Leaders in a Global Economy
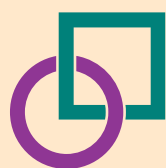## a study of executive women and men

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The *Leaders in a Global Economy* project grew out of the concerns of a group of companies. These companies had already identified the growing need for attracting, developing and retaining women as a key competitive business strategy, and they had been working on doing so for a number of years. Despite their progress, however, they felt there were still many challenges—both subtle and overt—to overcome. They wanted to better understand these challenges on a global basis so they could develop new approaches and strategies to address the advancement of both women and men.

The concerns of these companies resulted in a **unique partnership** and first-time collaboration among three non-profit research organizations: Families and Work Institute, Catalyst, and the Boston College Center for Work & Family.

This project, which began in 2000, includes a worldwide survey that is the **first-of-its-kind**:

- It is the **largest** cross-company study of global executives and the relationship between gender and career advancement ever conducted. It was conducted in 10 major United States-headquartered global companies[1] in a range of industries. The participating companies in this survey are: Baxter International Inc.; Citigroup; Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu; The Dow Chemical Company; Eli Lilly and Company; Goldman, Sachs & Co.; IBM Corporation; JPMorgan Chase; Marriott International; and The Procter & Gamble Company. In all, 1,192 executives participated in the survey.

- It is **global**. Overall, 62 percent of executives surveyed work in the United States and Canada, 16 percent work in Western Europe, 11 percent work in Asia-Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand), 7 percent work in Latin America, and 4 percent work in other regions of the world. Among the 38 percent of these executives who do not work in the United States and Canada, more than half were born in the country or region where they now work.

- It includes both **women and men**—52 percent of the participants in the study are women and 48 percent are men.

- It is **representative** of the top executives in each of these companies. The companies selected their top women and men across the globe to participate, and 51 percent of those selected did participate.

- It includes **very senior executives**. More than half (54%) either report directly to their CEOs (Level 1) or to the CEO's direct reports (Level 2). Furthermore, these executives have responsibility for large groups of people—22 percent are responsible for 500 people or more. In addition, 57 percent of the participants are in line positions.

SUMMARY OF GLOBAL STUDY FINDINGS

Background: The *Leaders in a Global Economy* study finds, not surprisingly, that men senior executives have higher status jobs than women senior executives, as measured by reporting level, number of direct and indirect reports, and total compensation.

Throughout the full research report, we investigate why this is so by looking at differences in men's and women's demographics, work experiences, family lives, ambitions, and the obstacles they face in advancing. None of these factors can fully explain why men have higher status jobs than women. Clearly, other characteristics of men and women or of the workplace affect these differences.

Given this context, the study digs deeper to challenge **common wisdom**. In many cases, we find that common wisdom does not hold up under scrutiny, while in other cases it does.

For more information about the full research report of the study findings, please go to **www.familiesandwork.org**, **www.catalyst-women.org**, or **www.be.edu/cwf**.

🌐

Common Wisdom: The higher women climb, the more they have to give up in their personal and family lives.

Finding One: Women executives are more likely than men executives to have made important life decisions in order to manage both their careers and their personal lives. For example:

- 18 percent of women versus 9 percent of men have delayed marriage or a commitment to a partner and 3 percent of women versus 1 percent of men have decided not to marry. Currently, 94 percent of men are married or in couple relationships compared with 79 percent of the women.

- Executive men and women have lives at home that are very different from one another: 74 percent of women surveyed have a spouse/partner who is employed <u>full-time</u> while 75 percent of men surveyed have a spouse/partner who is <u>not</u> employed.

- 35 percent of women versus 12 percent of men have delayed having children and 12 percent of women versus 1 percent of men have decided not to have children. Currently, 90 percent of men executives have children compared with 65 percent of women executives.

We find that women executives in higher status jobs, however, have <u>not</u> given up more in their personal and family lives to manage their careers than women executives in lower status jobs. In fact, 70 percent of women closer to the CEO in reporting levels (Levels 1 and 2) have children compared with 62 percent of women at reporting levels farther away from the CEO.

Because women at higher reporting levels are older than women in lower reporting levels, we controlled for these differences in age statistically. We still find that women at reporting levels closer to the CEO are *more* likely to have children and *less* likely to have decided not to have children than other women executives.

Moreover, women at the higher reporting levels are *no more* likely to have delayed or decided against committed relationships than women in lower status executive jobs. On the other hand, women at higher reporting levels are *somewhat more* likely than other women to have delayed having children early in their careers.

- Importantly, more than three-quarters of women (77%) and men (79%) who report having "postponed" having children at some point in their careers now have children.

Common Wisdom: Executives have to be work-centric in order to feel successful and to succeed in their careers.

Finding Two: Most executives are, in fact, work-centric: 61 percent have placed a higher or much higher priority on their work than on their personal or family lives over the past year. There is a substantial minority of 32 percent, however, (men and women alike) who have placed the same priority on work and on their personal or family lives. We call these executives "dual-centric."

- The executives who are dual-centric do not necessarily have fewer family responsibilities than other executives, making it easier to be focused on home and work. In fact, 62 percent of dual-centric executives have children under 18 who live with them at least half the time. They are more likely to have children at home than the general population of executives (54% of whom have children under 18 living at home).

Although working long and hard is clearly part and parcel of advancing in today's corporate structure, this study finds that a one-sided life, where work always comes first, isn't necessarily beneficial to career development.

The close to one-third of executives who are dual-centric feel more successful at work, are less stressed, and have an easier time managing the demands of their work and personal/family lives. Women who are dual-centric have advanced to higher reporting levels and also feel more successful in their home lives.

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Common wisdom: Men are more ambitious than women.

Finding Three: While it is true that men on average have higher aspirations than women (19% of men executives aspire to be a CEO or managing partner compared with 9% of women), a significant group of women hope to join their senior management committee (43%). By comparison, 54 percent of senior men have this aspiration.

Importantly, however, one in four of the executives in this study has reduced her or his aspirations—women more so than men (34% of women versus 21% of men). The most frequently selected reason is the same for both women and men. According to 67 percent of executives who have reduced their aspirations, a very important reason is "the sacrifices I would have to make in my personal or family life."

In addition, women who don't think there has been progress in breaking the glass ceiling are more likely to have reduced their aspirations than women who think progress has been made.

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Common Wisdom: Companies need to use different strategies to help women and men succeed.

Finding Four: The largest proportion of executives—both men and women—see business-focused strategies as the most helpful organizational strategies in their advancing:

- 83 percent note opportunities for leadership positions and 80 percent note challenging assignments as strategies that have been very helpful in their success.

- Men are somewhat more likely than women, however, to list business-focused strategies, while women are more likely than men to list work-life and diversity strategies. We cannot fully test whether this is because women and men see different ways to the top or because women and men are offered different types of opportunities.

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Common Wisdom: Men and women use different personal strategies to succeed.

Finding Five: This study finds that executive women and men describe the personal strategies that have helped them succeed as much more alike than different. These include both so-called "masculine" strategies, such as "taking risks and challenges" and "standing up for what I think," as well as so-called "feminine" strategies, such as "being collaborative."

When we adjust for differences in job status, only two out of a list of 19 potential differences between men and women are confirmed: women are more likely than men to say that having very high personal standards for their work and being able to navigate the politics of their organizations have been very important to their success.

The top rated personal strategies are:

- Being adaptable and able to manage change (50%)

- Taking on risks and challenges (38%)

- Being able to motivate others (38%)

- Having very high personal standards for my work (37%)

- Being a hard worker (32%)

- Being an effective problem solver (30%)

These strategies are related to managing well in the turbulent waters of today's business climate.

Common Wisdom: Men and women face different organizational barriers to advancement.

Finding Six: When asked about organizational obstacles, the top-rated obstacles, primarily concern the availability and quality of support executives receive from the people in their organizations. Clearly, having support from higher-ups in the organization is paramount for both women and men to advance. Women report facing many more obstacles, however, than men—specifically being excluded from important networks, having a limited number of role models, having limited opportunities for experiences in line or in general management positions, facing gender stereotypes, and being in dual-career families.

