



Raymond A. Mason School of Business

WILLIAM & MARY

DIVERSITY GOES TO WORK PODCAST

EPISODE 19: STUDENT TAKEOVER PART 1 – GENDER PAY GAP

Phil Wagner

Hello from the halls of the Mason School of Business here at William & Mary. I'm Phil, and this is Diversity Goes to Work. Buckle up because we're getting ready to take a deep dive into the real human lived experiences that shape and guide our diversity work in the world of work. Should be fun.

Phil Wagner

Dear friends of our podcast, thanks for tuning in over your summer. As you can likely surmise, things are a little bit slow here. We've taken a little bit of a summer sabbatical to give us space to think about, plan for, and record season two, which, by the way, is going to be dynamic. Stay tuned. It drops this fall. But in the meantime, we didn't want to keep you wanting, so we've decided to release three special bonus episodes. And lucky for you, I'm not the host. That's right. We put our students in front of the mic. During this mini-summer student takeover, you'll get to hear from three student groups from our Spring 2022 Diversity in the Workplace course here in the Mason School of Business. These episodes were specially selected as they build on some important themes and give our students a chance to showcase their work. We've selected three to keep you engaged as we wait for season two to drop. In this first episode, Will Casale, Tasia Ricks, and Katherine Davis will be sharing just a bit more on the gender pay gap. They've got some interesting insights, though it does bear noting that the perspectives shared in this podcast episode are the students and the students alone. They have guided the conversation, and I'm glad you can learn from their insights. So, without further ado, here's episode one of our summer student takeover with Will, Tasia, and Katherine.

Tasia Ricks

Hello, friends. Welcome back to Diversity Goes to Work. In this episode, we have myself, Tasia Ricks, a junior at the college, majoring in government with the minor in sociology.

Will Casale

We also have myself, William Casale, a senior here at the College of William & Mary. I'm an economics major and a business management minor.

Katherine Davis

And then myself, Katherine Davis. I am a senior marketing major with a concentration in management and organizational leadership.

Will Casale

And today, we are going to be talking about the gender pay gap. Guys, what are your thoughts on the gender pay gap right off the bat? What were some of the reasons you guys wanted to talk about this topic?

Tasia Ricks

Maybe because it's not real.

Will Casale

Tasia, come on. That joke was not funny, Tasia.

Tasia Ricks

Well, before we got into the heavy material, I had to do a little test practice run, you know. That's why we're here, right?

Will Casale

That was the test you guys all failed. That's the reason we're talking about this.

Katherine Davis

All right, guys, it's because of skeptics like Tasia that we need to have this conversation about the gender pay gap. So I'm going to start off with a timeline of historical events that have contributed to the gender pay gap. And then Will is going to talk to you guys a little bit more about some current issues that contribute to this gender pay gap. And then, we'll hear some thoughts from Professor Phil Wagner of the College of William & Mary. And then, we'll finish it off with Tasia, who is going to share some thoughts from a pharmacist Nicole Pryor and her experiences with the gender pay gap in her workplace. And then she's going to give you guys some recommendations on things that you can do to support the fight in getting equal pay for women in the workforce.

Tasia Ricks

By the end of this podcast, you should have every moral obligation to get up and join us in this fight to equal pay.

Will Casale

Yes. And now we're going to move it on over to Katherine for her section talking about history of the gender pay gap. Katherine, what do you have to say?

Katherine Davis

So historically, the gender wage gap refers to disparity in incomes between men and women from doing the same work, although, during our research, we discover that there are many more factors than just sex that contribute to the wage gap. Some other contributing factors

