

A New Era for Saudi Career Women

Exploring the barriers and opportunities facing career women in Saudi Arabia and how employers are addressing them



ABOUT THIS REPORT

We interviewed Saudi women and recruiters in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia about the barriers and opportunities of increasing women's participation in the workforce, in line with Saudi Vision 2030. This report combines those survey insights, along with LinkedIn insights and examples from four companies that have already put actions in place to address this topic.

DIVERSITY: THE NEW MINDSET IN SAUDI ARABIA

Diversity is complex. There's no easy shortcut to achieving it, and it doesn't happen overnight.

With a number of recruiters believing that diversity is the way to increase productivity, and with the strong focus of Saudi Arabia on gender diversity in the workplace as part of Vision 2030, this topic has become top of every company's agenda.

According to more than half of Saudi women polled by LinkedIn, the idea that they are not equipped to join the workforce is the main myth blocking them from opportunity. This new research examines barriers to female hiring in the Kingdom, with more than a third of women surveyed saying they're working harder to find a job than recruiters are to find them.

So how can women ensure they are being noticed by recruiters? And what do employers need to do to create the right opportunities for women to contribute to creating a more skilled and balanced workforce?

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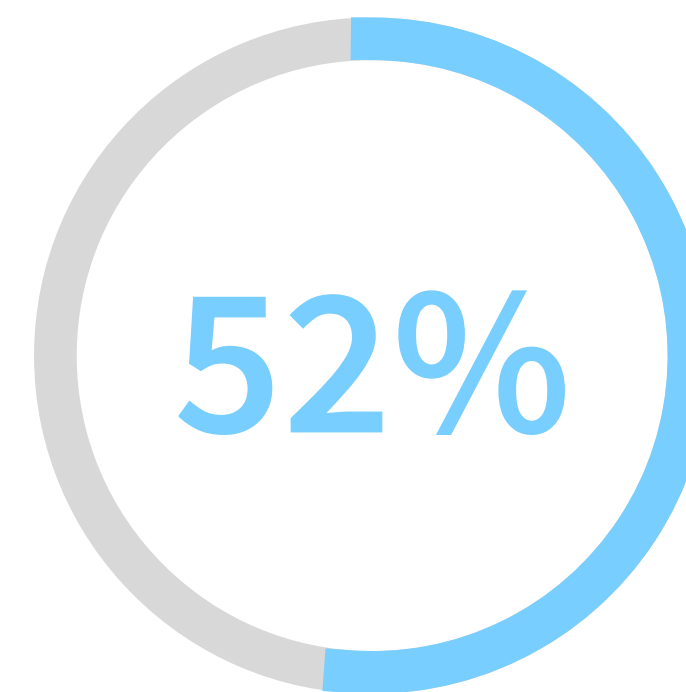
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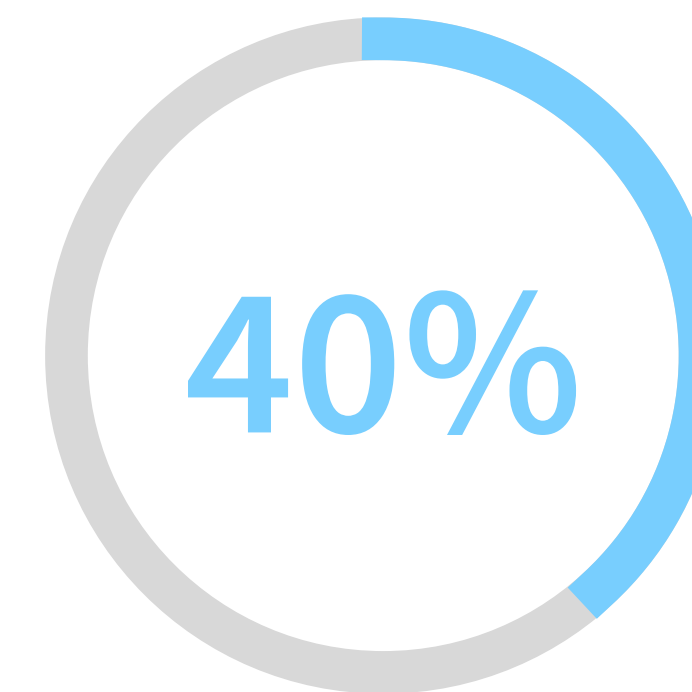
DIVERSE WORKFORCES CREATE HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY AND ENCOURAGE MORE CREATIVITY

Diversity used to be a box that companies checked. But today, diversity is directly tied to company culture and financial performance. Our data shows that 52% of Saudi recruiters believe the key benefit of gender diversity is higher productivity, with 40% of Saudi recruiters believing that diversity in the workplace cultivates a culture of creativity.

