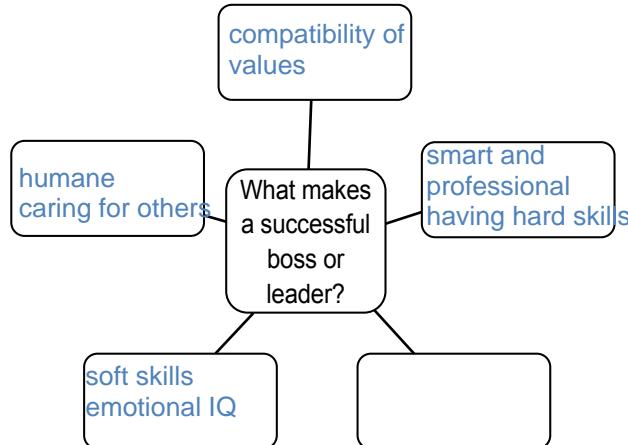


\$2bn woman: how Sheryl Sandberg became one of tech's most successful bosses

Level 3: Advanced

1 Warmer

a. What makes a successful boss or leader? Complete the mind map. Then, discuss your answers.



2 Key words

a. Write the correct words from the wordpool to complete the definitions below. Then, find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

activist	adversity	advocate	disinformation	influential
initial public offering (IPO)	instrumental	legacy	manipulation	misogyny
philosophical	right-wing	testify	unwavering	void
				whistleblower

1. having a powerful effect, on someone or something influential
2. essential in causing something to happen instrumental
3. never changing, moving, or looking away from something unwavering
4. the first sale of a company's shares to the public IPO
5. something related to the study of the nature and meaning of the universe and human life philosophical
6. a person who tells people in authority or the public that the company they work for is doing something wrong or illegal whistleblower
7. a person who believes strongly in political or social change and takes action to try to make this happen activist

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8. things that somebody has done successfully, having positive effects even after they retire or die
legacy

9. a person who supports or speaks in favour of someone or a public plan or action
advocate

10. supporting the conservative policies of the political right, which typically support capitalism and private businesses and are generally opposed to social change right-wing

11. a feeling of hate or dislike towards women or that women are not as good as men
misogyny

12. false information that is given deliberately disinformation

13. state that something happened or is true, especially in a court of law testify

14. something done to control or influence someone or something, usually in a dishonest way
manipulation

15. a difficult or unpleasant situation adversity

16. a large, empty space or hole void

b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity. You might have to change the form of the word.

1. His parents' unwavering support helped him achieve his dreams.

2. The journalist interviewed the whistleblower about safety issues she discovered at her company.

3. More and more disinformation is being circulated on social media, so it's important to fact-check what you see and read.

4. Famous people's opinions are often influential for the general public.

5. The political activists began protesting outside government buildings early this morning.

6. The witnesses were asked to testify in the trial.

7. How do you handle difficult situations and adversity?

8. The right-wing politicians did not support expanding social programmes, such as food aid and medical care for people experiencing poverty.

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9. Women often experience misogyny from male colleagues at work.
10. How can anyone fill the void of a broken heart?
11. When the teacher retired, his school reflected on her thirty-year legacy of supporting her students.
12. When the CFO's stock manipulation was exposed, he was forced to resign.

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Level 3: Advanced

Sandberg was once considered so critical to Facebook's success that her exit was seen as potential risk to investors' money

Rupert Neate

18 January, 2024

- 1 Mark Zuckerberg hired Sheryl Sandberg as Facebook's chief operating officer in 2008 as the social network was growing fast and trying to attract investment. Zuckerberg, who founded Facebook in his Harvard dorm room, was just 23 – Sandberg, then 38, was "the adult in the room".
- 2 The former sales executive at Google and chief of staff at the US Treasury rose to become one of the most influential figures in the global technology sector and one of very few women at the top of the industry. She also made a lot of money – she is now worth close to 2 billion US dollars.
- 3 Sandberg, now 54, left that role in June 2022, and on 17 January, she announced she was leaving Meta's board too. "This feels like the right time to step away," she wrote in a Facebook post, as Meta was "well-positioned for the future".
- 4 "Thank you, Sheryl, for the extraordinary contributions you have made to our company and community over the years," said Zuckerberg, the world's sixth-richest person with an estimated 133 billion US dollars. "Your dedication and guidance have been **instrumental** in driving our success and I am grateful for your unwavering commitment to me and Meta over the years."
- 5 Sandberg was one of six executive officers named when Facebook filed for an initial public offering in 2012. With her exit, only Zuckerberg remains. She had been seen as so critical to the company's success she was named alongside the founder as one of the key personnel who posed a potential risk to investors' money if they were to leave.

Zuckerberg and Sandberg met at a Christmas party at the home of Dan Rosensweig, a Silicon Valley executive in 2007. "We talked for probably an hour by the door," Zuckerberg told the *New Yorker*. They went on to have twice-weekly dinners at Sandberg's house. Dave Goldberg, Sandberg's late husband, said it was like they were "dating".

