



What is stopping women from moving into leadership?

Women's Transitions Barriers survey

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

For most leaders, getting the talent they need to meet their goals is an imperative. Yet while women represent over half the available talent pool, many organisations struggle to retain and grow talented women, and women continue to be under-represented at the leadership level. The survey goes beyond the traditional analysis of obstacles holding women back to better understand what women perceive to be stopping them from moving into leadership roles.

PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

1075



responses of career women

24



different industry sectors

67%



have children

19



different job positions

46%



carries all or the majority of the family responsibility

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Women's barriers to leadership positions

The survey examines three types of barriers: individual, organisational and transitional barriers. Each of these barriers captures a grouping of sub-barriers stopping women from moving into leadership roles. The stronger the barriers are, the greater the risk index score. The risk index score measures the risk of organisations losing female talent from the leadership pipeline, either because they give up or because they leave the organisation too close find better opportunities elsewhere. Each barrier has an equal share in the overall risk index.

1. INDIVIDUAL BARRIERS

Personal Life: assesses if women think it is difficult to combine a more senior role with their personal commitments.

Self-Promotion: assesses women's propensity to create their own barriers in their professional lives.

Societal Expectations: assesses how social and cultural norms affect women's decision-making.

Awareness: assesses the level of women's recognition of the benefits and rewards that can come from taking the next career step.

Overall score:

25%
low risk

women in the survey have few individual barriers that prevent them from moving up in the organisation.

2. ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS

Performance Evaluation: assesses women's perception of how their performance is valued and how their capabilities are rated in the organisation

Management Attitude: assesses what the perceived attitude of management is towards women aspiring to actively move ahead in the organisation

Organizational Support: assesses how the organisation backs women to move up

Overall score:

47%
medium risk

women experience quite strong organisational barriers that prevent them from moving up in the organisation.

3. TRANSITIONAL BARRIERS

Support Network: assesses the strength of supportive relationships in the women's professional life.

Manage Issues: assesses women's ability to make decisions in unclear circumstances, their ability to rapid prototype to arrive at solutions, and their ability to manage conflict in order to resolve issues.

Resilience: assesses women's ability to stay calm under pressure and to manage stress effectively.

Manage Yourself: assesses women's level of individual awareness and their ability to quell negative thoughts and replace them with positive thinking and action.

Overall score:

44%
medium risk

women are somewhat prepared for a professional transition to move up in the organisation.

1. WOMEN ARE READY TO MOVE INTO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

78%

can accommodate changes to professional and personal schedules quickly

78%

thrive on change

56%

ask for what they need from their boss no matter what the circumstances

2. WOMEN ARE AFRAID TO MAKE MISTAKES BECAUSE THEY ARE OFTEN MORE HARSHLY JUDGED

52%

find it challenging to learn from mistakes

57%

find it challenging to appear confident unless they are 100% prepared.

46%

find it difficult to bounce back quickly when they receive negative feedback

3. WOMEN PERCEIVE A BIASED PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM AS A MAJOR BARRIER

58%

believe they are not paid same as male peers for similar performance in same role

43%

believe women are not routinely considered for promotions

45%

feel they need more education and qualifications than male peers to be considered for promotion

4. WOMEN'S LACK OF SUPPORT NETWORK LIMITS THEIR INFLUENCE

58%

do not have a group of trusted advisors

53%

believe men at the office have a larger network than women

40%

lack supportive relationship in professional life

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

With change comes mistakes. With mistakes comes learning and growth

- Be open to making mistakes that come with change
- Step into personal power and manage limiting beliefs
- Build an organisational culture where it is okay to make and learn from mistakes

Cultivate strategic communication capabilities in order to improve equity

- Keep record of your achievements successes and your contribution to the organisation
- Ensure all candidates are evaluated on non-biased, objective criteria and required job skills
- Positively influence others' perception of your capabilities

Weak networks limit sphere of influence

- Build a strong network of supporters inside and outside the organisation
- Encourage participation in employee and women's network
- Actively mentor and/or sponsor female talent

ABOUT US

JUMP

Promoting gender equality,
advancing the economy

JUMP is the leading social enterprise working with organisations and individuals to close the gap between women and men at work, achieve sustainable corporate performance and create a more equal society.

Each year, JUMP carries out thought-provoking surveys: Female entrepreneurship in Belgium, Women leaders speak out !, Women in Science and Technology , Pioneering dads reverse traditional roles, ...

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LEVERAGE is a team of HR, Facilitation, Diversity, Organisational Development, and Professional Coaching experts.

They implement solutions to create diverse leadership teams and specialize in transitioning talented women to the top.

They have trained and coached countless women and consulted with some of the most notable Fortune 500, Fortune 100 companies and NGOs across the US and Europe.

The LEVERAGE team positively impacts the percentage of talented women staying in the leadership pipeline.

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