include race, class status, and education. There are roots of the gender pay gap that goes all the way back to the beginnings of industrial capitalism, where we saw men working outside of the home for wages, while women whose unpaid work in the home that was equally as valuable to societies was always undervalued because there was no wage associated with their role as the family caretaker. To fast forward about two decades to the 1940s, Winifred Stanley, a Republican member of Congress from New York, introduced a bill titled Prohibiting Discrimination and Pay on Account of Sex that would have amended the list of unfair labor practices in the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 to include discriminating against any employee in the rate of compensation paid on account of sex. However, this bill did not make it through Congress, and we did not see much progress for equal pay for women until the sixties when the JFK administration took office. Specifically, in 1963 on June 10, when the Equal Pay Act was put into effect. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 mandates that employers cannot award unequal pay or benefits to women and men who are working jobs that require equal skill, effort, and responsibility and which are performed under similar working conditions. While this was a pivotal event for women's rights, there were still flaws in the bill that resulted in the continuation of the gender wage gap. However, in 1964 there was an addition to this bill called the Title Seven of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin, not just those in 1963 of sex. And then we'll fast forward to the 70s when the concept of comparable worth and pay equity entered the national conversation. In the 1970s, we saw many women and people of color still segregated into small number of jobs, such as clerical, service workers, nurses, and teachers. An advocacy group, the National Committee on Pay Equity, explained that these jobs have historically been undervalued and continue to be underpaid to a large extent because of the gender and race of people who hold them. We then hear from Eleanor Holmes Norton, chair of the Equal Opportunity Commission during the Carter administration, who singled out comparable worth as the issue of the 1980s. However, the Reagan administration that came next firmly opposed this idea, resulting in little to no change in the laws surrounding the gender pay gap in the 90s. Fast forward nearly a decade to 2007. U.S. Supreme Court Ledbetter versus Goodyear, which was a case where Ledbetter sued her employer under the Civil Rights Act, alleging that it had underpaid her for 19 years, and a jury awarded her more than \$3.5 million dollars. However, Goodyear appealed, arguing that she failed to file the suit within 180 days while the discrimination first occurred. An appeals court reversed the original decision, and the Supreme Court also ruled against Ledbetter in a five to four vote. However, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and dissenting suggested that this was now a matter for Congress to take up. Which they did, and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act passed in 2009. It expanded the period for filing a discrimination claim, making it easier for other women to sue employers that they believe had discriminated against them. It was also the first piece of legislation signed into law by then-President Barack Obama just nine days after his inauguration. I'm now going to pass it over to Will to talk to you guys a little bit more about some current issues surrounding the gender pay gap.

Will Casale

Thank you, Katherine. Now that we have established the historical foundation of how women's pay in the workplace has evolved, let us move on to the modern-day United States. Woman's participation rate in the labor force has increased dramatically, and policy actively opposing discrimination in the workplace has never been stronger. However, the wage gap has not progressed at all, as there is still a clear and persistent discrepancy in compensation. According to the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau, women, on average, earn \$0.82 for every dollar that the average man earns. This \$0.82 on the dollar stat is one of the more famous accomplishment reference statistics in our modern society. Statistics, though, can often be vague in their implications, and sometimes they can be flat-out misleading. When we're analyzing stats involving groups of hundreds of millions of people, such as this measure, the full story can be left untold. There are a multitude of factors that contribute to this measure of pay difference in the workplace, and breaking them down can help us better understand what fully accounts for this discrepancy. First of all, we must break down how exactly this \$0.82 on the dollar statistic was calculated in the first place. This measurement of the gender wage gap is determined by finding the ratio of women's to men's earnings for full-time, year-round workers across the entire United States and taking the difference between those earnings. Contrary to popular belief, this metric does not reflect a direct comparison between men and women performing identical occupations in the workplace. There seems to be some intentionality behind this, though, as not doing direct comparisons allow the stat to encompass a variety of other factors contributing to the wage gap. Race is another very heavy influencer of how much women will make in the workplace. As the wage gap is much larger for most women of color, who earn \$0.62 for every dollar a white male earns. Hispanic women earn even less at a mere \$0.54 on the dollar, meaning men earn nearly twice as much as the average Hispanic woman. On the other hand, Asian women fare much better, earning about \$0.90 on the dollar. White females earn about \$0.79 per white male dollar. The role that race plays in the wage gap is often obscured by gender differences, but it is clearly a comparable factor in terms of its impact. Differing industries is also a contributing factor to the pay gap. Gender norms and expectations can tend to funnel men and women into different kinds of careers. Some of these female majority industries, such as home health aides, childcare workers, and other things of that sort. On average pay much less than male-dominated industries. Differing hours worked and years of experience are major factors in why women earn less on average, and they can be predominantly attributed to one thing, maternity. Women are disproportionately driven out of the workforce to accommodate caregiving, and it gives them a severe disadvantage in both hours worked a week and total experience over the course of their careers. Access to paid family and medical leave makes women much more likely to return to work and more likely to return sooner at that. However, as of March 2019, only 19% of civilian workers had access to paid family leave through their employers. This means lower hourly wages and fewer benefits compared with full-time workers. Make no mistake about it, though. The fact that maternity has a good chunk of the impact does not change the fact that this is still a clear gender-related issue. Women are forced to bear the brunt of the responsibility when it comes to pregnancy and early caregiving for a child. Company policy is simply lagging behind in terms of supporting women who become pregnant and trying to prevent their careers from being completely derailed. There is no overarching federal legislation requiring employers to offer

