

# Women in the Workplace

A 2017 STUDY

How organizations are closing  
the gender-diversity gap



# Charting a course to improve gender diversity

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Did you know that teams with more than 50% women have a higher collective intelligence,<sup>1</sup> and gender-diverse companies are 15% more likely to earn above-average revenue?<sup>2</sup>

By now, the benefits of promoting women into positions of power are very well known. Still, even the most open organization may struggle to help more women capture leadership roles. The path to senior leadership requires ambition and confidence – as well as a support system to help strivers overcome common obstacles.

To help provide insights useful to any organization committed to gender diversity in leadership roles, we examined millions of LinkedIn profiles, worked in tandem with Bain & Company, and interviewed senior leadership teams.

This report will:

1. Look at reasons why female leadership is still trailing behind
2. Offer insights into what's preventing women from reaching the top plus ways to overcome obstacles
3. Explore how LinkedIn and other organizations are trying to make an impact on diversity and inclusion for women

<sup>1</sup> Source: [Chronus](#), The Importance of Gender Diversity in the Workplace

<sup>2</sup> Source: [McKinsey](#), Why diversity matters, 2015

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# Women in leadership

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The current state of women leaders



# Women are making headway in leadership roles

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Before we can explore how to better address gender diversity, it's important to know the current landscape. In our analysis of LinkedIn profiles, we compiled the countries, industries, and job titles where women are thriving professionally.

## 1. There are more women leaders globally than ever before

Women now hold just over 25% of all leadership positions globally. Although a gap remains, this is a significant stride forward since 2008 when we first started tracking this data.



The US and Canada have the highest percentage of women leaders, with one-third holding director-level roles



Spain represents the least change, increasing female leadership hiring by just 3%



India has shown the biggest percentage increase in female leadership hiring, changing 25% since 2008

## 2. More women are entering tech

Despite tech still falling behind other sectors, the industry on the whole has acknowledged its shortcomings – and is hiring more women. Between 2008 and 2016:<sup>3</sup>



UX designers saw a 67% increase in hiring women



Chief technology officers also saw a 67% jump



CEOs only witnessed a 20% change – the lowest of the job titles measured

## 3. Plenty of female CHROs, few CEOs

Across the C-Suite, the role women hold that is more or less equivalent to men is chief human resources officer (CHRO). At the other end is CEO. While this indicates there is still work to be done, one study found female CEOs get paid more than their male counterparts<sup>4</sup>. Between 2008 and 2016:<sup>3</sup>



CHRO was the most gender-neutral executive role, increasing female hires by 82%



CTO followed closely behind with a 60% increase



CIO was the only role to show a decline, dipping 7%

<sup>3</sup> Source: [LinkedIn](#), International Women's Day: Celebrating the Progress of Women Leaders in the Workplace.

<sup>4</sup> Source: [Equilar](#), Top-Paid Female CEOs Earned an Average of \$22.7 Million in 2015.



# The gender leadership gap still remains

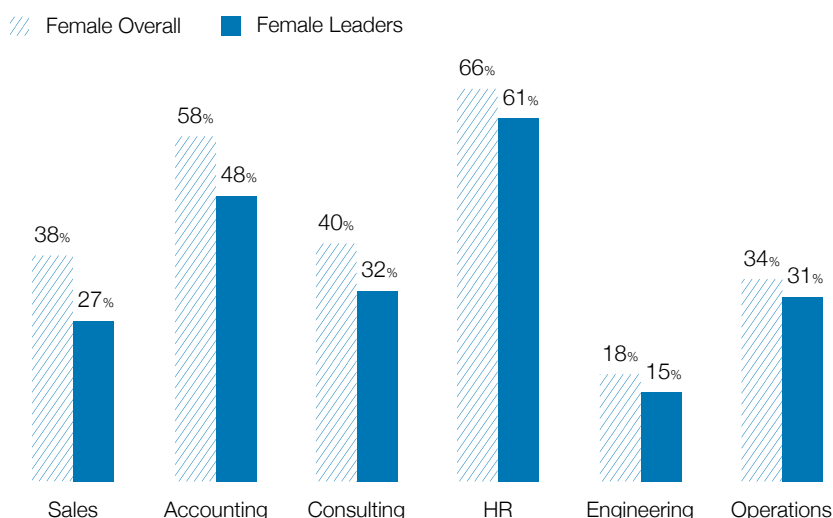
While businesses are making strides with female representation, a closer look at the numbers shows a clear gap between the number of women in the workforce and the number in leadership positions.