Common Wisdom: It is higher-level executives—male and female alike—who stand in the way or help those below them succeed.

Finding Seven: When asked about the person who has helped them the most, close to nine in 10 (87%) refer to a man. Among women executives, however, 19 percent have been helped the most by a woman.

- Importantly, women who have had a woman as the most helpful person are more likely than other women to have reached reporting levels 1 or 2.

Thus, while it is true that support and mentoring by higher-level executives—both male and female—are essential to developing leaders, we find that women mentoring women is of special importance.

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Common Wisdom: Women executives are more likely to leave their jobs than men and for different reasons.

Finding Eight: An equal number of men and women executives—44 percent—plan to leave their jobs in five years or less. This will constitute a large turnover in the top talent in these companies.

Almost 30 percent (29%) plan to leave in five years or less but do not plan to retire.

- Importantly, more women (32%) than men (26%) are in this category. One reason for this difference is that men executives are somewhat older on average than women executives.

- Of these male and female executives who plan to leave within five years but not retire, only 7 percent are planning to drop out of the workforce temporarily. The largest proportion (56 percent) plan to pursue a different career. There are no differences between men and women in what they plan to do when they leave their companies.

There are clearly some differences between men and women in the obstacles that have limited their careers. When we examined the statistical relationship between facing obstacles and retention, we find that men and women are affected by obstacles in the same way. Both men and women need to feel recognized for their performance and perceive the performance evaluation system as fair, both need to feel included in important networks, both need to see opportunities for growth and advancement, and both need sponsors and role models. To retain top talent, companies must address these issues effectively, regardless of gender.

Common Wisdom: Retention strategies should focus on the "hard" issues of promotion and compensation, not the "softer" issues.

Finding Nine: In order to retain talent in the executive ranks, employers need to attend not only to matters of promotion and compensation, but also to the so-called softer issues (which these analyses reveal are not soft at all) such as respect, acceptance of individual differences, support in the workplace, job quality, and flexibility.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES[2]

Comparing Western Europe with the United States and Canada:

- Executives in Western Europe are struggling more than those in the United States and Canada with certain tensions between their work lives and their personal and family lives. For example, executives in Western Europe are *less* likely to say they have the flexibility in their work schedules to manage their personal and family responsibilities.

Comparing Asia-Pacific with the United States and Canada:

- Executives, primarily women, in the Asia-Pacific region have more frequently made important personal and family life decisions in order to manage both their careers and their personal lives than their U.S. and Canadian counterparts. They are *less* likely to be married or living with a partner or to have children. In addition, executives in Asia-Pacific, primarily women, are *more* likely to have made the conscious choice of not marrying or entering a committed relationship because of their job.

- Executives in Asia-Pacific, primarily men, are *more* likely than executives in the United States and Canada to see themselves as facing stereotypes about their ability based on race/ethnicity and a hostile work environment.

ACTION STEPS SUGGESTED BY EXECUTIVES

When executives themselves are asked to suggest changes to help advance the next generation of women and men leaders, they say:

Improve career development and performance management systems for both genders: 57 percent recommended this for women, 59 percent for men. This category includes creating objective and inclusive performance management systems, providing key developmental experiences, and offering networking and mentoring opportunities.

Create an inclusive work environment: 32 percent recommended this for women, 29 percent for men. This category includes broadening acceptable leadership styles for both women and men, educating the workforce about diversity and inclusion, providing equal opportunities, and guarding against reverse discrimination.

Address work-life needs: 21 percent recommended this for women, 11 percent for men. This includes addressing cultural values and expectations by providing role models and supporting involvement in activities outside of work, reducing expectations of very long work hours, and rethinking career paths.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Based on the findings of the study and the executives' suggestions for change for the next generation of women and men leaders, we list our recommendations for diversifying senior leadership in corporations like the ones we studied.

Focus on Leadership: Review the senior leadership group in the company to assess the diversity of the group, going beyond race or gender demographics to include personal styles, family status, career paths, and nationalities. Clarify essential leadership skills for senior management, including requiring understanding and committing to diversity. Broaden the range of accepted leadership styles in order to foster individuality. Communicate the business benefits of having a wider spectrum of leaders, demonstrating that there is more than one way to make it to the top.

Focus on Key Developmental Experiences: Provide opportunities for learning and development on the job, for challenging and visible "stretch" assignments, reasonable risk-taking, and cross-functional roles that broaden <u>all</u> employees' exposure and skills. Invest in career planning programs and systems.

Focus on Rewards: Review performance management systems so that rewards are aligned with business goals and values, clearly communicated, and consistently used as the basis for recruitment, compensation, promotions, and other opportunities. Examine, reconsider, and make explicit the currently "unwritten" rules required for advancement.

Focus on Connections: Create a mentoring culture by recognizing and rewarding those who are effective mentors and coaches. Provide opportunities for executives to make professional connections across functions and geographies. Use workplace networks as an important resource for meeting the needs of underrepresented groups. Provide opportunities for women to mentor other women.

Focus on Work-Life: Transform the company understanding about work-life, clarifying that it is possible and positive to have a viable personal life while holding a senior management position in the company.

Focus on Retention: Examine the factors that might cause executives to leave, such as lack of respect, job quality, supportiveness, and flexibility and address them in ways that improve retention.

CONCLUSION

Throughout our analyses, we have searched for the factors that can explain the differences between the status of women's and men's jobs. None of the factors we have explored independently or together—including differences in men's and women's demographics, work experiences, family lives, ambitions, and the obstacles they face in advancing—can fully explain why men have higher status jobs than women. It is very clear from these analyses, however, that each of these factors does make a difference, and can add up over time to limit women's careers more than men's.

These study findings and recommended changes from executives on how to improve the advancement of the next generation of leaders are critical to understanding what companies need to do in order to recruit, advance, and retain their top talent—both women and men—so that they remain productive and competitive in today's global economy.

INTRODUCTION

Although there is considerable research about the issue of women and advancement, we continue to ask the same questions—we continue to carry on the same debates.

Yes, there have been some gains. But too many women on the leadership track are dropping back or leaving the labor force when they have children. And there are still so few women at the top.

In addition, many women are choosing to start their own companies rather than work for existing companies.

Around conference rooms, in offices and in homes, in public events and in the media, people are saying:

- The glass ceiling in corporations is much thicker, much more impervious to being cracked, than imagined. Or, perhaps they say the playing field has been leveled and there is too much ado about nothing.

- Companies have tried to address these issues, but their attempts to change haven't really addressed the tough issue issues that matter, like a workplace culture with excessive work hours that sees careers as a fast-paced marathon with no deviations off the track. Furthermore, companies may have addressed overt discrimination, but haven't made much of a dent in subtle discrimination issues.

- Some company efforts focusing on advancing women have led to resentment among men and growing tensions between men and women.

- Wanting to "have it all" may be passé, not really achievable. Some feel that women just have to make choices.

And if some best-selling books are any indication of where we stand on these issues, many people, especially women, are turning to humorous books that allow them to feel superior to the characters in the book who are failing as they try to "have it all" or to "outsource" their children to nannies who tell all.

That's why it is time to look at the issue of women leaders and advancement again, to test assumptions and beliefs against hard data collected at leading corporations that are trying to address these issues and are willing to be highly visible and open about their efforts.

We have this opportunity with *Leaders in a Global Economy,* a first-of-its-kind study:

- It is the **largest** study of global executives and the relationship between gender and career advancement ever conducted. It was conducted in 10 major global, U.S headquartered companies[3] in a range of industries. In all, 1,192 executives participated in the study.

- It is **global**—62 percent work in the United States and Canada, 16 percent work in Western Europe, 11 percent work in Asia-Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand),

7 percent work in Latin America, and 4 percent work in other regions of the world. Among the 38 percent of these executives who do not work in the U.S. and Canada, more than half were born in the country or region where they now work.

