



Unstoppable: Leading and Launching Women-led Movements

*...from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now,
the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing..." Matthew 11:12*

This guide is based on the July "Work, Love, Pray" podcast featuring Keri Ladoucuer. To hear the entire discussion, visit 4wordwomen.org/podcast, or download the 4word app and click on "Podcast."

Over 2000 years ago a movement called "The Way" burst into the world and began to multiply in unprecedented and astonishing ways. This movement, ushered in by Jesus himself, is still bringing restoration and hope to the world, and as women of faith in the marketplace, we have a special invitation to launch and lead movements within Jesus' over-arching movement – movements that bring heaven to earth.

Movements can happen in all kinds of spheres, and they take on many shapes and have different themes. But Keri Ladoucuer defines a Kingdom of God movement as a group of people with a shared imagination for how the world could be better in ways that promote the flourishing of all people. Movements like that require great leaders. And at this present moment in our culture, women in the workplace are particularly suited to launch and lead movements that change the world.

In decades past, models of leadership were derived in male-dominated cultures and were based on systems such as patriarchy or supremacy. But cracks developed in these old leadership models, and the cracks reveal their ultimate weaknesses. We need to move away from systems and models that focus on domination and competition to find new and better ways to think about leadership. We need leadership models based on qualities that are typically perceived as feminine.

Keri is no stranger to movements, and she sees at least seven movement-making opportunities for a new leadership paradigm built on the best qualities that women have to offer:

1. Women tend to see leadership as the tide that "lifts all boats" - not just the fastest boats!

Our definition of leadership matters, and over the past few years there's been a shift in the way we evaluate the effectiveness of a leader. The best leaders aren't concerned about being the "smartest person in the room." Rather, the best leaders are those who know how to ask the best questions. These are the kinds of leaders who elevate the purposes of everyone around them rather than objectifying employees for their own purposes and advancement. Leadership isn't necessarily about being out front or being "the best" - it's understanding the value and benefit of creating systems that lift everyone up and allow all voices to be heard.

2. Women seek to build ecosystems instead of empires.

Effective leaders are less concerned with their own image, their personal brand, and self-promotion. Great leaders work to harness the gifts and talents of the entire team, because they have the best intentions for the people and the purposes they are stewarding. Leaders like this seek to build interconnected ecosystems where there is **mutual** flourishing.



Systems based on power and control pit people against each other in contests of ego, competition, and one-upping. These power-based systems are harmful because they create unhealthy competition, and competition breeds scarcity. When everyone is allowed to contribute to problem solving, visioning, and strategizing, ego and competition take a back seat. And a culture of abundance is unleashed. When people own something together, they are empowered to reach higher and do better as a team.

3. Healthy women leaders value collaboration over competition.

Effectual leadership is about unlocking collaboration. And as mentioned before, when people are invited to the table and involved in creating solutions, their mentality tends to shift from scarcity to abundance. This mindset allows the whole team to take new ground for a higher purpose.

Before the pandemic, studies showed that 70-80% of employees felt disengaged from their job – and those figures are most likely higher post-pandemic. When we foster collaboration, employees begin to own the plans and solutions they helped create, and they become enthusiastic about seeing them through.

4. Grounded women leaders lean into empathy, intuition, and emotional health rather than relying solely on “rational” thinking.

Male dominated paradigms tend to prioritize rational thinking. But new research on emotional health indicates that rational thinking isn’t really “a thing.” We all have emotions, intuition, and stories we’re telling ourselves, and all of this influences our thinking. Leaders who attempt to lead with rational thinking alone are simply disconnected from themselves because they are disconnected from intuition and empathy – and that’s a dangerous way to lead.

When we connect to our intuition, we have access to some of our best ideas and solutions for making the world better. And we’re able to make better decisions. Some of our best dreams come from our God-given, Spirit-led inner wisdom, and when our mental health, our empathy, and our intuition all get activated in our leadership we’re able to make more informed and effective leadership decisions.

5. Women prioritize overall comprehensive impact over “up and to the right success.”

When we care about the “means” and not just the “ends” we are able lead more robust, fruitful movements. Movements that focus on Kingdom-oriented impact have the potential to lead to the flourishing of all people. And, as followers of Jesus, that’s the work we’re called to do. The work and ministry of Jesus brought the Kingdom of God to “earth as it is in heaven,” and we’re invited to continue that work with Jesus.

6. Women pursue the actual embodiment of their values – they are less likely to embrace empty aspirational vision statements.



