Women in the Workplace
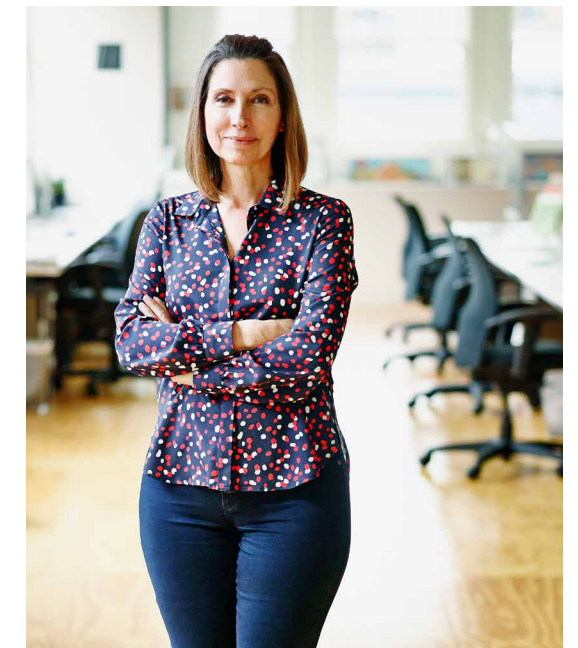
2018

About the study

Women in the Workplace 2018 is the largest comprehensive study of the state of women in corporate America. Since 2015, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company have published this report annually to give companies and employees the information they need to advance women and improve gender diversity within their organizations. McKinsey & Company also conducted similar research in 2012. This year, 279 companies employing more than 13 million people shared their pipeline data and completed a survey of their HR practices. In addition, more than 64,000 employees were surveyed on their workplace experiences, and we interviewed women of different races and ethnicities and LGBTQ women for additional insights. Since 2015, 462 companies employing almost 20 million people have participated in the study.

Sign up for the 2019 study at womenintheworkplace.com

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THE REPORT AT A GLANCE

Women in the Workplace 2018

INTRODUCTION

To achieve equality, companies must turn good intentions into concrete action

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For the last four years, companies have reported that they are highly committed to gender diversity. But that commitment has not translated into meaningful progress. The proportion of women at every level in corporate America has hardly changed. Progress isn't just slow. It's stalled.

Women are doing their part. They've been earning more bachelor's degrees than men for decades. They're asking for promotions and negotiating salaries at the same rates as men. And contrary to conventional wisdom, they are staying in the workforce at the same rate as men.

Now companies need to take more decisive action. This starts with treating gender diversity like the business priority it is, from setting targets to holding leaders accountable for results. It requires closing gender gaps in hiring and promotions, especially early in the pipeline when women are most often overlooked. And it means taking bolder steps to create respectful and inclusive workplaces. Everyday discrimination, which women of color and lesbian women are more likely to face, and sexual harassment have no place in today's workplace. All women—and all employees—should feel safe and supported at work.

We know that many companies, especially those that participate in this study, are committed and are taking some action. But this year's findings make it clearer than ever that companies need to double down on their efforts. This report includes concrete, evidence-based steps that organizations can take right now that will make a difference. We hope companies seize this opportunity. We can't achieve equality until they do.

A closer look at the corporate pipeline

Based on four years of data from 462 companies employing almost 20 million people, including the 279 companies participating in this year's study, two things are clear:

1. Women remain significantly underrepresented, particularly women of color.

2. Companies need to change the way they hire and promote entry- and manager-level employees to make real progress.

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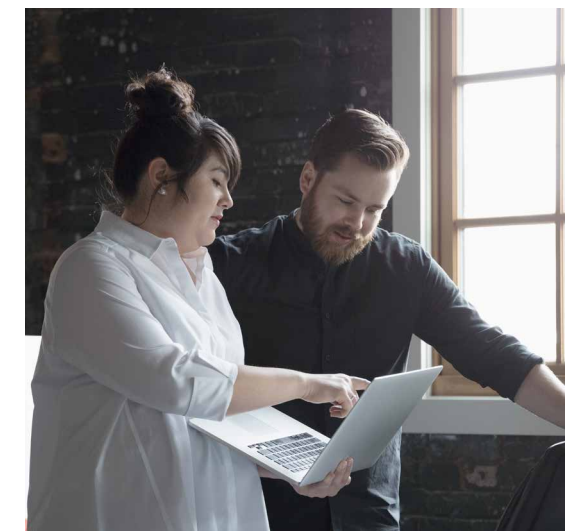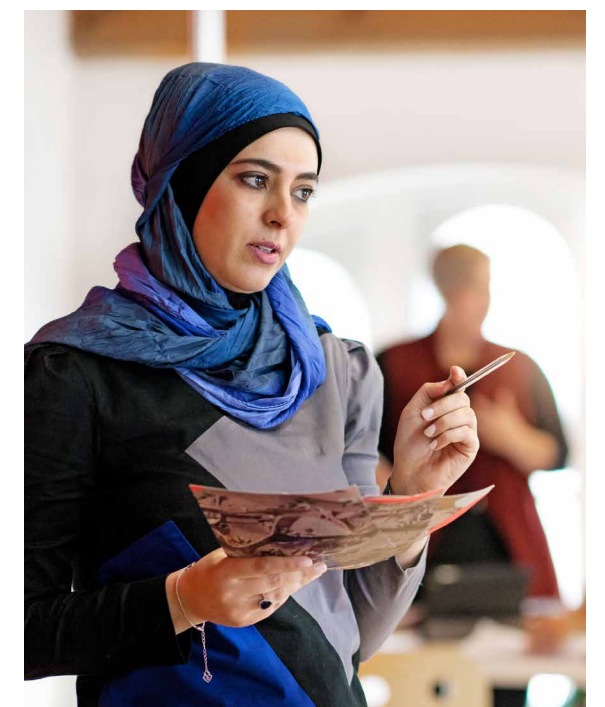
Women remain significantly underrepresented

Since 2015, the first year of this study, corporate America has made almost no progress in improving women's representation. Women are underrepresented at every level, and women of color are the most underrepresented group of all, lagging behind white men, men of color, and white women.[1]

Women are dramatically outnumbered in senior leadership. Only about 1 in 5 C-suite leaders is a woman, and only 1 in 25 is a woman of color.

REPRESENTATION IN THE CORPORATE PIPELINE BY GENDER AND RACE
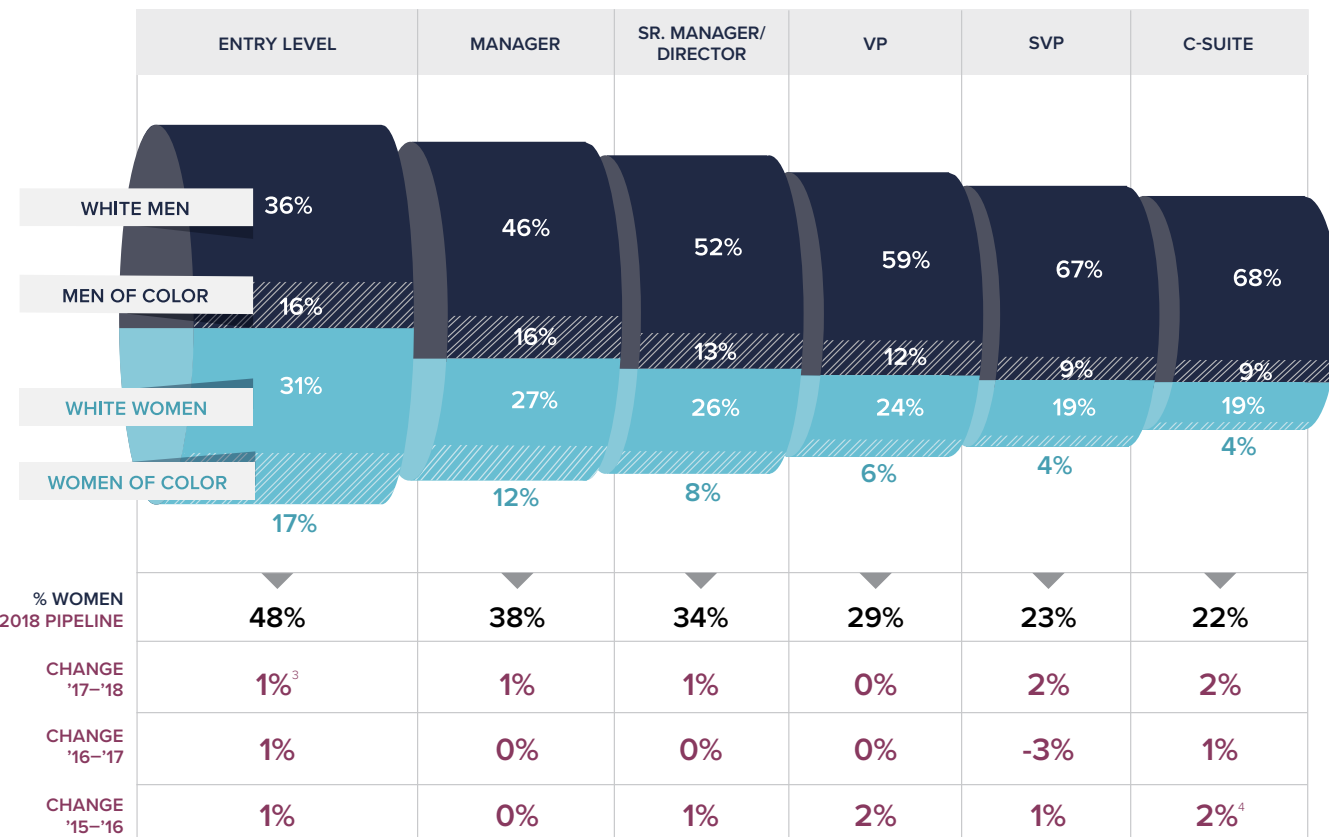
% OF EMPLOYEES BY LEVEL IN 2018[2]

	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER/DIRECTOR	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
WHITE MEN	36%	46%	52%	59%	67%	68%
MEN OF COLOR	16%	16%	13%	12%	9%	9%
WHITE WOMEN	31%	27%	26%	24%	19%	19%
WOMEN OF COLOR	17%	12%	8%	6%	4%	4%
% WOMEN 2018 PIPELINE	48%	38%	34%	29%	23%	22%
CHANGE '17–'18	1%[3]	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%
CHANGE '16–'17	1%	0%	0%	0%	-3%	1%
CHANGE '15–'16	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	2%[4]

1 In this study, women of color include Black, Latina, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or mixed-race women. However, due to small sample sizes, reported findings on individual racial/ethnic groups are restricted to Black women, Latinas, and Asian women. 2 Due to rounding, representation by race and gender may sum to 101 percent or 99 percent within some levels. 3 This represents percentage point change. 4 The small numbers at the executive level, combined with this study's methodology, which takes the average of companies, means that findings at the executive level are more sensitive to individual company variation.

Attrition is not the problem

For the fourth year in a row, attrition does not explain the underrepresentation of women. Women and men are leaving their companies at similar rates, and they have similar intentions to remain in the workforce. More than half of all employees plan to stay at their companies for five or more years, and among those who intend to leave, 81 percent say they plan to stay in the workforce. It's also worth noting that very few women and men say they plan to leave to focus on family.

WOMEN AND MEN LEAVE THEIR COMPANIES IN SIMILAR NUMBERS

% OF WOMEN AND MEN WHO LEFT THEIR JOBS IN THE LAST YEAR

MEN 15% WOMEN 15%
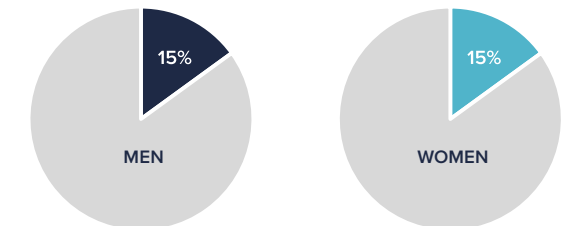
MOST EMPLOYEES PLAN TO STAY AT THEIR COMPANY OR REMAIN IN THE WORKFORCE

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO PLAN TO STAY AT OR LEAVE THEIR COMPANY

MEN   WOMEN

PLANNING TO STAY FOR 5+ YEARS 55% 53%

PLANNING TO LEAVE WITHIN THE NEXT 5 YEARS 47% 45%

WHAT THEY PLAN TO DO WHEN THEY LEAVE

Stay in the workforce	82% / 81%
Leave to focus on family	0% / 2%
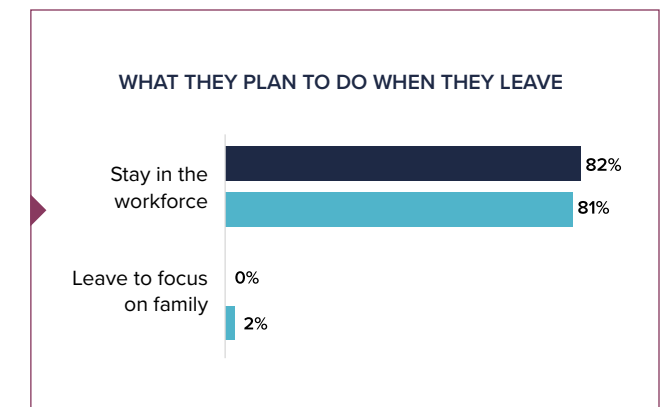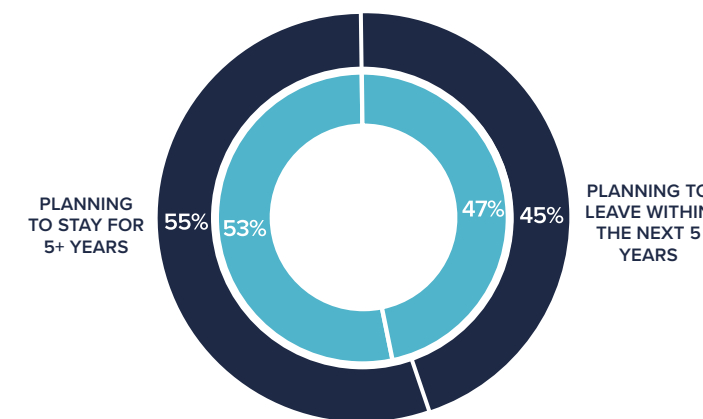
Women are left behind from the get-go

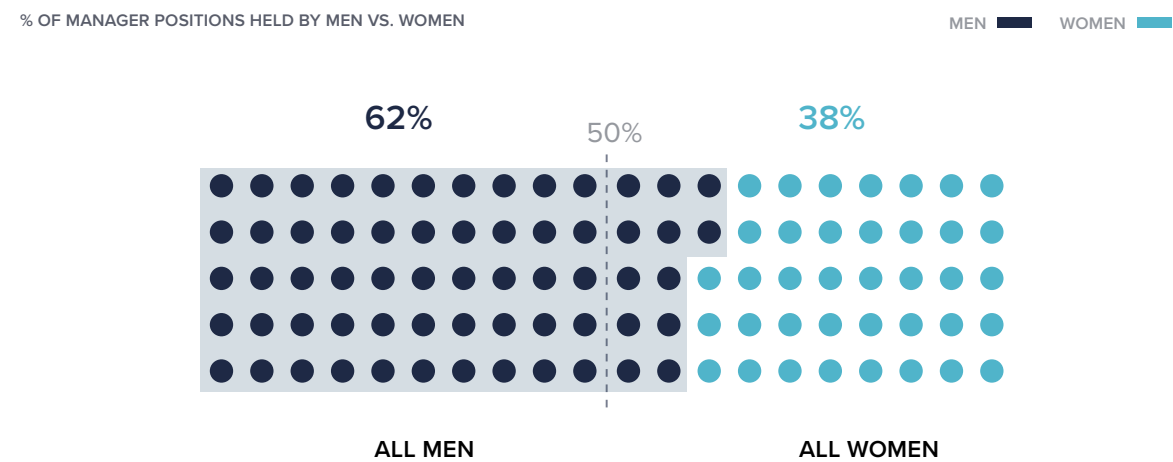The two biggest drivers of representation are hiring and promotions, and companies are disadvantaging women in these areas from the beginning. Although women earn more bachelor's degrees than men, and have for decades, they are less likely to be hired into entry-level jobs.[5] At the first critical step up to manager, the disparity widens further. Women are less likely to be hired into manager-level jobs, and they are far less likely to be promoted into them—for every one hundred men promoted to manager, seventy-nine women are. Largely because of these gender gaps, men end up holding 62 percent of manager positions, while women hold only 38 percent.

This early inequality has a profound impact on the talent pipeline. Starting at the manager level, there are significantly fewer women to promote from within and significantly fewer women at the right experience level to hire in from the outside. So even though hiring and promotion rates improve at more senior levels, women can never catch up—we're suffering from a "hollow middle." This should serve as a wake-up call: until companies close the early gaps in hiring and promotions, women will remain underrepresented.

If companies continue to hire and promote women to manager at current rates, the number of women in management will increase by just one percentage point over the next ten years. But if companies start hiring and promoting women and men to manager at equal rates, we should get close to parity in management—48 percent women versus 52 percent men—over the same ten years.

Performance bias helps explain early gaps in hiring and promotions. Research shows that we tend to overestimate men's performance and underestimate women's. As a result, men are often hired and promoted based on their potential, while women are often hired and promoted based on their track record.[6] This may be particularly acute for women at the start of their careers, when their track records are relatively short.

MEN FAR OUTNUMBER WOMEN AT THE MANAGER LEVEL

% OF MANAGER POSITIONS HELD BY MEN VS. WOMEN

MEN ■ WOMEN ■

62% 50% **38%**

ALL MEN   ALL WOMEN

WOMEN ARE FAR LESS LIKELY TO BE PROMOTED TO MANAGER

RATIO OF PROMOTIONS TO MANAGER FOR MEN VS. WOMEN

MEN ■ WOMEN ■

ALL MEN	ALL WOMEN	WHITE WOMEN	ASIAN WOMEN	LATINAS	BLACK WOMEN
100	79	84	80	81	60

The disparity in the promotion rate to manager is even worse for women of color. Most notably, for every 100 men who are promoted to manager, just 60 Black women are promoted.