## HR is on top, sales at the bottom

According to LinkedIn data, sales roles have the worst leadership gap at 11%, with 38% of women being hired into the workforce, but only 27% reaching leadership roles.

HR has the best representation of women at 66%, with 61% of them in leadership roles – a gap of just 5%. While engineering has the fewest women in the workforce at 18%, the leadership gap is small, with 15% of those women in leadership positions.

## Women Overall vs. Women in Leadership by Function



Source: LinkedIn Global Talent Trends Report 2016

## ENCOURAGING WOMEN IN STEM

Women make up **less than a quarter** of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) professionals.



14% of women work in engineering



18% of women work in IT



19% of women work in operations



30% of women work in research

## TO RECRUIT STEM WOMEN, HIGHLIGHT THE “HUMAN” SIDE OF YOUR COMPANY

**74%** of women in STEM care about company culture

**58%** of women in STEM care about employee perspectives

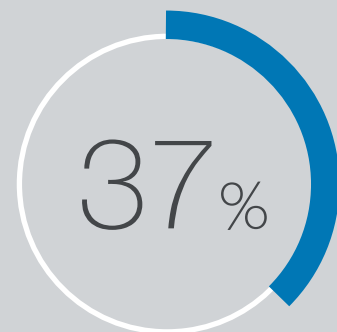
# Top 10 skills for women leaders globally

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1. Management
2. Leadership
3. Strategic planning
4. Customer service
5. Public speaking
6. Marketing
7. Project management
8. Social media
9. Event planning
10. Research

To determine the top attributes of female leaders today, we looked at the most common skills based on LinkedIn profiles. We found women are noted for their management, leadership, and strategic planning skills above all else.

Our data also shows a 35% increase in global hires made with diversity job titles over the past eight years. This indicates that organizations are starting to prioritize the connection between diversity and business success, especially at senior levels.



of talent acquisition leaders believe diversity will be the #1 trend in hiring



# Biggest drivers holding women back

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## OPTIMISM DEFICIT

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From the moment they set foot in the workplace, our study shows that women are less optimistic than men about their prospects of getting to the top. In comparison to men, women are:

**31%** more likely to question whether they have what it takes to advance

**19%** more likely to feel uninspired by their day-to-day work

**17%** more likely to say they aren't getting the same opportunities

**61%** more likely to have a spouse with a job as or more intense than theirs

**5x** more likely to be the primary parent

## THE MINDSET GAP

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Top managers share three key mindsets: the aspiration to strive for a top role, the confidence that they can get there, and the endurance to put in the work. Women often enter the workforce with a mindset deficit that stays with them throughout their career.

Aspire to reach the top:

**65%** of women **72%** of men

Confidence in leadership skills:

**63%** of women **75%** of men

Trust personal endurance:

**62%** of women **70%** of men

# Top drivers of success for women

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## COACHING AND SUPPORT

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While women who've made it to the top acknowledge their own drive and abilities, they also credit the support, opportunities, coaching, and training they've received. Here are the drivers we found in women who have a leadership mindset:


- They believe they are **more capable** than their peers of advancing to senior roles
- They know they have the **skills** and leadership style to reach a top position
- They feel **inspired** by senior leaders at their company, seeing them as people they would like to **emulate** in their own careers
- They believe they can get the **training** they need to get ahead

## CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

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Frontline managers are key to women rising up the ranks. Top-down efforts are necessary but not sufficient, since women (and men) make decisions about their careers based on daily interactions. The role goes beyond building out skill sets – you must also build their mindsets.

1. **Highlight diverse models of successful leadership.** Point to role models and discuss how she can build on her own strengths, skills, and priorities.
2. **Invest in day-to-day coaching.** Understand the skills and experiences that each woman needs in order to be successful. Then, formulate a plan to get there.
3. **Champion women.** Advocating for someone to take on a new project or stretch role further underscores your belief in her potential.



# Tackling the gender leadership gap

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How businesses, including LinkedIn, are starting to move the needle

# Leadership perspectives: ways to nurture diversity

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Our objectives are to achieve 30% of women in tech roles, for our senior technical female leaders to match the employee composition, and for our senior female People Leaders to grow to 41% across the business.

