

Gender Gap Myths #2 Exposed – Senior Women Executives Not Affected by Economy

Gender Gap myth #1 for women was exposed showing that many women are not starting out at the same level of pay as their male counterparts. **Despite their highly-employable MBA credentials, their career paths did not necessarily translate into comparable success in executive and corporate positions.**

The **second gender gap myth exposed** by Silva and Carter is **how the economic downturn has benefited executive women**. Their study showed that senior executive women suffered more than expected. Study results indicated that only 6% of senior men lost jobs due to the economy. **Senior women by comparison took a loss in earnings at over 3 times that rate at 19%**, and it debunks the myth they made progress and benefited from the downturn.

The media in general has talked about **women benefiting from the recession based on numbers of women employed** and this is true when compared to men who have lost jobs. However, less is said about the fact that **more women are holding service-sector, lower paying jobs**, which certainly skews the perception of any benefit from the economy.

Another interesting commentary on senior women is about **those who have advanced to high level positions but don't remain there**. According to Avivah Wittenbert-Cox, CEO of her own gender consulting firm, new CEO's often use the opportunity to re-structure their executive positions. She mentions the examples of both BP and Shell, where **the number of high level women dropped following the appointments of new CEOs**.

So, it appears that **women are still expendable** despite the level of their achievement.

Sources:

New Research Busts Myths About the Gender Gap by Christine Silva and
Nancy Carter

http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2011/10/new_research_busts_myths_about.html

Industry Knows No Gender by Avivah Wittenberg-Cox

http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2012/03/industry_knows_no_gender.html