- It includes both **women and men**—52 percent of the participants in the study are women and 48 percent are men.

- It is **representative** of the top executives in each of these companies. The companies selected their top women and their top men across the globe to participate and 51 percent of those selected did participate.

- It is includes **very senior executives**. More than half (54%) either report directly to their CEOs (Level 1) or they report to the CEO's direct reports (Level 2). Furthermore, they have responsibility for large groups of people—22 percent are responsible for 500 people or more. In addition, 57 percent of the participants are in line positions.

- It is **action-oriented**. The participating companies are using the results of this study to frame their next steps in addressing issues of advancement for both women and men.

Some might argue that the experiences of the women and men in this study do not mirror or have relevance for the majority of working women and men. We disagree with this assumption.

While not everyone sets out to rise to the top of their organization or enjoys the financial resources these top executives now have, the experiences and insights of these business leaders are informative to anyone interested in navigating their own work and family responsibilities and career advancement. None of the women and men in this study began at the top—they have worked their way up. And, according to the personal interviews we conducted with some of the executives at the outset of this project, these executives have come from many different types of backgrounds, from many different strata of their own societies. Furthermore, they have had to strategize and make tough choices about their careers and personal and family lives. We thus think that their lessons learned have great relevance for those who either want to advance or to help others advance.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The *Leaders in a Global Economy* project, which began in 2000, focused on women leaders for two primary reasons. First, women play increasingly important roles in business and in the global economy. Second, companies want to retain their top female talent.

Over its three-year history, there have been **12 company partners** in the overall project. They are all U.S.-based multi-national corporations: Baxter International Inc.; Citigroup; Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu; The Dow Chemical Company; Eli Lilly and Company; Goldman, Sachs & Co.; IBM Corporation; JPMorgan Chase; Marriott International; Merck & Company, Inc.; Merrill Lynch & Company, Inc.; and The Procter & Gamble Company. The lead business sponsor of this project throughout its history has been the IBM Corporation.

The **purpose** of the project has been to find out what helps and hinders the success of executives at work and at home. To accomplish this purpose, the project has taken place in three phases:

In the **first phase**, the research team conducted lengthy telephone interviews with four to five very senior women at each of the participating companies to ask them how they define success at work, at home, in caring for themselves, and in connecting to their communities. We then asked these women what helped them succeed and what stood in the way of their success at work and at home. Forty-five women were interviewed in five key regions of the world: North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East/Africa and Asia-Pacific.

The **second phase** involved bringing together delegations of top women leaders from participating companies to discuss issues related to women in business, to present benchmarking data on the companies and a review of best practice, and to create plans for making change within their companies. Ninety women from 19 countries participated in a three-day seminar in Prague, the Czech Republic in July 2001. At the end of this seminar, the senior women from each of the participating companies developed plans for next steps in addressing the issues raised. These action plans resulted in a number of changes at the companies.

Following the Prague seminar, the senior women also participated in developing the survey. First, they said that they wanted the study to include both women and men executives. Second, they submitted the questions they wanted to address to the researchers who developed the final survey.

In the **third phase**, Clear Picture Corporation, a survey research firm, conducted the study online between March and June 2002. Ten companies participated in this phase: Baxter International Inc.; Citigroup; Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu; The Dow Chemical Company; Eli Lilly and Company; Goldman, Sachs & Co.; IBM Corporation; JPMorgan Chase; Marriott International; and The Procter & Gamble Company.

The **three non-profit research partners** conducting this study are Families and Work Institute, Catalyst and the Boston College Center for Work & Family—also a first-of-its-kind collaboration.

The result is this study, *Leaders in a Global Economy: A Study of Executive Women and Men*.

STUDY BACKGROUND

We begin this study in a familiar place—with the finding that among this group of very senior executives, men hold higher status jobs than women on average.

The differences between men and women in their backgrounds and experiences cannot fully explain why men have higher status jobs. Neither can the differences in their home lives. Something else is going on.

This study attempts to dig beneath the surface—to separate facts from assumptions and to probe the other factors that might make a difference.

This study focuses on very senior leaders. Companies were asked to select their top men executives and top women executives across the world, providing an opportunity to compare the status of men's and women's jobs within a group representing the most senior executives in each of these companies.[4]

In addition, the fact that this is a global survey allows us to compare executives across key regions of the world.[5] Based on the size of our sample and our decision to include only executives who are citizens of the countries in which they are now working, comparisons could only be conducted between executives in the United States and Canada and Western Europe, as well as between executives in the United States and Canada and Asia-Pacific.[6] The most significant regional differences are noted throughout the report, and a more complete discussion of regional trends can be found at the end of the report.

Men, on average, hold higher status jobs than women.

We define job status by three objective indicators of job success: reporting distance from the CEO or managing partner (reporting level), total compensation, and the number of people whom the executive supervises directly (direct reports) and who are supervised by someone else whom the executive supervises (indirect reports).

- **First, men are more likely to have positions at reporting Level I or 2—directly reporting to the CEO or managing partner or reporting to someone who reports to the CEO or managing partner.[7]**

    - 71 percent of the men in the highest leadership positions are at Level 1 or 2 compared with only 39 percent of the women.

- **Second, men are more highly compensated.**

    - Only 16 percent of the men earned less than $200,000 in 2001, compared with 38 percent of the women.

Table 1: What was your total compensation from your job in 2001 dollars?

Total Compensation in U.S Dollars	All Executives N=1108	Men N=524 *	Women N=584
Less than $100,000	3%	1%	5%
$100,000-$199,999	24	15	33
$200,000-$299,999	23	23	22
$300,000-$399,999	12	16	9
$400,000-$499,999	7	8	6
$500,000-$999,999	16	18	15
$1,000,000 or above	15	20	10

* Results significant at p<.05

- **Third, men manage larger numbers of employees.**

  - Only 19 percent of the men have overall supervisory responsibility—direct and indirect reports—for fewer than 25 people compared with 43 percent of women.

REGIONAL COMPARISONS[8]

Among executives who are citizens of the countries in which they work, those in the United States and Canada earn somewhat higher salaries than executives in other regions of the world. For example:

- Only 1 percent of executives in the United States and Canada earn less than $100,000 USD, compared with 7 percent of executives in Western Europe and 13 percent of executives in Asia-Pacific.

- 17 percent of executives in the United States and Canada earn more than $1 million USD, compared with 13 percent of executives in both Western Europe and Asia-Pacific.

This is not, however, because executives in the United States and Canada have higher job status. Executives in Western Europe and Asia-Pacific are just as likely as their U.S. and Canadian counterparts to have positions at reporting Levels 1 or 2 and manage equally large numbers of employees. (These regional comparisons controlled for age and gender to eliminate any influence these factors might have on job status.)

Table 2: How many people are under your supervision; that is, they report to you or to others who report to you?

Direct and Indirect Reports	All Executives N=1106	Men N=524 *	Women N=582
Fewer than 25	32%	19%	43%
25 through 49	10	8	12
50 through 99	11	8	14
100 through 299	18	20	15
300 through 499	8	10	5
500 through 999	8	12	4
1000 through 9999	12	18	6
10,000 or more	2	4	0

* Results significant at $p<.05$

We asked: *Can differences in the job status of men and women be explained by differences in their demographic backgrounds?*

There are a number of differences in the demographics of women and men executives:

- **Men are three years older than the women on average.**

    - Men are 46.7 years on average compared with 43.7 years for women.

- **Men have worked for their companies three-and-a-half years longer on average than women.**

    - Men have worked for their companies for 18.9 years on average compared with 15.4 years for women.

- **Men have somewhat more education than women. However, this difference is not statistically significant.**

    - 59 percent of the men have a Masters Degree or higher compared with 54 percent of the women.

