Anecdotes are given in which Robert Rubin seeks advice from people who have fresh perspectives rather than deep experience in an existing culture and how Howard Schultz was open about sharing emotions. Don't Leave before you Leave – The author states that she has seen women forgo career advancement for family, but that she feels that some women do this too far in advance of developing family life. Anecdotes are given about Peggy Orenstein finding that even young girls imagine giving up career options to favor family life. The author then states that as a hiring and promoting manager, she often asks women of a certain age whether they plan to have children. She further states that she does not transgress discrimination laws against women who will need time off from work to have children, but rather wants the employees to be comfortable taking positions even when they are about to have a child. Make your Partner a real Partner – The author explores the concept of a "designated parent", which is supposed to be the person who does most of the childcare and is usually the woman. She reviews data that state that of the 28 women who direct Fortune 500 companies, only one had never married. Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique is cited as a source of information on the women's movement. Sandberg discusses her own marriage, which she and Dave Goldberg have set up in the Shared Earning/Shared Parenting style. The Myth of Doing it All – An anecdote is given in which Tina Fey says that the rudest question which people regularly ask women is "How do you do it all?", because the assumption is that a woman who is achieving in business must not have time to spend with family, and this same question is not asked to men in business. An anecdote about Laurie Glimcher describes how she recognizes that she cannot do all work and is frank about her limits. Let's Start Talking about it – The author recounts a bitter story of when, as a congressional page, she was patted condescendingly on the head by Tip O'Neill, who asked if she was a pom-pom girl, meaning a cheerleader for male work. Kenneth Chenault is given as an example of a CEO who attempts to defend women from sexism in the workplace. Working Together Toward Equality – The author recalls the media attention that Marissa Mayer received for accepting a job as CEO of Yahoo while in her third trimester of pregnancy, and said that women get extra scrutiny in the workplace. She states that stay-at-home mothers frequently look down upon women with advanced careers, and that it is necessary that there not be tension between these groups. Lean In has been reviewed by various commentators.[3][1][4][5][6][7] In a July 2013 article for The Baffler, Susan Faludi argues that Sandberg's message of women's workplace empowerment is actually a corporate-backed campaign; Sandberg encourages women to market themselves as "consumer object[s]" for professional advancement while discouraging solidarity and downplaying effects of systemic gender bias in the workplace.[8] Faludi further questions the selection criteria used by LeanIn.org for its corporate "Platform Partners", many of whom are burdened by "recent or pending EEOC grievances and state and federal court actions involving sex discrimination, sexual harassment, pregnancy discrimination, unfair promotion policies, wrongful terminations, and gender-based retaliations against female employees."[8] Zoe Williams in The Guardian referred to Lean In as "an infantilising, reactionary guide for ambitious women."[9] She emphasizes Sandberg's contradictory approach in both criticizing and upholding misogynistic workplace practices. During her Becoming book tour in 2018, Michelle Obama mentioned Lean In: [10][11][12][13] "I tell women that whole 'so you can have it all.' Nope, not at the same time. That's a lie. And it's not always enough to lean in, because that shit doesn't work all the time." Author bell hooks wrote a critical analysis of the book, called "Dig Deep: Beyond Lean In".[14] hooks calls Sandberg's position "faux feminist" and describes her stance on gender equality in the workplace as agreeable to those who wield power in society—wealthy white men, according to hooks—in a seemingly feminist package. hooks writes, "[Sandberg] comes across as a lovable younger sister who just wants to play on the big brother's team."[14] hooks states that mass media, along with Sandberg, tells us that any woman willing to work hard can climb the corporate ladder all the way to the top. The article further argues that Lean In ignores "the concrete systemic obstacles most women face inside the workforce." hooks reasons that instead of the "Lean In" campaign inciting social change, its purpose is to provide women advice on how to become successful within existing conditions, and that effectively, Lean In does not consider the reality of intersectionality, which has been a growing subject in the contemporary feminist movement. The main elements in hooks' article, such as race, class, and sexuality, draw from her work Feminism Is For Everybody. In the book, hooks describes how not all women are made equally – there is not a homogenous identity for women.