

3 reasons

female athletes make great leaders

Sure, sports are fun. But don't underestimate the benefits for women and girls and the implications for managers, companies and even countries. Research shows that not only does sport participation help girls to be healthy and more confident, it also can propel them into successful business careers and leadership positions. Additionally, the success of elite female athletes can create a "virtuous cycle" of enhanced perceptions of women, which in turn can contribute to changes in public policy.

1 Sport participation helps girls grow up healthy and confident

Girls who play sports ...

- ... have greater social and economic mobility ...
- ... are less likely to use drugs ...
- ... have greater personal safety ...
- ... and perform better in school ...

... and the differences are even more pronounced for girls from minority groups.

"When girls have equal access to sport, the positive results are undeniable."

Donna de Varona
Olympic champion and Lead Advisor for the EY Women Athletes Business Network

2 Sport experience helps young female leaders rise

74%
of executive women say a background in sport can help accelerate a woman's career.

Women who played sport:

- ▶ See projects through to completion
- ▶ Motivate others
- ▶ Build strong teams

+7% higher annual wages of former athletes vs. non-athletes

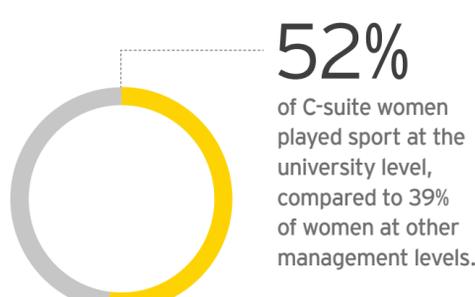
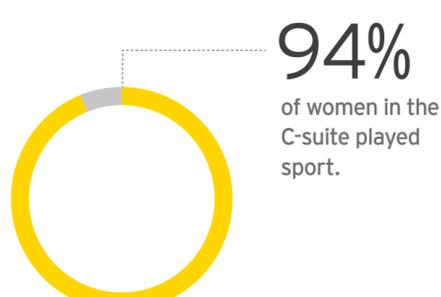
"[Female athletes] have an ability to assess risk and be perhaps a little bit more bold than a lot of other women. Don't hide that. That is going to be very useful."

Claire Shipman
co-author of *The Confidence Code*

"Progress may not be a straight line – but we do know, with tremendous clarity, that sports turns girls into women who lead. Provide them with sports experience, and watch female leaders rise."

Julie Foudy
Captain, Olympian and World Cup Champion, US Title IX scholarship recipient and top broadcast journalist at espnW/ESPN

3 Sport backgrounds help C-suite leaders succeed



Big impact

Elite women athletes make a big impact too. Women's success in sport – especially at global events such as the Olympic Games – feeds into changes in perceptions of a woman's status in society at large.

Another perk: when countries value gender parity through better education, more labor force participation, good women's health care and other female-friendly policies, their female athletes bring home more Olympic medals.

Some female leaders with sport backgrounds:

Hillary Clinton
Former US Senator and Secretary of State, played several sports including basketball, soccer and softball

Ellen Kullman
Former Chair and CEO, DuPont, played college basketball at Tufts University

Condoleezza Rice
Former US National Security Adviser and Secretary of State, was a competitive ice skater

Christine Lagarde
Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, was a member of the French national synchronized swimming team

"You become somebody who can take the lead, somebody who can think, somebody who can decide. It empowers you."

Nawal El Moutawakel
Olympic gold medalist from Morocco, now Vice President of the International Olympic Committee

"If you are serious about wanting to advance more women into leadership roles, you can't underestimate the role of sport."

Beth Brooke-Marciniak
Global Vice Chair of Public Policy, EY

Where will you find your next leader?

To learn how EY is harnessing the leadership potential of women athletes, visit ey.com/womenathletesnetwork. To follow the stories of and get inspired by athletes who will become next generation leaders, visit espnW.com.