We conducted a series of analyses to explore these differences further and find that **while the differences between men and women in age, education, and job tenure do help to explain why men have higher status jobs, they do not fully account for the differences.**

We also wondered: *Can differences in the job status of men and women be explained by differences in the job experiences of men and women?*

- **Men are more likely to be in line positions versus staff positions than women.**

    - 67 percent of the men are in line positions compared with 46 percent of the women.

- **Men are more likely to work in positions outside the United States and Canada.**

    - 43 percent of men (including expatriates and local nationals) work outside of the U.S. and Canada, compared with 34 percent of women.

    - In addition, men are more likely to be expatriates, or living outside of the country where they are a citizen (34% of men versus 19% of women).

Table 3: In what region/country do you currently reside and work?

Region/Country	All Executives N=1113	Men N=526	Women * N=587
US & Canada	62%	57%	66%
Latin America & Caribbean	7	8	5
Western Europe	16	18	15
Asia-Pacific	11	12	10
Other regions	4	5	4

* Results significant at p<.05

- **Men have moved more frequently than women.**

    - Men have moved an average of 4.2 times because of their jobs compared with 1.9 times for women.

- Of these moves, 2.3 have been international moves for men compared with 0.9 for women.

- However, almost equal percentages of women and men (24% of men and 26% of women) have refused a position because a spouse/partner did not want to move.

- **Men also travel more often than women do.**

  - 47 percent of men travel several times a year, compared with 30 percent of women.

- **Finally, men work somewhat longer hours than women.**

  - Men report working 63 paid and unpaid hours a week while women report working 62 hours. While this numerical difference is not large, it is statistically significant.

We conducted a series of analyses to explore this question and find that **while the different job experiences of men and women also help to explain why men have higher status jobs, they do not fully account for the difference. Something else is going on**.

Since the differences in the backgrounds and job experiences of men and women do not fully explain the differences in their job status, it is important to look at the lives of these executives at home to see if they make a difference. *Is it the home lives of women that stand in the way of their advancement?*

In fact, the home lives of women and men executives are very different from each other.

- Men are more likely to be married or in a couple relationship than women.

  - 94 percent of men are married or in couple relationships compared with 79 percent of the women.

Table 4: Are you presently married, living with someone as a couple, single and never married, divorced, widowed or separated?

Marital Status	All Executives N=1114	Men N=527 *	Women N=587
Married	81%	91%	72%
Living with someone as a couple	5	3	7
Single and never married	8	2	12
Divorced/Widowed/Separated	7	4	9

* Results significant at p<.05

- **Women and men are almost mirror images of each other when it comes to whether or not their spouses/partners are employed.**

  - 74 percent of the women have a spouse/partner who is employed <u>full-time</u> while 75 percent of the men have a spouse/partner who is <u>not</u> employed.

Table 5: Does your spouse or partner work for pay?

Working Status of Spouse/Partner	Men N=449 *	Women N=409
Yes, full-time	11%	74%
Yes, part-time	14	10
No	75	17

* Results significant at p<.05

Until now, there have been few figures—and a great deal of speculation—about how many women executives have husbands who are not employed—the "trophy husbands," as they were called in a recent U.S. business magazine. A considerable number of these women executives—17 percent—do have spouses/partners who are not employed (compared with 11 percent of employed married women in the U.S. labor force). **However, it is important to note that the vast majority of these women executives—84 percent—do live in two-earner families.**

This is consistent with the findings in Catalyst research. For example, in its 1996 study, *Women in Corporate Leadership: Progress and Prospects*, 87 percent of the married women were part of dual-earner relationships.

- **The demographics of women executives with spouses at home are similar to those women whose spouses are employed:**

  - Women with non-employed spouses are no more likely than women with employed spouses to have children.

  - There are also no age differences between women with non-employed spouses and those whose spouses are employed.

But even when they both have an employed spouse, the lives of men and women

executives are not comparable.

- **Women's spouses/partners work longer hours than those of men.**

  - Women's spouses/partners work 47.1 hours a week on average, compared to 32.7 for men's.

- **Despite the fact that most women executives live in two-earner families, the majority of women are still the major breadwinners.**

  - 61 percent of women executives earn substantially more than their spouse/partner.

  - On the other hand, 94 percent of the men executives earn substantially more than their spouse/partner.

TABLE 6: IF YOUR SPOUSE/PARTNER IS EMPLOYED, DOES HE OR SHE EARN SUBSTANTIALLY MORE THAN YOU, SUBSTANTIALLY LESS, OR ABOUT THE SAME?

Earnings of Spouse/Partner	Men N=147 *	Women N=390
Substantially more	1%	8%
About the same	5	31
Substantially less	94	61

* Results significant at p<.05

There has been a great deal of discussion about whether women—as opposed to men—have had to give up having children or "squander" their fertility, as it has been put.

- **Our results, as do those from other studies, make it clear that more men than women have children.**

  - 90 percent of men executives have children compared with 65 percent of women executives.

  - Men are also somewhat more likely (58%) to have children under 18 living at home at least half time than women (51%).

Table 7: Do you currently have a child under the age of 18 living with you at least half of the time?

Children under 18 living with you at least half of the time	Men N=147 *	Women N=390
Yes	58%	51%
No	42	49

* Results significant at p<.05

- **Not only are men more likely to have children than women, they have more children.**

  - On average, men have 2.5 children, while women have 2.1.

- **And although 61 percent of executive women are the major breadwinners in their families, the majority of women still have more responsibility than their spouses/partners in making child care arrangements.**

  - 57 percent of the women say they take more responsibility than their spouse/partner does in making child care arrangements compared with only 1 percent of the men.

- **On the other hand, more than two in five of these women have spouses/partners who take significant responsibility.**

  - 20 percent of the women say that their spouse/partner takes more responsibility and another 23 percent report sharing responsibility equally.

Even though many women do have spouses/partners who support them at home, **the contrast between the men's and women's lives at home remains dramatic—94 percent of the men have spouses/partners who take greater responsibility for making child care arrangements compared with only 20 percent of the women**.

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

Among executives who are citizens of the country in which they work, those in Asia-Pacific are less likely to have children than their counterparts in the U.S. and Canada.

- Just over half (53%) of executives in Asia-Pacific have children of any age compared with 77 percent of U.S. and Canada executives.

- Men in Asia-Pacific are much more likely to have children of any age than the women: 89 percent of Asia-Pacific male executives have children compared with 31 percent of Asia-Pacific female executives.

- In the U.S. and Canada, men are also more likely to have children of any age than are women (90% versus 68%).

No significant differences emerge between Western Europe and U.S. and Canadian executives. There are also no differences between male and female executives within Western Europe.

Responsibility for child care arrangements	All Executives N=618	Men N=322 *	Women N=296
I do	28%	1%	57%
My spouse/partner does	58	94	20
We split the responsibility equally	14	6	23
Someone else is responsible for making child care arrangements	0	0	0

* Results significant at p<.05

• **When we look at who takes care of the children during work hours, the contrast between women and men is also very evident.**

   - The most frequent form of child care among the men executives is their spouse/part-ner (77%). The second most common is school, at 11 percent, with non-relative care in their own home—such as a nanny—at 8 percent.

   - The most frequent form of child care among women executives is non-relative care in the executive's homes—such as a nanny (48%). The next most frequent is their spouse/partner (16%), confirming our previous finding that a significant minority of executive women have spouses/partners who are providing a great deal of support with family responsibilities. However, the 16 percent of women using spouse care is quite different from the 77 percent of men who use this form of care. In addition, school care is used by 16 percent of the women.

There are no differences between men and women executives when it comes to pro-viding elder care.

• **One in four executives (25%) currently provides "regular special assistance to an elderly family member, helping him or her with things that are difficult or impossible to do otherwise."**

   - Men are just as likely to currently provide elder care assistance as women.

• **In terms of providing elder care over the past year, an even higher number of executives are involved: 38 percent.**

   - Again, we find no gender differences between men and women on whether they have provided special assistance to an elderly family member in the past year.