- 6 "What do you believe? What do you care about? What's the mission? It was very philosophical," Sandberg said. Describing her role at Facebook, Zuckerberg has said she "handles things I don't want to. All that stuff that in other companies I might have to do. And she's much better at that."
- 7 That "stuff" included developing an advertising strategy to make the company hundreds of billions a year and hiring and firing employees. She also handled political and ethical issues, dealing with the Cambridge Analytica breach, the January 2021 attack on the US Capitol and the documents leaked by the whistleblower Frances Haugen that revealed some of the platform's most toxic impacts.
- 8 The run of scandals prompted activists to call for Sandberg's resignation and question her legacy as a women's rights advocate. Shaunna Thomas, the co-founder of women's rights group UltraViolet, has said that under Sandberg's watch, Meta platforms became "a right-wing playground where misogyny, racism, disinformation" grew.
- 9 "Sheryl Sandberg may fancy herself a feminist, but her decisions at Meta made social-media platforms less safe for women, people of colour and the American electoral system," Thomas said. "Sandberg had the power to take action for 14 years, yet consistently chose not to."
- 10 However, Debra Williamson, an analyst at Insider Intelligence, said: "There have been plenty of controversies surrounding Meta, but from a purely business standpoint, what she built at Facebook is pretty powerful and will go down in the history books."
- 11 Sandberg testified in front of Congress in 2018 to answer for Facebook's missteps and allegations of voter manipulation in the 2016 election and again in 2021 regarding the company's role in the Capitol riots.

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- 12 As well as running one of the world's largest technology companies, she has also found time to write two books. 2013's *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* became an international bestseller and established Sandberg as a leader in female empowerment.
- 13 "What we realised is that in order to really get to equality, equality in leadership everywhere, from our parliaments to our statehouses to our homes, we're going to have to go younger," she said last year. "Who wants to say to a girl seven years before she enters the workforce, 'One day you're going to be in a meeting and some man is going to talk over you, voice something you just said and get credit for your ideas.'"
- 14 Her second book, *Option B*, is "about facing adversity, building resilience, and finding joy" and focuses on her husband's death. "I was in 'the void,'" she wrote, "a vast emptiness that fills your heart and lungs and restricts your ability to think or even breathe."
- 15 Sandberg will now spend more time working with a foundation she set up to focus on women's issues in the workplace and "build a more equal and resilient world".

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3 Comprehension check

a. Answer the questions using information from the article.

1. What was Sheryl Sandberg's first role at Facebook in 2008? **COO**
2. What were the two previous positions she held before Facebook? **sales exec Google**
3. How much is Sandberg worth, according to the article? **2B** **COS US Treasury**
4. Who is worth more, Sandberg or Zuckerberg? **133B**
5. What happened at Facebook in 2012? **IPO**
6. When and where did Zuckerberg and Sandberg meet? **party in Silicon Valley in 2007**
7. What is some of the “stuff” Sandberg did at Facebook? **advertising strategy, hiring/firing employees**
political /ethical issues
8. What did advocates call for Sandberg to do because of scandals? **Asked her to resign**
9. What are the names of her two books? **Lean In and Option B**
10. What is Sandberg planning to do now? **spend more time on her foundation**

4 Key language

a. Complete the sentences using present perfect. Write if it is being used to talk about a completed action in the past or an action that started in the past and continues.

1. “Thank you, Sheryl, for the extraordinary contributions you (make) _____ **have made** to our company and community over the years,” said Zuckerberg. _____
2. “Your dedication and guidance (be) _____ **have been** instrumental in driving our success ... over the years.” _____
3. Zuckerberg (say) **said/ has said** _____ she “handles things I don’t want to”.

4. Shaunna Thomas (say) **said/ has said** _____ that under Sandberg’s watch, Meta platforms became “a right-wing playground where misogyny, racism, disinformation” grew.

5. Debra Williamson said, “There (be) _____ **have been** plenty of controversies surrounding Meta.” _____

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Level 3: Advanced

b. Rewrite sentences 1-5 using reported speech. Change the tenses, time phrases, and pronouns when necessary.

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- “Equality in leadership is possible in our lifetime.”
- “Age and maturity matter when it comes to leadership.”
- “Women face different standards and scrutiny when they hold leadership positions.”

6 In your own words

a. Do some research about successful women in leadership positions.

- Which industry or sector has the most female leaders?
- Which has the fewest?
- What are some ideas to increase representation in leadership positions?
- What policies or initiatives exist to improve equality in leadership?

b. Report your findings to the class and share your opinions. Here are some phrases to help you when you discuss facts.

According to my research, ...

One policy that is in place aims to ...

One example is ...

Another idea is ...

Some ways to do this are ...

Here are some phrases to use when stating your opinion.

I think (that) ...

In my experience, ...

From my perspective, ...

In my understanding / opinion, ...

I (dis)agree with ...