

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Established in 2004, ION is the national consortium and stakeholder organization whose mission is to increase the number of women appointed to corporate boards and to executive officer positions.



ION's member organizations represent nearly half of the 28 million women working in management and professional roles across the nation. ION is the only confederation of regional organizations in the US engaged in this work.

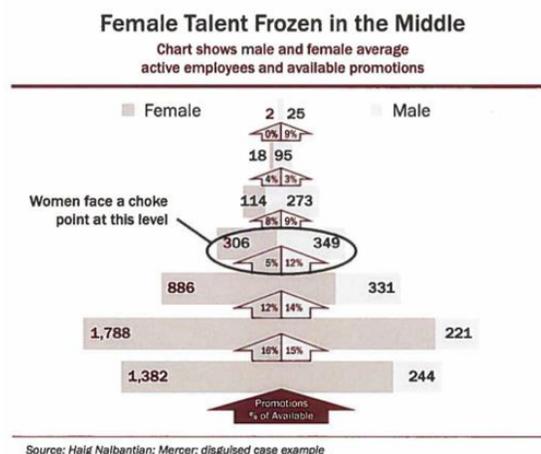
MERCER: WHEN WOMEN THRIVE

Mercer has updated their *When Women Thrive, Businesses Thrive* research from 2014; the analysis and projections are now based on nearly 600 companies across 42 countries, making it one of the most extensive studies of corporate practices and leadership diversity available.

Unfortunately, their findings continue to show that:

- Women are still underrepresented in the workforce at all levels.
- Organizations are failing to build a robust female talent pipeline.
- Current levels of hiring, promotion and retention of women will not achieve gender equality in the next decade.

The 2014 research drove its points home with a telling graphic that showed the "choke points" that stop women's advancement, when their likelihood of advancing drops to less than half of men's. [Read More.](#)



MANPOWER: 7 STEPS TO CONSCIOUS INCLUSION

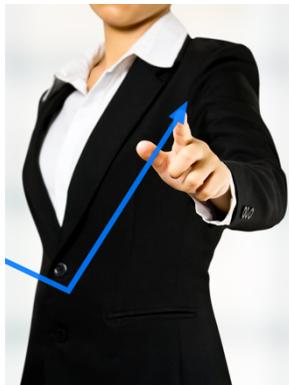
ManpowerGroup recently released *7 Steps to Conscious Inclusion: a Practical Guide to Accelerating More Women into Leadership*. Based on interviews with 222 leaders in 25 countries, the guide highlights differences in the responses of men and women and between generations (Millennials, Gen X and Baby Boomers) to questions related to the barriers to gender equality and what it will take to close the gap. Among the steps the guide recommends: leadership has to own it, succession planning that challenges assumptions, hiring people who value people, and being explicit about expectations. [Read More.](#)

WOMEN IN THE C-SUITE IMPROVE PERFORMANCE: BUILD A PIPELINE

A recent Peterson Institute for International Economics study found that more women in top corporate positions companies correlates with improved financial performance (net profit margin). The research included more than 21,000 companies in 91 countries and examined the levels of gender diversity among CEOs, corporate directors and C-suite officers. The study also looked at national policies that encourage women's participation in the workforce, including family leave and access to education. According to the researchers, "what matters most for gender diversity is creating a pipeline of women into corporate management, from elementary education through child-bearing years." (The study also found that 60% of the companies had no women on their boards, 50% had no female top executives and only 5% had female CEOs.) [Read more.](#)

SENIOR WOMEN MAY BE BEST LEADERS FOR "WICKED" PROBLEMS

PwC UK collaborated with Harthill Consulting in 2015 to identify the leadership capabilities needed to transform organizations in the face of financial uncertainty and a less predictable world. Their report argues that operational experience alone will no longer guarantee success as a leader in the face of "wicked" problems that challenge the notion of business-as-usual, and they reference a "how we make sense of the world" framework called Action Logics to discuss what current leaders may find challenging and what "Strategists" have to offer when transformational leadership is needed.



Interestingly, PwC reported that the highest concentration of Strategists was found among the women profiled by Harthill (10% of the women were categorized as Strategists vs. 7% of the men) - no real surprise given that the capabilities of Strategists are closely aligned with the strengths many women bring to the table. (PwC UK, 2015. *The hidden talent: Ten ways to identify and retain transformational leaders.*) [Read more.](#)

GALLUP RESEARCH: NUMBERS ARE SMALL BUT DIFFERENCES ARE STARK

Gallup has updated its research on perceptions of equity in the workplace, and while the percentages of women and men who believe their gender has negatively impacted their advancement and pay are relatively small, the magnitude of the differences between men and women is stark.