In God's Kingdom **how** we do what we do matters as much, if not more, than **what** we do. How we embody our beliefs means more than just believing intellectually that we are "right." When we embody and live out the values of God's kingdom, we can't help being transformational leaders! Kingdom oriented leadership might not look like some of the paradigms of leadership in the world, but this kind of leadership has the potential to unleash movements that make a real difference.

7. Women value transformational leadership over transactional leadership.

Transactional leaders are focused on short-term gains and the bottom line. They tend to ask only one question: "Are things moving up and to the right presently?"

Transformational leadership takes a step back and asks a set of different questions: "Are we helping or harming the environment?" "Are we objectifying employees to get them to produce more?" "Is the bottom line increasing while the mental health of our employees decreases?" Transformational leadership is far more potent in the long term because transformational leaders know that the ends don't always justify the means. They are keenly aware that engaged, emotionally healthy employees are essential for sustainable growth.

Keri Ladoucuer is helping leaders launch and lead movements that bring heaven to earth in the church and the marketplace. Her advice for women who sense God's call is compelling:

As a woman leader, you have wise, grounded, Spirit-led, profound intuition. And that wisdom within you wants to be unleashed because God has given that wisdom to you. So, give yourself permission to dream big Kingdom dreams, and allow God to unleash the vision inside your heart. God has given you gifts, and the world desperately needs what you have to offer. When God stirs those visions and passions inside of you, there's a movement waiting to be born – a movement that can bring flourishing to the world around you.

Discussion Questions

1. Which of the seven opportunities for women's leadership captured your attention most? Why?
2. How do you tap into empathy and intuition in your leadership and work? Do you sense that these qualities are welcomed and valued in your workplace?
3. Have you ever had a boss or leader who promoted "mutual flourishing" for those he or she led? What was this work experience like?
4. What dreams, visions, and passions for making the world a better place has God been stirring in your heart?
5. What do you plan to do right now to move out and follow God?



Keri is the Community Pastor at Community Christian Church in Naperville, IL, and founder of New Ground Network. As a coach, Keri has served pastors and church leaders by facilitating processes that catalyze them towards seizing their unique vision and develop their team's capacity. Her coaching has been shaped as a former marketplace executive, a pastor and senior leader at Willow Creek Community Church, with more than a decade of coaching Pastors and non-profit leaders. The thrill of launching more than 90 missional communities and having a front-row seat to the missional engagement of 100s of churches is exhilarating to her. She is an associate on the Exponential team where she teaches at conferences and contributes to their leadership resources. Her newest project is launching a podcast that facilitates conversations exploring the tension of following Jesus and the invitation for the Church to pace culture.

Keri, her husband Marc, and their two kids (Leah and Liam) have a blast looking for adventure in their hometown of Naperville, IL and exploring their awesome downtown of Chicago, IL.



Marion is the Director of Programs for 4word. Marion served in pastoral ministry for 17 years at three local churches including, most recently, Willow Creek Community Church. During her church ministry, she incorporated her organizational development skills with her practical knowledge of effective discipleship to create growth strategies that focused on the equipping and mobilization of congregations on the mission of Jesus. She holds degrees from Trinity International University and Wheaton College in Organizational Leadership and Missional Church Movement.



***4word** is a global community of Christian women in the workplace. Our mission is to help women in the workplace reach their God-given potential with confidence.*

Why 4word?

At 4word, we know you want to reach your God-given potential so you can have a Kingdom impact on your workplace and the world. To do that, you need resources for professional and spiritual growth - and a community of like-minded women to cheer you on!

The problem is your time is limited and meaningful connections are hard to find. This can leave you feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, and isolated on your life's journey.

We believe you shouldn't have to navigate work, life and faith on your own because God designed you for community. You are worthy to be surrounded by loving and supportive women who "get you."

We understand you face unique challenges as a Christian woman in the workplace, which is why we create easy-access opportunities for leadership development, spiritual growth, and connections to influential women around the globe.

Our Simple Empowerment Plan:

- Connect to a community – We offer virtual and in-person Community Groups specifically designed for working women – and we also have special groups for executive women.
- Access relevant content – 4word's podcast, blog, and our Community Group Discussion Guides are specifically geared to women in the workplace to help thrive on your journey.
- Get matched with a mentor – From our pool of over 220 amazing mentors we connect you with the right fit for a transformational mentoring experience through 4word's Mentor Program.



Join the Journey to empower 10 million Christian women in the workplace to change the world by 2030. Click the picture below to learn more.



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