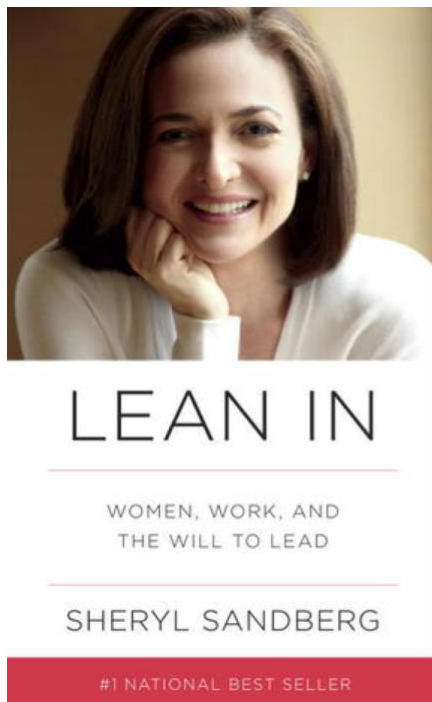


# WE<sup>2</sup> Book Club Discussion Notes – LEAN IN



BOOK: ***“Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead”*** by Sheryl Sandberg

DISCUSSION DATE: Tuesday October 27, 2020 at 4:00 pm EDT

<https://caes.rutgers.edu/blog-post/lean-in-to-the-we2-book-club-first-discussion-october-2020/>

## Major Themes and Takeaways from the LEAN IN Book Discussion:

- Gender Discount Problem: "Self doubt as a form of self defense"
- Work-life balance: "Don't leave before you leave."
- Mentorship - disagree with her assessment that you shouldn't just ask - put in the work/research and ask for coffee then if it is a good fit don't be afraid to ask them to be your formal mentor - don't miss out on an opportunity because you were afraid to ask - there are benefits of having a formal vs informal mentor ([There is still time to sign up for the WE2 formal mentorship program before the end of the week!](#))
- Privilege of the author - single user kind of read because it is based off of Sandberg's personal experiences in Silicon Valley - How will this differ across STEM industries? Across different states and different companies?
- Communal Leadership
- Authentic Leadership
- How do you personally relate to the word "feminist"? Do you avoid using it or talking about diversity/inequity in the workplace?
- How does this book read to the younger generations? Are the teachings outdated?
- How do we apply what is covered in the book to the IAC Program? What are specific actions WE2 Network can take?
- How do we build up more male allies in the IAC Program, our company workplaces and our lives? What makes someone an ally rather than just a supportive energy in your life?

## When I am in leadership and have women who are staying quiet, what's a way I can support their voice in those situations without embarrassing them?



- Round table discussion / everyone has to say something
- Prompt the group along different lines (ie "sophomores" or "people in the back") so that it is still a group being called on but they are not being called out as the few women in the room
- Call upon a specific women if you know they have background in a specific area so that you are calling on their professional expertise rather than the gender diversity they bring to the group ( ie "Emily, you are taking thermodynamics this semester, what are your

thoughts on x"). This shows both personal interest in their professional development and professional opinion and makes it about this not that they are being too quiet. (depending on the individual, you could ask them to look into it for next time so they are prepared to be called on next time but not immediately put on the spot.)

- Smaller groups - get the whole team to become more familiar with each other so that some shyness may go away on it's own
- Rotate leadership. Give everyone an opportunity to lead an assessment, and this will also give everyone an opportunity to see everyone else as a leader. When peers listen to each other and learn to want their opinion, that kind of encouragement will be just as important as coming from leadership.

*"The more women help one another, the more we help ourselves. Acting like a coalition truly does produce results. Any coalition of support must also include men, many of whom care about gender inequality as much as women do."*

### **Our Challenge to You:**

*Identify 3 potential male allies in your life (whether they are peers, leadership or personal). Choose 1 and start a conversation with them about your experiences as a women in your field*

*"Talking can transform minds, which can transform behaviors, which can transform institutions."*

Looking for more resources for yourself or tools to start this conversation with a potential ally? [Check out the Lean In website and associated videos.](#) Part of being an ally is being willing to put in the work, the first step of which is listening.