TOP PAYOFFS OF COMPANIES FOCUSING ON DIVERSITY



Higher productivity



Cultivates a culture of
creativity

THE STRUGGLES OF SEARCHING FOR DIVERSE TALENT

Although the benefits of a diverse workforce are clear, Saudi recruiters say they are still struggling to find top female talent in the Kingdom. 31% of Saudi recruiters believe that the lack of availability of female talent is the most difficult part of employing women. But this may be a problem of perception as 36% of Saudi women believe they are working harder and exerting higher efforts to be noticed than employers are trying to find them. In addition, 37% of Saudi women believe employers still need to do more to hire them in key roles.

31%

of Saudi recruiters believe the lack of availability of female talent is the most difficult part of female employment

36%

of Saudi women believe they are working harder and exerting higher efforts to be noticed than employers are trying to find them

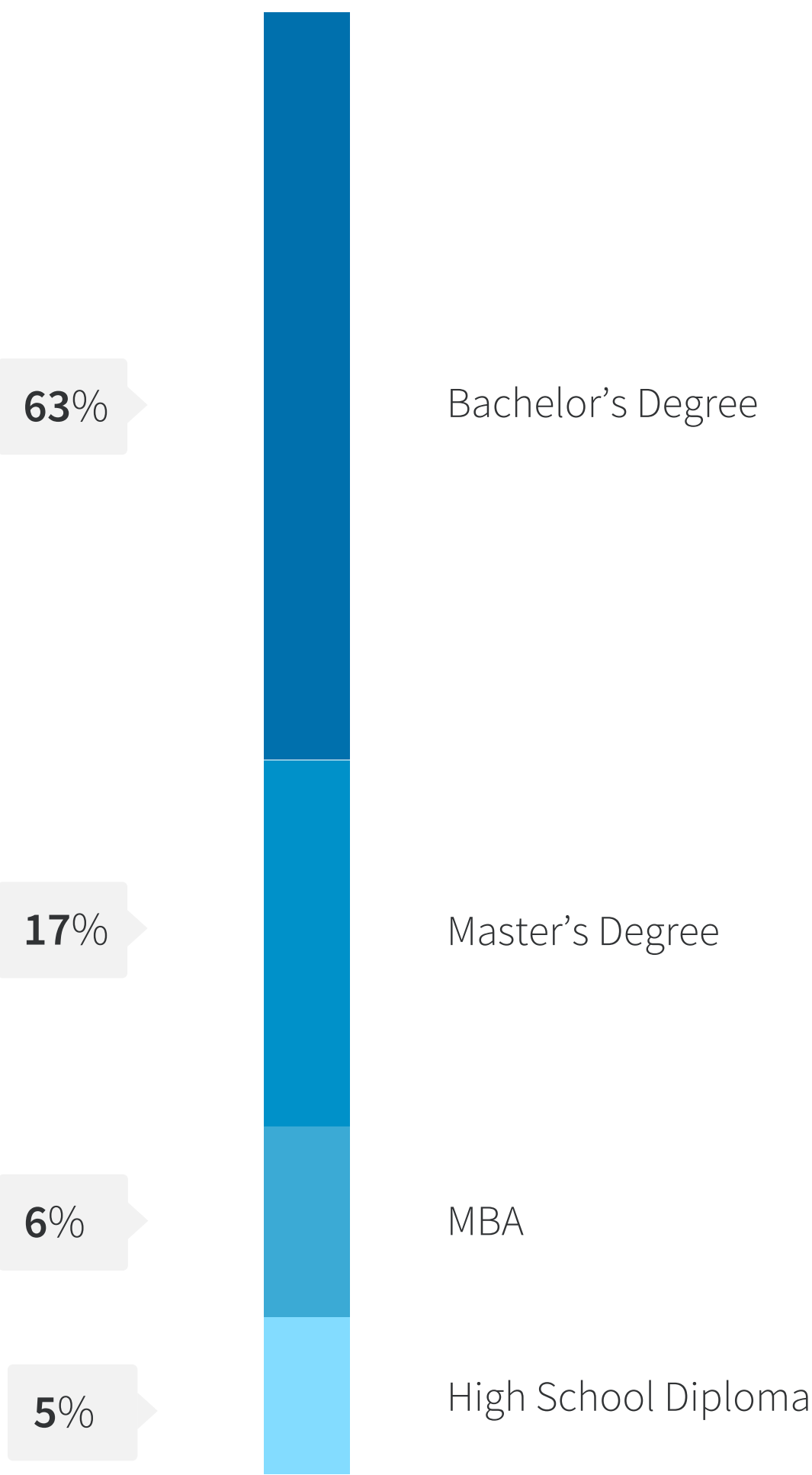


DEMYSTIFYING THE MYTH ABOUT FEMALE SAUDI TALENT

More than a half (52%) of female professionals in Saudi Arabia believe that the biggest myth hurdling their success and employment is that they are not equipped with the right skills.

Looking at LinkedIn’s insights in the Kingdom, we find that more than 63% of Saudi female members have indicated completing Bachelor Degrees, exceeding other developed countries, such as the United States which comes at 57%. And over 17% have completed a Master’s Degree, versus 19% when compared to the United States. It’s also worth noting that the top three fields of study for female professionals in Saudi are: Business Management & Administration, followed by Computer science and Health Science.

DEGREE BREAKDOWN



BUILDING A DATA DRIVEN RECRUITING STRATEGY

Instead of being overwhelmed by data, organizations can turn it into a competitive advantage.

Data driven recruiting is the analysis and interpretation of talent pool data to find the best people for your organization faster. And the same applies for reaching top female talent in Saudi Arabia. Companies need to understand who they are targeting and what matters to that audience.



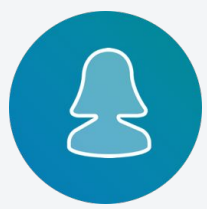
WHO ARE THEY?

Identify demographics, titles, skills, education, seniority and employers.



WHAT MATTERS TO THEM?

Find out their interests and motivators.