6 Corinne A. Moss-Racusin et al., "Science Faculty's Subtle Gender Biases Favor Male Students," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 109, no. 41 (2012): 16474–79; Rhea E. Steinpreis, Katie A. Anders, and Dawn Ritzke, "The Impact of Gender on the Review of Curricula Vitae of Job Applicants and Tenure Candidates: A National Empirical Study," *Sex Roles* 41, nos. 7–8 (1999): 509–28; Madeline E. Heilman and Michelle C. Hayes, "No Credit Where Credit Is Due: Attributional Rationalization of Women's Success in Male-Female Teams," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 90, no. 5 (2005): 905–26; Joan C. Williams and Rachel Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work: Four Patterns Working Women Need to Know* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).
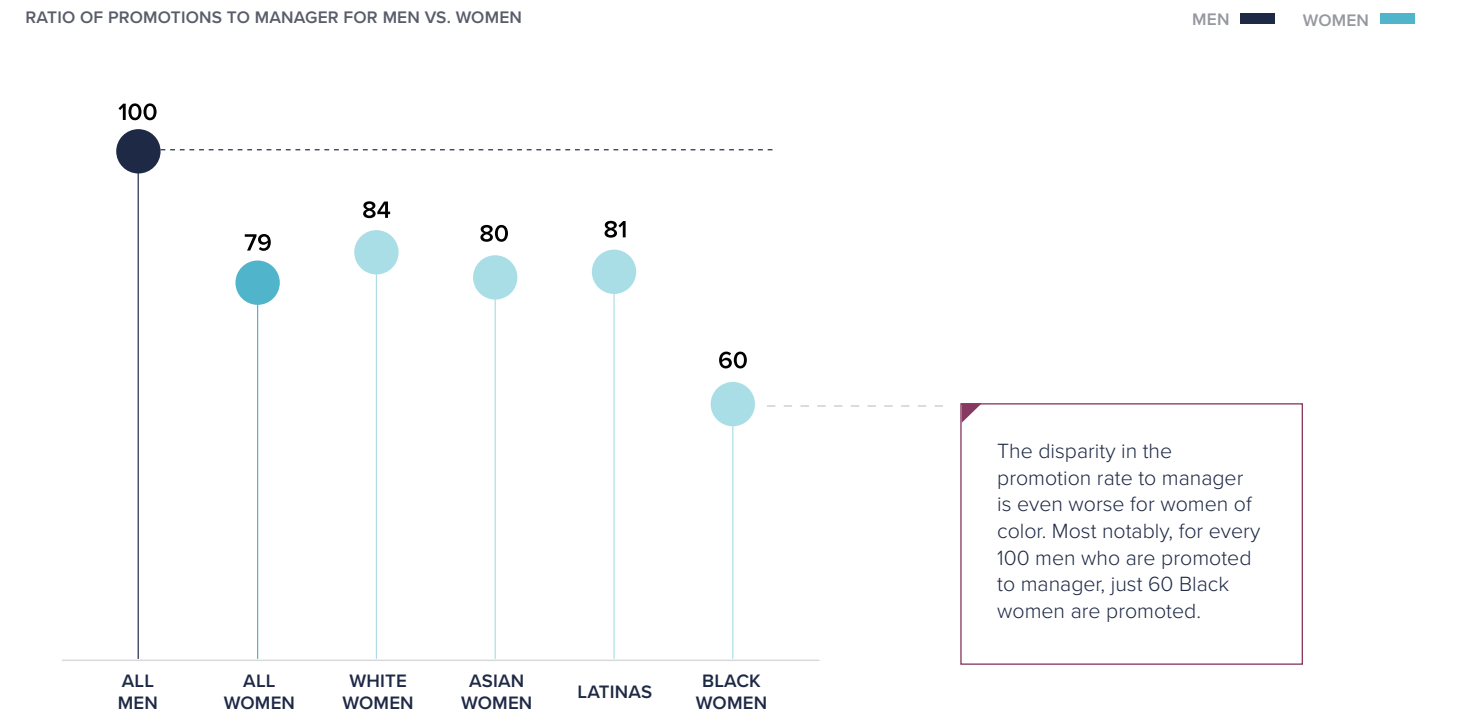
5 Women have earned at least 57 percent of all bachelor's degrees every year since 1999, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, table 318.10, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_318.10.asp?current=yes.

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The uneven playing field

Based on this year's survey of more than 64,000 employees, it is clear that women still experience an uneven playing field. They get less day-to-day support and less access to senior leaders. They are more likely to deal with harassment and everyday discrimination. They often feel the added scrutiny that comes from being the only woman in the room. And understandably, they think it's harder for them to advance.

Women of color and lesbian women face even more biases and barriers to advancement—as do all women who deal with compounding biases because of their identity, background, or beliefs.

"It's great for organizations to say they want to hire diverse employees. But when you get there and you're the only one who's like you, and nobody's really supporting what you bring to the table, it feels like exclusion."

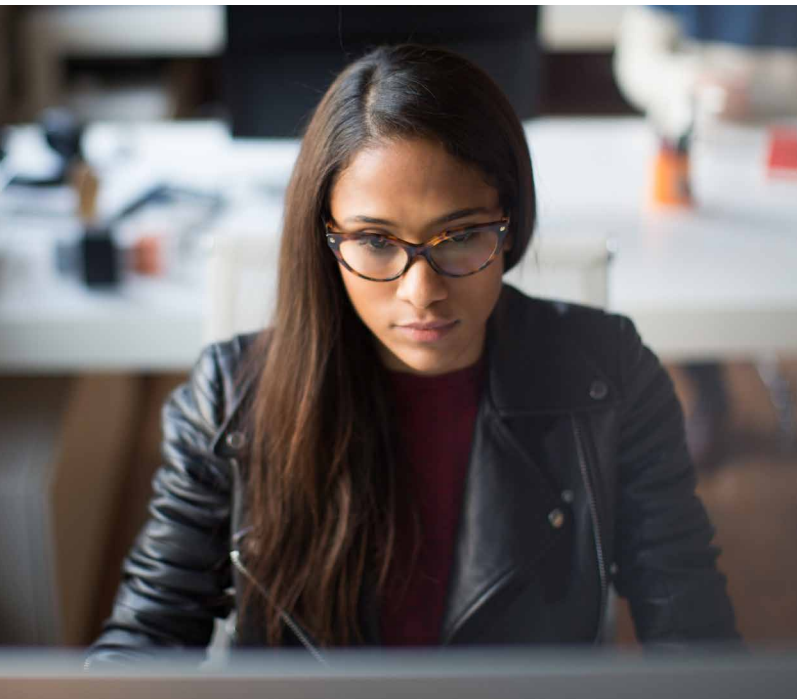—Director, 4 years at company, Latina woman

THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Less support from managers

ALL WOMEN

WOMEN OF COLOR

LESBIAN WOMEN

Women, especially women of color, receive less support from managers than men do. This is a problem because manager support is tied to positive outcomes like higher promotion rates and a stronger desire to stay with a company.

On a few critical fronts, managers provide less support to women than men, including providing the resources they need to succeed and helping them navigate organizational politics. These imbalances, though small on their own, add up.

Women are also less likely than men to socialize with their manager outside of work. Yet employees who do that are more likely to be happy with their job—and more likely to expect to stay at their company.

Women of color generally receive less support from managers than white women—and Black women receive the least support.

Black women are far less likely to get help navigating organizational politics and balancing work and personal lives, and managers are less likely to promote their accomplishments. The same dynamic holds true for access to managers: only about a third of Black women socialize with their manager outside of work, compared to about half of white women.

Lesbian women receive about the same level of manager support as women overall with one important exception: they get far less help balancing work and personal demands.[7]

Similar to women overall, slightly less than half of lesbian women socialize with their manager.[8]

Compared to entry-level men, women at the same level are less likely to have managers showcase their work and help them navigate organizational politics.

WOMEN AND MEN GET DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SUPPORT FROM MANAGERS

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO REPORT THAT THEIR MANAGER . . .   MEN ▬   WOMEN ▬

	MEN OVERALL	WOMEN OVERALL	WHITE WOMEN	ASIAN WOMEN	LATINAS	BLACK WOMEN	LESBIAN WOMEN
Provides the resources I need to succeed	49%	45%	47%	44%	43%	42%	45%
Helps me navigate organizational politics	41%	37%	39%	32%	30%	25%	35%
Creates opportunities for me to showcase my work	45%	42%	43%	44%	40%	35%	43%
Promotes my contributions to others	46%	44%	46%	40%	39%	35%	44%
Socializes with me outside of work	55%	47%	48%	53%	45%	35%	46%
Helps me balance work and personal demands	44%	46%	48%	46%	44%	39%	39%

7 "Lesbian women" includes all women who identified themselves as gay, lesbian, or homosexual in the survey. 8 This year's survey asked bisexual and lesbian women about their experiences. The results for bisexual women and lesbian women of color are not included in the report due to small sample size and a desire for more information than we were able to obtain this year.

THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Less access to senior leaders

Women get less access to senior leaders than men do. Yet employees who interact regularly with senior leaders are more likely to ask for and receive promotions, stay at their companies, and aspire to be leaders.

ALL WOMEN

Women are more likely than men to report they never have substantive interactions with senior leaders about their work. They are also more likely to say they never have informal interactions with senior leaders, such as casual conversations or lunch meetings. Because senior leaders are often the ones to create opportunities and open doors, this lack of access puts women at a disadvantage.

WOMEN OF COLOR

Compared to white women, more women of color say they never interact, formally or informally, with senior leaders. In particular, Black women get the least access to senior leaders.

LESBIAN WOMEN

Like women overall, lesbian women are more likely than men to say they never get formal or informal access to senior leaders.

Good sponsors open doors for their protégés, but they are rare.[9] A majority of employees with sponsors say they provide career advice, highlight their work to others, and advocate on their behalf for new opportunities. Employees with sponsors are 1.4 times more likely to say they've had a meaningful interaction with a senior leader and 1.5 times more likely to aspire to be a top executive themselves—and this is especially true for women. Yet fewer than one in four employees has a sponsor.

WOMEN HAVE FEWER INTERACTIONS WITH SENIOR LEADERS

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO NEVER INTERACT WITH SENIOR LEADERS   MEN ▪   WOMEN ▪

ALL MEN · ALL WOMEN · WHITE WOMEN · ASIAN WOMEN · LATINAS · BLACK WOMEN · LESBIAN WOMEN

27%
33% · 32% · 33% · 34% · 41% · 32%

I **never** have a substantive interaction with a senior leader about my work

ALL MEN · ALL WOMEN · WHITE WOMEN · ASIAN WOMEN · LATINAS · BLACK WOMEN · LESBIAN WOMEN

40%
49% · 47% · 45% · 54% · 59% · 47%

I **never** have an informal interaction with a senior leader

9 A sponsor is someone with power who is senior to you, knows your work, and takes active steps to help you advance. They might introduce you to influential connections, highlight your work to senior leaders, or recommend you for jobs and promotions.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

On manager support and access to senior leaders

"I would like a manager who respects and values my opinions, especially in my realm of expertise. I'd love to be asked, 'What are your thoughts?' Or, 'We're having this meeting. Can I pull you in on this?' But that doesn't happen."

—Analyst, 2 years at company, Black woman

"My manager doesn't help me with workplace politics. She tells me I should stay quiet."

—Entry level, 5 years at company, Black woman

"I actually think that when you do well, it's because of your manager. The comfort of your relationship with them can determine whether you're comfortable speaking up, whether you're comfortable making certain decisions."

—Director, 4 years at company, Asian woman

"At a meeting with the COO, a young woman asked him, 'How do you get to where you're at?' He replied, 'It's all who you know.' Hearing that, I felt defeated. If that's true, how am I going to get there? I want to be there. I think I deserve to be there. But I don't have those connections."

—Entry level, 5 years at company, Black woman

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THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Women face everyday discrimination

Everyday sexism and racism—also known as microaggressions—can take many forms. Some can be subtle, like when a person mistakenly assumes a coworker is more junior than they really are. Some are more explicit, like when a person says something demeaning to a coworker. Whether intentional or unintentional, microaggressions signal disrespect. They also reflect inequality—while anyone can be on the receiving end of disrespectful behavior, microaggressions are more often directed at those with less power, such as women, people of color, and LGBTQ people.

For 64 percent of women, microaggressions are a workplace reality. Most commonly, women have to provide more evidence of their competence than men and they have their judgment questioned in their area of expertise. They are also twice as likely as men to have been mistaken for someone in a more junior position. Black women, in particular, deal with a greater variety of microaggressions and are more likely than other women to have their judgment questioned in their area of expertise and be asked to provide additional evidence of their competence.

Lesbian women experience further slights: 71 percent have dealt with microaggressions. The nature of these encounters is often different for them: lesbian women are far more likely than other women to hear demeaning remarks in the workplace about themselves or others like them. They are also far more likely to feel like they cannot talk about their personal lives at work.

These negative experiences add up. As their name suggests, microaggressions can seem small when dealt with one by one. But when repeated over time, they can have a major impact: women who experience microaggressions view their workplaces as less fair and are three times more likely to regularly think about leaving their job than women who don't.

A third of lesbian women feel like they can't talk about themselves or their life outside of work.

Microaggressions aren't only a problem for women. About half of men have experienced microaggressions, and the problem is worse for men of color and gay men. Black men, like Black women, are more likely to have their judgment questioned and be asked to provide more evidence of their qualifications. Gay men, like lesbian women, are far more likely to hear demeaning remarks about themselves or others like them and to feel discouraged from talking about their personal lives at work.

MANY WOMEN FACE MICROAGGRESSIONS, AND THESE ENCOUNTERS ADD UP

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO'VE EXPERIENCED THE FOLLOWING DURING THE NORMAL COURSE OF BUSINESS MEN ▬ WOMEN ▬

	ALL MEN	ALL WOMEN	WHITE WOMEN	ASIAN WOMEN	LATINAS	BLACK WOMEN	LESBIAN WOMEN
Having your judgment questioned in your area of expertise	27%	36%	36%	29%	32%	40%	37%
Needing to provide more evidence of your competence than others do	16%	31%	29%	36%	30%	42%	34%
Being addressed in a less-than-professional way	16%	26%	26%	21%	23%	26%	23%
Being mistaken for someone at a much lower level	10%	20%	19%	22%	19%	22%	20%
Often having your work contributions ignored	16%	17%	16%	16%	17%	22%	20%
Hearing demeaning remarks about you or people like you	10%	16%	16%	15%	15%	19%	26%

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IN THEIR OWN WORDS

On everyday discrimination

"One thing I've become used to is having to prove myself constantly, over and over. It's tiring, and unfortunately it hasn't changed a whole lot as I've become more senior."

—Senior executive, 4 years at company, Latina woman

"I've had a couple of bosses who have made me feel that I shouldn't talk about my wife. I've responded, 'I'm just being me. You get to talk about your wife all the time, I'm going to talk about mine too. I shouldn't be held to a different standard.'"

—SVP, 10 years at company, white lesbian woman

"I was in the elevator and pressed the button for the executive office. Someone said to me, 'Um, no honey. That's for the executive offices. The interns are going to this floor.'"

—Director, 4 years at company, Asian woman

"I walked into a meeting where I was the only woman in a very large room of men. And when I sat down, an older white man from another company turned to me out of nowhere and said, 'Could you take notes for the meeting?' Which was a little bit odd because I was the lawyer in the room, the one doing the negotiating."

—VP, 6 years at company, Middle Eastern woman

This report contains stock photographs for illustrative purposes only. Images do not reflect the identities of the women quoted. Within the quotes, some identifying details may have been altered and/or withheld to protect the speaker's anonymity.

THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Sexual harassment remains prevalent

Sexual harassment continues to pervade the workplace. Thirty-five percent of women in corporate America experience sexual harassment[10] at some point in their careers, from hearing sexist jokes to being touched in an inappropriately sexual way.

For some women the experience is far more common. Fifty-five percent of women in senior leadership, 48 percent of lesbian women, and 45 percent of women in technical fields report they've been sexually harassed. A common thread connects these groups: research has found that women who do not conform to traditional feminine expectations—in this case, by holding authority, not being heterosexual, and working in fields dominated by men—are more often the targets of sexual harassment.[11]

Ninety-eight percent of companies have policies that make it clear that sexual harassment is not tolerated, but many employees think their company is falling short putting policies into practice. Just 62 percent of employees say that in the past year their company has reaffirmed that sexual harassment won't be tolerated, and a similar number say that they've received training or guidance on the topic. Moreover, only 60 percent of employees think a sexual harassment claim would be fairly investigated and addressed by their company—and just 32 percent believe it would be addressed quickly.
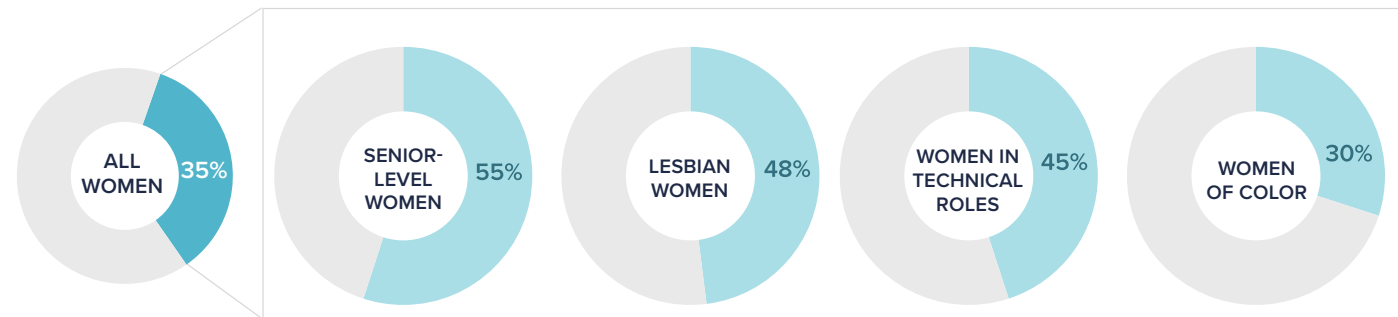
There are also stark differences in how women and men view their company's efforts to create a safe and respectful work environment. Only 32 percent of women think that disrespectful behavior toward women is often quickly addressed by their companies, compared to 50 percent of men. Women are far less confident that reporting sexual harassment will lead to a fair investigation. And they are twice as likely as men to say that it would be risky or pointless to report an incident.

