



FLEETCOR® Retains Female Employees by Empowering Them

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Source: Crystal Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer

As the Covid-19 pandemic wanes, we are experiencing a different crisis - a "she-session." According to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), women lost more than 5.4 million net jobs from February 2020 to the end of that year, which accounted for 55% of the job losses due to the pandemic. Many women were either downsized or were forced to take on full-time childcare as daycare centers and schools closed.

Those issues are mainly behind us now, but in the aftermath, while men have nearly all gone back to work, more than 1.1 million fewer women are working now than in February 2020. Many women want more work-life balance and will seek more flexible work options to get it. At FLEETCOR, we listen and act, first by ensuring there are women in positions of leadership.

According to a [McKinsey report](#), company profits and share performance can be close to 50 percent higher when women are well represented at the top. Further, senior-level women are more likely to embrace employee-friendly policies and champion racial and gender diversity. They are also more likely to mentor and sponsor other women. A great example is our chief accounting officer, [Alissa Vickery](#), who founded and is president of [Women of University of Georgia](#) Leadership Council, which fosters personal and professional growth of female alumni.

If women leaders leave the workforce, women at all levels could lose their most powerful allies and champions.

When I started working for FLEETCOR in 2003, there was women leadership mentorship groups only existed at very large companies, remote or hybrid work arrangements did not exist, and the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#) was a mere ten years old.

Fast forward to today, when FLEETCOR operates globally using a hybrid work model. We not only offer FMLA, but we also provide a very generous leave policy for moms and dads having or adopting babies. And we created Employee Resource Groups in three of our major regions—Europe, Brazil and North America—to foster female leadership within FLEETCOR.

FLEETCOR has made additional efforts to hire and retain women by implementing the Rooney Rule, where you must have at least one woman as a finalist in the hiring process before proceeding to onboard to help ensure one-quarter of the leadership team are women.

We try to foster a strong company culture and build trust between employer and employee, lead with empathy and focus on the small lift, big impact changes. For example, we encourage managers to avoid routinely scheduling 8 a.m. or 5 p.m. team meetings in consideration of employees who may have to juggle childcare or other personal obligations. And even in-office meetings should have a remote option for those who need the flexibility.

We are continuing to learn and grow in our support of women in the workplace, but I'm proud of the progress our team has made to create a more nurturing and equitable work environment. The pandemic opened a lot of eyes to the need for hybrid work models and more flexible scheduling. Now we must keep learning and adapting to ensure we create a workplace where everyone can thrive.