Executive Coach to Address Pregnancy Loss and Corporate Leadership at Grace Hopper Celebration 2026

On navigating miscarriage while building an executive career

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A session on pregnancy loss and executive leadership has been selected as one of the top-rated talks to emerge from the Call for Participation process for the Grace Hopper Celebration (GHC) 2026, the world's largest gathering of women and non-binary technologists.

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>
> *AnneMarie Otanez*

The session, "Leading Through Loss: 12 Miscarriages & the Corporate Climb," will be presented by Anne Marie Otañez, a Chief of Staff and executive coach who spent more than 20 years in corporate leadership, including a tenure at Microsoft. In it, Otañez will discuss having had 12 miscarriages while working in corporate America the entire time, and what it took to keep climbing the corporate ladder without the workplace recognizing loss as a reason to take time off.

"I've had 12 miscarriages and I've worked for corporate America that whole time, and how this is such a taboo topic and that we need to talk about these things," Otañez said. "Not necessarily to normalize them, but to normalize the fact that everybody has to deal with challenging situations, and sometimes work doesn't give you space to deal with it."

Otañez said the session centers less on the losses themselves than on what she did in response to them. "I anchor on the fact that I have been able to climb the corporate ladder and had to find ways to make space to heal, even though corporate America didn't necessarily recognize loss as a reason for me to take time off," she said.

Miscarriage is common but rarely discussed in professional settings. Estimates put the rate at roughly 10 to 20 percent of known pregnancies, and some research suggests the true figure — including losses that occur before a pregnancy is confirmed — may be considerably higher. Most U.S. employers have no formal policy addressing pregnancy loss specifically, leaving many

employees to navigate it within general sick leave or, often, without any accommodation at all. Sessions addressing the topic directly remain rare at industry conferences, which organizers pointed to as one reason Otañez's proposal stood out during this year's review process.



GHC 2026 takes place October 27–30 at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California, and is hosted by AnitaB.org, the nonprofit behind the annual conference for women in technology. Organizers said Otañez's session was among a small group singled out from this year's Call for Participation for a speaker spotlight ahead of the event, which draws several thousand attendees for keynotes, technical sessions, and career programming.

Otañez is the author of The Chief of Staff: An Insider's Guide to Becoming a Strategic Partner in the Executive Suite and founder of Own Your Power with Anne Marie, which coaches professionals in the chief of staff role. Her previous writing and speaking has focused on organizational alignment and team trust; this session marks a more personal departure from that work.

GHC's 2026 program runs over four days and includes keynotes, technical sessions, and career programming for attendees from academia and industry. More information on the conference is available at ghc.anitab.org.

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