paid maternity leave. The average amount of paid maternity leave given by companies is eight weeks, but this isn't mandated by the law. Federal law only requires twelve weeks of unpaid leave. 40% of employers offered paid maternity leave in some form. Under these conditions, it is nearly impossible for a woman's career trajectory to stay on track once they become mothers. Last but certainly not least is plain flat-out discrimination. Gender-based discrimination pay has not been legal in the United States since the early 60s, as Katherine previously referenced, but it still remains a widespread practice today. This extends beyond explicit decisions to pay women less than men. As the discrimination is not just a service level issue, but it is a systemic issue. Employers often discriminate in pay when they rely on prior salary history in hiring and compensation decisions. This can enable pay decisions that could have been influenced by discrimination to follow women from job to job. Given the variety of different factors at play with gender discrimination in the workplace, what sort of psychological theories can we use to account for these dynamics? To discuss these various phenomena, we've decided to bring on Dr. Phil Wagner, a professor at the College of William & Mary who specializes in organizational communication, social support, and diversity and inclusion.

Will Casale

Well, we are here with Dr. Phil Wagner. How are you doing today, sir?

Phil Wagner

You know, I am busy but good. And I know that's probably how you feel, too. It's like a crazy time in the semester but excited to be chatting with you, my friend.

Will Casale

Yes, thank you very much for making the time. It's that time of the year. It's very busy for everybody. So I wanted to ask you just a couple of questions to see what your thoughts are on this gender pay gap dynamic in the workplace. I first wanted to ask you about social comparison theory. I wanted to know if you think that plays a role in gender discrimination in the workplace.

Phil Wagner

So there are, for lack of a better term, a bucket of theories that we can use to address issues of workplace inequity workplace performance that relates to DEI issues and exclusion, group conflicts. I would first frame and say I'll pull from my lecture notes, Will, so just a heads up. It'll be a little bit repetitive here, and just anybody listening, those notes come from Michelle Mebarak's work. Great, prolific scholar that has sort of synthesized those theories. But for me, the idea of social comparison playing out in gender discrimination in the workplace. Yeah, I think so because this relates to one of the three questions that we ask about DEI work, which is, first and foremost, why do employees feel excluded in the first place? And this is sort of riffing off of that theme. So for me, to contextualize the theory coming from Leon Festinger from the 50s, theory says we have this innate sort of, like, internal driving force that compels us to just evaluate ourselves in relation to others. And that's natural. We're constantly self-reflective beings thinking about ways to benchmark our success. And we do that quite simply

