

Inspiring Inclusion on International Women's Day

by Sabrina Bailey, CEO

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“Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance.”

Verna Myers

Today is International Women's Day and all of us at Fiducient Advisors are honored to celebrate with you. This year's theme, "Inspire Inclusion," is a call to collaboratively break down the barriers that prevent women from achieving their full potential while living in a way that inspires others to do the same. Today is a perfect time to reflect not just on the strides we have made toward gender equality, but also on how we can further the cause of inclusion in every sphere of life.

Inclusion is more than just opening doors and letting people into the room; it's about making sure everyone has a seat at the table, everyone can contribute to the conversation and everyone's voice is heard. This means recognizing the diverse talents, perspectives and experiences women offer and valuing these as essential components of success in any field.

The Power of Representation

From a young age, the power of representation was deeply ingrained in me through the resilient spirits of my great-grandmothers. Each faced the heart-wrenching reality of both widowhood and single motherhood in the prime of their lives. However, in an era when the workforce was overwhelmingly male dominated, they carved their paths with unwavering determination. One became a steel welder, the other a butcher - occupations that defied the gender norms of their time. I have fond memories of sitting in their laps, captivated by their tales of grit and perseverance. They were not just storytellers but beacons of inspiration, urging their five great-grandchildren (both male and female) to chase our dreams with relentless zeal, even if those dreams challenged the societal conventions of what's deemed normal or attainable.

Representation continues to be one of the most potent ways to inspire inclusion. When young girls and women see others like them in positions of power, influence and success, it shatters the glass ceiling of what they believe is possible, offering hope that despite what the world looks like from the outside, they can achieve any goal they set their mind to. Representation in finance, politics, science, mathematics, arts, sports

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and leadership roles across sectors sends a powerful message: "You belong here, and your contributions are valuable."

Creating a Sense of Belonging

Belonging is the very essence of genuine inclusion, acting as the lifeblood within a community. Picture a moment when you step into a space, only to find yourself distinctly different, like a lone orange circle amidst a sea of green squares. You experience a tight knot of apprehension in the depths of your being, questioning if you should retreat. That feeling is the chasm between mere inclusion and true belonging. My own journey has been punctuated with countless instances where, upon entering a room, a sense of camaraderie and connection was conspicuously absent. This has been especially true in an industry where leaders who mirror my own image are few and far between.

Belonging transcends mere participation; it's about creating environments where women, and indeed all individuals, feel seen, heard and valued for who they are. A sense of belonging instills confidence and encourages people to authentically share their perspectives, sparking innovation and collaboration. By prioritizing belonging, we lay the foundation for a more inclusive world ensuring everyone feels profoundly connected and integral to the whole.

The Role of Allies

The pursuit of inclusion extends far beyond the efforts of women alone; it demands the engaged support and active involvement of allies from every point on the gender spectrum. Such allies are indispensable, lending their ears to the stories of women, championing transformative change and leveraging their own spheres of influence to elevate women's narratives. In my own professional odyssey, a constellation of allies - Scott Faris, Travis Pruitt, David Anderson, Tom Foster, and Shundrawn Thomas - played pivotal roles. These individuals were not just mentors but also my staunchest supporters and constructive critics. They offered not only the wisdom necessary for my growth as a leader but also the unwavering faith to persevere through daunting challenges. Their influence was transformative, enriching my personal and professional development and shaping me into a more effective and empathetic leader.

Embarking on the path to allyship is a journey you can begin this very moment. If you haven't already taken that step, reflect on the obstacles that may be deterring you and strategize ways to navigate past these barriers. Today presents itself as the perfect opportunity to advance and position yourself as a supportive ally for the emerging generation of leaders. There's no time more opportune than the present to extend your support. True progress is made when we all work together to dismantle the systemic barriers that hold women back.

A Call to Action

This Women's International Day, let us commit to inspire inclusion in every aspect of our lives and create environments in which everyone experiences a sense of belonging. Whether it's by mentoring a young woman in your field, supporting women-owned businesses or advocating for policies that promote gender equality, every action counts. Together, we can create a world where every woman can thrive, contribute and have the opportunity to lead. Let's inspire inclusion today, for a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow.

About the Author



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In her role as CEO, Sabrina is responsible for leading the firm's strategic vision and direction to help our clients prosper. Sabrina has decades of leadership experience within the investment consulting and financial services divisions of Mercer International, Willis Towers Watson, Northern Trust and the London Stock Exchange Group, plc (LSEG). Sabrina holds an MBA in organizational leadership. Beyond her professional achievements, Sabrina is committed to giving back to the community. She is an Advisory Board Member for Salvation Army Chicago-Metro and the Co-Founder and President of Grow For Hope, a nonprofit focused on empowering women through employment and education.