

# My Change Toolkit

## Module 1 ■ Session 1

**From: I WANT TO CHANGE**



**To: I AM CHANGE**

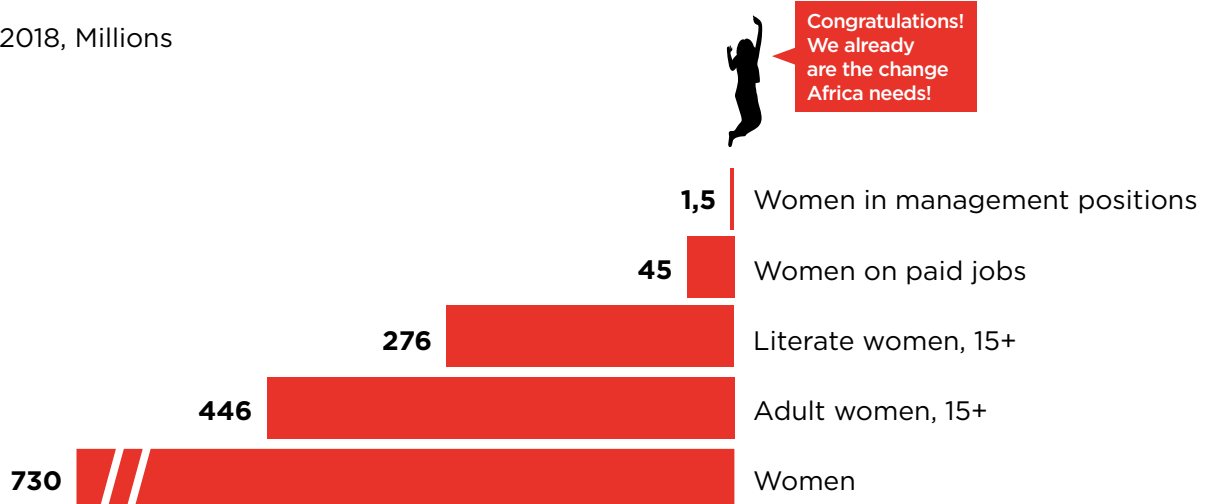
As you may have realized from our introductory guide, we will make a fundamental switch of language and mindset from WILLING & DOING to BEING. This shift is a foundation of personal development tools, positive psychology, and even spiritual teachings meant to anchor us in our real selves rather than in endless Wish and To Do lists.

### 1 out of 500

Let me share with you a great news: we don't have to change anything, because we already are change. Indeed, when we look at the facts, we are 1 out of 500 African women who made it to management positions in the continent, that means that we are 0,2% of African women who incarnate change.

#### Women In Management positions in Africa and Middle-East excl. High income Middle-East countries

2018, Millions



\* Best estimate based on 21% women in management positions with an average management rate of 10 to 20% in African companies based on available data for a sample of countries, giving a range between 1 and 2 million women managers.  
Sources : Worldbank data, ILO stats.

Let's congratulate ourselves and our sisters for what we have achieved together.  
Yeah!!!

I hear you saying, “And now what? Is this the grail we are looking for?” Of course not, **Women Working For Change** want more because we have the ambition and the potential to achieve more!

“We want a fairer, stronger, more competitive African business world, empowered by gender-equal transformative leadership:

**50% women on boards (vs. 25% in 2019<sup>1</sup>).**

**50% women CEOs (vs. 5% in 2016<sup>2</sup>).**

**50% women in management committees (vs. 22% women Exco members in 2019).**

**50% women at the top of Africa’s top 500 companies.**

**50% women in the workplace and equal pay.”**

Let’s see how we can make it to the next level. So far, we have navigated naturally and maybe unconsciously to the management positions we hold. However, each one of us has done it her own way, using her unique strengths to achieve her goals. Do you know yours?

## To the next level

When I work with leading women in different cultures and set ups on their strengths, they all seem to know them. However, when we dive, many find out that they mostly talk about competencies and skills they were expected to develop and for which they have received feedbacks. However, very few knew their unique signature strengths.