Our DevelopHER program – a 360-hour paid internship program that identifies women with prior work experience – gives women from other career backgrounds exposure, immersion, and development in the software industry. Over 10 weeks, women are taught the fundamental skills they need to become sought-after junior software developers. After the internship, MYOB may offer permanent positions, or assist them in finding employment through our extensive networks.

**ALLA KEOGH**

GENERAL MANAGER, PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE,  
MYOB



We focus on building an inclusive environment to support our diverse workforce and leverage the diversity of thought, backgrounds, and experiences that drives innovation and, ultimately, improved business performance.

We continue to build toward balance within our senior leadership community that's currently at 42% female and 58% male. Flexible working programs and building a pipeline of female talent are top priority areas.

**AMANDA REVIS**

CHIEF PEOPLE EXPERIENCE OFFICER, SUNCORP



# Leadership perspectives: ways to nurture diversity

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In 2015, we started a journey to increase our representation of women in senior management. We defined some ambitious goals to achieve by 2020: 1) to be known for best-in-class leadership; 2) to be recognized as a great place to work; 3) to double our representation of women in senior leadership.

To achieve these goals, we developed a roadmap called Project Inclusion. It's an end-to-end organizational change-management plan that covers five key pillars: leadership, policies and benefits, pipeline, education and development, and communications, and has a total of 25 work streams.

The success of this approach is grounded in the fact that we recognize diversity is not achieved through a narrow focus area or one-off training.

**SOPHIE GUERIN**

HEAD OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, ASIA PACIFIC & JAPAN, DELL

Women of Wipro was launched in 2008, and soon became a call to action where we analyzed the stages of a typical woman's life and career. The early stage of her career is focused on building perspective and fuelling aspirations, and our Exposure programs include job rotations and networking opportunities. The middle stage blends in Flexibility Initiatives, which help her manage growing job responsibilities with duties at home.

The next stage is about strengthening a seasoned professional, and our Empower programs include mentoring and Women in Leadership workshops to identify challenges. Addressing each career stage has helped our women professionals gain confidence and enjoy a longer career runway.

**SUNITA CHERIAN**

SVP, HUMAN RESOURCES, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION HEAD, WIPRO



# Winning with LinkedIn's Women's Initiative (WiN)

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In 2014, LinkedIn launched the Women's Initiative with the goal of increasing the number of qualified, high-potential female senior leaders. Our strategy develops a culture where every employee can thrive and reach their fullest potential, and where building teams with diversity in mind is valued.

Another reason we created this initiative is because we want to win. Achieving diversity and inclusion in the workplace is not just the right thing to do – it's critical to our long-term success as a business.

## WIN'S AREAS OF FOCUS

- Creating a culture of conscious inclusion
- Investing in high-potential women through skill development, coaching, visibility, and opportunities to showcase talent
- Hiring qualified senior-level women internally or externally in senior leadership roles
- Communicating what we do to drive awareness and understanding

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- A strong performer who consistently exceeds expectations
- A high-potential leader who will be ready for promotion within 1-2 years
- A senior-level manager



# How a sense of belonging drives women leaders

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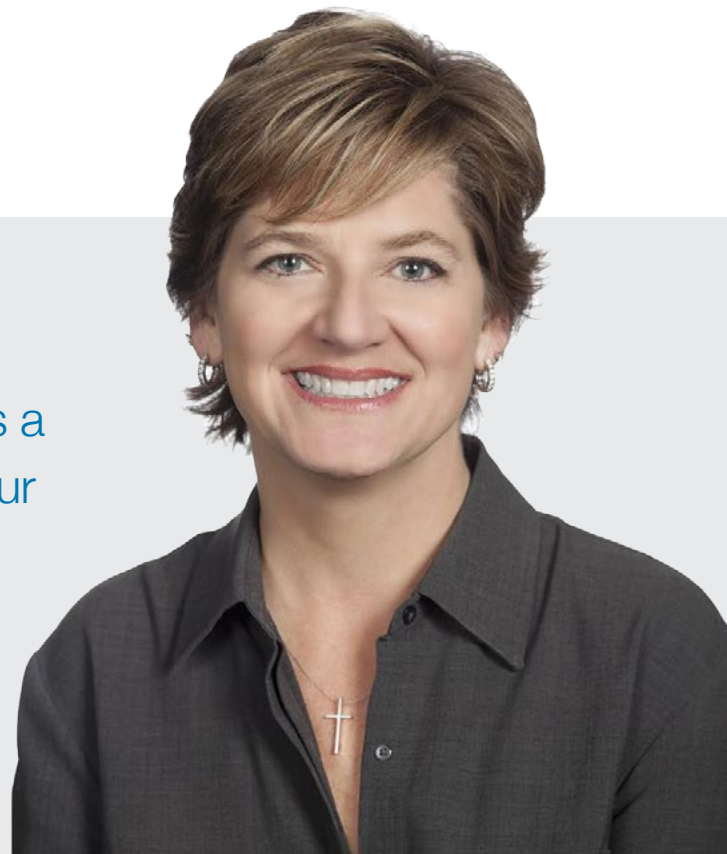
The idea at the heart of LinkedIn's drive to build female leadership was to ensure female talent and leaders feel that they belong. This was a key element we discovered at other best-in-class organizations. By looking at their diversity roadblocks, aspirations, and ongoing efforts to promote women, we found several takeaways.