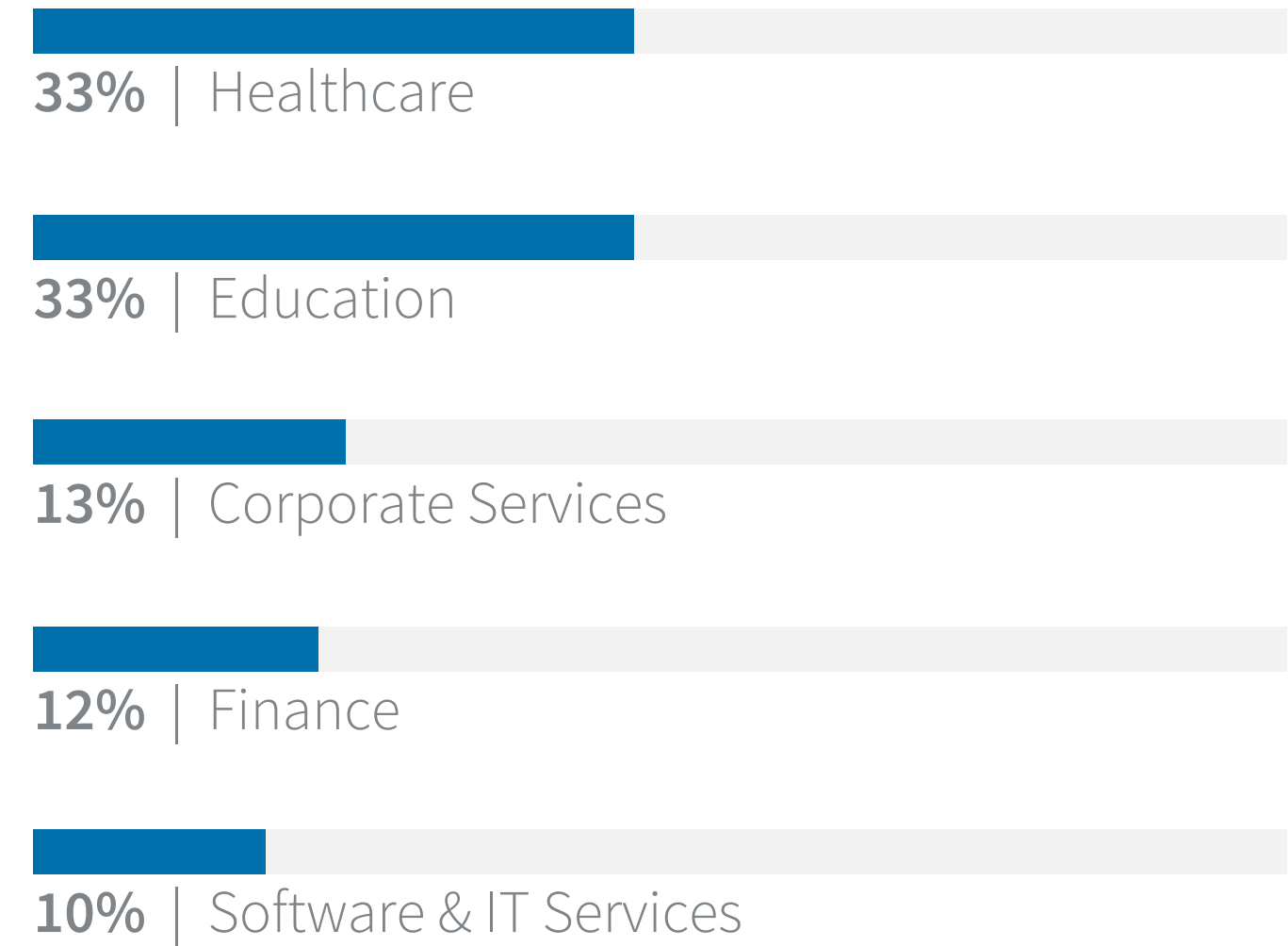


WHAT ARE THE KEY INSIGHTS ABOUT FEMALE TALENT IN SAUDI ARABIA?

Discovering key insights about the talent that employers are trying to find will allow them to have a more targeted recruiting strategy and tactics when trying to find them and engage with them.

LinkedIn’s insights in the Kingdom have revealed that the top industries for Saudi females are