- More than twice as likely: 12 % of women believe they have been passed over for a promotion or opportunity at work because of their gender vs. 5% of men.
- Over four times as likely: 17% of women feel they have been denied a raise as a result of their gender vs. 4% of men.
- Half as likely: only 20% of women report that they are completely satisfied with the amount of money they earn vs. 44% of men.

Where were women and men in agreement?

- 59% of men and 56% of women indicated that career advancement was extremely or very important to them.

(Gallup: *Working Women Still Lag Men in Perceptions of Workplace Equality* - 09/02/15) [Read more.](#)

NEWS AND RESEARCH LINKS



- The NFL recently announced that it will extend the "Rooney Rule" to executive positions in the organization. Moving forward, all executive searches will require that the pool of candidates include women. More details to come. <http://ow.ly/XXGYy>
- Fewer operational & strategic opportunities - not differences in competency levels - are linked to less advancement & lower pay for women. <http://ow.ly/XUGGS>
- Op-Ed: focus on getting more women on boards shouldn't ignore the need for gender diversity at all levels of the organization. <http://ow.ly/Xp4xO>
- Business schools are making progress on gender diversity, but it's not clear that top jobs will be the pay-off for women. <http://ow.ly/WEs5b>
- McKinsey's Women in the Workplace research suggest it will take 100 years to reach gender parity in the C-Suite. <https://t.co/9i4ryB2DEB>
- Nike finds that employees are 13 times more engaged on diverse teams, 82 times more engaged on inclusive teams. <http://t.co/L24tmU4nSS>
- More research that shows that diversity programs can limit actual change in organizations. <http://t.co/uGkMWU7kwz>
- UK report: lack of flexibility in workplace costing employers by excluding highly qualified women from high skill jobs. <ow.ly/GyoTx>
- Hidden costs of not having paid leave in US include loss of women from the workforce & higher turnover expense; also higher use of public assistance for families with not leave. <ow.ly/Jh1B2>
- What we know about pay & diversity gaps at Sony thanks to recent hack; women & minorities come up short-even co-presidents. <ow.ly/FX6zz>
- Could the COO spot be the path to the CEO's job in tech? High-profile female COOs, like Sheryl Sandberg, could be a positive sign of things to come (or yet another glass ceiling). <ow.ly/E8mUB>
- Debate on the fairness of a merit system sponsored by Diversity Council of AUS is worth a read. Love this assessment from AUS Chief of Army David Morrison: when men are promoted on potential & women are promoted on proven performance, there is no level playing field. "Merit is perceived by those who see themselves as meritorious." <ow.ly/EBGsF>
- Cisco makes workforce diversity a priority; now requires that there is a female manager on every talent interview panel. <ow.ly/ERxCj>
- Glass Cliff: USPS postmaster general & CEO Megan Brennan faces growing deficits & declining mail volume. <ow.ly/EqaaT>
- Making Progress: Boston's Women's Workforce Council has 54 companies that have agreed to share data on gender & pay. <ow.ly/Eqbj4>
- HR can help close the gender pay gap in orgs with these practices. <http://t.co/dmF9rCToMP>

- After Sony hack, Charlize Theron insists that studio pays up - demands same deal as male co-star for upcoming film. <http://t.co/DIIURYf3pW>
- Female MBAs lag behind male counterparts, even in similar sub-sectors of field. Gap is substantial: \$21K gap overall, \$11K in banking sector (upon graduation); gap widens from there. <http://t.co/28abCbGK3c>
- Study says reason for gender pay gap in tech is that women ask for lower salaries. (Rhetorical question: how does any company justify paying men more for this reason alone?) <http://t.co/IPwJRDJbZc>
- Global Leadership Forecast: highest performing organizations have women & millennials in leadership roles. <http://ow.ly/AIZZo>
- Research: Stark numbers comparing performance reviews of women & men - women get more criticism & it gets personal @FastCompany <http://ow.ly/B6kkC>

Through its annual research reports, the sharing of best practices, thought leadership and board search referrals, ION provides a national platform and voice for collaboration, education, advocacy, and outreach for the advancement of women across corporate America.

To find out how your organization can join ION's efforts to expand gender diversity in the boardroom and in executive positions, contact Julie Graber at director@ionwomen.org



For a version of this summary of this with live hyperlinks, visit the ION website, <http://ionwomen.org/newsletter> or use this QR code.