There were similar findings in Families and Work Institute's *1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce*. That study finds that employed men and women are equally likely to be providing elder care and they spend the same amount of time providing this care weekly. However, this study did find that the specific tasks men and women perform are different—women are more likely to provide direct physical care, while men are more likely to help by making necessary arrangements, paying bills, and so forth.

Perhaps elder care will increasingly level the gender playing field in that both employed men and employed women do assume these responsibilities. Given the aging population in the United States and in many other countries and the growing number of employees who expect to assume elder care responsibilities in the future—especially at senior levels (and it already affects more than one third of the executives in these companies)—this trend could have a profound impact on companies in the future.

Nonetheless, since the gender playing field when it comes to home life is anything but level now, we conducted a series of analyses to explore the question of whether these differences in home life explain differences in job status between men and women. We find that **while the different home lives of men and women do help to explain why men have higher status jobs, they do not fully account for the difference**.

Indeed, even when we adjust for all of the preceding differences in background characteristics, job experiences, and home life between men and women, the differences in job status (reporting level, number of direct and indirect reports, and total compensation) favoring men persist. Clearly, other characteristics of women and men or of the workplace affect these differences.

We organize the study results by comparing **common wisdom** or assumptions with what we find. These assumptions are not based on any formal data, but on what we typically hear when issues of women and advancement are discussed.

FINDING ONE

Common Wisdom: The higher women climb, the more they have to give up in their personal or family lives.

Finding One: Women executives in higher status jobs in these companies have <u>not</u> given up more in their personal and family lives to manage their careers than women executives in lower status jobs.

Indeed, women at reporting levels closer to the CEO are more likely to have children and less likely to have decided not to have children than other women executives. Moreover, they are no more likely to have delayed or decided against committed relationships than women in lower status jobs.

<center>⊕</center>

The path to this counter-intuitive finding began with examining the issue of choices. **We asked:** *What kind of important life decisions have women and men made in order to manage their careers and their personal lives?*

And initially, this research journey took us back to familiar ground.

We find that women have made many more important life decisions to manage their careers and personal lives than men have.

- **More women than men have delayed or decided against having committed relationships.**

    - 18 percent of women and 9 percent of men have delayed marriage or a commitment to a partner.

    - 3 percent of women and 1 percent of men have decided not to marry.

- **More women than men have postponed or decided against having children.**

    - 35 percent of women and 12 percent of men have postponed having children.

    - 12 percent of women and 1 percent of men have decided not to have children.

Table 9: Please mark any of the following choices that you have made since you started working in order to manage your career and personal life?

Choices	All Executives N=1120	Men N=529 *	Women N=591
Delayed marriage or delayed commitment to a partner	14%	9%	18%
Decided not to marry	2	1	3
Postponed having children	24	12	35
Decided not to have children	7	1	12

* Results significant at p<.05

As we said, most of these findings are not new. But our data allow us to go beyond what some other studies have done.

First, because there is a debate about whether the paths that women and men take to manage their careers and their personal lives are actually <u>chosen</u>, we wanted to explore this question: *To what extent have the paths that women and men take to manage their careers and personal lives been chosen?*

First, we looked to see how many of those who have never been married say that they have made a "choice" not to marry.

- **The large majority of single and never-married executives have not "decided" against getting married.**

  - Overall (as shown in Table 4) 8 percent of these executives are single and never married. Of these, 82 percent have not "decided" against getting married.

  - However, a substantial number—30 percent—of those executives who are currently single and never married say they have made the decision to <u>delay</u> marriage or a permanent commitment in order to manage their careers and personal lives.

Among executives who are citizens of the country in which they work, those in Asia-Pacific are more likely than executives in the U.S. and Canada to have decided not to marry or enter into a committed relationship.

- 8 percent of executives in Asia-Pacific have decided this compared with 2 percent of executives in the U.S. and Canada.

- 13 percent of Asia-Pacific women have decided not to marry or enter a committed relationship. No (0%) Asia-Pacific men have made this decision.

There are no overall differences between Western European and U.S. and Canadian executives on any decisions they have made to manage their career and personal lives. However, women in both regions have made more tradeoffs than men.

We wondered whether men and women differed with respect to these decisions, since they differ in their patterns of marriage (2% of the men and 12% of the women are single). Although one might expect men and women to differ, we don't find this to be the case:

- **There are no differences between men and women in delaying or deciding not to get married or making a permanent commitment.**

    - Thus, most currently unmarried executives hope or plan to marry or live in a committed relationship in the future.

    - Second, we looked to see how many of those who don't have children say that they have made a "choice" not to have children or to postpone having children.

- **The majority of childless executives have not "decided" against having children.**

    - Of the 23 percent of executives who don't have children (Table 7), only 24 percent say they have decided against having children. This means that 76 percent have left the option of having children open.

    - Overall, 7 percent of these executives have chosen not to have children.

We wondered how men and women differ. And here we find that men and women do differ quite dramatically:

- **More childless women than childless men have made a decision not to have children.**

    - Of the 35 percent of women who do not have children, 28 percent say they have decided against having children.

    - Of the 10 percent of men who do not have children, only 9 percent say they have decided against having children.

    - **Overall, 12 percent of all of the women executives and 1 percent of all of the men executives say they have chosen to be childless.**

Despite these large gender differences, **most childless executives—male and female— have not "chosen" not to have children**.

- **However, close to one in four executives who currently do not have children report having postponed having children.**

    - There are no statistical differences between men and women here. Almost one quarter of childless men (24%) and childless women (23%) say they have postponed having children.

We also wondered how many of these executives who at some point in their careers postponed having children now have children.

- **More than three-quarters of women and men who report having "postponed"**

having children at some point in their careers, now have them.

- Among the 35 percent of women who say they postponed having children, 77 percent currently have children, while 23 percent do not.

- Among the 12 percent of men who have postponed having children, 79 percent now have children, while 21 percent do not.

Our findings reveal that postponing parenthood is not a "forever" situation for most executives. In fact, delaying parenthood may have been a deliberate strategy used by some executives to manage work and family lives more successfully—though clearly the fertility issues for women and men who postpone having children are not the same.

We next asked: *Given the "choices" that executives have made, have they achieved what they want to at work?*

Of course, this is a personal question. So we asked the executives how close they are to living up to their own definitions of success on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the most successful and 1 being not successful). Their own definitions of success include things such as furthering the company's business results, achieving a high level of compensation, having a position with significant decision making authority, earning the professional respect of others, furthering the growth and development of others, and challenging themselves and learning new things.

- On average, senior executives rate themselves as fairly successful at 7.6.

- **Men rate themselves as more successful at work than women do.**

  - Men rate themselves, on average, at 7.8 compared with women at 7.5. Although the numeric difference is not very large, it is statistically significant.

We wondered whether the difference in how successful men and women feel at work is related to differences in their job status.

We find that after adjusting for differences in men's and women's compensation, reporting levels, and number of direct and indirect reports, there is no difference between men and women in how successful they feel.

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

Among executives who are citizens of the country in which they work, there are NO regional differences in how successful they feel at work. Gender differences were similar in all regions.

In other words, if women were in jobs of equal status to those of men—which they are not—they would feel equally successful.

We next asked how successful executives feel in their home lives: *Do men and women feel equally successful in their home lives?*

Again, this is a personal question. So we asked the executives how close they are to living up to their own definitions of success on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the most successful and

1 being not successful). Their own definitions include: good relationships with the people who are most important to them, achieving financial security, fulfilling their family responsibilities, supporting the people who are most important to them, and having enough time for themselves and their personal activities/interests.

- On average senior executives rate themselves as fairly successful in their home lives at 7.1—not as high as the 7. 6 they give themselves for success at work.

- **And again, men rate themselves as more successful in their home lives than women do.**

    - Men rate themselves on average at 7.4 compared with women at 6.9.

Additional analyses revealed that the following factors are related to feeling more successful in one's home life:

- Being married or being in a partner relationship;

- Not delaying marriage;

- Having children of any age;

- Not postponing having children; and

- Not deciding against having children.