healthcare, education, corporate services, finance, software and IT services. As for their top skills these are team management, healthcare, and communication.

TOP INDUSTRIES



TOP SKILLS



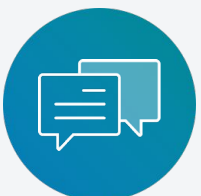
Management



Healthcare



Communication



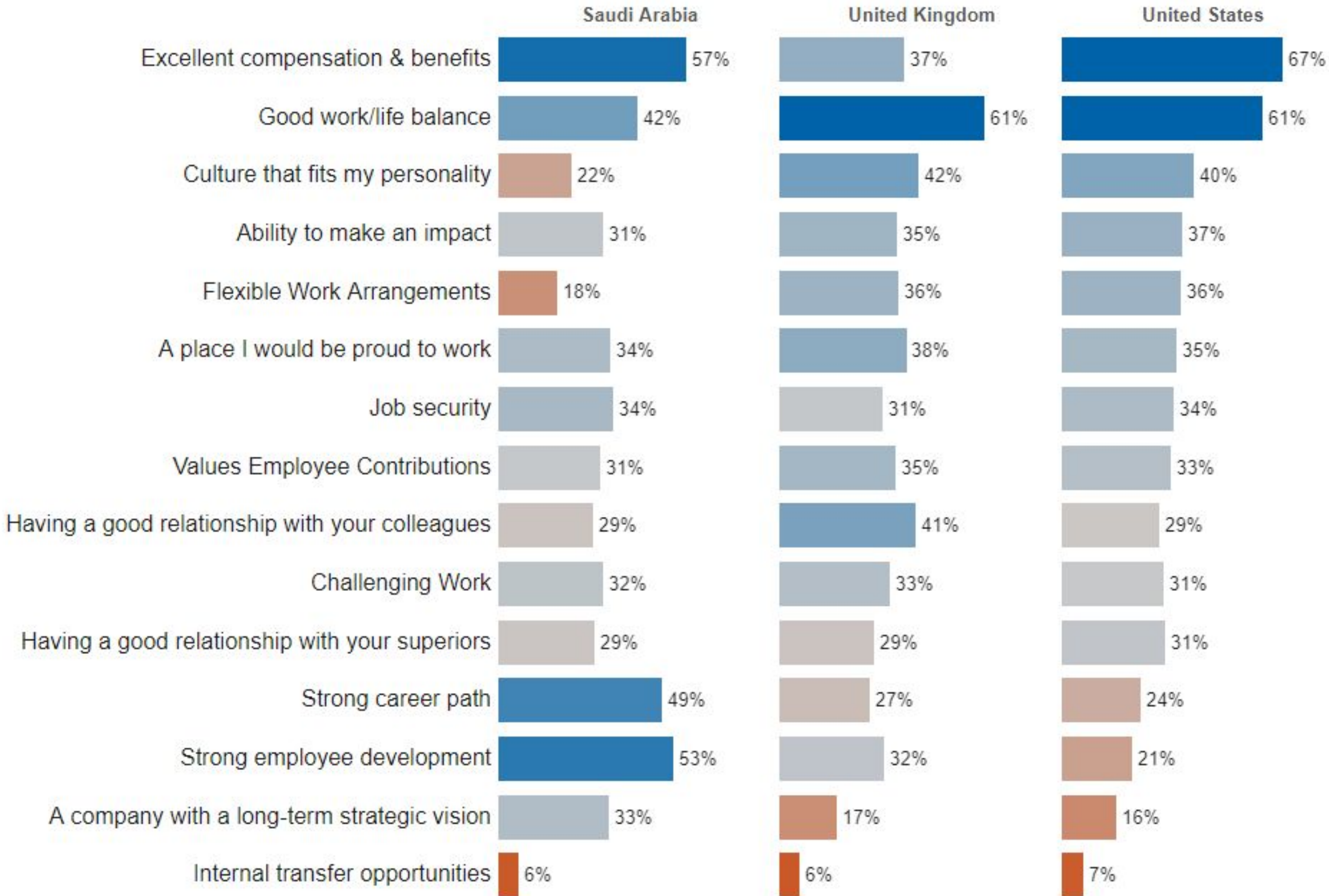
WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO FEMALE TALENT IN SAUDI ARABIA?