by using sort of observation and how we relate to others as a kind of data-driven change management strategy. We do this in all areas of life, right? I played piano growing up, and I had this arch enemy, Benji. We were kind of at the same level, but to be honest, he was just a little better than me, no matter how much I practiced. So I compared myself to Benji. That's how I knew I met the mark. We would sort of grow together. Even if he was a little bit ahead of me, I knew and judged my own status by my relation to him. So I think in the world of work, there are a lot of different ways that something like that might play out. Probably one that sticks out to me related to this conversation is an area of access and how that impacts opportunities for that sort of benchmarking we talked about. A caveat this is a little bit of a note on simplicity. I will definitely keep my answers like high-level public, not super deep, so don't judge me for it. But I think the first thing I think of is that the context of the world of work is not necessarily like, well established for successful comparison for women to benchmark their performance. Quite simply, because we know that data has told us consistently time and time again, women have consistent barriers towards upward mobility and particularly access to the C suite. So if you're a female with C suite expectations and aspirations, how do you benchmark that? Who do you compare that against? It's likely going to be a male colleague. So how do you do that? We're not arguing that women and men can't learn from each other, but I do think that there are different obstacles faced which complicates how that theory might be applied. We talked about this in class, but you can't really be what you can't see, and I would say you can't really benchmark yourself against others that aren't there. So this is about acknowledging that the world of work is kind of an unbalanced power system. And researchers argue back and forth about the gendered or sex function of social comparison that didn't originally factor into Festinger's work. Other research that followed off of that kind of left it off too. We do now collectively sort of understand that the comparison process underneath the lens of social comparison looks differently for men and women. Early research, I think from the early 2000s, like Shelley Taylor's work, looks at the desire to affiliate with others. And that research notes that that's a more marked desire among females than males. So it's hard not to see how this might factor into representation issues. I also think it maps out the other theories, some that we talked about in class, some that go beyond some communication theory, things like uncertainty reduction theory. We always try to reduce the amount of uncertainty or anxiety we face in any situation. And people want to compare themselves to each other in part to sort of reduce that anxiety that might come along with imposter syndrome or assessing whether they're where they should be or not. Other theories like social identity theory or self-categorization theory, I think, also give us a good foundation here too. But I do think that this theory might be helpful. But we have to contextualize it with the realities of the world of work. And I think access complicates that reality as it relates to application of this theory. Does that answer your question? Will, I told you. I'm super verbose.

Will Casale

That was as complete of an answer as I could have hoped for.

Phil Wagner

All right, good.

Will Casale

One of the other things you were discussing all these objective barriers that are clearly there in the workplace for women who are trying to achieve certain opportunities. And those are objective regardless of how they perform. But one of the psychological consequences associated with this could be a lack of motivation, knowing those obstacles are there in the first place. So do you get the sense that identity-based motivation theory plays a role in the workplace as well?

Phil Wagner

Okay, so this is a good question, and I see where you're going here. So I'm kind of one trick pony, and I always go back in my own DE&I work. I did another podcast today where we talked about these three things. So apologies for the repeat, but my own work in the space goes back to three central questions. Why do employees feel excluded? What are the consequences of that exclusion on their motivations and behaviors, and performance? And then three, why do groups experience conflict in the workplace? And so, question number two, this clearly relates to that. I think there are a few different theories that might relate here. The socio-meter model of self-esteem or interaction model of cultural diversity, or a handful of identity theories, might also explain this too. I've studied identity theory a lot. I use identity theories in my work. I have to tell you, identity-based motivation is not my particular forte, but it is pretty simple. So it's easy to understand. I haven't utilized it in research, but it's very easy to apply. IBM really just looks at human motivation and the ways in which that motivation kind of drives us towards specific or outline goals. So the premise of the theory is that people just prefer to act in ways that align or feel congruent with their identity or identities. And I say identities because we, of course, have to take an intersectional perspective. I know we're talking about men and women, but I want to be mindful here that no one has just one identity. They overlap and compete and converge, complicate each other. But for sake of conversation, let's boil it down to just like a binary gender identity. What we're talking about with wage gap is really just about exclusion writ large. So, sure, it has specific outcomes, but it's primarily about exclusion. So then we can back up and recognize two things that that theory probably would tell us pretty specifically. First, workplace exclusion is going to shape which identities are more present or more salient in specific situations. So maybe your employee identity, your identity as a woman, your identity as a Latino might factor in differently given the context of workplace exclusion. So in the context of wage discrimination, it's hard not to see how gender identity factors in. Data tells us that race does, too, because black women make even fewer cents on the dollar than white women do, so those identities matter, but an intersectional lens is likely to be the most impactful. And then, I think the theory would also remind us that workplace exclusion shapes specific norms and values, and behaviors. And so the theory tells us that exclusion in the workplace can affect employees motivation to undertake or complete tasks, right? I mean, if you're feeling those, it is going to impact what you want to do and why. And I think our readings that we've talked about in our own course will sort of set this up, Will. Mebarak, in her work, gives an example, I believe, of how gender might impact wage-related issues. So she talks about if a woman sees an ad vacancy for a really challenging but advantageous opportunity, her desire or motivation to even move forward and think about