We also explored whether having children younger than18 who live at home at least half time (the question we used to assess whether the executives have current responsibility for children) makes a difference in feelings of success at home. We find that it does not. **Apparently, it is simply having children of any age (and these include biological, adopted, and step-children) that contributes to feeling successful in one's home life.**

Since we have found that men are more likely to be married or living with a partner, more likely to have children, less likely to have postponed having children or to have decided against having children, we wondered if these factors explain why men feel more successful than women in their home lives. To test this idea, we statistically controlled for these differences between men and women.

We find that even after these differences between men and women are adjusted statistically, there remains a small but statistically significant difference. That is, women still feel slightly less successful in their personal and family lives on average.

Perhaps women expect more of themselves in their home lives, setting the bar higher than men, and therefore have more difficulty feeling successful.

These findings should not be read to presume that <u>all</u> executives need to be married and have children to feel successful. As with all statistical findings, these findings mean that these fac-

tors do make a difference for more executives than simply would occur by chance.

The obvious next question is: *Do the very things that lead some women to feel less successful in their family and personal lives lead them to be more successful and, therefore, feel more successful in their work lives?*

Put another way, are women who have made choices to postpone or delay marriage, committed relationships and/or children more successful in their careers?

We addressed this question by using hierarchical linear regressions to predict the three indicators of job status we have been using:

- Reporting level;
- Total compensation; and
- Number of direct and indirect reports.

Remember that when these three factors are statistically controlled, there are no differences between men and women in their feelings of success at work.

The regression analyses first controlled for executives' age, educational level, and job tenure because we have found that older executives, those with more education, and those with longer tenure at their companies, have higher status jobs on average.

In the next stage of the analyses, we evaluated the five key factors associated with women's feeling less successful in their family and personal lives:

- Not having a child of any age;
- Not being married or involved in a committed relationship;
- Having delayed marriage or commitment;
- Having postponed having children; and
- Having decided against having children.

It is often assumed that to move up the executive ranks women must give up more in their personal and family lives than men. Thus, we, like most others, suspected that women who made the above choices would be more successful at work or, stated conversely, that more successful women would be more likely to have made these choices since the direction of causation is not clear.

But that's not what we find. Our results show that:

Among these very senior executives in these companies, women in higher status jobs have not made more important life decisions in their personal and family lives to manage their careers than women executives in lower status jobs.

Indeed, women at reporting levels closer to the CEO are more likely to have children and less likely to have decided not to have children than other women executives. Moreover, they are no more likely to have delayed or decided against committed relationships than women in lower status jobs.

On the other hand, women at higher reporting levels are somewhat more likely than other women to have delayed having children early in their careers. We find no other significant relationships.

Since this is an unexpected finding, its meaning is not quite clear. Perhaps this finding represents a new phenomenon. Because previous studies have not investigated these issues among corporate leaders in the depth we are able to, it may mean something new is going on.

Studies of women scientists over the past few decades, however, have revealed a similar pattern. Sociologists Jonathan Cole and Harriet Zuckerman of Columbia University have found that eminent married women scientists publish more than their counterparts who are single women and that women's rates of publication rise after childbirth and during the years they are caring for young children. They state that for most women, "science and motherhood do mix" (p.170, Cole and Zuckerman, 1987 in Zuckerman, Cole and Bruer, 1991).

So perhaps this means that this phenomenon has previously existed, but has been "below the radar screen." Or perhaps it means that in companies that have made concerted efforts to address issues of women's advancement and of work and family life, it is more possible to combine motherhood and family life with advancement. Obviously, more research is needed to address these questions.

An Additional Finding: Executives who are currently in line positions have made fewer important life decisions in their personal or family lives—delaying marriage and committed relationships or deciding not to have children—than those in staff positions.

It is often assumed that because executives in line positions have profit and loss (P&L) responsibilities, they have to make more personal or family life choices than those in staff positions. These jobs are often seen as less conducive to managing work and personal/family lives, especially for women. Our study provides the opportunity to ask: **Do executives in line positions make more important life choices than those in staff positions?**

Our data clearly show that women are less likely to be in line positions than men (46 percent versus 67 percent). This corresponds to Catalyst's 2002 Census of Women Corporate Officers and Top Earners in the Fortune 500 that shows that 30 percent of women corporate officers are in line positions compared with 50 percent of men corporate officers.

- **In addition, there are no statistically significant differences between line and staff executives in whether or not they are married.**

- **When it comes to delaying marriage, there is a difference, but it is the opposite of what is expected—executives in line positions are less likely to have delayed**

marriage than those in staff positions (11 percent versus 16 percent).

- In terms of differences between women and men, women in line positions are *less* likely than women in staff positions to have delayed marriage or a partner relationship in order to manage their careers and personal lives (14 percent versus 21 percent). There is no difference among men.

- There are also no differences between executives—both men and women—in line or staff positions when it comes to deciding not to marry.

• **There is no statistically significant difference between executives in line and staff positions in whether they have children.**

- 79 percent of executives in line positions have children versus 76 percent in staff positions. There are no gender differences in this finding.

• **We also find that there is no difference between line and staff executives in decisions to postpone having children.**

• **However, there is a difference between line and staff in their decisions not to have children.**

- Men in staff positions are more likely than men in line positions to have decided not to have children: 3 percent versus less than 1 percent. There is no difference among women.

• **In addition, executives in line positions—both men and women—do not find it any more difficult to manage their work, personal, and family lives than those in staff positions.**

In sum, perhaps surprisingly, executives in line positions have made fewer important life decisions in their personal or family lives—delaying marriage and committed relationships or deciding not to have children—than those in staff positions.

Since the executives in some of these companies have moved between line and staff positions, this finding does not tell us about the long-term impact of being in a line or staff position.

We do know, however, that all is not a bed of roses when it comes to these positions. For example, being in a staff job can inhibit career advancement. In Catalyst's 1996 study of women at the vice president level and above in the Fortune 1000 companies, 82 percent of CEOs reported that "lack of general management and line experience" prevents women from advancing to corporate leadership. In addition, we hear that women can get pushed into staff roles and can't get out and that some line jobs, particularly in plant environments, may be inhospitable work environments for women.

Thus, although our findings do not indicate that being in a line position is necessarily more detrimental to managing work and family life than being in a staff position, there are additional subtle issues that warrant further investigation.

FINDING TWO

Common Wisdom: Executives have to be work-centric in order to feel successful and to suc-ceed in their careers.

Finding Two: Although working long and hard is part and parcel of advancing in today's cor-porate structure, a one-sided life, where work always comes first, isn't necessarily beneficial to career development.

The close to one-third of executives—men and women alike—who are dual-centric, or who place the same priority on their work and personal/family lives, feel more successful at work, are less stressed, and have an easier time managing the demands of their work and personal/family lives. Women who are dual-centric have advanced to higher levels and also feel more successful in their home lives.

This study reveals that some commonly held assumptions about executives and advancement aren't true—at least in these companies. We find that executives don't necessarily have to give up their personal/family lives or profit and loss responsibilities in order to advance.

- **However, managing work and home responsibilities is problematic for close to half of these executives, with 47 percent reporting that it is difficult or very difficult.**

    - Women are more likely than men to report that it is very difficult or difficult to man-age (50% versus 45%).

TABLE 10: HOW EASY OR DIFFICULT IS IT FOR YOU TO MANAGE THE DEMANDS OF YOUR WORK AND YOUR PERSONAL OR FAMILY LIFE?

Difficulty or ease	All Executives N=1112	Men N=527 *	Women N=585
Very easy/easy	11%	15%	7%
Neither easy or difficult	41	40	43
Difficult/very difficult	47	45	50

* Results significant at p<.05

The obvious next question is: *How <u>do</u> these executives manage their responsibilities on the job and at home?*

It is clear that advancing up the pyramid in corporate America is a winnowing process—that

many either drop out or are selected out along the way up. It is also clear that advancing into executive jobs takes a large amount of energy and drive.