These numbers indicate the urgent need for companies to underscore that bad behavior is unacceptable and will not go overlooked. Leaders at all levels need to set the tone by publicly stating that sexual harassment won't be tolerated and by modeling inclusive behavior. HR teams should receive detailed training so they know how to fully and compassionately investigate claims of harassment, even if they involve senior leaders. And companies would benefit from putting an audit process in place to ensure that investigations are thorough and sanctions are appropriate.

> It is important to note that the prevalence of sexual harassment reported in this research may be lower than what some working women experience. This survey focuses on full-time employees in the corporate sector versus the full economy, and given the nature of sexual harassment, it is often underreported.
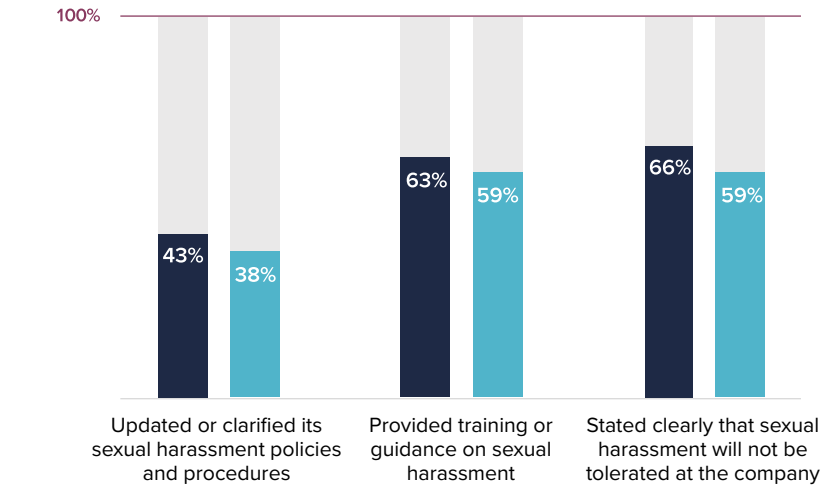
GROUPS WHO MOST COMMONLY EXPERIENCE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

% OF WOMEN WHO REPORT HAVING EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT OVER THE COURSE OF THEIR CAREER

ALL WOMEN	SENIOR-LEVEL WOMEN	LESBIAN WOMEN	WOMEN IN TECHNICAL ROLES	WOMEN OF COLOR
35%	55%	48%	45%	30%

COMPANIES ARE FALLING SHORT PUTTING POLICIES INTO PRACTICE

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO REPORT THEIR COMPANY HAS DONE THE FOLLOWING IN THE PAST YEAR

MEN ■ WOMEN ■

100%

	MEN	WOMEN
Updated or clarified its sexual harassment policies and procedures	43%	38%
Provided training or guidance on sexual harassment	63%	59%
Stated clearly that sexual harassment will not be tolerated at the company	66%	59%

WOMEN ARE FAR LESS CONFIDENT THAT REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT WOULD BE EFFECTIVE OR HELPFUL

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO THINK REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT WOULD BE . . .

	MEN	WOMEN
POINTLESS It wouldn't be taken seriously	1%	3%
RISKY I might be penalized in some way	2%	5%
UNCERTAIN I don't know how it would play out	12%	22%
HELPFUL It's a good first step	15%	18%
EFFECTIVE It would be fairly investigated and addressed	70%	52%

SKEPTICAL OF OUTCOMES

THINK IT WOULD BE EFFECTIVE OR HELPFUL

MEN   WOMEN
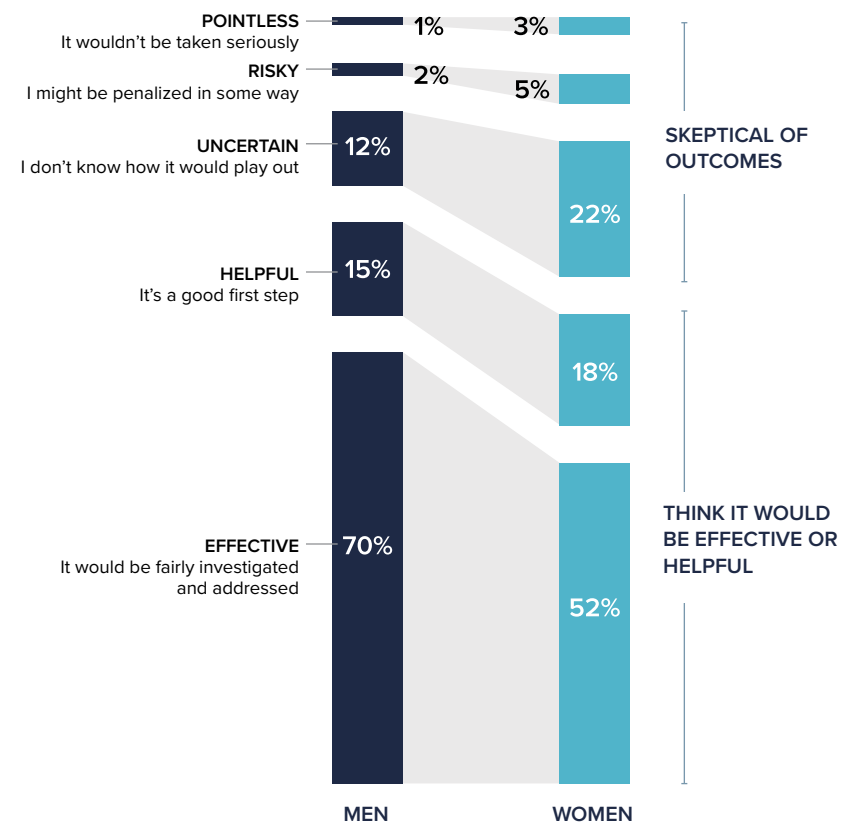
When it comes to sexual harassment, there is an information gap. One in five employees wants more information on their company's harassment policies, including what to do if they're harassed and how their company handles claims—and women are 50 percent more likely to want this information. It's also worth noting that, regardless of gender, employees who have been sexually harassed are twice as likely to want additional information as those who haven't been harassed.

10 It's worth noting that the definition of unlawful harassment varies by jurisdiction. 11 See Jennifer L. Berdahl, "The Sexual Harassment of Uppity Women," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 92, no. 2 (2007): 425–37; Heather McLaughlin, Christopher Uggen, and Amy Blackstone, "Sexual Harassment, Workplace Authority, and the Paradox of Power," *American Sociological Review* 77, no. 4 (2012): 625–47, http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0003122412451728.

THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

The "Only" experience

Being "the only one" is still a common experience for women. One in five women says they are often the only woman or one of the only women in the room at work—in other words, they are "Onlys."[12] This is twice as common for senior-level women and women in technical roles: around 40 percent of them are Onlys.

Women who are Onlys are having a significantly worse experience than women who work with other women. Over 80 percent are on the receiving end of microaggressions, compared to 64 percent of women as a whole. They are more likely to have their abilities challenged, to be subjected to unprofessional and demeaning remarks, and to feel like they cannot talk about their personal lives at work. Most notably, women Onlys are almost twice as likely to have been sexually harassed at some point in their careers.

Far fewer men are Onlys—just 7 percent say that they are often the only or one of the only men in the room—and regardless of their race and ethnicity, they face less scrutiny than women Onlys. By and large, white men who are Onlys have a better experience than any other group of Onlys, likely because they are broadly well represented in their company and are a high-status group in society.

Women Onlys have a more difficult time. Because there are so few, they stand out in a crowd of men. This heightened visibility can make the biases faced by women Onlys especially pronounced. While they are just one person, they often become a stand-in for all women—their individual successes or failures become a litmus test for what all women are capable of doing. With everyone's eyes on them, women Onlys can be heavily scrutinized and held to higher standards. As a result, they most often feel pressure to perform, on guard, and left out. In contrast, when asked how it feels to be the sole man in the room, men Onlys most frequently say they feel included.

Being an Only also impacts the way women view their workplace. Compared to other women, women Onlys are less likely to think that the best opportunities go to the most deserving employees, promotions are fair and objective, and ideas are judged by their quality rather than who raised them. Not surprisingly, given the negative experiences and feelings associated with being the odd woman out, women Onlys are also 1.5 times more likely to think about leaving their job.

Being an Only is a far too common experience for people of color and gay people. They face more extreme biases and have a more negative experience than people like them who are not Onlys.

Forty-five percent of women of color and 37 percent of men of color are often the only or one of the only people of their race or ethnicity in the room. When this is the case, women and men of color are more likely to feel excluded and scrutinized—and this is especially pronounced for women of color who are Onlys. In particular, Bla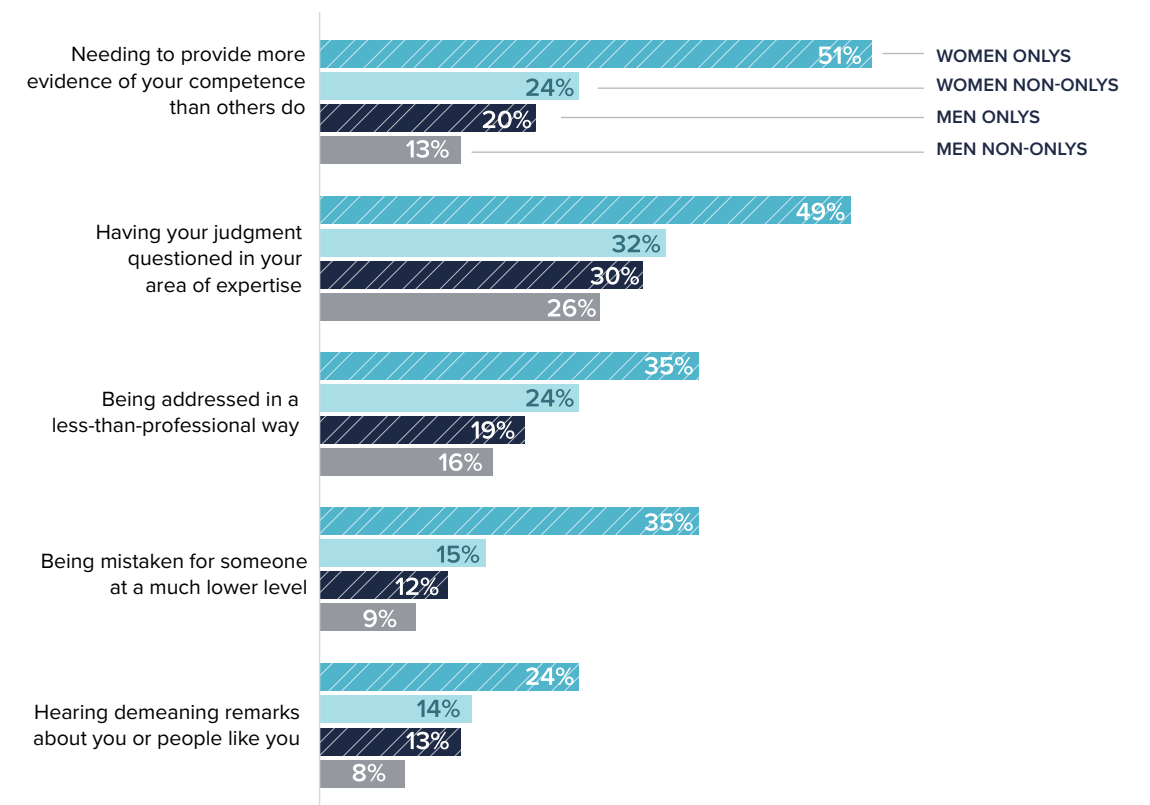ck women are having a difficult experience. They are significantly more likely than other Onlys to feel closely watched and to think that their actions reflect positively or negatively on other people like them.

Seventy-six percent of lesbian women and 70 percent of gay men are often the only or one of the only people of their sexual orientation in the room. When gay people are Onlys, they are twice as likely as other groups of Onlys to say they can't talk about themselves or their life outside of work. And like other Onlys, they also feel on guard, closely watched, and under pressure to perform.

12 Historically, social scientists have used terms such as "numerical minorities" and "tokens" to describe similar dynamics. For the first study on this dynamic, see Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

WOMEN ONLYS EXPERIENCE MORE MICROAGGRESSIONS

% OF ONLYS VS. NON-ONLYS WHO HAVE THESE EXPERIENCES DURING THE NORMAL COURSE OF BUSINESS . . .

MEN ▬▬ WOMEN ▬▬

Needing to provide more evidence of your competence than others do
- WOMEN ONLYS: 51%
- WOMEN NON-ONLYS: 24%
- MEN ONLYS: 20%
- MEN NON-ONLYS: 13%

Having your judgment questioned in your area of expertise
- 49%
- 32%
- 30%
- 26%

Being addressed in a less-than-professional way
- 35%
- 24%
- 19%
- 16%

Being mistaken for someone at a much lower level
- 35%
- 15%
- 12%
- 9%

Hearing demeaning remarks about you or people like you
- 24%
- 14%
- 13%
- 8%

BEING AN ONLY WOMAN FEELS FAR WORSE THAN BEING AN ONLY MAN

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO REPORT THESE FEELINGS WHEN THEY'RE AN ONLY

WHAT IT MOST FEELS LIKE TO BE AN ONLY WOMAN	WHAT IT MOST FEELS LIKE TO BE AN ONLY MAN
1. Under pressure to perform (38%)	1. Included (26%)
2. On guard (31%)	2. Fortunate to be there (11%)
3. Left out (25%)	3. On guard (11%)
4. Included (25%)	4. Under pressure to perform (10%)
5. Fortunate to be there (23%)	5. Left out (10%)
6. That your actions reflect on people like you (22%)	6. Closely watched (8%)
7. Closely watched (22%)	7. That your actions reflect on people like you (7%)

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

On the "Only" experience

"I feel like I have to represent the entire race. I need to come across as more than proficient, more than competent, more than capable. I have to be 'on' all the time. Because in the back of someone's mind, they could be judging the entire race based on me. And I don't want anybody else's opportunity to be ruined because I messed it up. I know that seems really heavy, but that is often how I feel. I am pretty sure that when most white people make a mistake, they don't feel like they're representing all Italians or all Irish. But a lot of Black Americans do feel like that . . .

When you're the only one, you look around and you realize, 'Oh, I'm different.' It is hurtful that despite the civil rights movement, I'm still the only Black person in the room. I think often about Martin Luther King Jr. and the history of Black Americans. People died so that I could go to school and have an education. People literally lost their lives so that I could work where I'm working. And I will not let their deaths be in vain. That's really, really important to me."

—Mid-level administrator, 4 years at company, Black woman

"I feel excluded. I feel that there's a bit of a boy's club. I don't even know if people realize it. It can be as simple as men going for coffee and not realizing that the only people they ask happen to be men."

—Associate, 2 years at company, Middle Eastern woman

"I feel the weight of having to decide whether to come out or not. Do I participate in the conversation about the weekend or not? And that is exhausting."

—SVP, 10 years at company, white lesbian woman

"When you're the only one, you often feel like you have to prove yourself."

—Senior manager, 1 year at company, Black woman

THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

It feels harder to advance for women

ALL WOMEN

WOMEN OF COLOR

LESBIAN WOMEN

Women think their gender makes it harder to advance. Given that women remain underrepresented at almost every level in the pipeline and are less likely to be promoted than men, they appear to be right.

Women are three times more likely than men to think that their gender has played a role in their missing out on a raise, promotion, or other chance to get ahead. They are also more likely to think their gender will make it harder for them going forward.

Compared to white women, women of color are slightly more likely to think their gender will make it harder for them to advance. Asian women, in particular, are much more likely to feel disadvantaged.

Lesbian women are more likely than women overall to think that their gender makes it harder for them to advance.

Race and sexuality also affect how women see their opportunities to advance. Nearly a third of women of color—and almost half of Black women—think their race has played a role in missed opportunities and will make it harder for them to advance. Over a quarter of lesbian women feel the same way about their sexuality.

WOMEN THINK THEIR GENDER LIMITS THEIR OPPORTUNITIES

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO REPORT THAT . . .

MEN ■ WOMEN ■

	Their gender has played a role in missing out on a raise, promotion, or chance to get ahead	Their gender will make it harder to get a raise, promotion, or chance to get ahead in the future
ALL MEN	8%	15%
ALL WOMEN	24%	29%
WHITE WOMEN	24%	27%
ASIAN WOMEN	21%	37%
LATINAS	22%	31%
BLACK WOMEN	24%	31%
LESBIAN WOMEN	31%	38%

McKinsey&Company

LEAN IN
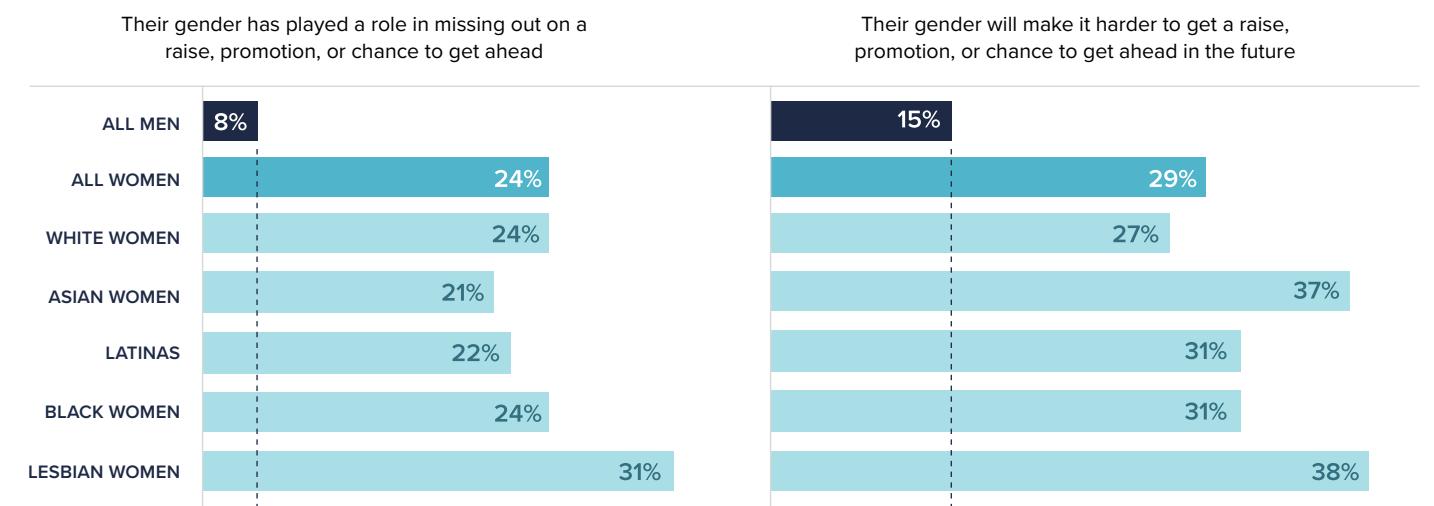
THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Women see a workplace that is less fair

Women see their company as less meritocratic than men do, and this matters. Employees who think their companies are fair are happier in their job and more likely to intend to stay at their company.

