

## TED TALK LESSON

### HOW DIVERSITY MAKES TEAMS MORE INNOVATIVE

#### TEACHER'S NOTES

CREATED BY  
ESLDEBATES.COM



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How diversity makes teams more innovative

[https://www.ted.com/talks/rocio\\_lorenzo\\_want\\_a\\_more\\_innovative\\_company\\_hire\\_more\\_women](https://www.ted.com/talks/rocio_lorenzo_want_a_more_innovative_company_hire_more_women)

#### Group discussion task (potential answers):

1. Change the narrative. Framing the idea as increasing diversity, or increasing intellectual diversity, or allowing for different points of view in the leadership can help. Just saying we have a quota will create negative reactions.
2. Critical mass. Studies have shown that once there are roughly 20% of positions are women then the culture of the department changes and their isolation ends. At 40% then the department will see the benefits of female leadership, and the previous culture has reversed.
3. Research has shown that people have prototypes about the ideal worker, or the ideal leader, which is typically male. Recruiters need to expand their idea of an ideal candidate beyond the male prototype and create a large pool of qualified female candidates.
4. Discomfort is to be expected. Moving to quotas may not be a smooth process. Even in Norway, where there is general satisfaction with quotas now, there was a period of transition. Organizational change is never easy, but it is the price to pay for the benefits

#### Vocab matching answers

1. d
2. f
3. h
4. e
5. j
6. c
7. i
8. a
9. b
10. l
11. g
12. k

#### Ted Talk video answers

1. Management consultant.
2. Yes.
3. Requires more effort and time, but they do generate more creative ideas.
4. 171.
5. Gender, nationality, career, industry, age, and education.
6. 70%
7. False, it's more than 20%
8. False, the data shows the opposite. The number of women in leadership roles has not matched the rate of women who are educated and have 10 years of experience.

# Warmer questions

- Where you work or go to school how many men to women are there? Is it in equal numbers?
- How many male business leaders can you think of?
- How many female leaders can you think of?
- What changes will you see in the future with gender and leadership?

## Reading section



### One small step for a woman

There is a revolution happening in businesses all across the world. No, it's not related to finance, technology, or politics. Instead, the change is coming with women in the boardroom. While over the last 50 years great progress has been made in how women are being represented under the law, little change has occurred at the very top of society. Many leaders in politics and business are still mainly men. The UK, Germany, and other nations have now made legal requirements to have more gender diversity in leadership positions.

***Only 5% of the 500 CEOs on the 2016 Fortune 500 list are women, a mere 27 out of 500.***

[source: <https://www.gendereconomy.org/the-debate-about-quotas/>]

It is however, true that there is a steady stream of women who are joining the elite ranks of company leaders. That said, progress is slow and at current rates achieving 30% female representation on boards of directors would require at least 30 years.

If there is a desire to make changes at the very top of companies, legal methods must be employed.

## Some Countries Are Using Quotas to Drive Up Numbers

Women's Global Representation on Boards, 2010-2017

| Country        | % Women Directorships, 2017 <sup>17</sup> | % Women Directorships, 2010 <sup>18</sup> | % With Three or More WOB, 2017 <sup>19</sup> | % With One or More WOB, 2017 <sup>20</sup> | % With Zero WOB, 2017 <sup>21</sup> | Quota and Year Introduced <sup>22</sup> |
|----------------|---|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Australia      | 28.7%                                     | 10.2%                                     | 48.5%  | 95.6%                                      | 4.4%                                | No                                      |
| Canada         | 25.8%                                     | 12.9%                                     | 57.9%  | 95.8%                                      | 4.2%                                | Pending                                 |
| Finland        | 33.7%                                     | 24.2%                                     | 75.0%  | 100.0%                                     | 0.0%                                | Yes, 2008                               |
| France         | 40.8%                                     | 12.7%                                     | 100.0%                                       | 100.0%                                     | 0.0%                                | Yes, 2010                               |
| Germany        | 20.9%                                     | 10.7%                                     | 80.0%  | 94.5%                                      | 5.5%                                | Yes, 2015                               |
| India          | 13.8%                                     | 4.5%                                      | 13.2%  | 93.4%                                      | 6.6%                                | Yes, 2013                               |
| Italy          | 35.8%                                     | 3.6%                                      | 100.0%                                       | 100.0%                                     | 0.0%                                | Yes, 2011                               |
| Japan          | 5.3%                                      | 0.9%                                      | 0.6%   | 47.7%                                      | 52.3%                               | No                                      |
| Netherlands    | 22.1%                                     | 13.9%                                     | 57.1%  | 96.4%                                      | 3.6%                                | Yes, 2013                               |
| Switzerland    | 21.3%                                     | 9.2%                                      | 35.0%  | 97.5%                                      | 2.5%                                | Yes <sup>23</sup>                       |
| United Kingdom | 26.8%                                     | 8.9%                                      | 64.3%  | 100.0%                                     | 0.0%                                | No                                      |
| United States  | 21.7%                                     | 12.3%                                     | 39.2%  | 97.4%                                      | 2.6%                                | No                                      |