The signature strengths have been developed by Martin Seligman and Christopher Peterson from University of Pennsylvania’s Positive Psychology Center defined as “a strength is a trait, a psychological characteristic that can be seen across different situations and over time... They are ubiquitous, valued in almost every culture in the world.” In his book Authentic Happiness, Martin Seligman demonstrates that we are better and happier versions of ourselves when deeply anchored in our unique signature out of 6 virtues and 24 character strengths<sup>3</sup>:

Virtue	Wisdom	Courage	Humanity	Transcendence	Justice	Moderation
Strength	Creativity Curiosity Judgement Love of learning Perspective	Bravery Persistence Honesty Zest	Love Kindness Social Intelligence	Appreciation of beauty Gratitude Hope Humor Spirituality	Teamwork Fairness Leadership	Forgiveness Modesty Prudence Self-control

<sup>1</sup> All 2019 comparisons are based on “The Power of Parity: Advancing women’s equality in Africa” 2019 report by McKinsey Global Institute

<sup>2</sup> The 2016 comparison is based on “Women Matter Africa” 2016 report par McKinsey & Company

<sup>3</sup> Please refer to the Values In Action Character Strengths site for a complete presentation of virtues and strengths <https://www.viacharacter.org/character-strengths>

# My Change Toolkit

## Module 1 ■ Exercise 1

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Your signature includes **5 character strengths** that make you one of a kind.

I suggest guiding you through a simple exercise to raise your awareness about your unique signature strengths so that you can mobilize them more systematically and consciously in your next journey to C-suite, CEO roles, boards memberships, and in any challenge you set for yourself.

### Identify your signature strengths now

Before you start the exercise, please take a moment to sit comfortably, anchor your feet on the ground, close your eyes and take 10 deep breaths following your inbreath and outbreath, repeating silently: “I inhale, I’m aware of my inhale. I exhale, I’m aware of my exhale”.

1. Describe 3 moments of success that you highly value in your leadership journey, for example: academic reward, professional promotion.

For each moment, identify the signature strength(s) that you have developed.

Moments of success	Signature Strength
Moment 1.	
Moment 2.	
Moment 3.	

2. Describe 3 challenging moments in your leadership journey that were really hard for you, for example: academic or professional failure, loss of a loved one.

For each moment, define the signature strength(s) that you have developed.

Challenging moments	Signature Strength
Moment 1.	
Moment 2.	
Moment 3.	

3. Describe one major change that you want to achieve in this moment of your life. Apply your signature strengths to define how best you can make this change happen.

The Change I want to make in my life	My Signature Strengths	My path to make this change happen

Congratulations on identifying some of your signature strengths! If you want go further in this investigation, you can take the full VIA strengths survey test.<sup>5</sup>

## Your signature strengths in action

In the next month, before we make our next step in this change journey, I would like to leave you with the following reflections:

- Observe how you use your signature strengths in your professional and personal life and reflect on how you could mobilize them more often and more accurately;
- Take the chance to help others (colleagues, team members, family members) raise their awareness about their unique signature strengths for example, by asking them how they would do things their own way without constraints, by giving them feedback on what could be one of their real strengths.

I am sure you will find out unique ways to mobilize your and others' signature strengths to support your leadership paths.

I'm really looking forward to meeting in April for the second step of our Change Toolkit's first module that will take us

**From: WE ARE CHANGE**



**To: WE ARE CHANGING ONE ANOTHER**

Faithfully yours,

Kenza Barrada for WOMEN WORKING FOR CHANGE  
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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/questionnaires/survey-character-strengths>

# For more resources on this topic

## ■ POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY CENTERS

University of Pennsylvania – Positive Psychology Center

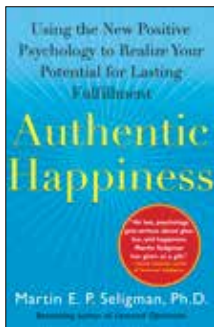
<https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/>

<https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/>

VIA institute on character

<https://www.viacharacter.org/character-strengths>

## ■ PUBLICATIONS



<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/the-power-of-parity-advancing-womens-equality-in-africa>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Women%20matter/Women%20matter%20Africa/Women%20Matter%20Africa%20August%202016.ashx>

## ■ VIDEOS

Définition de la Psychologie Positive par Christophe André (psychiatre et psychothérapeute, chef de file des thérapies comportementales et cognitives en France)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqHLUgpw\\_D8&list=PLa0hwet9MO89IcQPHGI9tj7I2AB-qhp](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqHLUgpw_D8&list=PLa0hwet9MO89IcQPHGI9tj7I2AB-qhp)

Positive Psychology, by Martin Seligman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=faT8jw17RHE&t=35s>

VIA Classifications of Character Strengths and Virtues

<https://www.coursera.org/lecture/positive-psychology-applications/3-2-via-classifications-of-character-strengths-and-virtues-83ktE>