Similar to last year, 45% of men think women are well represented in leadership when 1 in 10 senior leaders in their company is a woman. By comparison, 28% of women think this.

ALL WOMEN

Women are less likely than men to think that promotions are based on fair and objective criteria, that the best opportunities go to the most deserving employees, and that ideas are judged by their quality, as opposed to who raised them.

Women are also significantly less likely than men to think women are well represented in senior leadership.
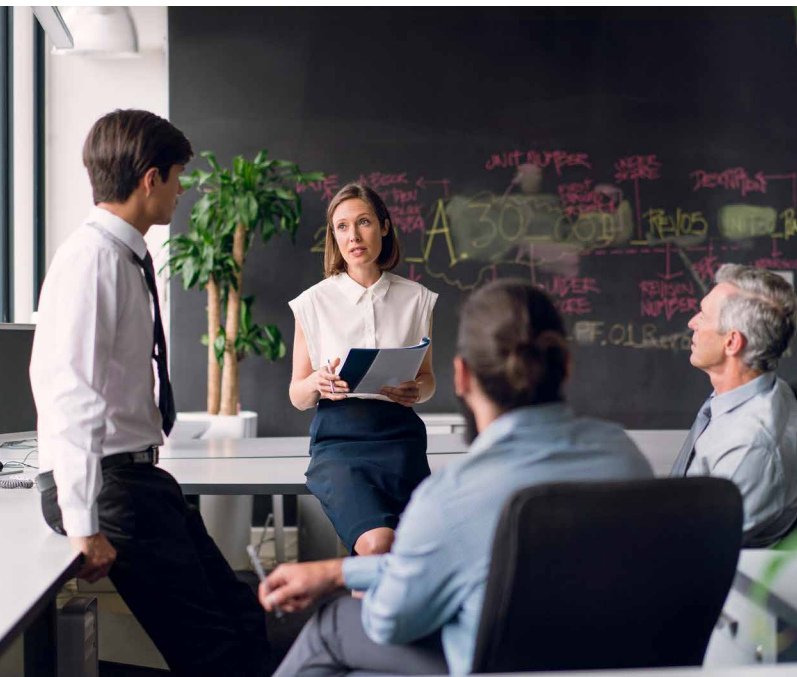
WOMEN OF COLOR

In general, women of color are less likely than white women to say their company is meritocratic, and Black women are the most skeptical.

Compared to other women of color, Asian women are less likely to think women are well represented in senior leadership.

LESBIAN WOMEN

Like women overall, lesbian women are less likely than men to say their company is meritocratic.

Lesbian women are the least likely to believe that women are well represented in senior leadership.

WOMEN ARE LESS LIKELY TO THINK THEIR WORKPLACE IS FAIR

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO FEEL . . .   MEN ▬ WOMEN ▬

Ideas are judged by their quality, not by who raised them

	%
ALL MEN	65%
ALL WOMEN	55%
WHITE WOMEN	57%
ASIAN WOMEN	55%
LATINAS	54%
BLACK WOMEN	45%
LESBIAN WOMEN	55%

The best opportunities go to the most deserving employees

	%
ALL MEN	52%
ALL WOMEN	43%
WHITE WOMEN	45%
ASIAN WOMEN	45%
LATINAS	44%
BLACK WOMEN	31%
LESBIAN WOMEN	42%

Promotions at this company are based on fair and objective criteria

	%
ALL MEN	50%
ALL WOMEN	43%
WHITE WOMEN	46%
ASIAN WOMEN	43%
LATINAS	44%
BLACK WOMEN	32%
LESBIAN WOMEN	45%

LEAN IN

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

On the steeper path to advancement

"When you're the only Black woman, you have to excel. You have to always give 100%. It's sink or swim. In my opinion, I would not be here today if I did not excel beyond the measure."

—Analyst, 2 years at company, Black woman

"As a woman, you've got to give 150%. You have to be more prepared, you have to be more articulate, you've got to be strong in your compassion, but also not too emotional, not too aggressive."

—SVP, 10 years at company, white lesbian woman

"I would say I've received a fraction of the opportunities I would have as a white man. The ones that I did receive, I had to fight really hard for. I've seen many white men groomed for leadership. They were hand-held through the process by senior leaders. That didn't mean that they didn't have to perform, but it did mean that the door was open wide for them and they were given all the resources they needed to be successful. That didn't happen for me. I had to literally kick the doors open."

—Senior executive, 4 years at company, Latina woman

"My job title was junior for a long time. People started telling me, 'You need to change that, because you can't use that on your résumé. You won't be respected.' I had to really lobby to change it. It made me realize that my manager didn't advocate for me unless I asked for it."

—Manager, 7 years at company, Asian lesbian woman

This report contains stock photographs for illustrative purposes only. Images do not reflect the identities of the women quoted. Within the quotes, some identifying details may have been altered and/or withheld to protect the speaker's anonymity.

McKinsey&Company

LEAN IN

THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Women are asking for more

ALL WOMEN

WOMEN OF COLOR

LESBIAN WOMEN

Women are negotiating for raises and promotions as often as men, but they do not always get the same outcomes.

Women are asking for promotions and raises at about the same rates as men. However, women early in their careers are less likely to get promoted, and on average women are paid less than men in similar roles.[13]

Although white women are asking for promotions as often as men do, they are slightly less interested in being promoted to the next level.

Women of color are far more likely than white women to say they want to advance to the next level—and Black and Asian women are even more interested in advancing than men.

Despite their higher aspirations, Latinas and Black women ask for promotions and raises at about the same rates as white women, but they get worse results. On average, they receive fewer promotions and are paid less for comparable work.[14]
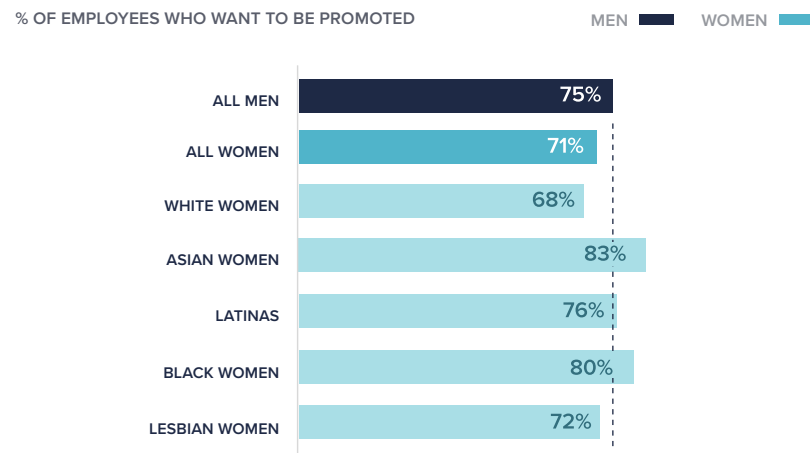
Compared to white women, Asian women are more likely to ask for promotions and raises, and they get mixed results. On average, they are less likely to be promoted but are paid more for comparable work.[15]

Compared to women overall, lesbian women are similarly interested in advancing and ask for promotions and raises at about the same rates. However, studies of lesbian women's pay point to varying outcomes. In some studies, lesbians earn significantly more than heterosexual women; in others, they earn significantly less.[16]
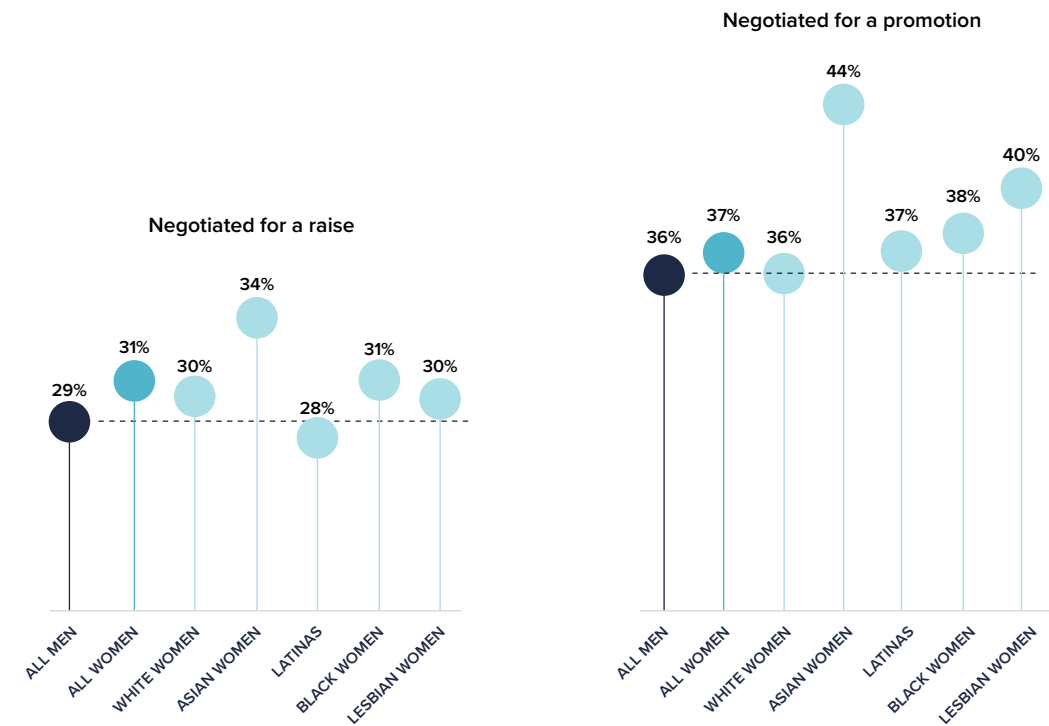
WOMEN WANT TO ADVANCE ALMOST AS MUCH AS MEN DO

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO WANT TO BE PROMOTED   MEN ▬   WOMEN ▬

ALL MEN	75%
ALL WOMEN	71%
WHITE WOMEN	68%
ASIAN WOMEN	83%
LATINAS	76%
BLACK WOMEN	80%
LESBIAN WOMEN	72%

WOMEN ASK FOR PROMOTIONS AND RAISES AS OFTEN AS MEN

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO'VE NEGOTIATED FOR THE FOLLOWING OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS   MEN ▬   WOMEN ▬

Negotiated for a raise

ALL MEN	ALL WOMEN	WHITE WOMEN	ASIAN WOMEN	LATINAS	BLACK WOMEN	LESBIAN WOMEN
29%	31%	30%	34%	28%	31%	30%

Negotiated for a promotion

ALL MEN	ALL WOMEN	WHITE WOMEN	ASIAN WOMEN	LATINAS	BLACK WOMEN	LESBIAN WOMEN
36%	37%	36%	44%	37%	38%	40%

13 For data on the pay gap between women and men with similar occupations, see Ariane Hegewisch and Emma Williams-Baron, "The Gender Wage Gap by Occupation 2017 and by Race and Ethnicity," Institute for Women's Policy Research (April 9, 2018), https://iwpr.org/publications/gender-wage-gap-occupation-2017-race-ethnicity/.

14 Ibid. 15 Ibid. 16 Data on lesbian women's pay is inconsistent. Studies show that they are paid less than men, but estimates of the gap between lesbian and heterosexual women vary between 25 percent less and 43 percent more. See Marieka Klawitter, "Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Sexual Orientation on Earnings," *Industrial Relations* 54, no. 1 (2015): 4–32, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/irel.12075.

THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Women think differently about top jobs

Women are less interested in being a top executive than men, and women and men see the benefits differently.
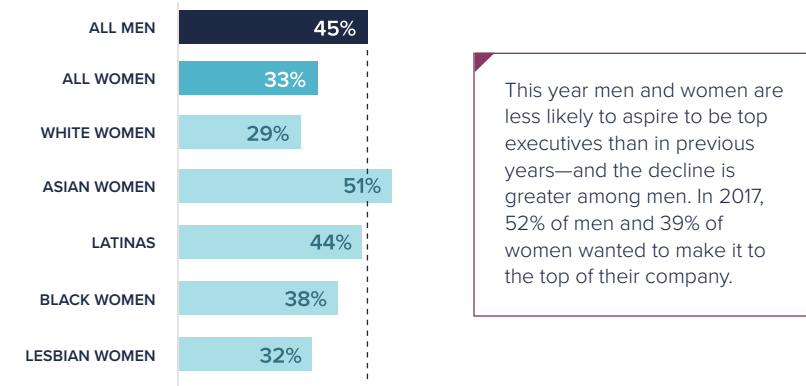
ALL WOMEN

Compared to men of the same race and ethnicity, women are less likely to aspire to be a top executive.

Women and men who want to be senior leaders see the benefits differently. Women are more interested in being role models than men are, while men are more motivated by the opportunity to impact the success of their company.

WOMEN OF COLOR

Women of color are much more interested in becoming a top executive than white women are.

Black women with leadership ambitions are particularly interested in paving the way for others and having a positive impact on company culture.
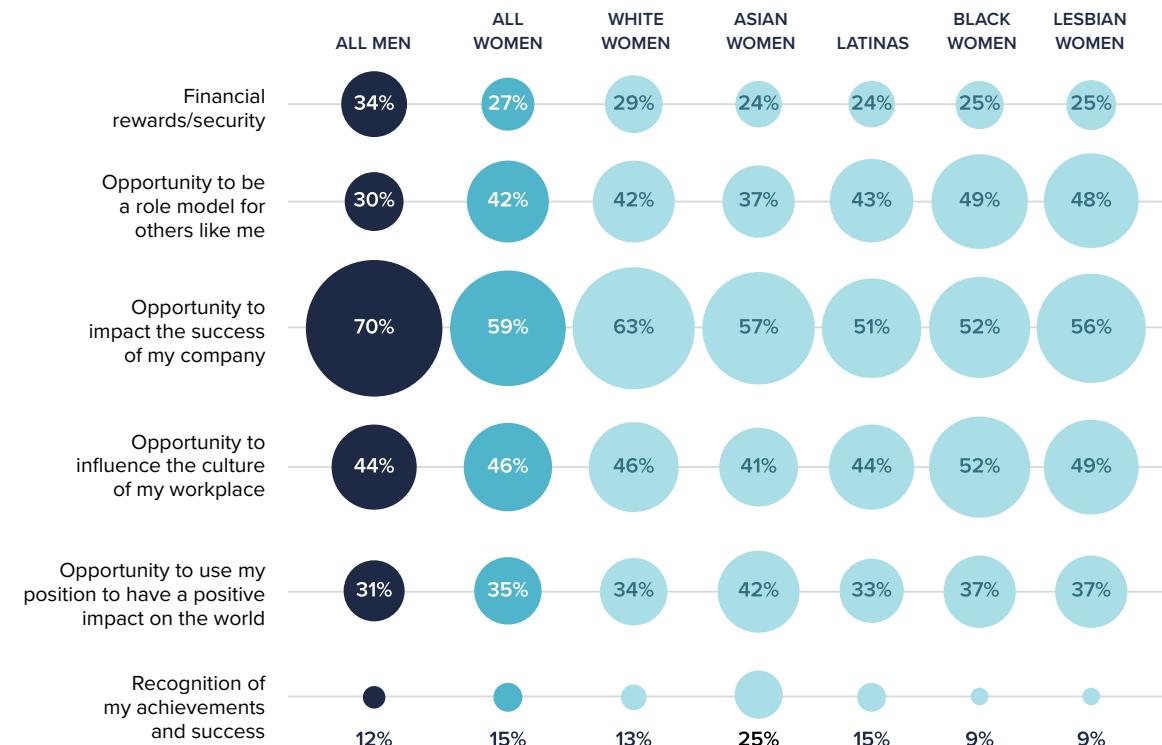
LESBIAN WOMEN

Lesbian women are about as interested in being a top executive as women overall.

Like Black women, lesbian women with leadership ambitions are very interested in being role models and shaping company culture.

There are important racial and ethnic differences in leadership ambitions. Men and women of color are far more interested in becoming a top executive than their white counterparts. And compared to all other groups of women, Asian women are more likely to want to be promoted and to aspire to be a top leader.

WOMEN ARE LESS INTERESTED IN GETTING TO THE TOP

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO WANT TO BE A TOP EXECUTIVE   MEN ▬   WOMEN ▬

ALL MEN	45%
ALL WOMEN	33%
WHITE WOMEN	29%
ASIAN WOMEN	51%
LATINAS	44%
BLACK WOMEN	38%
LESBIAN WOMEN	32%

This year men and women are less likely to aspire to be top executives than in previous years—and the decline is greater among men. In 2017, 52% of men and 39% of women wanted to make it to the top of their company.

WOMEN AND MEN HAVE DIFFERENT MOTIVATIONS FOR WANTING TOP JOBS

MOTIVATIONS FOR WANTING TO BE A TOP EXECUTIVE   MEN ▬   WOMEN ▬

|	ALL MEN	ALL WOMEN	WHITE WOMEN	ASIAN WOMEN	LATINAS	BLACK WOMEN	LESBIAN WOMEN
Financial rewards/security	34%	27%	29%	24%	24%	25%	25%
Opportunity to be a role model for others like me	30%	42%	42%	37%	43%	49%	48%
Opportunity to impact the success of my company	70%	59%	63%	57%	51%	52%	56%
Opportunity to influence the culture of my workplace	44%	46%	46%	41%	44%	52%	49%
Opportunity to use my position to have a positive impact on the world	31%	35%	34%	42%	33%	37%	37%
Recognition of my achievements and success	12%	15%	13%	25%	15%	9%	9%

A road map to gender equality

The vast majority of companies say that they're highly committed to gender and racial diversity, yet the evidence indicates that many are not treating diversity as the business imperative it is.