Overall, these organizations and their talent divisions are:

- Identifying where they have made progress and accurately measuring pipeline metrics across the employee lifecycle
- Constructing effective plans and programs to tackle gaps and obstacles
- Providing resources, training, and development to help create leadership paths for women
- Allowing women more opportunities for career growth throughout their life, not just in their 20s and 30s

“Belonging matters – it’s that third dimension to diversity and inclusion. It’s a strength at a company level. It fuels your culture and it fuels your energy.”

PAT WADORS  
CHRO, LINKEDIN



# Calling DIBs on diversity at LinkedIn

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Stamping out something as ingrained and complex as bias is not as simple as force-feeding diversity and inclusion through one program or training session. Diversity and inclusion are necessary, but not sufficient. To succeed in this arena, we needed to introduce belonging.

“I can be authentic, I matter, and I am essential to my team.” It’s with this trifecta in mind that LinkedIn launched The DIBs Index – an ongoing research project into diversity, inclusion, and belonging that helps us focus our actions and measure success.

The opportunity to create a comprehensive measure of experiences of diversity, inclusion, and belonging started with our Employee Voice Survey.



# Why belonging matters

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LinkedIn's vision is to create economic opportunity for every member of the global workforce.

To accomplish it, we believe it's critical to build diverse teams that are a reflection of our members. Therefore, we are committed to creating a work environment where employees not only feel included, but also feel like they belong.

## How we introduced belonging at LinkedIn

In order to track trends over time, we leveraged questions from our engagement survey and mapped aspects to diversity and inclusion. This can be a simple way to uncover hidden barriers.

We also share stories, so we can become advocates for each other, holding ourselves accountable to increase representation of employee groups who may have been less visible.

We believe strongly that a sense of belonging is the key to unlocking the full potential of our employees. Every year, we're getting closer to achieving our collective vision.



## SAMPLE SURVEY PROMPTS FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- I feel comfortable being myself at work
- I go out of my way to help others feel like they belong
- Even when something negative happens, I don't question whether I belong
- Someone I work closely with cares about me as a person

# Key takeaways for gender diversity, inclusion, and belonging

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As companies around the world embrace diversity and inclusion, it's time to cultivate more women leaders at your workplace.

Ensuring that all employees feel included and that they belong at an organization are essential to closing the gender gap. Use this checklist to help move your team, and the top levels of your organization, closer to true gender parity.

## HOW TO MOVE THE NEEDLE FORWARD FOR WOMEN LEADERS

- ☐ Strive to create an unbiased recruiting and interviewing process
- ☐ Ensure sufficient training and coaching for women at every level
- ☐ Outline criteria for success clearly, and how it can be met
- ☐ Promote a culture of regular feedback
- ☐ Give women the opportunity to stretch in their current roles
- ☐ Inspire women to envision their path to the top and to use a leadership mindset
- ☐ Provide direct encouragement for employees to be their most authentic selves
- ☐ Celebrate and champion women in the organization



LinkedIn Talent Solutions offers a full range of recruiting solutions to help organizations of all sizes find, attract, and engage the best talent. Founded in 2003, LinkedIn connects the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. With 530+ million members worldwide, including 75% of the US workforce, LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network.

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