

Lean in! Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg gave Hillary Clinton research on 'gender and leadership' weeks before launch of presidential campaign

- Sandberg met with Clinton insiders who would become senior staffers on the campaign a month before it launched, including pollster Joel Benenson
- Exchange was discovered in the Wikileaks dump of Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta's personal emails
- Facebook says Sandberg's meeting with Clinton's team was personal in nature; she shared research from her book, not the social media platform
- She held similar meetings with other groups, Facebook says, and shared her findings in opinion pieces before the Clinton meeting

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Facebook Chief Operating Officer and Lean In author Sheryl Sandberg gave [Hillary Clinton](#) aides research on 'gender and leadership by women' as they put together the former first lady's presidential campaign.

Sandberg met with Clinton insiders who would become senior staffers on the campaign a month before it launched, including pollster Joel Benenson.

The [exchange](#) was discovered in the Wikileaks dump of Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta's personal emails by [The Daily Caller](#).



Facebook Chief Operating Officer and Lean In author Sheryl Sandberg, left, gave Hillary Clinton aides research on 'gender and leadership by women' as they put together the former first lady's presidential campaign



Sandberg and Clinton hug onstage at the Women for Women 20th Anniversary Gala celebration at the American Museum of Natural History in 2013



Sandberg met with Clinton insiders who would become senior staffers on the campaign a month before it launched. Clinton, seen here at an event on Thursday, announced her bid in April. The meeting took place in March

Cheryl Mills, Clinton's chief of staff at the State Department, wrote in a February 2015 email to Benenson: 'I have arranged for *Sheryl Sandberg and her researcher to be available on 5 March at 10 am to step through the research on gender and leadership by women*. The HRC meeting begins at 11am.'

'Are you available then for such a meeting?' she asked him in the stolen email. 'If so, who else should be included?'

Benenson told her, 'Yes. I can do it. I would also like to bring Katie Connolly, the VP who is working with me on all HRC work if that's OK.'

Connolly is a vice president at Benenson's firm, Benenson Strategy Group.

Mills proceeded to set up the meeting, a follow up email shows, that she invited Benenson, Podesta, Clinton's future deputy communications director, Christina Schake, and communications director, Jennifer Palmieri, to attend.

Palmieri had announced her departure from the White House earlier that month, where she held the same role, to join Clinton's yet-to-be announced campaign.

Facebook was accused by former staffers this year of suppressing conservative news from its trending section. The company denies that charge.

It told DailyMail.com that Sandberg's meeting with Clinton's team was personal in nature. She shared research from her book, not the social media platform.

She held similar meetings with other groups, Facebook said, and shared her findings in opinion pieces for the **New York Times** before the Clinton meeting.

Clinton pronounced her second White House bid on April 12 in a YouTube video.

Sandberg waited more than a year to formally endorse her.

The day Clinton accepted the Democratic nomination for president at the party's quadrennial convention in late July she declared her support in a **Facebook post**.

'Watching this historic moment with my children, I am thinking about our past and their future,' she said. 'But my support for Hillary is not because she is a woman. It is because she is the most qualified candidate—and she is the leader we need.'

Politico reported last month that Sandberg is on the short list for Treasury Secretary if Clinton wins the election.

Like her female boss, Sandberg would be the first woman to hold the high-profile government job.

Women celebrities, athletes star in #LeanInTogether campaign ad