Take gender diversity as an example. In contrast to what companies say about their commitment, only around half of all employees think that their organization sees gender diversity as a priority and is doing what it takes to make progress. Around 20 percent of employees say that their company's commitment to gender diversity feels like lip service. And few organizations are making a strong business case for gender diversity: while 76 percent of companies have articulated a business case, only 13 percent have taken the critical next step of calculating the positive impact on the business.[17]
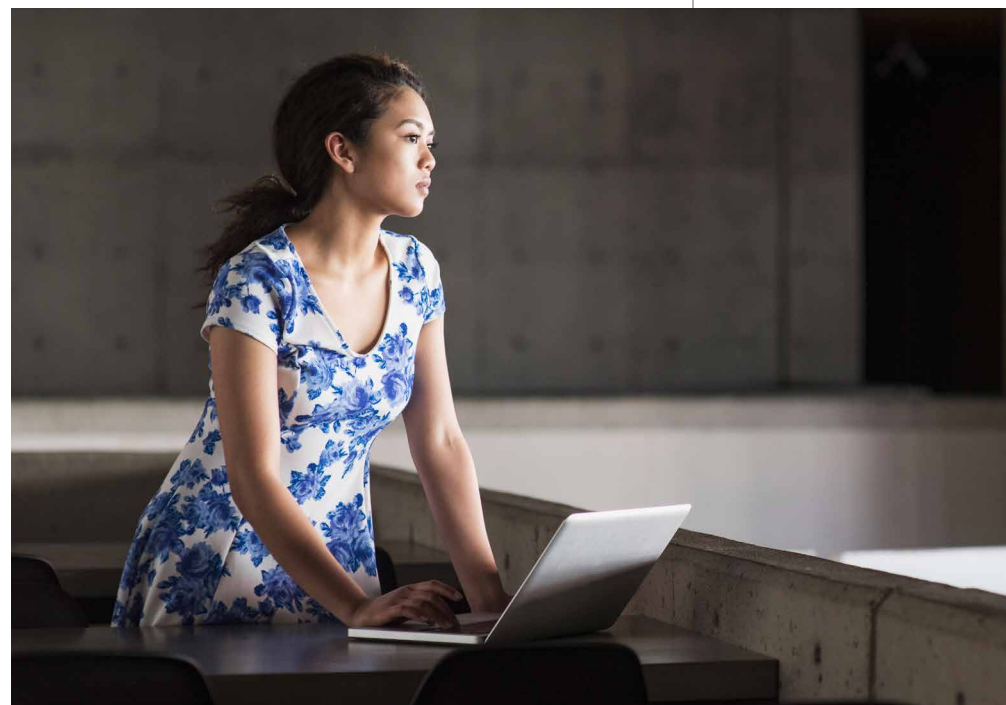
Based on four years of data and insights from a range of experts, there are six actions we recommend that companies take to make progress on gender diversity.

1. Get the basics right—targets, reporting, and accountability

2. Ensure that hiring and promotions are fair

3. Make senior leaders and managers champions of diversity

4. Foster an inclusive and respectful culture

5. Make the "Only" experience rare

6. Offer employees the flexibility to fit work into their lives
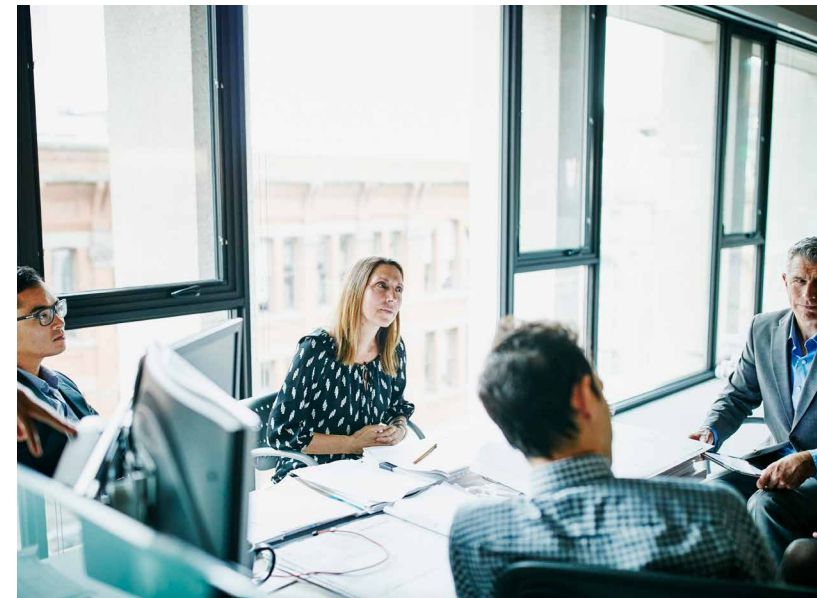
Commitment to gender diversity is declining. In 2017, 90 percent of companies said they prioritized gender diversity, while just 84 percent say that this year. Employees are also less convinced of their company's commitment. Last year, 56 percent said their organization was doing what it takes to improve gender diversity. This year that number has dropped to 45 percent.

17 For recent research making the business case for diversity, see "Why Diversity Matters," McKinsey & Company, January 2015, https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters.

1. Get the basics right—targets, reporting, and accountability

Experts agree that setting goals, tracking and reporting on progress, and rewarding success are key to driving organizational change. When it comes to gender diversity, more companies need to put these practices in place.

Only 38 percent of companies set targets for gender representation, even though setting goals is the first step toward achieving any business priority. Only 12 percent share a majority of gender diversity metrics with their employees, even though transparency is a helpful way to signal a company's commitment to change. Only 42 percent hold senior leaders accountable for making progress toward gender parity, and even fewer hold managers and directors accountable. It's hard to imagine a groundswell of change when leaders aren't formally expected to drive it.

Companies are falling shorter when it comes to women of color. Fewer than half track representation by gender and race combined—and just 10 percent set representation targets for women of color.

Setting goals, tracking progress, sharing results, and holding employees to account are basic business practices. While some diversity strategies are more complicated to implement than others, these are relatively clear-cut steps that companies can—and should—take.

CHECKLIST
Basic practices for improving gender diversity

		% OF COMPANIES THAT DO THIS
☐ Track representation by:		
∟ Gender		96%
∟ Race		89%
∟ Gender & race combined		48%
☐ Set representation targets by:		
∟ Gender		38%
∟ Race		32%
∟ Gender & race combined		10%
☐ Share a majority of gender diversity metrics with employees		12%
☐ Hold senior leaders accountable for progress on gender diversity metrics		42%
☐ Hold managers and directors accountable for progress on gender diversity metrics		16%

More than 90% of companies say they prioritize gender and racial diversity because it leads to better business results, but the message is not reaching employees. Only 42% of employees think this is the case for gender diversity, and only 22% think it's the case for racial diversity.

CASE STUDY
vmware®

VMware: Tracking and rewarding progress

What they did

VMware wanted to make diversity metrics easy for senior leaders to access and to hold them accountable for improving the metrics.

VMware's CEO gave each vice president a yearly goal of improving the global representation of women. To develop strategic action plans, VPs were given access to a diversity dashboard with real-time HR metrics. The dashboard tracks representation, hiring, promotions, and retention, showing areas of progress in green and areas of decline in red. This tool helped leaders to easily see improvement areas, strategize, and track progress toward meeting their representation targets.

Each senior leader's progress is recorded on a scorecard and reviewed at regular intervals with the CEO's executive staff. To meet their business goals, senior leaders now have to meet representation targets and demonstrate inclusive behavior.

Outcomes

Since announcing these goals and unveiling the dashboard in August 2017, VMware has made significant progress. Their global hiring rate for women is 5.6 percentage points higher than their baseline representation, and for the past twelve months, the company has met gender representation targets across all geographic regions.

2. Ensure that hiring and promotions are fair

Hiring and promotions are the two biggest levers for changing the representation of women across the pipeline. Yet companies are not hiring and promoting women and men at equal rates, especially at the entry and manager levels.

Part of the problem is that very few companies have end-to-end processes in place to ensure fair practices. Fewer than one in three companies sets diversity targets for hiring and promotions, even though setting goals is critical to achieving them. Fewer than one in four companies uses tools to reduce bias when reviewing résumés, even though reviewers often fail to give equal consideration to women, people of color, and other underrepresented groups. Fewer than half of companies require diverse slates of candidates for external hiring and only a quarter require them for internal promotions, even though they lead to more diverse hires and promotions.

Very few companies train employees to recognize and push back against bias in hiring and promotions. Just 19 percent of companies require unconscious bias training for employees involved in hiring. A mere 4 percent require training for employees involved in performance reviews. And only about a third remind employees to take steps to avoid bias at the outset of both processes. Unconscious bias can have a big impact on who's hired and promoted—and who's not—and it's critical that companies take concrete steps to counter it.

Finally, it's important to track outcomes. Otherwise, it's impossible for a company to know if it's treating candidates fairly. Many companies track outcomes in hiring to check for gender bias, which is a good start. But far fewer track the compounding effect of gender and racial bias, which disadvantages women of color. And companies are far less likely to track bias in performance reviews—for example, to see if women's communication styles are criticized more often than men's—yet performance reviews play a major role in who gets promoted and who doesn't.

Until companies hire and promote women at the same rates as men, we won't see progress in the representation of women in corporate America. Ensuring that these processes are fair is vital to that goal.

Only a third of companies make sure job candidates are interviewed by a diverse group of employees, yet companies should use strategies like this to underscore that they prioritize diversity and inclusion.

Steps for minimizing bias in hiring and promotions

	HIRING	REVIEWS & PROMOTIONS
	% OF COMPANIES THAT DO THIS	
☐ Set diversity targets	**29%** for gender **9%** for gender & race combined	**21%** for gender **8%** for gender & race combined
☐ Use automated résumé screening tools to reduce bias	**23%**	N/A
☐ Require diverse slates of candidates be considered	**48%**	**26%**
☐ Set clear, consistent evaluation criteria before the process begins	**72%**	**71%**
☐ Require unconscious bias training for employees involved	**19%**	**4%**
☐ Provide reminders about how to avoid unconscious bias before the process begins	**36%**	**32%**
☐ Track outcomes to check for bias	**78%** for gender **35%** for gender & race combined	**42%** for gender **18%** for gender & race combined

Research shows how biased the résumé review process can be. In one study, replacing a woman's name with a man's on a résumé improved the candidate's odds of being hired by 71 percent.[18] In another, replacing a stereotypically Black-sounding name with a stereotypically white-sounding name resulted in 50 percent more callbacks— the equivalent of adding eight years of work experience.[19]

18 Rhea E. Steinpreis, Katie A. Anders, and Dawn Ritzke, "The Impact of Gender on the Review of Curricula Vitae of Job Applicants and Tenure Candidates: A National Empirical Study," *Sex Roles* 41, nos. 7–8 (1999): 509–28. **19** Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan, "Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination," *American Economic Review* 94, no. 4 (2004): 991–1013.

Sodexo: Building a business case for change

What they did

Sodexo was struggling to get managers worldwide to buy into diversity initiatives. The company realized that they needed to build a business case for more women in leadership.

Sodexo looked at how business units with different proportions of women and men in management performed on a range of key financial and nonfinancial metrics, including client retention, employee engagement, and workplace safety. After studying the performance of more than 50,000 managers, they discovered that business units with a higher concentration of women in management (i.e., 40 to 60 percent women) perform better. Their operating margins, client retention, and employee retention are all nearly 10 percent higher, and their employee engagement rate is 14 percent higher.

Outcomes

Sodexo used these proof points to build a business case for getting more women in management and set a goal that 40 percent of senior leaders will be women by 2025. To help meet this goal, 10 percent of annual bonuses for senior leaders is now contingent on making progress against it.

CASE STUDY

Airbnb: Designing a fairer review process

What they did

Airbnb wanted to make sure women and men were progressing through their employee pipeline at similar rates, so they made changes to their performance evaluation process to block bias.

Working with Stanford University's VMware Women's Leadership Innovation Lab, Airbnb updated and standardized the criteria used in evaluations and added a five-point rating scale to the questions on their review form. The new criteria and rating scale require managers, direct reports, and peers to slow down and think critically about their assessments, which can lead to fairer outcomes. The review form also has limited open-ended questions, which reduces the chance for gender-biased language to be used in the review process. Lastly, because studies show that women tend to underrate their own performance and men tend to overrate theirs, Airbnb stopped asking employees to rate themselves.

To ensure that the new assessment form is used effectively, Airbnb introduced an animated video and tip cards that educate managers on unconscious bias, and they equipped leaders with talking points to underscore the importance of fairness in performance evaluations. These tools have been used in calibration sessions with nearly 700 managers, and the company offers all employees training on reducing bias in reviews.

Outcomes

Two years after updating their review process, interviews with managers point to an increase in awareness about the ways bias impacts performance assessments. Airbnb continues to track and analyze the ratings and promotion rates of employees to make sure there are no unexplained gender differences. They're also tracking changes in employee perceptions about fairness in the performance review process. Based on these initial indications, the new performance review evaluation system appears to be having a positive impact.

McKinsey&Company

LEAN IN

3. Make senior leaders and managers champions of diversity

Senior leaders and managers are critical to driving organizational change. But companies are not giving managers and leaders clear marching orders when it comes to improving gender diversity.

Senior leaders set the agenda in organizations; they signal what's important.

The problem is . . .

- Only about one in three employees reports that senior leaders . . .
  └ Encourage an open dialogue on gender diversity
  └ Provide guidance on how to improve gender diversity
- Just one in five employees believes leaders are held accountable for results.

And companies need to do more . . .

- Less than a third of companies share a majority of gender-diversity metrics with managers and leaders and offer financial rewards for making progress. Yet what gets measured and rewarded is typically what gets prioritized.

  Given the role senior leaders play in setting the agenda in companies, progress is unlikely if they are not incentivized to act.

Managers make many of the day-to-day decisions that shape employees' experiences and career progression.

The problem is . . .

- Less than a third of employees say that managers often challenge biased language and behavior when they see or hear it.
- Just one in four employees says their manager provides guidance on how to improve gender diversity.

And companies need to do more . . .

- Less than half of managers receive unconscious bias training. Yet when employees understand how bias impacts their decision-making, they are able to make fairer, more objective decisions.

  For managers—who often determine who gets stretch assignments, promotions, and the resources to be successful— this kind of training is particularly helpful.

Until leaders at all levels understand the problem, are trained to help solve it, and are held accountable for making progress—in other words, until companies require that leaders treat gender diversity like any other business imperative—it will be hard to achieve lasting change.

Getting managers on board matters. When employees have a manager who regularly challenges bias, as opposed to one who rarely does, they are more likely to think that everyone has an equal chance to advance at work—and they are less likely to think their gender has played a role in their missing out on a raise or promotion. Women in particular feel this way: they are almost four times less likely to think their gender has held them back and almost twice as likely to think they enjoy the same opportunities as their peers.

Only 39% of women and 47% of men think that gender diversity is a high priority for their manager. Just 22% of women and 30% of men say their manager provides guidance on how to improve gender diversity.
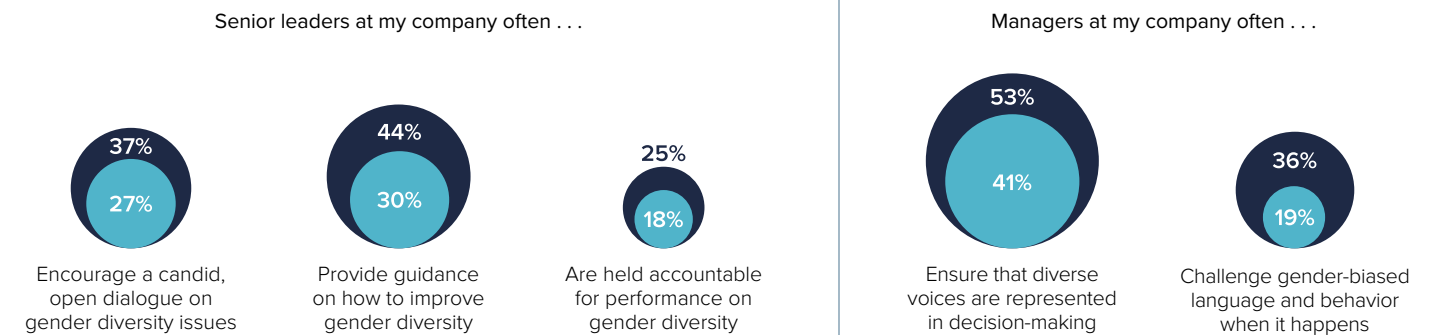
Men think leaders are doing a better job promoting gender diversity than women do. Men are almost twice as likely as women to think managers challenge gender-biased language and behavior and almost 1.5 times more likely to say that senior leaders offer guidance on how to advance women and improve gender diversity.
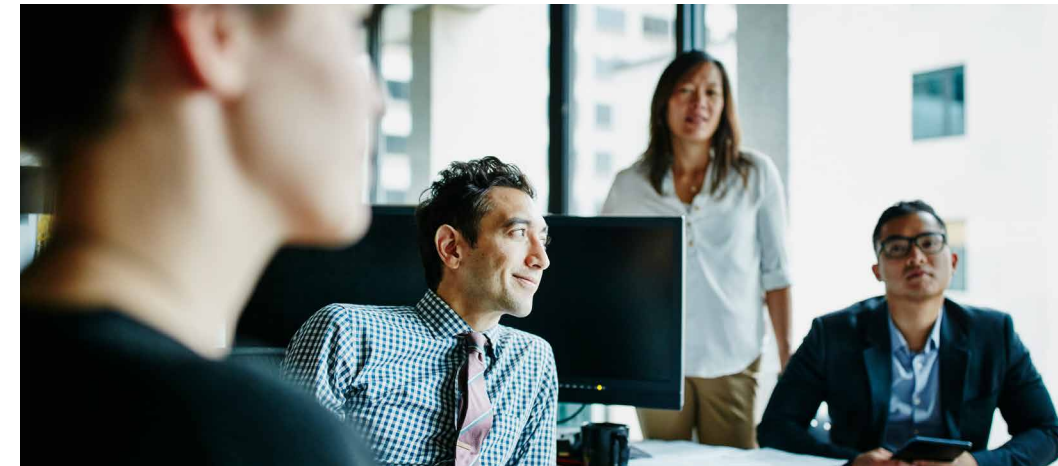
FEWER WOMEN THINK LEADERS ARE CHAMPIONING GENDER DIVERSITY

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO SAY   MEN ■■■■   WOMEN ■■■■

Senior leaders at my company often . . .

37% / 27% — Encourage a candid, open dialogue on gender diversity issues

44% / 30% — Provide guidance on how to improve gender diversity

25% / 18% — Are held accountable for performance on gender diversity

Managers at my company often . . .