competing for that position would likely be impacted by multiple different intersecting elements of her identity or multiple intersecting identities. So gender, of course, but also work identity for that specific woman, those identities might intersect to send messages about the likelihood of her success. We have to sort of look at organizational culture. Do her identity experiences support this idea in her head that she would fit in, that she would be valued, would be taken seriously? Has she overheard conversations from male executives commenting that female leaders maybe aren't as successful? Or has she heard other women share experiences where they have had a really tough time changing organizational culture or achieving the outcomes they need to be successful in that position? We have to look at organizational culture writ large to ask questions about motivation. So I think these really are issues of culture. But I think the theory is probably most helpful in helping us understand the relationship between exclusionary work environments and the ways in which they impact employee motivations and behaviors. So I think even the small, like slight changes in organizational culture, those can drastically shift motivations and experiences. And we have to think about how that might play out for other people too. LGBTQ folks, folks with a disability, BIPOC, folks who don't see themselves represented. I think this goes beyond just the gender and wage conversation alone, but I think it's a theory that could help us understand more about that topic writ large.

Will Casale

So clearly, the gender wage gap is still a very big and very real problem in the United States today. Now that we've discussed all of the problems associated with unequal compensation in the workplace. We'd like to give our best efforts to find some solutions that you, our listener, can get involved in. And for that, I'm going to move it on to our good friend Tasia.

Tasia Ricks

Before I get into ways to combat the gender pay gap, I would love for you all to hear from an individual who has experienced this. All right, everyone. Today I would like to introduce Dr. Nicole Pyer, whom is a pharmacist, has been practicing pharmacy for the past twelve years, as well as navigating through business roles and other aspects. And she has information to share about gender inequalities. Okay, so I just have a few questions for you today. I'm going to start by asking what is your experience in this space and how did you approach the issue?

Nicole Pyer

Okay, first, I would like to speak about being a woman in the professional world is something that can be intimidating. But in addition to that, a lot of times, what happens is that women in these spaces typically don't talk about pay rates or salary positions. Most of the times, when you accept the offer from these from large companies, you negotiate your salary. And especially when you negotiate, you definitely believe or have a perception that you're advocating for yourself. And so, a lot of times, what happens is people end up lowballing themselves in positions like this, surprisingly. I think that sometimes a lot of women in power or in higher ranking or powerful positions tend to go or negotiate lower pay grade salaries. Being in the professional world and being a pharmacist, particularly. One of the sayings back in school, like

six years, six figures, so you always think like, oh, when you get out, you graduate, you'll be able to make six figures, and everything will be great. Well, I did have the advantage of being able to have a six-figure salary, but it wasn't until that I got into the professional world, from intern, from intern to grad intern, to actually practicing, that I realized that I wasn't being paid the same amount as my counterparts. And it just so happened to be a conversation about another male pharmacist who was actually leaving the company. And it was a discussion about why would he be leaving the company when he made x amount of dollars per hour. And it raised an eyebrow for everybody who overheard that conversation. Because, as I stated, when you're negotiating a salary in certain positions, companies tend to go on the lower pay grade. If you have experience and you've been in avenues where you can negotiate your pay grade, it's not as intimidating. But in this situation, I was freshly graduated, and I was willing to take anything at that time. So when I realized that my male counterpart, who had maybe about ten years more experience than me, was making almost 20 to 30, almost 40,000 more than I was, it was kind of like, wow, what happened? What happened to me that why was I given a lower pay grade? But, you know, what happens a lot of times is that it's swept under the rug. Employers encourage their employees to not discuss their pay rate with their colleagues, and I think a lot of times, it's because of the inequality that you see between genders, race, and disabilities. I think those are the reasons a lot of employers tend to encourage their employees to not speak about their pay rate.

Tasia Ricks

Wow, that's a lot of information. Yes, that's a lot of information to take in. Thank you. Sorry that you experienced that. Being that you have experienced this, do you have any advice for anyone who is currently facing these issues?