Source: <https://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-corporate-boards>

## Quotas

To improve the gender ratio in senior boardroom positions Germany and (soon to be) California is going to require by law to have a certain percentage of female leaders. There is some controversy in doing so. Some think that having a minimum number of female leaders would mean that 'lesser' qualified workers are placed in senior positions. Studies (like that of the TED Talk in this lesson) show that this is not the case, as the pool of qualified, educated, and experienced workers are increasing each year.

Some have been trying to understand why this might be the case. A study in Canada has shown that perhaps the reason is not merit but image related. Many senior leaders have an image of the "ideal worker" or the "best characteristics" for a CEO. These images do not function around skills but perception and as such, female candidates are excluded.

***There is hostility toward quotas in countries that don't have them and enthusiasm for quotas in countries that do have them.*** [Source: <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/FacultyAndResearch/ResearchCentres/GE-backup/Research/ResearchBriefs/-/media/7FF5BB639953481AACF86ECF31AE3A77.ashx>]

## Group Discussion task

Imagine you are the leader of a large company in a developed country. You currently have 80 senior managers and leaders but they are all men. You want to have more gender diversity in the firm. Consider the following questions;

- People view quotas as being negative as some people would feel women being promoted is just to increase diversity. How would you change the image of quotas?
- If there is a single woman in a group of other leaders, there is a tendency for her to be isolated and opinions ignored. What method would you use to avoid this?
- How would you define an ideal candidate for promotion or hiring for leadership positions?
- There may be a negative reaction from male members of the organisation, how would you reduce this discomfort?

### Notes

# Vocabulary matching

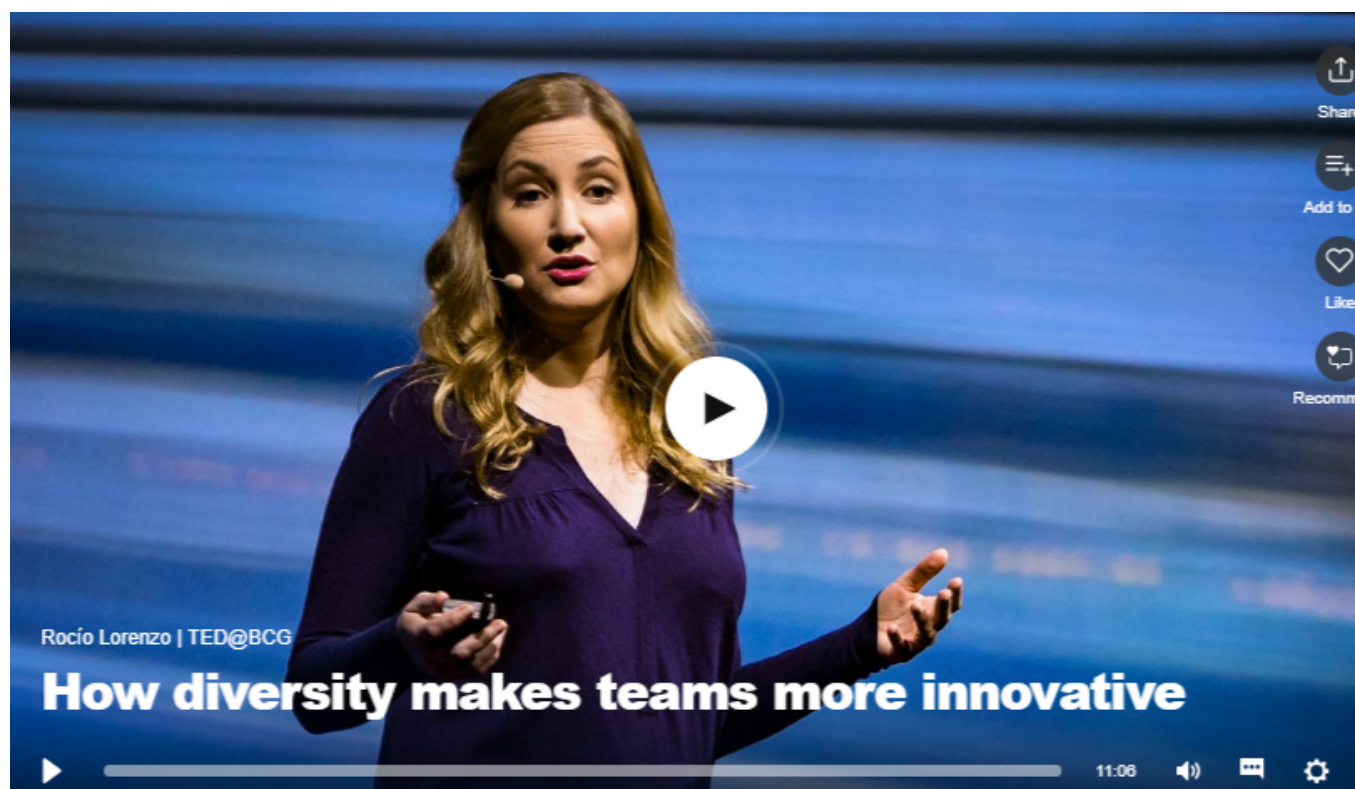
Using the words on the left match them to their real definitions.

