

IHA CEO WOMEN'S FORUM RESOURCES

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Two firms that do board search (along with executive search): WittKieffer and Korn Ferry

Two firms that do board candidate placement: (Kim notes that she has not had personal experience with these organizations, so can't recommend one way or the other)

himforher.org
theboardlist.com

- **“Taking a Seat (On a Board) to Advance Your Career,”** Healthcare Executive Podcast, American College of Healthcare Executives, June 15, 2022.
https://soundcloud.com/healthcare-executive/taking-a-seat-on-a-board-to-advance-your-career?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing
- **“How to Position Yourself for a Board Seat,”** WittKieffer Podcast, July 5, 2022.
[How to Position Yourself for a Board Seat - WittKieffer](#)
- **“Are You Ready to Serve on a Board?”** Anthony Hesketh, Jo Sellwood-Taylor and Sharon Mullen, Harvard Business Review, January 31, 2020.
<https://hbr.org/2020/01/are-you-ready-to-serve-on-a-board>
- CEO Newsletter / Your Career / Winter 2014
“Helping Women Succeed to the Highest Levels,”
Rhonda M. Anderson, RN, DNSc, FACHE

The latest research on women CEOs in healthcare reveals that the percentage of women who hold CEO positions has remained fairly constant for nearly 25 years at 11 percent in 2012, the same as in 1990.

The study, however, also reveals that the gap between the number of women CEOs and men CEOs has closed, though this is potentially due to fewer positions available as the healthcare field continues to consolidate. While women CEO numbers aren't at levels many would consider acceptable, all of us have a responsibility and opportunity to foster an environment that encourages our most talented professionals, no matter what gender, to reach their fullest potential.

For the past seven years I have had the privilege to be CEO of Cardon Children's Medical Center, a 206-bed facility with 642 associates located in Mesa, Ariz. The medical center is part of Banner Health system, headquartered in Phoenix, and is among 25 hospitals and facilities that have women CEOs in half of the facilities. While leadership at Banner is evenly distributed among the two

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genders, I personally don't think about it in great detail but do believe the system's hiring practices lend themselves to identifying the best candidates for all the positions in Banner. Like most high-performing organizations, we conduct, over a period of time, an internal talent mapping process of the demonstrated leadership and career aspirations of our associates. This process provides the organization with a nearly seamless transition in leadership. We use a purposeful and focused succession planning program that further helps us grow and place the most qualified individuals into leadership positions.

I have been with Banner Health since 1999, serving in various leadership roles. I myself transitioned to CEO of Cardon Children's Medical Center after having served four years as COO of Banner Desert Medical Center and serving in a pediatric service line leader role for Banner. Never have I had any indication of, or experienced, gender issues at Banner.

I am sure many of us achieved our positions by working hard, accepting new areas of responsibility that challenged our status quo, producing excellent results, mentoring others, and always keeping our focus on the patient and the business of healthcare. We also received mentoring, advice, and guidance while reaching out to others in respectful and compassionate collaboration and networking.

We can do much to help advance women to the highest levels of leadership, and that includes establishing an environment where women don't have to take an "I am a woman" approach and prove something or feel the need to apologize for strengths. There is much we as women CEOs can do to explain that having confidence in one's skills and knowledge is not something to hide. At the same time, one must be clear on the competencies one is lacking and create and implement a plan to enhance those areas for growth. It is also important to "push oneself" to reach outside ones comfort zone and volunteer for new assignments in program leadership, or areas not as familiar.

I participate in ACHE's Leadership Mentoring Network, and I believe it is part of my "giving back" to the profession. I have had the privilege of mentoring and coaching many female ACHE members, and I try to start the mentoring of each mentee with a coaching focus of "stay low on the Ladder of Inference." That means don't place yourself at the top rung of the inference ladder with the belief

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that the playing field isn't level for you and that your journey will be more difficult than a man's journey.

Many times, however, the mentee is already on the top rung and carries the belief "I have to prove something." My response to women when I hear this, and one I encourage all CEOs to convey, is to ask themselves: "What am I trying to achieve in terms of goals for the company or a particular project? Do I have confidence that what I am presenting can be done in a professional, thoughtful, well-researched manner? How will my audience accept my knowledge, wisdom and abilities?" If they start with positive assumptions rather than believing they will not be listened to, their confidence provides them with a foundation of self-assurance and the ability to positively complete the work.

This line of self-preparation and coaching provides the aspiring leader executive presence rather than an "I have something to prove" kind of attitude, which ultimately leads to losing sight of the goal.

Don't Apologize for Your Strengths

Teamwork and assimilating persons with complementary strengths is one key ingredient for success. Sometimes women may feel they have to diminish the fact they have strengths. While women don't have to boast about their strengths, they also don't have to apologize for them. They should, however, identify them and determine how to best apply them to the team's work so an organizational goal can be achieved. As an example, a woman who has a strong financial background and knows how to develop business plans should be encouraged to offer her assistance to do so.

Have Confidence in Your Skills

CEOs know how important it is to assess and acknowledge our areas of strength and areas for growth. To understand our strengths and opportunities for development, many of us have undertaken some self-reflection either informally or formally through structured assessments. At Banner Health we have the benefit of these assessments and the opportunity to discuss with other team members so we can continue to help each other grow and develop. We need to encourage this same approach with other "up and comers." And while it's important for future leaders to dive

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into a project, we must provide support so they learn and succeed. Mentoring, coaching, and facilitating completion of self-assessments and a strong personal/professional growth plan will help us all support our future leaders. As an experienced leader, remember to give back, get involved with ACHE and be an encourager of our future leaders.

Rhonda M. Anderson, RN, DNSc, FACHE, is CEO of Cardon Children's Medical Center; Banner Health, Mesa, Ariz. She can be reached at rhonda.anderson@bannerhealth.com.

CALL OUT

We can do much to help advance women to the highest levels of leadership, and that includes establishing an environment where women don't have to take an "I am a woman" approach. Mentoring, coaching, and facilitating completion of self-assessments and a strong personal and professional growth plan will help us all support our future leader.

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