When on the search for new job opportunities, strong employment development and strong career path rank high for females across Saudi compared to more developed countries; which means that they are eager for the opportunity to learn and develop themselves when looking for a job.

Listening to the voice of potential candidates gives employers the chance to focus on what matters the most to them, and emphasize it in their communication with their specific target audience.

EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION ACROSS FEMALES IN SAUDI ARABIA

What is important to candidates when considering a job?



Sample Size: 26,082

Source: Q3 2016 Talent Drivers Survey

USE CASES OF HOW COMPANIES ARE ADDRESSING DIVERSITY IN THE KINGDOM

We already know gender-diverse workplaces are more successful.
Here we showcase how companies are embracing this opportunity
in Saudi Arabia.

CASE STUDY

TAKAMOL HOLDING ALIGNING TO VISION 2030

Takamol, the government company and partner of Ministry of Labor and social development in Saudi Arabia directly supports women's employment in the Kingdom.

In line with the Saudi Vision 2030 which aims to increase women's participation in the workforce, Takamol Holding launched several programs to empower women in the Saudi workforce.

The programs include:

- Wusool: an initiative that enables women to overcome the difficulties of transportation from and to the workplace in order to support their job stability.
- Qurrah: an initiative to provide support to the Saudi working women in order to enable them to join the labor market and achieve sustainability in it while feeling reassurance regarding the care provided to their children through registering them in the licensed children's hospitality service during working hours.
- Tojjar: a newly launched e-commerce platform designed to help small businesses and entrepreneurs boost their business online.
- Bahr: a platform that connects professional freelancers with clients, It provides a wealth of expertise that gives more opportunities for freelancers to work.

“Since the establishment of Takamol Holding, the employment of women and increasing their participation in the workforce has been a crucial priority and one of the reasons behind the success of the firm's initiatives and projects. In fact, women make up 33% of the total number of employees at Takamol.”



Dr. Ahmad Al-Yamani
CEO
TAKAMOL HOLDING

CASE STUDY

THIQAH BUSINESS SERVICES BELIEVES THAT THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY LIES IN THE HANDS OF ITS YOUTH

Since its inception THIQAH had a major focus on the potential of young talent as part of their talent acquisition strategy. They believe that by enabling and empowering the youth, the impossible can be achieved; and they will be the leaders of change. The company is known for a youthful age range among all the employees (27 years is the average age), which is clearly reflected in the leadership of THIQAH.

THIQAH invests in providing all talent that join with the right training and skills they will need to be successful in the future. Also, opening the doors for them to contribute in all business lines THIQAH offers (Smart Solutions, Data Solutions, and Business Services). THIQAH also launched internship programs so that interns can then have the opportunity to join the company once their internship has ended.



