

## SLT MENTORSHIP MATTERS STORIES

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Your story should outline such things as:

- A problem (for you or another) with gender diversity/bias that you faced and how you solved it (or couldn't solve it).
- A friend/colleague's story of above
- A company-wide solution that showed dedication to gender-diversity.
- How this mentorship or another relationship may have helped you with gender diversity/bias
- Or other type stories

The stories are not intended to disparage or call-out specific people or companies for something negative!  
DO NOT USE NAMES OF PEOPLE OR COMPANIES UNLESS

- 1) the story indicates a positive action AND
- 2) You receive documented permission to use names

### Example Story: **Maximum 500 Words**

As a woman in a large cyber security corporation, I have firsthand experienced exclusion that is clearly due to me being female. This includes male-bonding type activities that allow mid-level staff to connect with c-suite levels such as golfing, gameday gathering/discussions, cocktails afterwork – the types of things for which women are often outright not invited or just feelings of “not belonging” or the need rush home to be the care provider for children. I realize that much of this is not intended to be exclusive but is the result of the tendency for people to gravitate toward those most like them. But it results in gender divisions. In my job, I saw these groups as the only way to get noticed as a peer.

When I discussed with a friend in a different field my desire to connect more with the senior leaders, she advised me to approach someone as a mentor in the company that could help navigate my way to more integration with leadership. But as I started to explore mentor prospects, I realized the majority of leaders were men, and the few I did approach with the idea of mentoring felt it might be construed as “inappropriate” for them as a male to mentor a female. While I did not necessarily agree with what I felt was an outdated idea, I was again stuck.

But after some thought and some additional great advice, I realized that a mentor does not have to work at my own company or even in my own field. So, through a professional organization unrelated to my company, I got involved in a mentorship program that connected me with a woman who had experienced the same issues but who had learned techniques that helped her build her own pathways into leadership roles. She was a true **thought leader**, not just someone who could integrate and introduce me to into peer gatherings. She helped me see that my goal should not be about getting noticed by “belonging” to the sort of informal bonding that might happen, but to get noticed in ways that highlighted my work and my abilities. While the route into leadership was not clear sailing, my mentor helped me set my sights on what was important. For me, having a mentor outside my own workplace was the best way I could move toward gender diversity in my own experience.

## SLT ALLIES GUIDE SUBMISSIONS

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Your tip, suggestion, ideas, or guidance should propose a way to work towards gender diversity and counter bias in the workplace. The Guide is intended to offer people “REAL LIFE” ideas they too could use to build gender diversity for themselves professionally; how other allies can help; and how companies, schools, and other institutions can support gender diversity.

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**Example Tip: Maximum 175 Words**

**Summary: Analyze Company’s Current Issues Before Building diversity Initiatives:** As an HR professional, I have been reading, training and taking note of the growing focus in the media about importance of “building diversity in the workplace”. But one of the most powerful things I ever learned as our company explored ways to ensure we were gender and racially diverse was something I think rarely happens: analyzing data. Before your company can even begin to start building programs, policies, and procedures to grow diversity, you must know where you currently stand. Too many companies simply tally up how many women verses how many men within their staff. That is not the true picture. A company needs thorough analysis of such things gender-specific data as average years to promotion, level upon hire, range of merit and COL raises, even types of offices and desk location assigned. Once you start really noting and understanding where your company’s needs are, can you really start building systemic changes toward diversity.