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## **THE ROLE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SUCCESS OF INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES**

### **Роль гендерного равенства в успехе международных компаний**

In the modern competitive landscape, gender equality is no longer just an ethical issue but a strategic imperative for companies seeking sustainable advantages. While innovation and efficiency remain crucial, human capital and diversity are now key differentiators. This article explores the direct link between gender-balanced leadership and improved corporate financial performance and innovation, addressing the skepticism that still exists despite growing evidence of its benefits.

Empirical research indicates that companies with gender-diverse leadership exhibit higher profitability and innovation rates. McKinsey & Company reports that organizations with gender-balanced boards are 25 % more likely to outperform market averages [1]. Additionally, the Peterson Institute for International Economics found a 15 % increase in net profit as the proportion of women in management rose from 0 % to 30 %.

Gender equality offers significant economic advantages, including the attraction and retention of highly qualified talent, particularly in sectors experiencing labor shortages. Diverse perspectives stimulate the generation of novel ideas and innovative solutions, enhance customer understanding, and improve decision-making processes. Studies show that women control up to 80 % of consumer purchasing decisions, making gender diversity in leadership crucial for understanding market needs.

Moreover, gender-balanced boards make more informed and long-term decisions, reducing risks and promoting sustainable development. This is essential in an era characterized by increasing environmental and social responsibility expectations.

Despite the evident benefits, women remain underrepresented in top management positions. This disparity can be attributed to several barriers.

1. **Stereotypes and Bias.** Unconscious biases often influence promotion decisions, favoring candidates who resemble the decision-maker in terms of gender, age, and experience. This perpetuates a cycle of underrepresentation.

2. **Pipeline Leak.** The 'pipeline leak' phenomenon occurs when women disproportionately leave the career pipeline during advancement. It is increasingly clear that the gap starts early, often at the level of emerging leadership. Women are less likely to be promoted than their male coworkers.

To overcome these barriers, companies must adopt a multifaceted approach.

- **Integration of Gender Equality into Business Strategy.** Gender equality should be embedded in corporate strategy and supported by senior management.

- **Transparent Career Development and Remuneration.** Implementing clear and unbiased career progression and compensation policies can minimize the impact of gender bias.

- **Talent Development Investments.** Providing training programs and flexible work arrangements can help retain qualified employees, particularly women.

- **Performance Metrics.** Establishing metrics to track progress in gender equality can motivate employees and managers to prioritize inclusivity.

- **Salary Audits.** Conducting regular salary audits to close the gender pay gap can enhance employee confidence and attract talented professionals.

In conclusion, it is emphasized that gender equality is not only an ethical issue but also a critically important strategic asset. Companies that effectively implement its principles gain access to a wider talent pool, enhance innovation potential, and improve financial performance, which ultimately becomes the key to long-term competitive advantage.

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## CULTURAL ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

### Культурные аспекты международного бизнеса

As our world grows increasingly interconnected through globalization, and commerce extends beyond individual nations to operate on an international scale, understanding the social and cultural environment is essential. The success of international activity directly depends on a company's ability to adapt to the cultural characteristics,