[15] hooks states that privileged white women know that their status is different from that of black women/women of color (pg.10); reformist white women with class privilege want the freedom they see men of their class enjoying (pg.38); and heterosexual women appeal more to men and society (pg.97). Kathleen Geier discussed in the article "Does Feminism Have a Class Problem?"[16] that Sandberg's philosophy was that if more women advanced into leadership positions then all women would gain. Geier's response to this assumption was: "there is little reason to have faith that Sandberg-style 'trickle-down' feminism will benefit the masses any more than its economic equivalent has … her enthusiasm for capitalism and her advocacy of a depoliticized strategy that focused on self-improvement rather than collective action troubled many feminists on the left."[16] Geier advises that the only effective and lasting way to advance economic equality is through collective political action; implementing some programs such as universal childcare, paid family and sick leave, and a European-style cap on work hours would resonate for women of all classes. In the same The Nation article, Judith Warner, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and author, parallels Geier by saying that feminism should focus on structural problems and not individual adaptation. Women need to find experiences that unite them without forgetting the differences of class, race, education, and empowerment that set them apart. Warner also advocates that one of the most effective actions toward gender equality is fighting for meaningful workplace flexibility. The third contributor to The Nation article is Heather McGhee, president of Demos. She explains that a business model that relies on suppressed wages on those who are at the bottom of their society's social and political hierarchies – women as well as that of immigrants, people of color, and the poor – will not be feminist when a woman breaks through as a CEO. McGhee mentions some statistics gathered by Demos, which shows that retail's gender pay gap costs women an estimated $40.8 billion in lost wages annually, a total that will rise to $381 billion cumulatively by 2022. McGhee advocates that bridging the pay gap should be a focus for women. Along with Kathleen Geier, Judith Warner, and Heather McGhee, Nancy Folbre, an economics professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, discussed in the article about Lean In with relation to intersectionality. Folbre illustrated intersectionality as the following, "it's more-than-four-way intersection, there's no traffic light and people often don't know which way to turn. Some, driving luxury SUVs, will be perfectly safe. Others, on foot, are likely to get hurt. Gender is an important vehicle of collective identity. So too are class, race, ethnicity and citizenship." Folbre continues to say that Lean In vindicates intersectional analysis as the focus of inequality in the book was only based on gender. Moreover, the book speaks to a selected few of women who are seeking to advance their careers, not those who are struggling to find and keep a stable job. Susan Faludi argues that challengers of Lean In cannot argue against Sandberg without mentioning her wealth. Faludi expresses that a problem with the "Lean In" venture is that it leaves out single mothers: "Lean In offers a faux liberation for single mothers, as they couldn't 'lean in' if they wanted."[17] Furthermore, Faludi reasons that improving the lives of single mothers requires more than showing women of privilege how they can further advance themselves in society. This standpoint correlates to contemporary feminists who argue for social and cultural change to support "mothering" (including single mothers) as an empowering rather than oppressive experience.[18] In 2015, OR Books published Lean Out: The Struggle for Gender Equality in Tech and Start-up Culture, edited by Elissa Shevinsky, which included a number of essays that make the above points and recount a variety of experiences of just how big the barriers for women in tech really are. In 2019, author Minda Harts released her first book, The Memo: What Women of Color Need to Know to Secure a Seat at the Table.[19] The book was compared to Lean In, but tailored to the specific needs and experiences of women of color. It provided an in-depth look at the racism and sexism women of color face in the workplace and offers strategies to help them achieve their career goals.[20][21] Main article: Leanin.org In response to the success of the book, Sandberg founded LeanIn.org (also known as Lean In Foundation) in the same year the book was published,[22] a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, dedicated "to offering women the ongoing inspiration and support to help them achieve their goals."[23] The organization offers educational resources and programming that encourages female leadership. Careless People ^ a b Corrigan, Maureen (12 March 2013). "'Lean In': Not Much Of A Manifesto, But Still A Win For Women". NPR. Retrieved 21 May 2013. ^ Laura Bennett (4 December 2013). "From Vanity Fair to Letterman to Lean In: The Long, Strange Journey of Nell Scovell". The Cut. Retrieved 24 September 2021. She was Sheryl Sandberg's co-writer on Lean In ^ Slaughter, Anne-Marie (7 March 2013). "Sheryl Sandberg's 'Lean In'". 