53% / 41% — Ensure that diverse voices are represented in decision-making

36% / 19% — Challenge gender-biased language and behavior when it happens

A CLOSER LOOK

Engaging white men is critical but challenging

There is a strong correlation between the degree to which people experience bias and how personally committed they are to diversity. Lesbian women and women of color are the most personally committed to both gender and racial diversity, followed by gay men, men of color, and white women. White men are the least committed—and are also the least likely to say they experience bias. This commitment gap can be significant. Seventy-three percent of women of color are personally committed to racial diversity, but just 51 percent of white men are. The same trend holds true for gender diversity: women of color are highly committed to gender diversity, while white men are far less so. This lack of commitment can lead to a lack of engagement: only one in five women and one in three men say that the men in their company regularly participate in initiatives to improve gender diversity.

There are also signs of a backlash among men: 15 percent think their gender will make it harder for them to get ahead, even though their representation in the workplace far surpasses women's. And white men—who are better represented than any other group—are more likely to think this than men of color. Companies can bring more men along by linking diversity to better business outcomes. When men think their company prioritizes gender diversity because it's critical to the success of the business, they are more likely to prioritize it themselves.

> 15% of men think their gender will make it harder for them to advance.

CASE STUDY

P&G: Getting men involved

What they did
P&G knew they needed the support of men—who hold many senior leadership positions—to reach their diversity and inclusion goals. The company enlisted men as diversity champions through the MARC (Men Advocating Real Change) program. Developed by Catalyst, MARC helps men understand and mitigate common biases that can disadvantage women, such as the cultural belief that men are a better match for leadership, and builds effective partnership across genders. P&G began hosting regular MARC Leaders workshops and kept participants engaged with follow-up surveys and newsletters. The company also arranged for senior leaders who participated to host their own events for employees who couldn't attend the workshops.

Outcomes
More than 950 senior P&G leaders have completed a MARC Leaders workshop. P&G surveyed participants and found that after the average workshop, 96 percent of men acknowledge having more privileges than women, compared to just 70 percent before the workshops. Fully 100 percent of men who participated said that they now feel they have a personal stake in diversity and inclusion and will work on recognizing their bias and taking steps to counteract it.

For more details on the MARC program, visit catalyst.org/marc

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4. Foster an inclusive and respectful culture

Fostering an environment where all employees feel included and respected starts with making sure everyone feels safe. That means communicating that sexual harassment is not acceptable and reviewing and handling reports of harassment promptly and decisively. Too few employees believe that their company does both, despite the importance of getting these basics right.

Beyond that, there is a great deal companies can do to promote an inclusive, supportive, and civil culture. This would benefit everyone. Although women deal with more everyday slights and disrespectful behavior than men, 58 percent of all employees experience some type of microaggression, suggesting that incivility is too common at work.

Companies should develop clear guidelines for what collegial and respectful behavior looks like—as well as unacceptable and uncivil behavior. To be treated seriously, these guidelines must be supported by a clear reporting process and swift consequences for disrespectful behavior. Companies should also hold periodic refreshers to drive the guidelines home and make sure all employees understand them. Steps like these have an impact on employee satisfaction and retention. Both women and men who believe that disrespectful behavior toward women is often quickly addressed at their company are happier in their roles and less likely to think about leaving. Not surprisingly, this has a bigger positive impact on women: they are 44 percent less likely to think about leaving their company, compared to 17 percent of men.
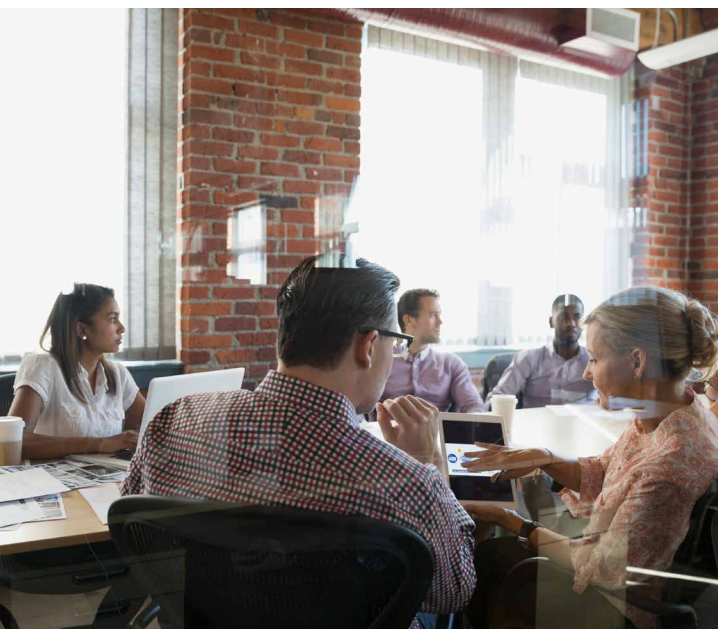
For change to happen, managers need to step in early when they see problematic behavior and model the right behavior themselves. When managers regularly challenge gender-biased language and behavior, women are significantly happier and more likely to stay. Yet just over a quarter of employees say their managers typically do this, and less than half of managers say they've received the unconscious bias training needed to get this right. The quality of the training also matters: it's good to educate managers broadly on bias, but it's even better to dig into specifics and cover more subtle or complex instances of bias. Training should address how microaggressions work, so managers know what to watch for on their team, and it should cover the concept of intersectionality, so they understand the overlapping and compounding biases that women and others from marginalized groups face. And although managers are critically important, all employees would benefit from this type of training.

It's also helpful to take a step back and think about how company and team norms might disadvantage certain employees. Work events centered on outdoor activities can leave out employees with different abilities; an expectation that employees are on call nights and weekends can make life harder for working parents; and outings to sporting events can exclude some women.

Finally, companies need to actively encourage and value diversity. That means signaling that diversity is a top priority with action and accountability, seeking out different voices and perspectives, and fostering an inclusive culture where employees can respectfully talk about tricky topics, and where they are expected to actively help in building a better workplace for everyone. And of course, talking the talk on diversity only goes so far unless companies also walk the walk by building diverse teams.

WHAT COMPANIES CAN DO TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

% OF EMPLOYEES WHO THINK ABOUT LEAVING

MEN OVERALL	WOMEN OVERALL	WOMEN ONLYS
19%	20%	26%

% OF EMPOYEES WHO ARE HAPPY WITH THEIR JOB

MEN OVERALL	WOMEN OVERALL	WOMEN ONLYS
76%	76%	71%

THIS % DROPS WHEN THEIR COMPANY . . .   ↓   ↓   ↓

THIS % IMPROVES WHEN THEIR COMPANY . . .   ↓   ↓   ↓

. . . PRIORITIZES DIVERSITY

MEN	WOMEN	WOMEN ONLYS		MEN	WOMEN	WOMEN ONLYS
-7%[20]	-10%	-12%	Senior leaders encourage a candid, open dialogue on gender diversity issues	+14%	+14%	+17%
-7%	-10%	-13%	Senior leaders are held accountable for performance on gender diversity	+13%	+14%	+17%

. . . DOES NOT TOLERATE BIASED AND DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

MEN	WOMEN	WOMEN ONLYS		MEN	WOMEN	WOMEN ONLYS
-6%	-11%	-15%	Managers challenge gender-biased language or behavior when it happens	+13%	+15%	+19%
-3%	-9%	-11%	Disrespectful behavior toward women is quickly addressed	+10%	+13%	+18%
-3%	-7%	-8%	Incidents of sexual harassment are quickly addressed	+10%	+12%	+14%

. . . ENCOURAGES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

MEN	WOMEN	WOMEN ONLYS		MEN	WOMEN	WOMEN ONLYS
-7%	-8%	-10%	This company values the differences that people bring to the workplace	+13%	+13%	+17%
-8%	-9%	-12%	Ideas are judged by their quality, not by who raised them	+14%	+14%	+18%
-9%	-12%	-14%	Managers ensure that diverse voices are represented in decision-making	+15%	+16%	+18%

20 The reported increases and drops are percentage point changes.

LEAN IN

CASE STUDY

Mozilla: Creating an inclusive culture

moz://a

What they did

In 2016, Mozilla learned through focus groups that women were having challenging workplace experiences. They also learned from an employee survey that women were much more concerned than men about workplace harassment and bullying. The survey results suggested that Mozilla could help improve women's experiences by rewriting their Community Participation Guidelines, the company's code of conduct.

Mozilla wanted to understand what was missing from this document, so they convened additional focus groups of women. The groups recommended that the guidelines clearly describe who is protected under the code of conduct, including people of different races, ages, and genders. They also recommended providing examples of good and bad behaviors and explaining when and how to use the guidelines, how to report incidents of harassment or bullying, and what to expect after reporting.

Mozilla edited their code of conduct accordingly and ran an internal education campaign to make sure that employees knew about the changes and took them seriously.

Outcomes

After publicizing the changed code of conduct, Mozilla's next engagement survey showed that women felt better about the company's inclusiveness and stance on harassment. Fourteen percent more women believed that harassment and bullying are not tolerated by Mozilla, 15 percent more women felt safe reporting harassment and bullying, and 10 percent more women believed that people treat one another with respect at Mozilla.

MOZILLA'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Below are slightly edited excerpts from Mozilla's Community Participation Guidelines. In addition, Mozilla clearly outlines the consequences of inappropriate behavior, which is critically important.

BEHAVIOR THAT IS EXPECTED

Be respectful: Value each other's ideas, styles, and viewpoints. We may not always agree, but disagreement is no excuse for poor manners. Be open to different possibilities and to being wrong. Be kind in all interactions and communications, especially when debating the merits of different options. Be aware of your impact and how intense interactions may be affecting people. Be direct, constructive, and positive. Take responsibility for your impact and your mistakes—if someone says they have been harmed through your words or actions, listen carefully, apologize sincerely, and correct the behavior going forward.

Be inclusive: Seek diverse perspectives. Diversity of views and of people on teams powers innovation, even if it is not always comfortable. Encourage all voices. Help new perspectives be heard and listen actively. If you find yourself dominating a discussion, it is especially important to step back and encourage other voices to join in. Be aware of how much time is taken up by dominant members of the group. Provide alternative ways to contribute or participate when possible.

Appreciate our similarities and differences: Be respectful of people with different cultural practices, attitudes, and beliefs. Work to eliminate your own biases, prejudices, and discriminatory practices. Think of others' needs from their point of view. Use preferred titles (including pronouns) and the appropriate tone of voice. Be open to learning from and educating others as well as educating yourself.

BEHAVIOR THAT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

Personal attacks: Conflicts will inevitably arise, but frustration should never turn into a personal attack. It is not okay to insult, demean, or belittle others. Attacking someone for their opinions, beliefs, and ideas is not acceptable. It is important to speak directly when we disagree and when we think we need to improve, but such discussions must be conducted respectfully and professionally, remaining focused on the issue at hand.

Unwelcome sexual attention or physical contact: Unwelcome sexual attention or unwelcome physical contact is not acceptable, including:

- Sexualized comments, jokes, or imagery in interactions, communications, or presentation materials

- Inappropriate touching, groping, or sexual advances; this includes touching a person's hair, pregnant stomach, mobility device, or tattoos without permission

- Physically blocking or intimidating another person

- Simulating physical contact (such as emojis like "kiss") without affirmative consent

- Sharing or distributing sexualized images or text

Read Mozilla's complete guidelines at mzl.la/cpg

5. Make the "Only" experience rare

Companies should take steps to reduce the number of women who are the only one in the room—and who feel isolated and under pressure as a result.

Many businesses need to change the way they think about adding women to their organization—which means moving beyond the mindset of "one and done" and pushing to add women until they reach true parity. A recent analysis found that S&P 1,500 companies are significantly more likely to have just two women on their board of directors than would be expected by chance, which suggests that companies may stop focusing on gender diversity once they reach a threshold of two women.[21] This "check the box" mentality is the wrong approach.

In addition to increasing the representation of women, companies should be thoughtful about how they move them through their organization. One approach is to hire and promote women in cohorts; another is to cluster women on teams. As opposed to staffing one woman on a number of teams, companies should consider putting groups of two to three women on teams together. And of course, it's important to think twice before clustering women in functions traditionally dominated by women, like human resources and communications. This can reinforce gender stereotypes. Instead, it's better to look for opportunities to staff groups of women in a variety of functions across the organization.

It's also important that companies create opportunities for women Onlys to connect with other women. HR teams should make sure that their organization offers networking groups so women can find support and community. Likewise, managers should think through the day-to-day interactions of their teams and create opportunities for women to work together.
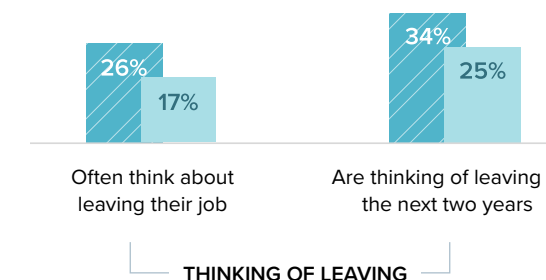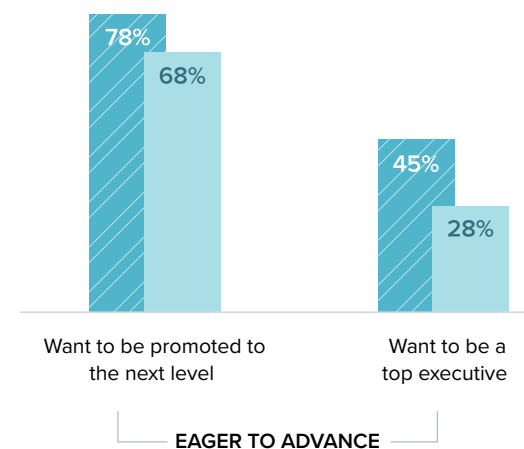
Building an inclusive and respectful workplace pays dividends when it comes to women Onlys. Across races and ethnicities, women Onlys have higher ambitions to be a top executive than other women. But they are also more likely to think about leaving their company. By making these driven employees' experiences more fulfilling and less isolating, companies are more likely to retain them. That would be a win for everyone.

It's worth noting that 25% of all employees are an Only on some dimension. So beyond addressing the experience of women Onlys, it behooves companies to be thoughtful about how they put together teams and look for opportunities to support employees who may feel left out.

WOMEN ONLYS ARE MORE AMBITIOUS, BUT THEY ARE ALSO MORE LIKELY TO THINK OF LEAVING

% OF WOMEN ONLYS VS. NON-ONLYS WHO . . .

WOMEN ONLYS ▨   WOMEN NON-ONLYS ▨

78%		
68%	45%	
	28%	

Want to be promoted to the next level / Want to be a top executive

EAGER TO ADVANCE

26%	34%
17%	25%

Often think about leaving their job / Are thinking of leaving in the next two years

THINKING OF LEAVING

Support groups can improve the Only experience. Women Onlys who belong to Lean In Circles—small groups of peers who meet once a month to support one another and learn new skills together—are more likely to be happy in their job, more likely to believe that they have an equal chance to grow and develop, and more likely to think their company is doing what it takes to improve gender diversity.

Learn more at leanin.org/partner

21 Edward H. Chang, Katherine L. Milkman, Dolly Chugh, and Modupe Akinola, "Diversity Thresholds: How Social Norms, Visibility, and Scrutiny Relate to Group Composition," *Academy of Management Journal,* in press, published online February 26, 2018, https://journals.aom.org/doi/10.5465/amj.2017.0440.

LEAN IN
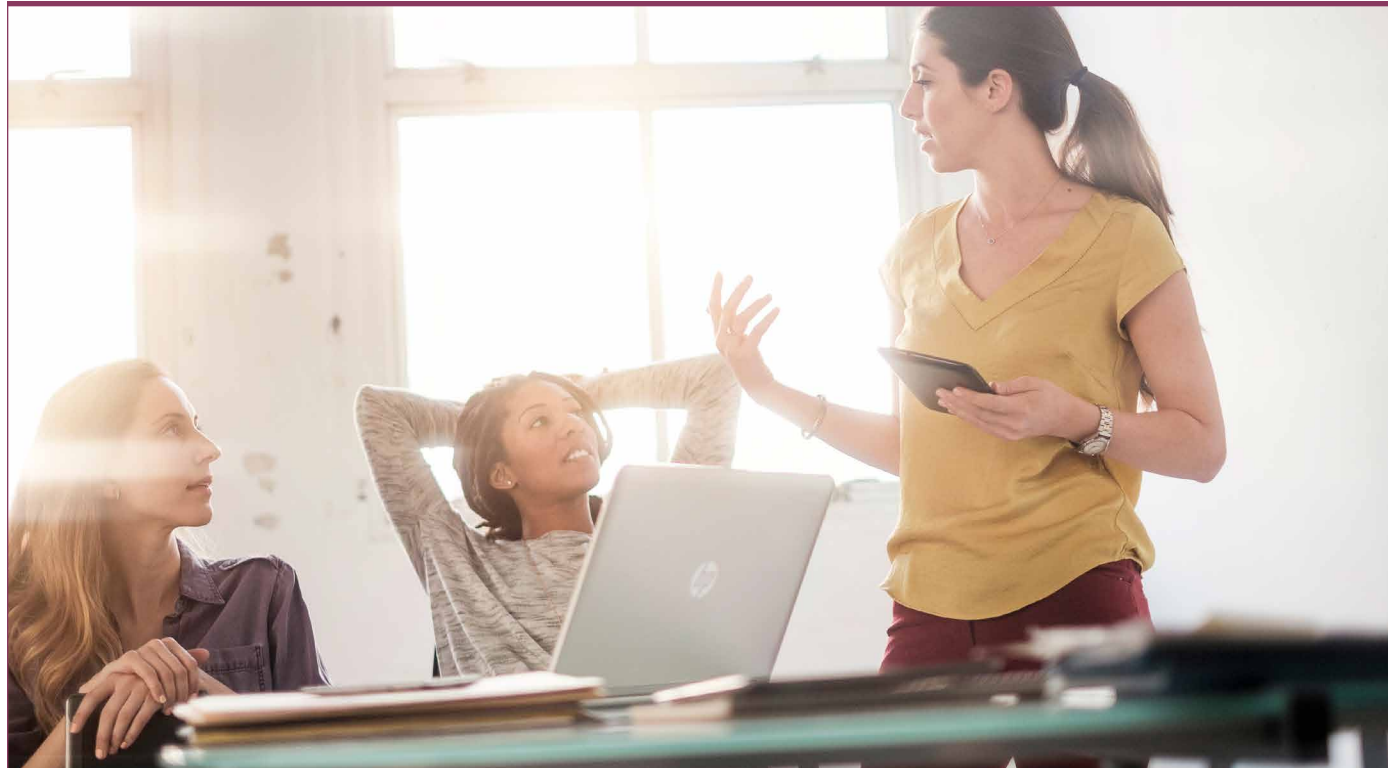
## Hilton: Offering opportunities for women to connect with other women

Hilton

What they did

Hilton established employee affinity groups called Team Member Resource Groups (TMRGs) to create communities for underrepresented groups, including women, people of color, LGBTQ people, veterans, and people of different abilities. There are now more than fifty TMRG chapters with 7,400 members around the world.