Perhaps some of these executives are better able to manage their jobs and their home lives because they are more adept than others at keeping a lot of balls in the air at the same time. Or perhaps they have learned strategies that help them manage.

To explore this issue, we turned to two questions from our study:

- "In the past year, how often have you put your job before your personal or family life?"

- "In the past year, how often have you put your personal or family life before your job?"

Typically, when researchers study this issue, they ask one question, about "balancing" or "managing" work and personal/family life (as we did), but we went beyond that one question, asking these two additional questions—one about work and one about personal and family life— because Families and Work Institute has found that putting a high priority on work does not necessarily preclude putting a high priority on personal or family life. Furthermore, we asked executives to make this assessment for the past year—rather than for a single moment in time—because we have found that priorities can and do shift continuously.

For the past several years, we have argued against the popular notion of "balance" as it is usually defined because we have found in our previous research that it is too narrow a concept. Balance implies a scale where if one side is up, the other has to be down. It is an either/or concept. Families and Work Institute's *1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce and its Ask the Children* (2000) study have shown that managing work and personal/family life is not a zero-sum game, where if you give to one side, you necessarily take away from the other. Importantly, we have found that employees with high quality jobs and more supportive workplace environments are, in fact, more likely to go home in better moods and with more energy to give to the important people in their lives. In other words, work can enhance home life rather than detract from it. We do not focus on the issue solely as one of time (which is finite); we also include energy and mood, which are not constrained in the way time can be. This notion fits well with the studies on multiple roles that find that people with more roles in life fare better than people with fewer roles (for example, see Barnett and Rivers, 1996; Crosby, 1991).

The findings of this current study confirm our notion that balance (as a scale) is indeed too narrow a concept. Managing work and home life is about setting priorities, and giving high priority to one aspect of life (at work or at home) does not necessarily prevent one from giving the same or similar priority to the other.

From the executives' answers to these two questions, we created five categories.

- **Most (61%) place a higher priority on work than their personal and/or family lives. They are, in fact, work-centric.**

- **However, about one third of executives (32%) put the same priority on their lives on and off the job.**

    - For example, these executives may put work over their home lives sometimes, but they also put their home lives over work sometimes as well. In sum, neither work nor their personal/family lives gets short shrift. **They are "dual-centric."**

- **Very few executives (6%) place more priority on their home lives than work.**

Table 11: Work, family and personal priorities

Priorities	All Executives N=1104
Put a much higher priority on work over their personal/family life	27%
Put a higher priority on work over their personal/family life	34
Put the same priority on work and their personal/family life	32
Put a higher priority on their personal/family life over work	5
Put a much higher priority on their personal/family life over work	1

Other results from this study confirm the work-centric lives of most executives. For example:

    - 64 percent say that they *very often* or *often* interrupt their time at home or away from the workplace outside "official" work hours to address work-related issues.

    - Almost half (49%) say that they interrupt their vacation or holidays to address work-related issues *very often* or *often*.

We also find:

- **There are no differences between men and women executives in how much priority they put on work versus their personal and family lives—women and men are equally likely to be dual-centric.**

    - However, executives with children of any age place less priority on work than executives without children.

- And just in case one thinks that dual-centric executives have the luxury to be focused on work and on home because they don't have children at home with them, this is not the

case: 62 percent have children younger than 18 who live with them at least half of the time. **In fact, they are more likely to have children at home than the general population of executives (54 percent of whom have children under 18 at home).**

Do executives who place higher priority on work feel more successful at work?

We find that:

- **Executives who put the same priority on work and their personal/family life—who are dual-centric—feel the most successful at work.**

- **Those who fall into the extremes; that is, they put a much higher priority on work than their personal/family life, or put a much higher prior-ity on their personal/family life than work, feel the least successful at work.**

If being dual-centric is linked to feeling more successful, what about objective measures of success as measured by reporting level, compensation, and number of direct and indirect reports? Contrary to expectations, we found few differences, and those we did find suggest that work-centric executive women are actually less successful:

- **Women who put a much higher priority on work are actually the least likely to be in Level 1 or 2.**

  - This is not true for the men, where we find no differences.

Perhaps women feel the need to prioritize work on the way up the ladder and can lead a fuller life when they are closer to the top. Perhaps having a life filled with more than work is a key to greater success. Or perhaps more senior jobs allow more autonomy over schedules because very high-ranking executives do not have to ask for permission to take time off. While our study does not allow us to resolve these questions, it is clear that always putting work first doesn't necessarily lead to feeling or being successful.

Do executives who put a higher priority on their personal or family lives feel more successful at home or does putting the same priority on both have the most positive impact? Among our results, we find:

- **Women who are dual-centric feel the most successful in their personal/home life.**

Our next question was: *Are executives who are work-centric more or less stressed?*

In this study, we asked executives to respond to several standardized questions about stress. We selected these measures because other studies have shown that they are linked to actual physical health; in other words, they find that employees who are more stressed exhibit more health problems over time. In an era with escalating health care costs, this is an issue that many companies are concerned about.

We find:

- **Women indicate that they are not faring as well as men on all three items assessing their levels of stress.**

  - For example, 47 percent of women report that they have felt nervous and stressed often in the last three months compared with 37 percent of men.

Table 12: Feelings of stress

Executives who report they have experienced the following thoughts and feelings OFTEN in the last three months	All Executives N=1120	Men N=529 *	Women N=591
Felt that things were going your way	38%	43%	34%
Felt nervous and stressed	43	37	47
Felt you could not cope with all the things you had to do	15	10	19

* Results significant at p<.05

We then combined the three items in Table 12 to create an overall indicator of stress. We find that:

- 8 percent of executives experience very high stress;

- 29 percent experience moderate stress;

- 38 percent experience little stress; and

- About a quarter (26%) do not experience any stress at all.

In sum, 37 percent of these executives experience moderate to high levels of stress.

- **Women are much more likely to experience higher levels of stress than men.**

  - 44 percent of women experience moderate to high stress, compared with 29 percent of men.

We then looked at the connections between levels of stress and executives' ratings of how well they are doing in taking care of themselves. In the survey, we asked executives to rate themselves on the following question: "On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being very successful and 1 being not successful), how successful are you in living up to personal definition of taking care of yourself and your own well-being?" We find that:

- On average, executives rate their success in taking care of themselves at 6.6.

- Those who experience high to moderate stress rate themselves significantly lower at 5.3.

Of course, it is not clear which comes first—being stressed and then not caring for oneself, or not caring for oneself and becoming stressed. Our previous research indicates that while some of the root causes of stress lie in the individual, others are derived from the environment at work and at home.

Other predictors of stress include:

- Being at reporting Level 3 or below for women, but not for men; and

- Having a spouse who is employed full-or part-time for men, but not for women.

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

Among executives who are citizens of the country in which they work, there are NO regional differences in the overall stress levels reported. There are also NO differences in how well executives from around the world feel they are taking care of themselves.

Interestingly, but not unexpectedly, (since Families and Work Institute has had the same finding in a number of other studies), simply working longer hours is not linked to higher levels of stress.

We then asked: *Does how an executive prioritizes work and personal/ family life make a difference?*

We find:

- **Executives who place priority on the extremes—that is, much higher priority on work over personal/family life or on personal/family life over work—are the most likely to experience high stress levels.**

- **Conversely, executives who are dual-centric feel much less stressed than other executives.**

  - 26 percent of dual-centric executives experience moderate or high levels of stress, compared with 42 percent of other executives.

  - Furthermore, 34 percent of dual-centric executives report that they are not stressed at all, compared with 22 percent of other executives.

We also looked at how those executives who are dual-centric feel they are managing their work and personal/family lives.

- **Executives who place the same priority on their work and personal/family lives have a much easier time managing both sets of demands.**

  - 19 percent of dual-centric executives find it *easy* or *very easy* to manage the demands of their work and personal/family lives, compared with only 8 percent of other executives.

