The Edge: Women are a critical component to business

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What women bring into the workplace goes way back to the caveman days.

We (women) were the gatherers of food, materials and information. We were also the connectors — of other women, extended families, etc. We knew where to find resources and how to connect people. These survival skills are still hardwired into women today. We are information gatherers, liaisons, mediators … and when you put us together, we achieve business goals through creative thinking and connection.
Today, women are critical elements within corporate work teams, executive ranks and on boards, translating sometimes vague ideas into action, laying out long-term strategies and securing buy-in from the full team.

In the boardroom, women tend to bring a longer-term vision and perspective to the table.

Here at CareerSource Brevard for example, my leadership team and I had a vision for creating a four, 10-hour-day workweek. The reason? Focusing on better customer service.

Some readers may scratch their heads at this — wondering why taking Fridays off would increase customer service — although it is clear that shutting down the office for a full day would certainly have the opportunity to save on overall operations cost.

At CareerSource Brevard, one of the things we focus on is filling job orders for businesses. That is, providing workers for local businesses that need support. Since we changed to a 4/10 workweek, we have seen a 51 percent increase in job referrals and a 56 percent increase in direct worker placements. Why? Because with a 10-hour workday, our staff members are able to start their workday prior to the Career Centers being open to customers, giving each employee dedicated time to research available job openings and match the best job seekers to those positions.

Prior to this personal work time being made available, employees would have to find the time in their day to accommodate this critical task in between visiting with dozens (or more) job seekers face-to-face. It’s a female perspective that ultimately created this solution.

My message to you, the reader, the business owner, the board chairperson or the corporate executive: Make sure you’re actively recruiting a solid mix of women, that your project teams and boards have gender balance. You will increase team communication, enhance long-term thinking and reach your strategic goals, which all directly impact that super-critical bottom line.