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. . Diversity           | a. A company's income.   |
| 2. Innovative            | b. A standard which something can be judged.                                   |
| 3. Homogenous            | c. A product or service which makes a company have an advantage in the market. |
| 4. Political correctness | d. When there is a variety of people.  |
| 5. Ratio                 | e. A type of expression which can insult socially disadvantaged people.        |
| 6. Competitive advantage | f. New ideas, methods, and thinking.   |
| 7. Comply                | g. When lots of pieces of evidence can be grouped together                     |
| 8. Revenue               | 8. Revenue h. When objects are similar, matching, alike.                       |
| 9. Criteria              | i. Following someone's wish or demand.   |
| 10. Leadership style     | j. The number of two objects relative to each other.                           |
| 11. Correlation          | k. When once action can be the result of another action.                       |
| 12. Causation            | l. The culture of the decision makers.   |

## Video section

Are diverse companies really more innovative? Rocío Lorenzo and her team surveyed 171 companies to find out – and the answer was a clear yes. In a talk that will help you build a better, more robust company, Lorenzo dives into the data and explains how your company can start producing fresher, more creative ideas by treating diversity as a competitive advantage.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/rocio\\_lorenzo\\_want\\_a\\_more\\_innovative\\_company\\_hire\\_more\\_women/up-next](https://www.ted.com/talks/rocio_lorenzo_want_a_more_innovative_company_hire_more_women/up-next)



Watch the video and then answer the questions below

1. What was Rocio's job in Europe?
2. According to Rocio, diversity is a business priority?
3. What is her experience of working with diverse teams?
4. How many companies were used in the first survey?
5. What are the dimensions of diversity?
6. What percentage of public companies in Germany have an all-male board?
7. According to Rocio, a company would need to have 80% women leaders for it to become more innovative? (true or false)
8. According to Rocio, having more educated female workers over time leads to more female CEO and board members? (true or false)

## Advantages of female executive quotas

1. While there are fears of implementing a quota system once a company becomes more familiar with the new system the process is a lot smoother. Sometimes the fear of a scheme is only through it being unfamiliar and not because it is a bad idea.
2. There is a fear that there are not enough women who are able to take these jobs. This is simply not true, there are many women in the workforce with over ten years of experience who can take up the executive roles. By expanding their search away from traditional routes there is a way to find candidates who are more than qualified to do the job.
3. Given time the culture around female executives and any stigma will disappear. It takes time to adjust to a new working environment.
4. Women are able to bring more varied work and life experiences to the role. They are able to see problems differently and find alternative solutions. New points of view are always welcome to find solutions.
5. Move society forward. The quota system will serve as a method to make wider society better for everyone through representation. Companies can now say they represent their customer in the highest levels of a company. Meanwhile in the home children and family members will see that life is changing for the better and can be inspired in the process. Daughters will look up to the mothers for what they are doing and will eventually follow in their footsteps.

## Disadvantages of female executive quotas

1. In some areas around the world, it may be illegal to have a fixed number of women in the workplace. Some countries enforce strict equality law and so introducing quotas would be breaking this rule.
2. Can create a psychological loss for other employees and workers in a company. Even if the process is for the benefit of everyone, some may seem to find it unfair and later support for quotas will be lost.
3. Stigma. Once women enter positions of leadership others may think their place is not earned and so they can be ignored. Their opinions and voice will seem to be less valid.
4. Increased isolation. While it takes at least 20% of the leadership positions to be female for culture change to occur. Any women entering these jobs before this is reached are at risk of being isolated. This could be social, political, and emotional.
5. If others see this arrangement as being unfair, then male applicants may refuse to apply for these jobs, as it is now seen to be unfair to men. If this situation continues for an extended period then the department of workgroup will have less talent drawn to work there.
6. If more support is given to women then there is a chance that minority groups will not get the right funding and leadership support to help their diversity numbers.
7. Quotas that were introduced in Norway led to 40% of executive positions being held by women. While this is positive, the change did not lead to an increase in female employees at other levels of businesses.
8. Having women promoted the executive level may not stop discrimination against women. The stigma and underlying discrimination can still persist but may not be dealt with as the company is now acting to comply with the law and not the spirit of the law.

