**Twitter has a woman problem: of all its executives and directors, only one is female**

Twitter filed for [an IPO yesterday](http://qz.com/130335/twitter-ipo-filing/), and amidst all the excited speculation, I couldn’t help but notice that yet again, we are about to witness the gender gap in corporate America widen ever so slightly. Among the faces of the [company’s leadership team](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304176904579111293482553988.html#project%3DTWITTER0930%26articleTabs%3Dinteractive), its [executive officers and board of directors](http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1418091/000119312513390321/d564001ds1.htm#toc564001_14), and its [key shareholders](http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1418091/000119312513390321/d564001ds1.htm#toc564001_17), I see only one woman: Vijaya Gadde, Twitter’s general counsel and secretary of the board. I count 11 men, on the other hand, and that’s not including the venture capital firms listed—none of which appears to have a woman partner.

Of course, this won’t likely raise many eyebrows; after all, [only 27% of Fortune 500 companies](http://www.policymic.com/articles/20599/27-of-fortune-500-companies-have-no-women-executives) have even one woman on their executive teams, and women [CEOs head up just 22](http://management.fortune.cnn.com/2013/05/09/women-ceos-fortune-500/) of those 500 firms. And the tech industry is notoriously male-dominated.

In [supposedly-meritocratic](http://www.laurenbacon.com/wp-admin/www.laurenbacon.com/once-and-for-all-tech-is-not-a-meritocracy/) Silicon Valley, it’s unlikely many will bat an eyelash as these men cash in their chips and become wealthy beyond most people’s wildest dreams. While I’m tempted to rail against the economic injustice of it all, and point to [the widening gap](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnijnsM) between America’s wealthiest citizens and the rest of its population, I doubt any of that will convince corporate CEOs or investors to get more women into the C-suite. So let’s talk about the business case for gender diversity.

For starters, there’s the [research showing that diverse teams](http://www.inc.com/lauren-leader-chiv%C3%A9e/diversity-helps-maximize-your-innovation-potential-.html) are more innovative—surely a concern for Twitter as it shifts from a privately-held concern to one that will be working to maximize shareholder returns.

There’s also evidence that companies with [more women on the board](http://www.catalyst.org/media/companies-more-women-board-directors-experience-higher-financial-performance-according-latest) of directors perform substantially better in terms of return on equity, return on sales, and return on invested capital.

And finally, there’s the common-sense argument that if your [customer growth is slowing down](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304176904579111293482553988.html#project%3DTWITTER0930%26articleTabs%3Darticle), and [your user base skews male](http://blog.bufferapp.com/social-media-in-2013-user-demographics-for-twitter-facebook-pinterest-and-instagram), there might be a substantial benefit to getting some women in the room to help you figure out how to get more women using your platform.

Tech may indeed have a [pipeline problem](http://www.forbes.com/sites/dailymuse/2012/03/15/solving-the-pipeline-problem-how-to-get-more-women-in-tech/), but if companies like Twitter want to continue to push the edges of innovation and garner significant shareholder returns, they’d do well to at least get their women-to-men ratio into the double digits.