

Not in the Club: An Executive Woman's Journey through the Biased World of Business

Janet Pucino

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As obstacles are thrown in the path of women's progress toward leadership, this book shows how to begin dismantling the glass ceiling.

Census Bureau data reveal that women represent more than 50 percent of the US labor pool, received 61 percent of MBA degrees, and earned as many doctorate degrees as their male counterparts in 2010. Yet, *Not In The Club: An Executive Woman's Journey Through the Biased World of Business* reminds us that even when women reach the highest corporate strata, they seldom become members of the male-dominated "Club" that catapults them to financial success. Indeed, women held only 3 percent of CEO positions and 15 percent of board positions, according to 2010 labor data.

Women have been bumping into the glass ceiling ever since they entered the US labor force, so author Janet Pucino's thesis isn't new. But her approach to addressing gender inequities in the workplace is refreshing. Her purpose is twofold: Raise awareness of specific individual behaviors and organizational cultures that keep the glass ceiling intact, and offer a set of pragmatic prescriptions for removing that barrier.

Pucino earned an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and held senior-level positions in the financial services, technology, media, and entertainment industries. Currently, she is CEO and founder of Deep Canyon Media, a content development, publishing, and consulting company.

Using empirical evidence and interview vignettes, Pucino shows how men and women knowingly and unwittingly throw obstacles in the path of women's progress toward leadership positions. She explains that while clubs have membership requirements that are exclusive, they differ from The Club, which doesn't appear on any organizational chart yet regulates who gets plum assignments, promotions, and access to influential networks. The Club, typically run by the "good old boys," is rife with deep-rooted biases and double standards and exerts power via bullying. Toxic Club cultures fuel aggressive behaviors that can harm either gender, but typically are far more detrimental to women.

"The best way to unseat gender biases from an individual or an organization is to confront them head-on," she says, providing examples. She counsels women to use labor statistics and company budget data to inform senior management about gender discrimination in the workplace. Her book concludes with a set of corporate and societal prescriptions for women's advancement—for example, that all publicly traded companies publish diversity statistics for management and board members, that high schools promote gender equality for sports teams, and that organizations foster formal mentorship programs for women.

Pucino's book provides an important refresher course. *Not In The Club* may not shatter the glass ceiling, but it should help organizations incorporate strategies for dismantling it.

NANCY WALKER (Summer 2013)

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