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Women's Day is March 8

Based on responses from recipients of the AICPA's and CPA Practice Advisor's 2020 Most Power Women in Accounting Awards, here are five things businesses can do to build a culture that provides greater gender equity in the workplace:

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In advance of International Women's Day on March 8, the [Association of International Certified Professional Accountants](#) is sharing tips for businesses to better support and empower their female employees.

“The Global pandemic has highlighted the balancing act that women have

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build a culture that provides greater gender equity in the workplace:

- **Be flexible:** The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all of us to change the way we work and manage our lives. A study by McKinsey & Company found that 70% of women said childcare was their biggest concern compared to 40% of men. Employers should understand the added stress that comes from managing household responsibilities with the demands of work. This will likely require thinking outside the box for equitable and realistic solutions, such as flexible workhours or split days.
- **Make it OK to say “no”:** Create an environment where those who are overwhelmed feel safe, and will not feel penalized or judged, for saying “no” to additional projects or responsibilities. Encourage women to ask for help when they need it and the option of taking wellness breaks to move, meditate, practice gratitude, and embrace this time with their families.
- **Offer support:** Show concern for your employees and offer them the support they need. Ask the important questions and really listen to responses: How are you doing? and What can we do to assist you? Then find a way to provide the support needed, which again could be unconventional.
- **Emphasize well-being and self-care:** For nearly a year, your employees have largely lived the same day over and over. Many are juggling all their responsibilities, which have now seeped into their workday and therefore resulted in no boundaries. It's important that you help the women in your organization find ways to successfully manage their mental health, stress and energy levels and to take some joy out of each day.
- **Be more inclusive:** Look around you in important leadership meetings – online or in person. Are women and people of color (POC) well represented? If not, reshape your invitation lists and include women and POC in meetings where strategy, vision, and business critical decisions are being made, even if they aren't partner

yet. If you are unsure of how inclusive your organization is, the AICPA's

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- [ENGAGE 2021](#), the accounting and finance industry's premier event of the year will feature a track on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, with sessions focused specifically on women's issues and leadership. This year's event will be June 7-10 in Las Vegas.
- The [AICPA & CIMA Women's Global Leadership Summit](#), an annual conference which gives women in the profession the opportunity to develop their skills and connect with like-minded professionals. This year's Summit will take place in Dallas on November 3-5, 2021.
- The AICPA [Women's Initiatives Executive Committee](#), a dedicated group of volunteers whose mission is to promote and support the success of women to advance the profession together.
- The [Women in Leadership Forum](#), a network of CIMA members dedicated to supporting women in finance and accounting and helping them build their dream career.
- Providing Continuing Professional Development resources and webcasts to help accounting and finance professionals close the gender gap within their organization. This includes practical toolkits such as the [SheQ – Using the Power of Emotional Intelligence for Success](#), which has an accompanying archived webcast, videos such as [Advancing Gender Equality in the Workplace: What Works](#) and podcasts such as [Diversity and Inclusion: Closing the Gap](#).
- [CPA Firms Sponsorship Success Toolkit](#), a guide to help firms implement sponsorship programs to help advance women in the profession.

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