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"Sheryl Sandberg's complicated legacy holds key lessons for leaders on what they can do to boost diversity at the top". Business Insider Africa. Retrieved 2024-08-13. ^ "Sheryl Sandberg's 'Lean In' Foundation and Movement". The New York Times. Retrieved 19 June 2016. ^ "About - Lean In". Lean In. Retrieved 2016-01-14. Newman, Judith (March 19, 2018). "'Lean In': Five Years Later". The New York Times. ISSN 0362-4331. Official website Lean In Community Facebook Page Retrieved from " Women are in a much better position today compared to past decades and centuries. Yet, there are still many obstacles holding women back from career progression. This represents lost opportunities not just for women, but also organizations and society at large. In this book, Sheryl Sandberg—one of the world's most influential business executives—shares research and stories of the struggles faced by women, with advice on how we can create greater equality and more fulfilling lives for men and women alike. In this free version of Lean In summary, you'll learn how to overcome some of the internal and external barriers to gender inequality, and get additional insights on career advancement. Sheryl Sandberg shares a lot of research and real-world stories/anecdotes to show the extent of gender bias and inequality around us. However, instead of blaming men or systems for holding women back, she explains how women also unconsciously play a part due to their own fears and beliefs. Sandberg believes that the solution to greater equality is to have more women in top leadership positions: This is the best way for women's voices to be heard and considered, and it offers the best chance to address issues ranging from equal opportunities at work to helping rape victims in Liberia. In a nutshell: The Back Story for "Lean In" In the past, Sandberg didn't see herself as a "feminist". She believed that to make her mark, she just had to work hard and deliver results. Yet, she soon realized that gender disparity was real. When Sandberg became the chief of staff at the Treasury Department, people suggested that she got the role because she was a woman, not because of merit. When she attended a meeting at a private equity firm, she couldn't use a women's bathroom because they didn't have one. Over the years, she saw female friends and colleagues drop out of the workforce either by choice or because they felt pressured to give up their careers for their families, often driven by societal expectations of women to prioritize caregiving over their career aspirations. Sandberg didn't realize how hard it was to juggle a career and motherhood, until she got pregnant with her first child. She gained 70 pounds, had swollen feet and vomited daily. After the baby arrived, she struggled between her desire to spend time with her child and giving 100% to her job. This was despite the support from her company and family—something that many women didn't even have. Eventually, she realized that it wasn't enough to keep her head down and work hard. Women faced real obstacles that wouldn't go away on their own. So, she started to speak up about gender issues. Her TEDTalk "Why We Have Too Few Women Leaders" brought of a flood of responses from men and women alike. It convinced her of the need for more people to speak out, and motivated her to write this book. In this book, Lean In, Sandberg addresses challenges that women face in balancing work and family. She presents research and statistics to make her case for gender equality, offers practical advice for career advancement, and shares insights for men and women to overcome gender bias and fulfill their potential. The insights are useful for: Any woman who wants to pursue her career goals and ambitions (including those who want to make it to the top); and Any man who wants to understand what the women around him are up against, and how to become a successful leader. Sandberg starts by sharing facts and data to show that our world is still ruled by men. For example, when this book was written, women led only 17 out 195 independent countries worldwide, and held 20% of parliamentary seats globally. In the USA, only 21 out of the Fortune 500 CEOs were women. The gap was even bigger for women of color. In some countries, women are still denied basic civil rights and education. Millions of girls and women are trapped in the sex trade. In some places, it's still common for women to be raped or be subjected to sexual harassment. In a world of true equality, women would hold half the leadership positions and men would run half the homes. Sandberg shares research to suggest how this could create better outcomes all round—from harnessing the benefits of diversity at work, to developing better cognitive and psychological outcomes in children, improving relationships between couples, and fostering fairer treatment of individuals regardless of gender. However, for more women to rise to the top, we must first address a range of internal and external obstacles. In the 11 chapters of the book, Sandberg addresses several issues and challenges across 3 broad themes: We'll now dive into some of these issues in detail. Do get our full 15-page Lean In summary for a more detailed breakdown of all the key insights in the book! Overcoming Social and Internal Barriers Our beliefs and choices are strongly influenced by cultural biases and social conditioning. Many gender biases—including those held by women themselves—hold women back from their