## Extended discussion questions

1. Do you think the world currently favours men over women? why or why not?
2. When do you think there will be a time when companies have 50% female executives on their boards?
3. Would you want your daughter to be a business leader? Why or why not?
4. Will there ever be a time in the world when society will no longer discuss gender differences?
5. Is there a difference in how men and women understand a problem and then try to find a solution to it?
6. Do men and women have different leadership styles?

## Potential debating topics

1. More women in the boardroom will lead to more problems.
2. Women make better leaders and role models.
3. Should women desire leadership jobs?
4. More female leaders will lead to higher profits for a company.
5. Women face discrimination in the workplace



# DEBATING PLANS

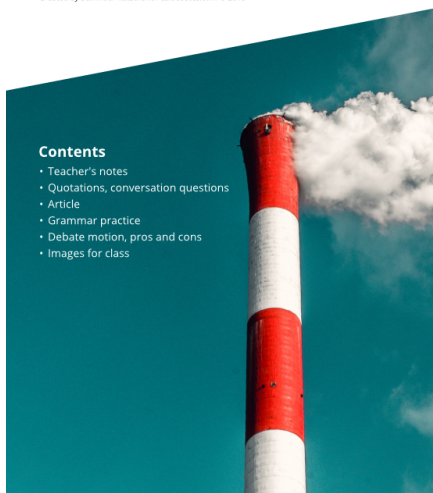
## PREMIUM 30-PAGE DEBATING LESSONS ON DOZENS OF TOPICS

These lessons are extensive and includes a magazine-like introduction, a 2-page article, vocabulary section, grammar exercises, and images for discussion. To help students organize their debate, worksheets are included for appropriate language and pros and cons to get them started. In total these lesson plans offer 30 pages of activities and tasks for students.

### Environmental Crimes

#### Debate Lesson Plan

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#### Contents

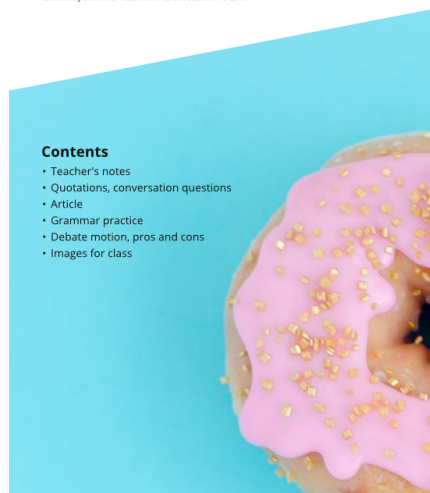
- Teacher's notes
- Quotations, conversation questions
- Article
- Grammar practice
- Debate motion, pros and cons
- Images for class

Should natural features be given legal rights to protect them from pollution? This debate will target issues relating to how to legally protect the environment and criminalise pollution.

### Food Tax

#### Debate Lesson Plan

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#### Contents

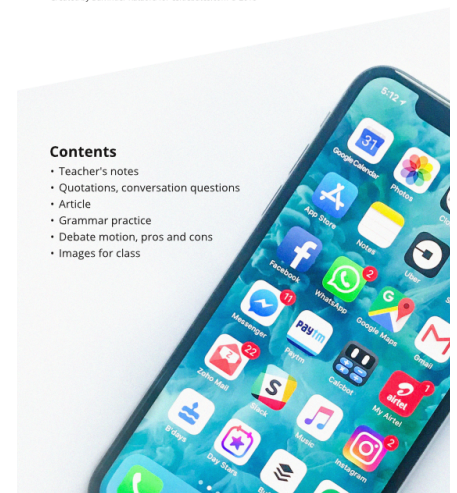
- Teacher's notes
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- Debate motion, pros and cons
- Images for class

What are the best ways to tackle obesity? Some people advocate better food education, while others want to tax people to change their spending habits. Which is the most effective?

### Social Media

#### Debate Lesson Plan

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#### Contents

- Teacher's notes
- Quotations, conversation questions
- Article
- Grammar practice
- Debate motion, pros and cons
- Images for class

People are becoming increasingly concerned about social media. Discuss the main issues and find out what your students think and why.