Nicole Pyer

Absolutely. Once I was faced with this, I definitely encouraged my counterparts to talk about their pay with their colleagues. If we're doing the same job, we should be having the same equal pay. And I understand that experience may be a factor or certain credentialing, but if our base pay is all the same across the board, then when we're going up for our annual review, it shouldn't be that my male counterpart is almost \$15 over what I'm being paid. If we have the same amount of time and experience, and you see that to this day, and it's an unfortunate situation, but I think in spaces like this, I heavily encourage it. Even if you don't want to specify exactly how much you make on an annual basis, I think that if you could just get a figure and kind of say, okay, where you are in this median, then I think that will kind of encourage people to have conversations. And if they do realize that they are being lowballed, I think that you should go to your employer, and you should address it because they're breaking the law. There is an equal pay act that was implemented into law to discourage and stop employers from paying certain employees a lesser income due to their race or their gender. So I definitely encourage women, men, black, white, Asian of any gender or race to talk to their colleagues. Like I said, if you want to be discreet, talk about a figure, even if you talk about certain incentives, like vacation time, things of that sort, and just kind of talk about it in order to see where they stand. And if you realize that you're being lowballed, I definitely think you

should take that information, go to the employer, and they should be able to explain you why you're making less than your counterpart, especially if you have the same experience and the same education.

Tasia Ricks

Okay, thank you for that answer. I just have one last question for you. Rather, do you know of any misconceptions about the gender pay gap? And if you do, what factors do you think contribute to these misconceptions?

Nicole Pyer

As I stated previously, most employers when you receive an offer letter, or you receive an offer. A lot of times, they say, hey, don't discuss this information with your colleagues about your pay rate. And a lot of times, they try to insinuate that maybe you're being paid higher than your colleagues. But what if it's like reverse psychology, and it's the complete opposite? What if it's that your employer is actually lowballing you compared to your other counterparts who have the same education, the same experience, and the same time vested into your career? So as I stated previously, I think it's really important to talk about this. Don't be afraid to talk about it with your counterparts. And I think what encourages that is that people are afraid to. Because I know at one time it was considered against company policy to discuss your pay rate with one another, but now you don't hear about that as much. But growing up and being an intern and applying for different positions, every time that I received a new job, it was documented in like the new colleague orientation to not discuss your pay rate with your colleagues. And if they found out, you would be either terminated, or it was some type of it would be something against you for the company. I'm trying to think of the word. It's like almost like a demerit. If they found out about it like I said, you can either be terminated or you could be demoted, which I think is totally absurd. And it's like, why would you want to discourage your colleagues from talking about something that this gender inequality affects people across the board, it affects level of education, it affects social economics. If women are able to be paid more, that means that it's more income coming into the household for families, and it also allows for women to be more confident to apply for positions of power because they know that they will be getting paid. And as well as for other companies to encourage people to apply for different positions to receive higher education because they know that they will be compensated for the time and the investment that they put in themselves to be an asset to the company. I hope that answered all of your questions.

Tasia Ricks

Yes, that was a lot, but a lot of great information. I really do appreciate you for doing this interview today. Do you have any other remarks or anything else to add?

Nicole Pyer

No, I just encourage people to continue to advocate for yourself and your colleagues. If you feel like you are being wronged by a company that you're investing your time and effort into. I think you should take it to H.R., get the facts, and hopefully, we can all stand together to close

this gender inequality pay because all those laws are put in place. It is very much still a real thing that is happening, and I'm glad that we're having a conversation around this, but it takes courage for people to stand up for themselves or maybe even their colleagues.

Tasia Ricks

Ending the gender pay gap is about making sure women and men are paid fairly and equitably for the work they do. According to the globalcitizen.org, improving gender equality and pay will, in turn, help with other things, like improving women's health, ending domestic violence, and even enabling female entrepreneurship. I will discuss ways to combat the gender pay gap and advocate for equal pay through four different lenses at the federal level, corporation level, individual level, and as a coworker or colleague. At the federal level, laws and bills should be put into place. The Paycheck Fairness Act, which promotes pay equity, has passed in the House but continues to fail in the Senate. One way the gender pay gap can be narrowed is by members of Congress and other politically powerful people vocally supporting legislative measures to strengthen equal pay. This can include voting yes for bills like the Paycheck Fairness Act, which, if passed, will launch pay transparency initiatives. These transparency initiatives will hold employers accountable for pay practices by mandating that they disclose wages and overall compensation. These actions will also work to reduce pay secrecy.