TMRGs provide a support system for members and a safe space for dialogue on issues they're experiencing at work. They also promote the professional growth of their members through mentorship and networking opportunities, career development sessions, and leadership panels. TMRGs are sponsored by senior leaders, who use feedback from the groups to help make Hilton's culture and work environment more inclusive.

Outcomes

Insights from TMRGs have led to expanded benefits like parental leave and flexible work arrangements and contributed to a 5 percent reduction in employee turnover in the United States since 2016. Hilton has also used TMRG recommendations to update its employee travel program and to shape the design and layout of the company's new hotel brands.
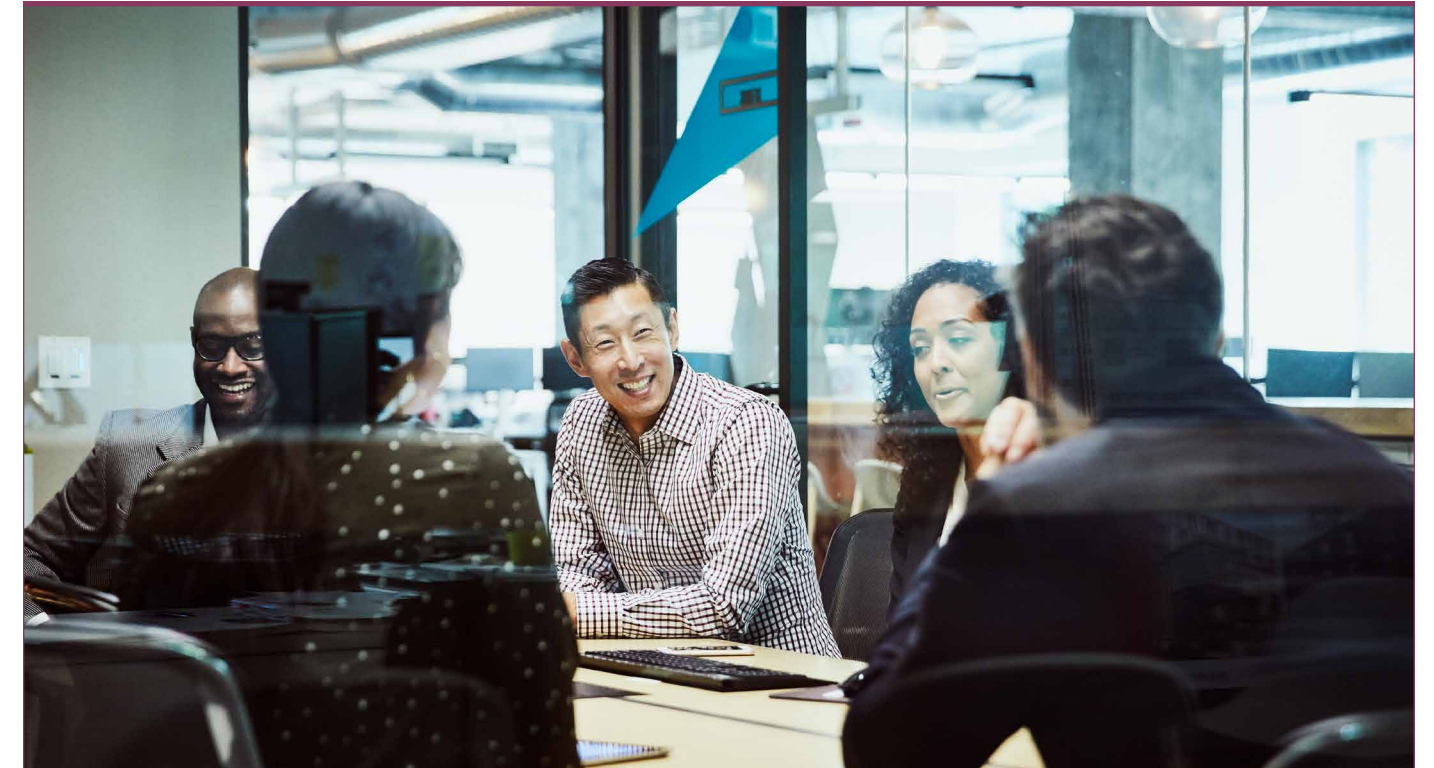
L'Oréal: Creating networks for underrepresented groups

L'ORÉAL USA

What they did

L'Oréal USA launched Think Tanks, employee resource groups that promote a more inclusive workplace for underrepresented groups, including women, people of color, people with disabilities, veterans, and the LGBTQ community. Think Tanks have helped L'Oréal identify policies and programs to better support their diverse workforce, including new disability benefits and health-care coverage for infertility treatment and gender reassignment surgery. Input from Think Tank members has also helped L'Oréal USA marketing campaigns resonate with a more diverse audience.

Different Think Tanks have different missions. For instance, the "L'Oréal for Women" Think Tank developed a road map to support the advancement of women into senior positions. Two key initiatives were a leadership certification program at Harvard University and an annual offsite for senior leaders that focused on promoting equality and fighting bias.

Outcomes

Since the program started in 2012, L'Oréal USA believes Think Tanks have contributed to a 40 percent increase in women in leadership and an 18 percent increase in people of color across the company. During the same time period, the number of employees who have disclosed a disability has quadrupled.

6. Offer employees the flexibility to fit work into their lives

To increase the representation of women at all levels, companies need to find more ways to help employees balance work and family.

Managing the complexities of raising children and running a household while building a career is a juggling act for many workers. Forty-one percent of employees have children at home, and 17 percent of them do not benefit from the support of a partner in the house. Although balancing work and family is an issue both for women and men, it continues to weigh more heavily on women: across all races and ethnicities, women are far more likely than men to do most or all of the household work, in addition to their day jobs. Lesbian women are the exception: they split household work more evenly with their partners.

A majority of companies offer employees some flexibility to ease work-life friction, such as the ability to work part-time or telecommute. But fewer companies address the unique challenges faced by parents. Less than two-thirds of companies offer maternity leave beyond what's required by law, and just over half offer fathers the same benefit. Far fewer companies have programs designed to ease employee transitions to and from extended leave, even though those periods can be particularly challenging for employees and their families. And ongoing support for parents—like subsidized or on-site child care—is still uncommon. Programs like these make a difference: it's easier to focus on your job when you know that your children are well cared for.
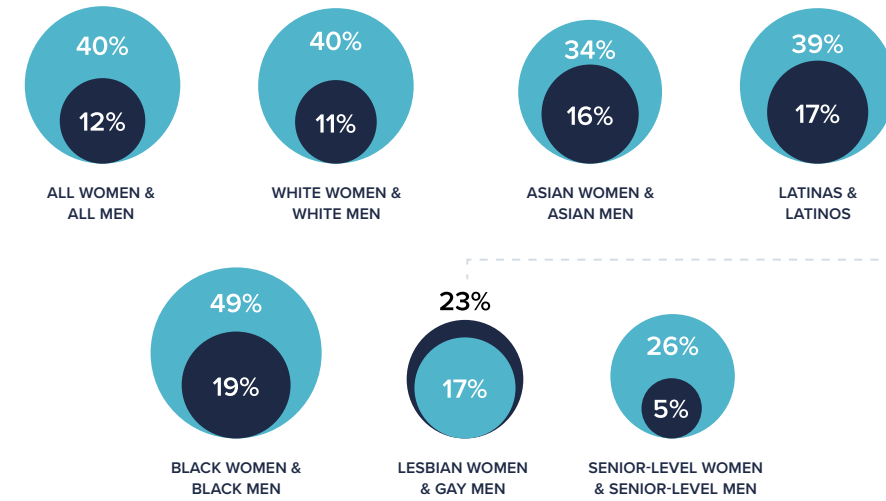
Just 45% of employees say that their manager regularly helps them balance work and personal demands— and women and men feel equally unsupported.

WOMEN STILL DO MOST OR ALL OF HOUSEHOLD WORK

% OF WOMEN AND MEN WHO HAVE PARTNERS AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OR MOST HOUSEHOLD WORK
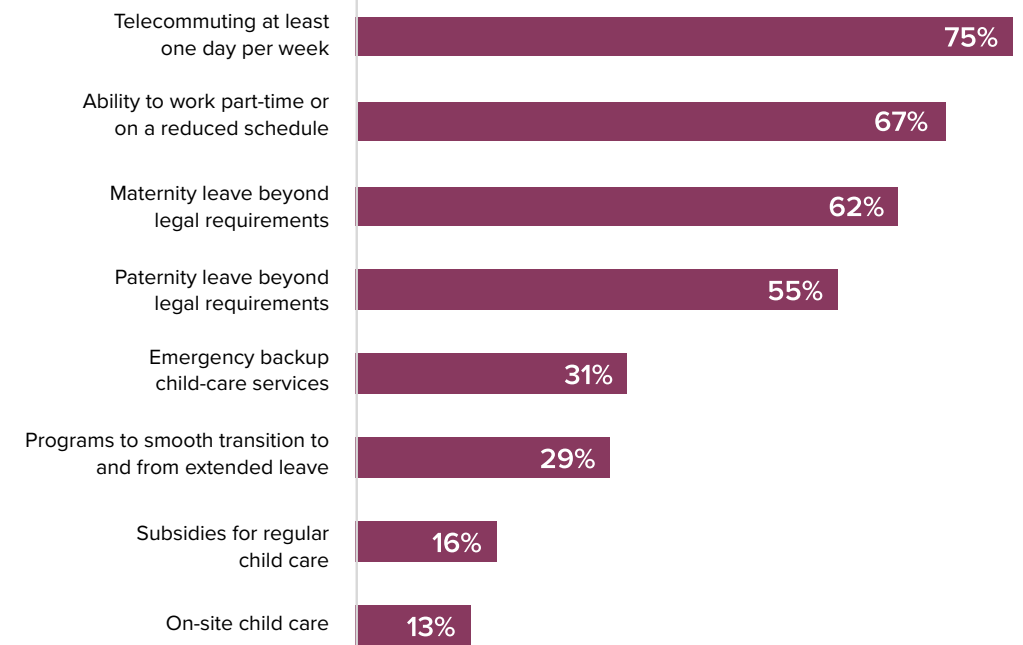
MEN ▬   WOMEN ▬

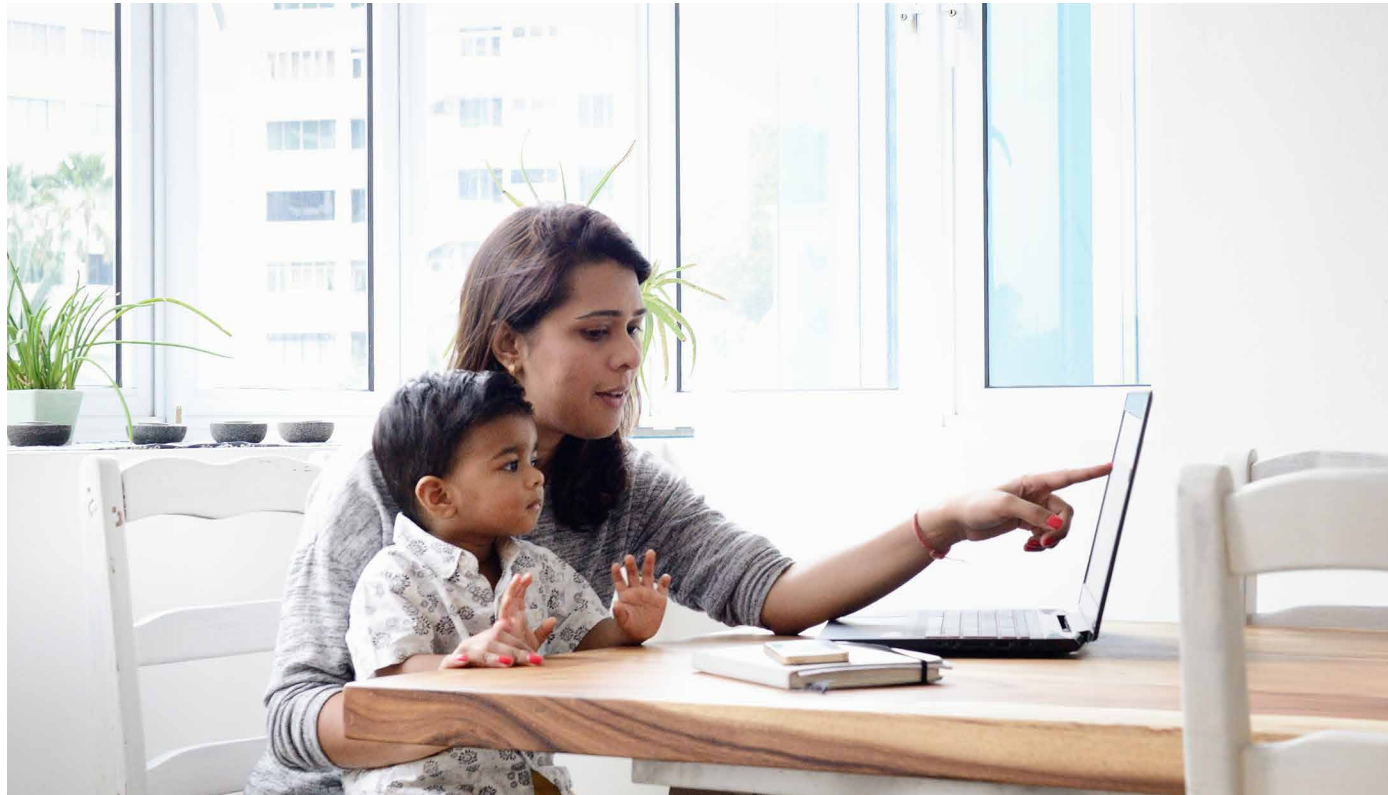|	
ALL WOMEN & ALL MEN	40% women / 12% men
WHITE WOMEN & WHITE MEN	40% women / 11% men
ASIAN WOMEN & ASIAN MEN	34% women / 16% men
LATINAS & LATINOS	39% women / 17% men
BLACK WOMEN & BLACK MEN	49% women / 19% men
LESBIAN WOMEN & GAY MEN	23% women / 17% men
SENIOR-LEVEL WOMEN & SENIOR-LEVEL MEN	26% women / 5% men

Lesbian women split household work more evenly with their partners.

COMPANY POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT WORK/LIFE BALANCE

% OF COMPANIES THAT REPORT THEY OFFER . . .

| Policy	%
Telecommuting at least one day per week	75%
Ability to work part-time or on a reduced schedule	67%
Maternity leave beyond legal requirements	62%
Paternity leave beyond legal requirements	55%
Emergency backup child-care services	31%
Programs to smooth transition to and from extended leave	29%
Subsidies for regular child care	16%
On-site child care	13%

A CLOSER LOOK

Making work work for women in leadership

Senior-level women often have more household responsibilities than senior-level men. They are twice as likely as men at their level to have a partner who works full-time, which means they are far less likely to have someone at home focused primarily on the household and the kids. And when women in leadership have partners, they are five times more likely than men in the same situation to do all or most of the household work. So perhaps not surprisingly, among senior-level employees who don't want to be top executives, 42 percent of women say it's because it would require too much of their families, compared to 35 percent of men.
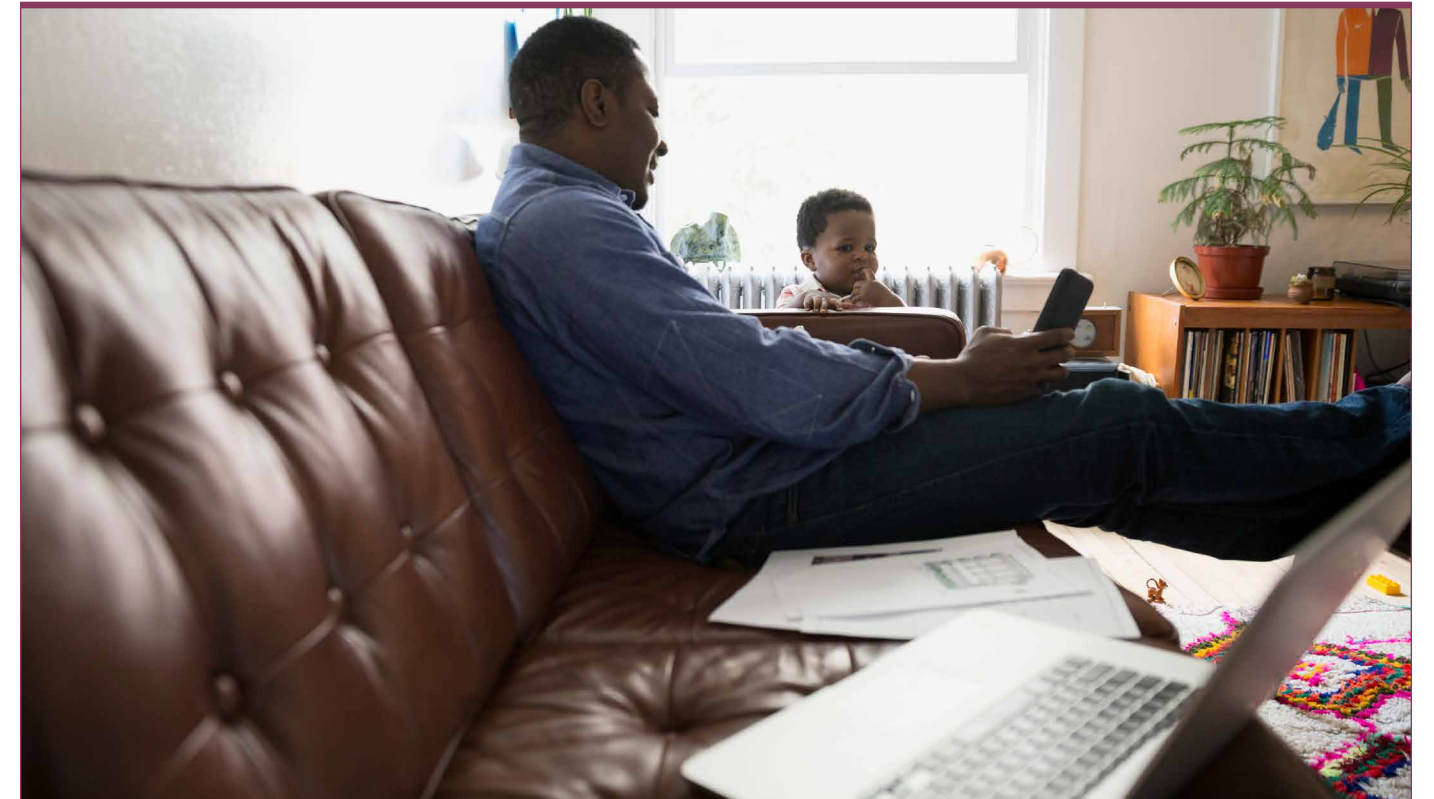
CASE STUDY

Allstate: Helping employees balance work and life

What they did

Allstate has a long history of supporting working families. For more than twenty years, they have provided on-site child care at the company's headquarters, including care for infants and preschoolers, full-day kindergarten, and vacation programs for children. For at least fifteen years, they have offered compressed and part-time schedules, job sharing, and flexible start times.

