

# Women in the Workplace

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 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

# Table of contents

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## 1. WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

The current state of women leaders

## 2. TACKLING THE GENDER LEADERSHIP GAP

How businesses are starting to move the needle

# 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.

## There are more women leaders globally than ever before

Women now hold just over 25% of all leadership positions globally.<sup>3</sup>

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 <sup>3</sup>



Spain represents the least change, increasing female leadership hiring by just 3% <sup>3</sup>



India has shown the biggest percentage increase in female leadership hiring, changing 25% since 2008 <sup>3</sup>

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

# The gender leadership gap still remains

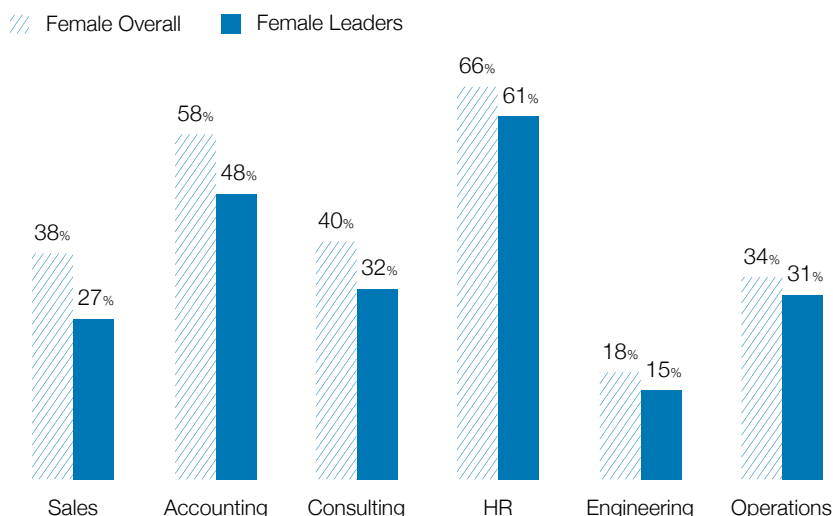
While businesses are making strides with female representation, a closer look at the numbers shows a clear gap between the number of women in the workforce and the number in leadership positions.

## HR is on top, sales at the bottom<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>



## ENCOURAGING WOMEN IN STEM<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>

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

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

<sup>4</sup> Source: Data Reveals How the Percentage of Women in Leadership Has Changed Over the Past 15 Years

<sup>5</sup> Source: The Gap Between Women and Men in STEM and What You Can Do About It



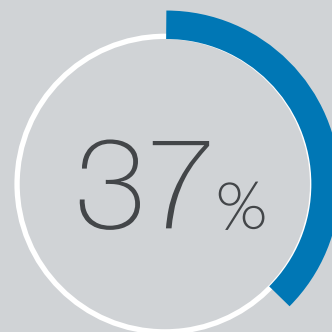
# Top 10 skills for women leaders globally

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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.<sup>3</sup> 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<sup>3</sup>

# Biggest drivers holding women back<sup>6</sup>

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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

<sup>6</sup> Source: Charting the Course: Getting Women to the Top



# Top drivers of success for women<sup>6</sup>

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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.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Charting the Course: Getting Women to the Top



# Tackling the gender leadership gap

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How businesses 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





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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