Additionally, an increased wage floor or minimum wage is another potential way to compact the gender pay gap. Minimum wages vary from state to state, and although they may have been increased over time, it is quite obviously still not enough to close the gap. Especially when women are making less than their male counterparts worldwide. Universal social protection and economic security policies to keep women in the workforce is another way to narrow the gap. For women being in a job and being able to come back to the job in cases of maternal leave or other situations is important. Women's work needs to be valued through legal and collective regulation. Creating these laws and policies would not be enough, though let's not forget these laws must be enforced. For ensured enforcement of federal laws, compliance reviews should be conducted regularly. As a corporation, gender pay audits and action plans can be used to tackle the gender pay gap. Once employers acknowledge the data that proves this gap, the action plans can be implemented to combat this issue. Another tactic could be improving employment opportunities for women by developing promotion opportunities. The first step, though, would be to equalize performance reviews. It is pertinent that men and women are evaluated by the same standards. To ensure there are women equally available for promotion, companies should ensure diversity in every job level. Jobs that are not diverse exasperate the issue of equal pay as occupational segregation, and the opportunity gap are drivers of the gender pay gap. With that said, recruiting and promoting women to leadership roles will place women in spaces to influence company culture and decision-making. Lastly, in the corporate world, many companies are outright pledging commitment to pay equity. A company can be made more in charge of its employees if they take this pledge. Now at the individual level, I strongly believe that you are your best advocate, so advocate for yourself first of all. Don't be afraid to ask for a raise or negotiate your salary after doing research. Make sure to research the salary for your job position in your geographical area, and do not forget to talk about your strengths in regards to your role in the company. Another way to advocate for

yourself is to join advocate groups such as the Equal Pay Advocates. This group challenges the legal, policy, and cultural barriers that allow the gender wage gap to persist. Their advocacy campaign, Equal Pay Today, suggests action through calling, tweeting, and even write into legislatures for policy reform. This brings me to another point. Advocate for yourself through social media. Don't just use those for cute pictures. Use your social media platform to discuss equal pay or even tell your story if you have ever experienced this. Share campaigns on your feed and follow activists. Basically, use your platform to educate, learn, and advocate. If you are a person experiencing the gender pay gap at work, talk to others that may be experiencing this too. This will create a sense of community, security, and confidence for everyone. Even if others are not experiencing this grievance, discussing it with them could possibly put pressure on them to do something about it. After all, pay and equity affects the entire workplace. Finally, if you want to see change, you have to get out and vote. Every vote counts. Do not ever be discouraged by the thought that your one vote does not matter. As a coworker or colleague, if you're in a position that can promote more equitable pay, advocate for those who are underpaid. As a team lead supervisor or manager. If you have the power to ensure internal equity, conduct regular compensation reviews. If this is not within your power, make a case to eliminate gaps in your team when in meetings with H.R. or your boss. Teamwork and productivity lies within how one feels about their position in the company, among other factors. Those who are not satisfied in their position will not always show up as their best self at work. It is extremely important to take the initiative when you are in a higher position than those who are suffering. Because if you stand by and you watch, you are indirectly contributing to the persistence of the gap. All right, guys, do you have any other recommendations for combating the gender pay gap?

Will Casale

Yeah, well, I think that's all good, Tasia. I think you touched on a lot of good topics. One of the things I was thinking that doesn't really get at the root of the systemic issues, but sort of the best way that you personally can give yourself the best opportunity if you're affected by the gender pay gap. There's a couple of ways. One, I think, is valuing education. The statistics show that fully educated women don't suffer anywhere near as much as those who don't have a full college diploma or high school diploma or anything of that sort. I think another good way to sort of fight for change is to get involved in jobs that allow you to unionize, just because the more numbers you can kind of get behind a movement, the more likely the workplace is to change their policies. So those are sort of a couple of suggestions I might have, but yes, and that's our podcast. Katherine, you want to close it off for us?

Katherine Davis

Yeah. We really hope that this podcast was as informative for you as it was for us. And just to end us off, Tasia's going to give us a little bit of a call to action to get you guys excited about combating this issue in your everyday lives.

Tasia Ricks

Thanks again for listening. I just want to say that the time is now to have these uncomfortable conversations. The time is now to advocate for those who can't advocate for themselves. We have stood by long enough, but now it's time to get up and advocate. Thank you.

Will Casale

Thank you for listening. We hope you enjoyed.

Phil Wagner

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