

BREAKOUT SESSION #2

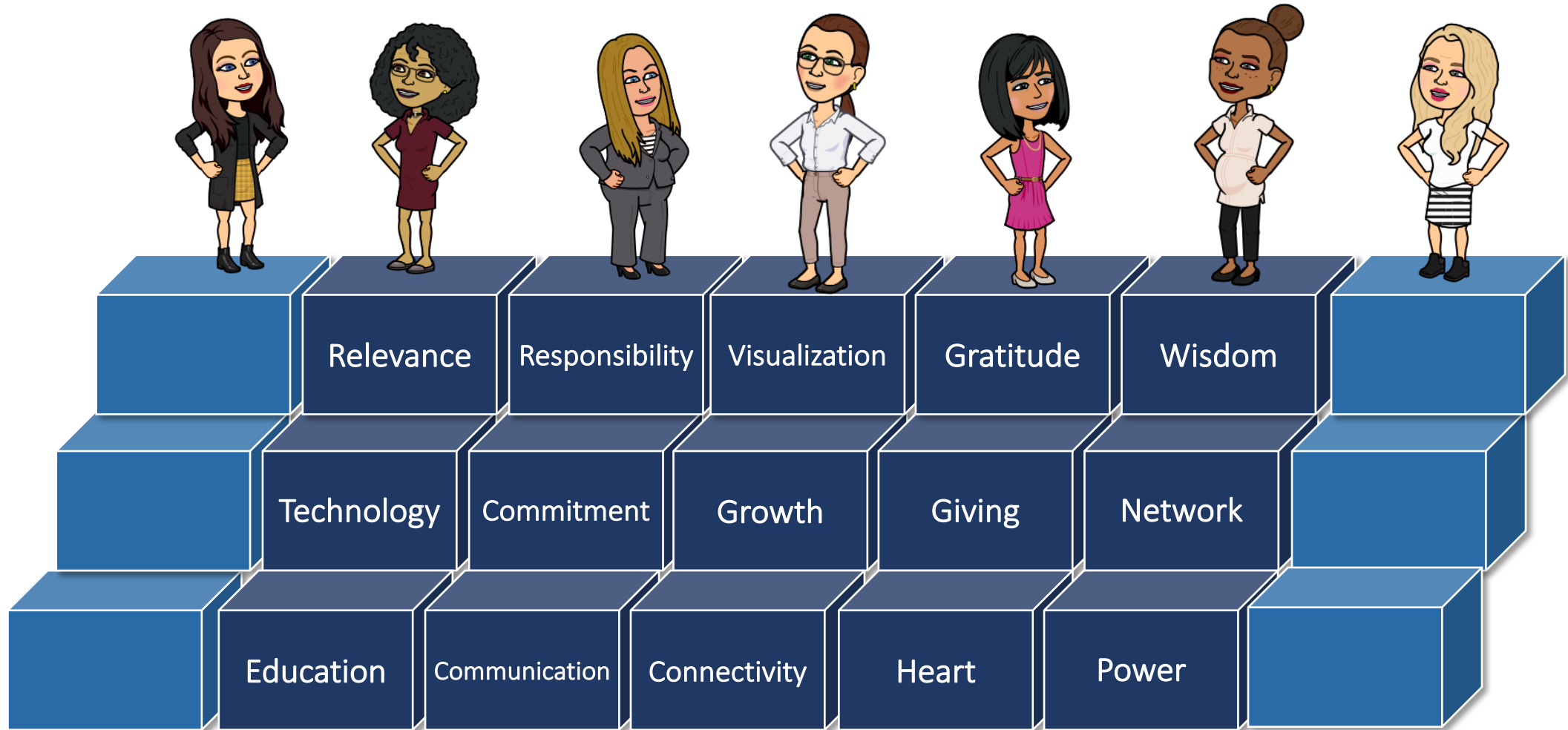
Lean In: Site Selection Style

A CANDID CONVERSTATION

COMMITTEE LEAD: Leslie Wagner

PANELISTS: Michelle Comerford, Alexandra Segers, and Sarah White

“Strong Women Make Strong Societies” — Melinda Gates





Discussion: What's On Your Mind?

- **Lean-In Terminology Developed from Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook (2013)**
 - In 2019, new terminology: Lean Out being the pursuit of closing the gender gap.
 - Has it come at the expense of female well-being?
 - In 2020, new Pandemic era and its impact on Women in the Workforce
- **Aligning with Economic Development**
 - What is happening at the state/regional/local levels with women in ED?
- **Are Mentors Important in Economic Development?**
 - Does gender matter with mentors?
- **Advancing Gender Equity – An Effective Tactic for Communities?**
 - Rise in women owned business
 - Are there unique initiatives, creative funding, incentive opportunities?



- **Women in leading positions in the construction industry**

- Oh, we cannot have a woman on our construction site. We have only restrooms for men.
- Why are you here? You should marry one of the engineers and all will work out.
- You must be the Architect intern – you can draw some colored pictures for the façade.
- Are you the secretary?
- Can you please bring us some coffee and write the meeting minutes?





Sarah's Take-Aways

- **Embrace changes and look at those moments as opportunities.**
 - You can grow the most when forced to get out of your comfort zone.
- **Give yourself grace.**
 - Juggling work/life balance can be messy at times.
- **Get a mentor. Be a mentor.**
 - Build a support network to learn from others' experiences and know that your insights can provide valuable guidance as well.

Michelle's Take-Aways



- **Your work performance today will pave your path to the future.**
 - Working hard, being flexible and supportive, having a good attitude and desire to use your strengths to add value is the best way to advance your career.
 - This is also the best way to naturally find a mentor, as people will gravitate to you and your work ethic and reach out to you more.
- **Use your gender differential at the table to your advantage.**
 - You may naturally “stick out” as one of few females in the room, so impress them with your hard work and knowledge, and you are more likely to be remembered (for good reason😊).
- **Work-life “balance” is a lie.**
 - There will be phases where you need to be more engaged with work, and phases where you need to be more engaged with life. Both are important and not a sign of weakness to choose life over work when you need to. If you do #1 above right, this will make it even easier for you to create the “balance” you need, when you need it.



Leslie's Take-Aways

- **People – Men and Women offer different perspectives. Be uniquely you!**
 - Multi-tasker, Supportive, Focused, Strong Work Ethic.
- **Treat People Well.**
 - Simply said by Maya Angelou, *“People will never forget how you made them feel.”*
 - Help each other, we are more empowered together. Pay it forward.
- **Don't be Afraid to Take Risks.**

Be open to change and opportunity.
- **Continue to Do.**
 - *“I can't do everything, but I can do something. I must not fail to do the something that I can do.”* - Helen Keller
 - Continue education, seek certifications, take time to network, read industry periodicals for pleasure.

THANK YOU

Leslie Wagner, Michelle Comerford, Alexandra Segers, and Sarah White