“Leading change is our essence at THIQAH; which we take literally in all aspects of our jobs. As opposed to us enabling youth, honestly they are enabling us. The innovation, challenge, proactiveness, and change in mindset they bring to the table is what makes us leaders in what we do.”



Ayman Alfallaj
CEO
THIQAH BUSINESS SERVICES

CASE STUDY

BUPA ARABIA FOCUSING ON INCLUSION AS A BIG PART OF DIVERSITY

52% of global companies are focused on inclusion as part of their diversity efforts*, and Bupa Arabia is one of those companies that has identified early on that companies can't have diversity without inclusion. As an organization they strive to create an inclusive work environment in which all employees feel valued because of the different attributes they bring to the table, and therefore are motivated and have opportunities to contribute their fullest towards business goals.

With 33% female employees, Bupa Arabia has committed to ensure fairness and equality when it comes to salaries and growth opportunities, as well as having a focus towards providing the leadership, training, professional development and practices that will empower women within their business. Another priority is providing outstanding workplace and culture for working mothers, including free daycare starting from three months old infants to two year old toddlers led by professional caregivers.

“My career journey started by joining this great place, it allowed me to recognize my dream and how I see my future. Being a successful employee, a women with a dream and a determined working mother. Bupa played a big role in making it happen.”
Khulood Bakhaswain, Manager, Broker Relationship Management at Bupa Arabia.

“Gender diversity at Bupa Arabia is key to our business success. We are determined in creating opportunities for males and females where everyone feels valued, included and performing at their peak. In Bupa Arabia, We are respectful of all employees irrespective of race, gender, color, religion, or any other non-job related personal characteristics.”



TARIQ ALAMOUDI
CHRO, CET
BUPA ARABIA

*Global Recruiting Trends 2018, LinkedIn

CASE STUDY

SAUDI MANPOWER SOLUTIONS CO. COMMITTED TO GENDER EQUALITY

Some might say that having 50/50 gender workforce in the next couple of years might be ambitious but that is exactly what Saudi Manpower Solutions Co. (SMASCO) are looking to do. SMASCO don't believe in creating a separate recruitment strategy for recruiting women into the workplace but one that is fair and inclusive to all.

The aim is to eliminate gender bias by sharing stories and knowledge in what traditionally has been a male dominated industry. Senior leaders within SMASCO also promote a culture that encourages and embraces diversity. SMASCO believes that having an equal gender workforce will not only be an asset for the success of the business but also for the future of the industry.



“We currently employ 120 Saudi Women across different functions, including leadership positions such as Head of Learning & Development. This number will continue to grow and SMASCO is committed to make 50% of our workforce female employees, as their contribution to ours and our clients’ success is invaluable.”



AYMAN ALTAMMAMI
GM CENTRAL REGION
SAUDI MANPOWER SOLUTIONS CO.



CONCLUSION

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND PROFESSIONALS

In this new era, creating a skilled and balanced workforce can only be achieved through collaborative actions from both sides. LinkedIn's role is to bridge the gap between employers and professionals by providing a platform where these two audiences can easily find and connect with each other. For the women who are keen to further their careers, they need to ensure they are visible to recruiters by using platforms such as LinkedIn. And for employers, they need to promote a culture of diversity and start taking actions towards finding top female talent and providing them with the best opportunities that fit their skills. By bringing both sides together the narrative can start to change, and the Kingdom can thrive by creating a more productive and creative workforce.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The results in this report are both from an independent research as well as LinkedIn insights.

The research was conducted by an independent research company YouGov, talking to 300 Saudi women and 300 recruiters in Saudi Arabia. More than half of the women polled were aged between 18 and 29 and three quarters are currently out of employment.

The research sample data for LinkedIn insights in this report is largely based on profile data and recruiting activities related to women in Saudi Arabia. Gender is inferred based on members' first names, names that cannot be identified as either gender were excluded from the gender analysis. Figures based on 69% of this talent pool with known gender.

The Talent Drivers Survey mentioned in this report is the largest professional survey conducted by LinkedIn in 88 countries, and available in 19 languages. We ask members: What's important when they consider a job opportunity?

AUTHORS

RESEARCH



LEENA ABDULLAH
SENIOR INSIGHTS ANALYST

EDITORIAL



LAURA COLLINS
PROGRAM MANAGER EMEA
PRODUCT & CONTENT
MARKETING



NADA ENAN
SENIOR MANAGER
MARKETING & PR MENA



ZEINA HARMOUCHE
MARKETING MANAGER
MENA & GROWTH MARKETS

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