



## **Women Leaders Break Through the Glass Ceiling Only to Face the Dangers of the Glass Cliff**

### **Description:**

A great deal has been written about the pathways and barriers to women's advancement into leadership positions. Concepts such as the glass ceiling, concrete walls, sticky floors and career labyrinths have received significant attention in research and popular media.

Another potential obstacle for this new wave of women in leadership roles is the danger of the "glass cliff." This phenomenon happens when women achieve leadership roles during periods of downturn, crisis, conflict or failure within the organization. These are high-risk leadership assignments for which women and diverse leaders may take the blame if the organization or situation does not rapidly improve under their leadership. So, women may break through the glass ceiling to reach top leadership roles, only to fall off of the glass cliff if the organization does not recover from the problems they inherited. The existence of the glass cliff is confirmed by research that women and people of color are more likely to be promoted to CEO of weak performing or troubled firms.

This panel will outline problems facing women & the organizations they occupy:

- Glass ceilings
- Broken rungs
- Glass cliffs
- Glass slippers

### **Reference materials:**

- [The New Wave of Women Leaders](#)
- [Women Leaders Break Through the Glass Ceiling Only to Face the Dangers of the Glass Cliff](#)
- [Women in the Workplace](#)
- [How reverse mentorship can help create better leaders](#)
- [The invisible danger of the 'glass cliff'](#)
- [The 'glass cliff' is a serious problem for women in corporate America. Here's how to dismantle it.](#)
- [Why women are still falling off the glass cliff](#)
- [MCCA Research Report](#)