In 2006, they launched their first parent-focused employee resource group to provide peer support, help parents navigate the company's work-life balance resources, and surface challenges faced by parents and caregivers to leadership. In addition, for the last several years, Allstate has offered employee discounts at child-care facilities across the country. And in 2018, they decided to take this support even further with the addition of telecommuting and remote work options.

Outcomes

Employees who take advantage of Allstate's family-friendly policies feel overwhelmingly positive about the experience. In a 2018 survey, 96 percent of employees who used the company's onsite child-care program reported that it helped them balance personal and professional demands. Another 95 percent said it made it easier for them to concentrate and be more productive on the job.

In 2017, 42 percent of Allstate employees made use of flexible work arrangements. Those who did were more likely to say they felt valued on the job, were satisfied with their work-life balance, and would recommend the company as a great place to work. Employees often cite the company's flexible policies as one of the ways Allstate has exceeded their expectations.

CONCLUSION

Looking ahead

We have more solutions than ever for companies that want to get to gender equality. But companies need to start by putting the basics in place and sticking to them. They need to treat diversity as the business priority it is. Until they do, meaningful progress remains out of reach.

It's critical that companies focus on closing gender disparities early in the pipeline. This will improve the representation of women all the way to the top. It will also help reduce the number of women who are Onlys. Once, companies might have thought that adding one or two women here and there was sufficient. Now we know how difficult the Only experience can be—and that diversity requires going far beyond "one and done." Real diversity starts with real numbers.

It's equally critical that employers take steps to reduce sexual harassment and microaggressions and promote a culture of civility and respect. Companies that sincerely want to do right by their employees will treat this as vital to their mission. Especially in this day and age, lip service is not enough.

Closing the corporate gender gap isn't a side issue. It's an economic necessity. Programs and policies designed to reduce bias and ensure fairness don't just benefit women. They benefit everyone. In the best workplaces, the most talented people can rise, no matter who they are. That should be the expectation for every workplace, everywhere.

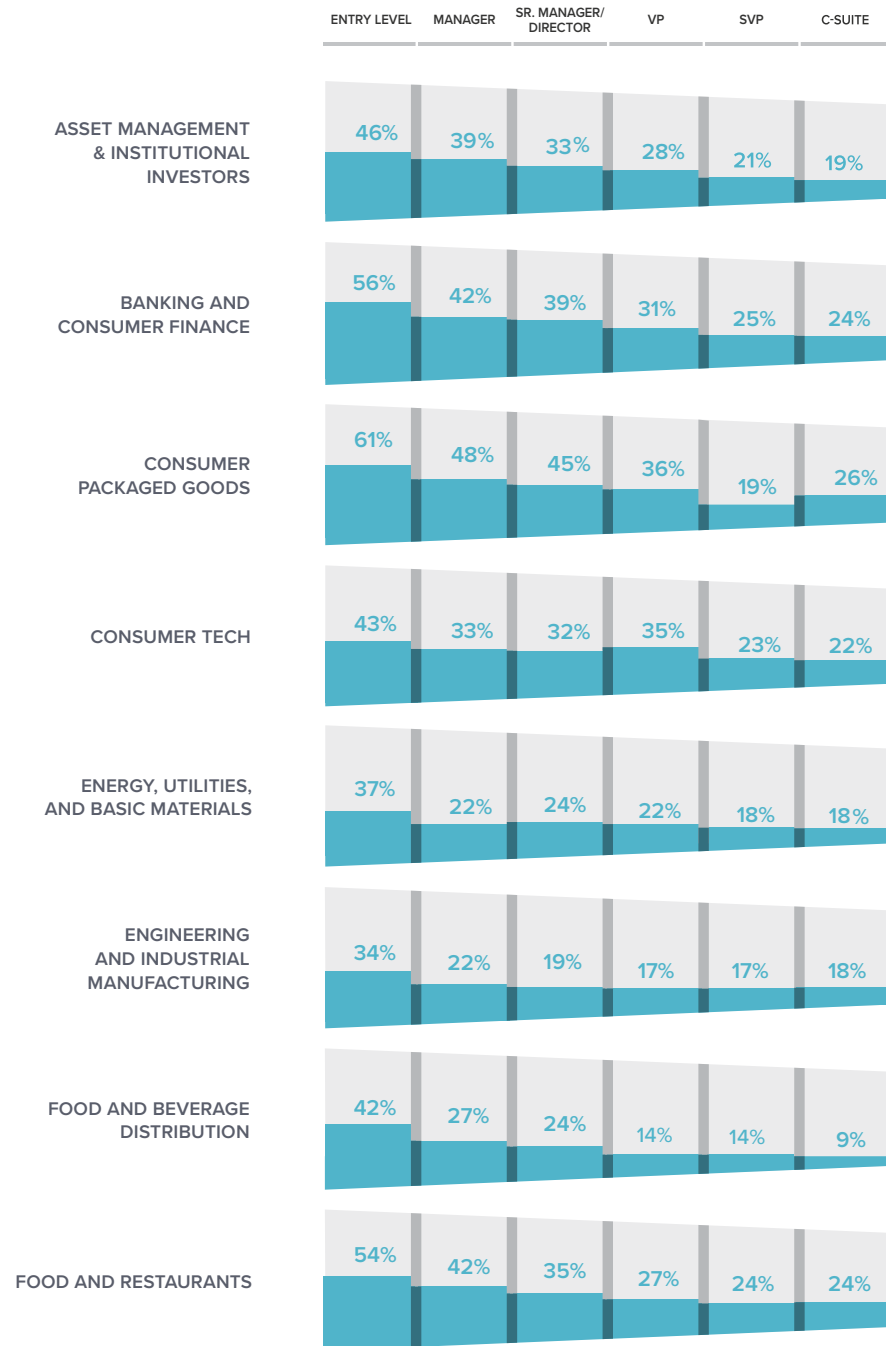# Acknowledgments

McKinsey&Company

LEAN IN

CORPORATE PIPELINE BY INDUSTRY

Different industries have different talent pipelines

Although women are broadly underrepresented in corporate America, the talent pipeline varies by industry. Some industries struggle to attract entry-level women (technology: hardware), while others fail to advance women into middle management (engineering and industrial manufacturing) or senior leadership (food and beverage distribution).
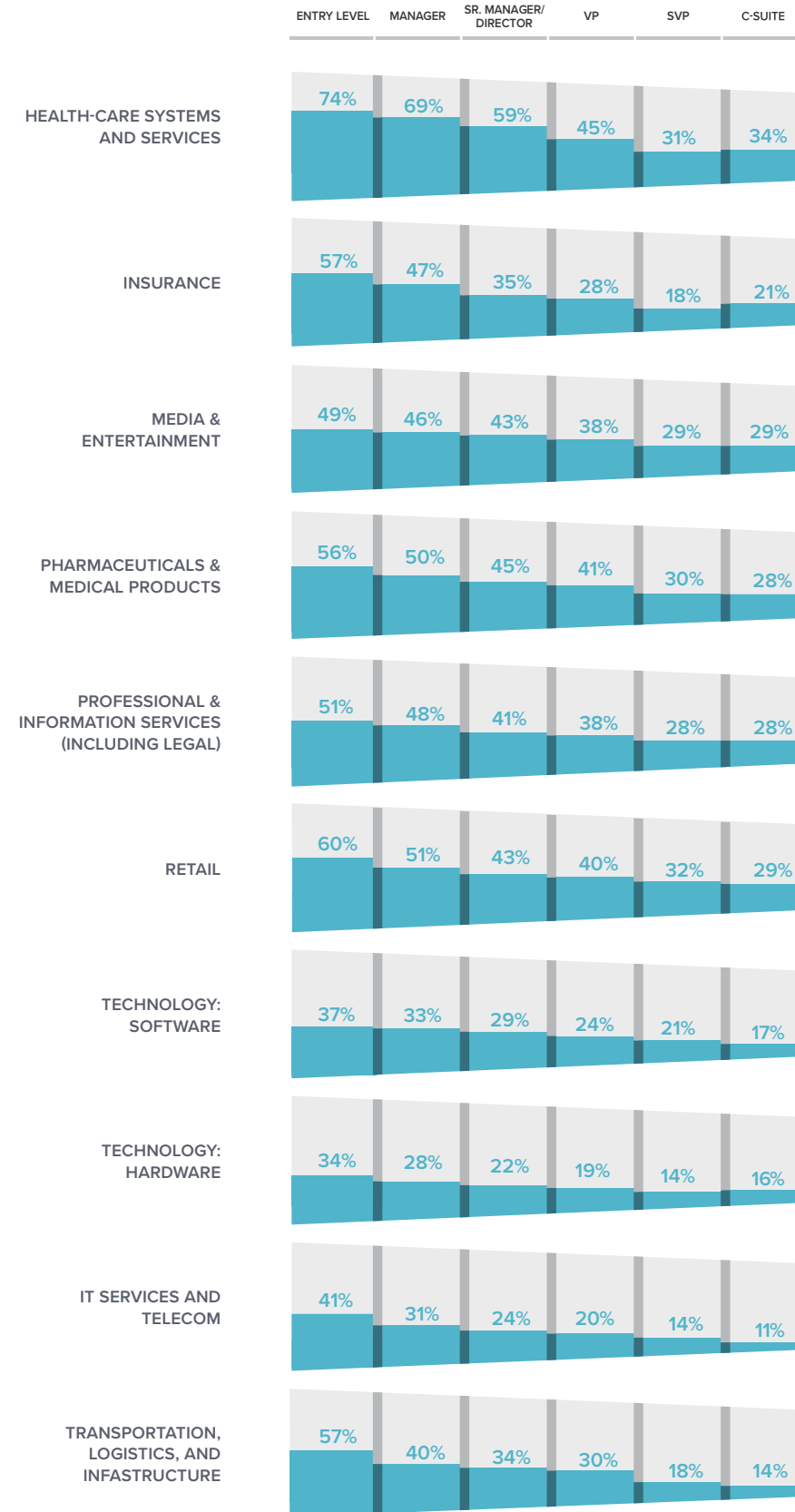
REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN ACROSS INDUSTRIES

% OF WOMEN BY LEVEL

	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER/ DIRECTOR	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
ASSET MANAGEMENT & INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS	46%	39%	33%	28%	21%	19%
BANKING AND CONSUMER FINANCE	56%	42%	39%	31%	25%	24%
CONSUMER PACKAGED GOODS	61%	48%	45%	36%	19%	26%
CONSUMER TECH	43%	33%	32%	35%	23%	22%
ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND BASIC MATERIALS	37%	22%	24%	22%	18%	18%
ENGINEERING AND INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	34%	22%	19%	17%	17%	18%
FOOD AND BEVERAGE DISTRIBUTION	42%	27%	24%	14%	14%	9%
FOOD AND RESTAURANTS	54%	42%	35%	27%	24%	24%

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN ACROSS INDUSTRIES (CONT.)

% OF WOMEN BY LEVEL

	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER/ DIRECTOR	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
HEALTH-CARE SYSTEMS AND SERVICES	74%	69%	59%	45%	31%	34%
INSURANCE	57%	47%	35%	28%	18%	21%
MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT	49%	46%	43%	38%	29%	29%
PHARMACEUTICALS & MEDICAL PRODUCTS	56%	50%	45%	41%	30%	28%
PROFESSIONAL & INFORMATION SERVICES (INCLUDING LEGAL)	51%	48%	41%	38%	28%	28%
RETAIL	60%	51%	43%	40%	32%	29%
TECHNOLOGY: SOFTWARE	37%	33%	29%	24%	21%	17%
TECHNOLOGY: HARDWARE	34%	28%	22%	19%	14%	16%
IT SERVICES AND TELECOM	41%	31%	24%	20%	14%	11%
TRANSPORTATION, LOGISTICS, AND INFASTRUCTURE	57%	40%	34%	30%	18%	14%

Report authors

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Methodology

COMPANY PIPELINE DATA AND PROGRAMS SURVEY

This study is based on research from 279 companies across North America and builds on similar research conducted annually by LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company since 2015, as well as research by McKinsey & Company in 2012. Each participating company submitted gender diversity talent pipeline, policies, and programs data to McKinsey. Pipeline data included the current representation of men and women (overall and, optionally, by race/ethnicity), and number of hires, promotions, and employees who left the company by gender and, optionally, race/ethnicity. Submitted data reflect diversity metrics and program and policy prevalence as of December 31, 2017.

Promotion, hiring, and attrition rates were estimated independently for women and men at each level. Promotion rates were calculated by dividing the number of promotions into a level by the start-of-year number of employees of that gender in the level below. Attrition rates were calculated by dividing the number of each gender who left the company at a given level by the number of employees of that gender in that level at the start of the year. Hiring rates were calculated by dividing the number of each gender who were hired into a level by the number at that level at the start of the year. The ratio of men and women's promotion and external hire rates was calculated by dividing women's rates by men's rates.

Scenarios to examine the potential of equitable hiring and promotion rates assumed that share of promotions or hires reflects the group's representation in the appropriate candidate pool. In the case of promotions, we reflected the representation from the level below at the start of the year. In the case of hiring, the pool of candidates was calculated as the average of the representation at the current level and the level below, consistent with an equal mix of lateral and promotion types of hiring.

For the corporate pipeline: Companies were weighted based on the Fortune 500. All metrics (e.g., representation, promotion rates, hiring rates, etc.) were computed for each company. Industry weights were then applied to approximate the company composition of the North America Fortune 500 in 2017. This enabled us to avoid overemphasizing or underemphasizing particular industries and better estimate trends over time based on each year's sample of companies. The industry breakdown of the Fortune 500 used for our weighting was:

- Retail—17%
- Energy and basic materials—16%
- Finance—17%
- Tech—12%
- Health care—9%
- Automotive and industrial manufacturing—8%
- Food and restaurants—7%
- Media and entertainment—4%
- Transportation, logistics, and infrastructure—4%
- Professional and information services—2%
- Engineering—2%

DEFINITION OF LEVELS

Companies categorized their employees into six levels and the board of directors based on standard definitions. In assigning jobs/employees to one of the six levels, companies were asked to consider reporting structure, salary, and advancement. The reported levels and definitions are as follows:

- L1—C-suite-level executives and presidents: CEOs and their direct reports, or those responsible for company operations and profitability
- L2—Senior vice presidents: senior leaders of the organization with significant business unit or functional oversight
- L3—Vice presidents: leaders of the organization who report directly to senior vice presidents
- L4—Senior managers/directors: seasoned managers with responsibility for multiple teams and discrete functions or operating units
- L5—Managers: employees who manage people, programs, or projects
- L6—Entry level: employees who carry out discrete tasks and participate on teams, typically in an office or corporate setting (field employees like cashiers or customer service representatives are not included in our primary analyses)

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Participation in the Employee Experience Survey was encouraged but optional. Employee experience findings are based on the survey results from more than 64,000 employees from eighty-one companies. No single company accounted for more than 5 percent of the responses.

Group differences: To ensure that differences highlighted between genders or groups are both reliable and substantial, we used a dual cutoff for consideration. All differences noted in this report are statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level using a two-tailed test and reflect a difference of at least four percentage points between two groups.

GROUPING OF RESPONSES

When appropriate, analyses of employee experiences and company practices aggregated the top-two and bottom-two boxes of the response scale. For example, the percentage of respondents who "agree" ties back to those who "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree."

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

We conducted qualitative interviews with thirty-seven women from thirteen companies in our sample, which include a range of industries including health-care systems and services, professional and information services, retail, tech, banking and consumer finance, and food and beverage distribution. Interviewees were chosen from volunteers and were selected to reflect a range of levels, functions, and demographic groups. Our interviews focused on women's workplace experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the quantitative findings from the employee survey. Individual names, company names, and any other identifying information were kept strictly confidential and have been redacted/anonymized for reporting purposes.

COMPANIES INCLUDED

Participating companies opted in to the study in response to invitations from LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company or by indicating interest through our public website. We have grouped these companies into industry benchmarks that provide peer comparisons. The reported industry breakdown of participating companies is as follows:

- Asset management and institutional investors—21
- Banking and consumer finance—15
- Consumer packaged goods—7
- Consumer tech—8
- Energy, utilities, and basic materials—21
- Engineering and industrial manufacturing—18
- Food and beverage distribution—19
- Food and restaurants—48
- Health-care systems and services—14
- Insurance—10
- IT services and telecom—5
- Media and entertainment—7
- Pharmaceutical and medical products—20
- Professional and information services—17
- Retail—12
- Tech: Hardware—10
- Tech: Software—20
- Transportation, logistics, and infrastructure—7

For the industry pipelines, averages across companies: All metrics (e.g. representation, promotion rates, hiring rates) were computed for each company. Company results were then averaged, so as to best represent the practices across the range of companies, rather than allowing the larger companies to overly influence overall results.

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

This report covers only findings from North America (United States and Canada). We received additional data for four other geographic regions—Europe, Asia Pacific, Latin America, and Middle East/Africa—to be used for company-specific comparisons.