-    Significantly fewer (31%) dual-centric executives find it *difficult* or *very difficult* to manage both demands than other executives (56%).

We also examined the levels of responsibility dual-centric executives have for making child care arrangements. While one might expect dual-centric executives to have more support at home, we find no differences between dual-centric and other executives on how much help they have for child care responsibilities.

Although working long and hard is part and parcel of advancing in today's corporate structure, a one-sided life, where work always comes first, isn't necessarily beneficial to career development.

The one-third of executives—men and women alike—who are dual-centric, or place the same priority on their work and personal/family lives, feel more successful at work, are less stressed, and have an easier time managing their work and personal/family lives than other executives. Women who are dual-centric have advanced to higher levels and also feel more successful in their home lives.

These findings are not an anomaly. Other studies are beginning to reveal that maintaining a focus on both work and other aspects of life does *not* detract from success and achievement and may, in fact, lead to higher levels of overall contentment among some people (see Marks and MacDermid, 1996; Marks, 1997; and Marks et al., 2002).

This finding adds to our conviction that the public discourse about work and family life needs to move beyond the concept of "balance" as it is commonly defined. The analogy of "navigating" (as in sailing) may be more apt. It calls for charting a course between the demands of work and family life to reach personal satisfaction. It is an ongoing process that takes place over time and is intentional. Not at all static, it involves tacking from one side to the other and back again to move toward one's goals.

So how do people manage? The personal interviews we conducted in Phase I of this study provide some clues. Executives who are dual-centric have many different strategies.

These include setting strict boundaries between the time they are working and not working:

> *I don't carry a briefcase home stuffed with work...Evenings and weekends are for my family and being able to maintain that barrier between my work life and my personal life [works].*

Another strategy is being emotionally present when one is physically present—focusing on the immediate situation:

> *Even though I can't be home every single evening, when I'm here I'm here. I don't have 50 percent of my brain turned on to work.*

Still another strategy is to take time for rest and recovery. For example, one executive talked about periods of working very hard interspersed with regular weeks away—with no cell

phone, no email, and no access to the outside world. In other words, periods of expending a lot of energy on work interspersed with periods of rest or a changed focus.

Another strategy is being clear about priorities—making sure that neither side of life is short-changed. And many executives report that they have to give up what is less essential—such as entertaining or having a perfectly clean house.

It is important to note that one's life stage undoubtedly affects one's priorities. We suspect that there are people who are now dual-centric who were once work-centric. And likewise, there are people who are now dual-centric (such as people with children) who may become more work-centric in the future when their children are grown.

Setting priorities is a dynamic process and should be an intentional process. As one executive puts it:

> *There's always talk about a balanced life, but they don't understand that there are weeks when the job takes over and there are weeks when the home takes over.*

FINDING THREE

Common Wisdom: Men are more ambitious than women.

Finding Three: While it is true that men on average have higher aspirations than women (19% of men executives aspire to be a CEO or managing partner compared with 9% of women), a significant group of women hope to join the senior management committee (43%). By comparison, 54 percent of senior men have this aspiration.

Importantly, one in four of these executives has reduced her or his aspirations—women more so than men (34% of women versus 21% of men). The most frequently selected reason is the same for both women and men. According to 67 percent of executives who have reduced their aspirations, a very important reason is "the sacrifices I would have to make in my personal or family life."

In addition, women who don't think women have made much progress in breaking the glass ceiling are more likely to have reduced their aspirations than women who think progress has been made.

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At this point in the report, we turn to issues of what helps and hinders advancement. We begin by setting the context: *Who wants to advance and what are their aspirations?*

During Phase II of this project—the seminar in Prague—in session after session, women posed the question: "Why aren't there more women CEOs?"

We then asked the attendees if they, in fact, wanted to be the CEO or managing partner of their companies—or of any company for that matter.

At Prague, we found that 21 percent of the women did want to be CEO or managing partner. In this study, we asked a similar question: "What is the highest level of job that you aspire to?"

We find:

- 14 percent of executives want to be CEO or managing partner; almost half, 48 percent want to be on the senior management team; and 28 percent want to be a division head, a practice or service area leader.

Overall, men have higher aspirations than women.

- **19 percent of men want to be CEO or managing partner, compared with 9 percent of women.**

Women, however, are ambitious:

- **43 percent of senior executive women aspire to be on the senior management team of their company.**

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- By comparison, 54 percent of senior men aspire to be on the senior management team in their company.

Table 13: What is the highest level of job that you aspire to?

Aspirations	All Executives N=1070	Men N=507 *	Women N=563
CEO, Firm Managing Partner	14%	19%	9%
Senior Management Team	48	54	43
Division Head, Practice or Service Area Leader	28	20	36

* Results significant at p<.05

While the difference between men and women is not an unexpected finding, we wondered whether women and men had once held higher aspirations, which they have now curtailed.

- **More than one in four executives once aspired to a higher level than they now want to reach.**

- **And, more women (34%) than men (21%) have reduced their expectations.**

When we asked why, the most frequently selected reason is the same for both women and men.

- **According to 67 percent of executives who have reduced their aspirations, a very important reason is "the sacrifices I would have to make in my personal or family life."**

- Another 41 percent say "a decision to emphasize other aspects of my life."

- And 36 percent say "the excessive work hours that go along with that job."

  - More women (41%) than men (26%) select excessive work hours.

It is clear that many executives believe that further advancement will require becoming more work-centric than they would like. However, recall that some executives seem to be successful by being dual-centric. To address this issue, companies should explore and question how much sacrifice is really necessary in top jobs.

Table 14: If you have changed your aspirations, which of the following were VERY IMPORTANT to you?

Very Important Reasons	All Executives N=300	Men N=105 *	Women N=195
The sacrifices that I would have to make in my personal or family life w/l	67%	NS	
A decision to emphasize other aspects of my life w/l	41	NS	
The excessive work hours that go along with that job w/l	36	26	41
The job pressure that goes along with that job	26	NS	
A more realistic appraisal of my personal potential relative to peers	24	NS	
The realization that people like me, regardless of performance don't reach that level	25	NS	
My age and/or health w/l	13	19	10
The public visibility that goes along with that job	6	NS	

* Results significant at p<.05; NS = differences not statistically significant

It is sometimes argued that women's career achievement is less than men's simply because women are less ambitious, because they do not aspire to the same levels, for whatever reasons.

To evaluate this hypothesis, we added aspirations to the statistical model previously used to predict job status (pp. 22-23). This model included a variety of factors representing personal background characteristics, job experiences and home life. Perhaps surprisingly, even when career aspirations and reduced aspirations are added to the predictive model, a significant difference in job status favoring men remains.

We find that the level to which executives aspire and whether they have reduced their aspirations do not eliminate the gender difference in job status favoring men. Despite women's progress up the corporate ranks in recent years, our inability to "explain away" gender differences in job status, even after controlling for a large number of factors related to job status, suggests that a "glass ceiling" remains.

We next turned to an exploration of some of the factors that might help explain the lowering of aspirations. We find:

- **Women who have children are more likely than women who do not have children to have reduced their aspirations (38% versus 30%).**

- **Men with employed spouses are more likely than men with at-home spouses to have reduced their aspirations (36% versus 19%).**

Because stereotyping has emerged as a serious obstacle to advancement for women, we next explored this issue in relationship to aspirations. We asked: *How do women and men differ in how they feel about women's advancement? Do these attitudes matter in terms of their aspirations?*

We asked a series of questions that explore gender-related attitudes about advancement and we find major differences between women and men in how they feel about these issues.

- **Men see women as having made more progress than women feel they have made.**

  - 83 percent of men executives agree that women have made a great deal of progress in obtaining senior positions, compared with 63 percent of women who agree with this statement.

Table 15: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement about your current company?

Women have made a great deal of progress in obtaining senior positions	Men N=525 *	Women N=588
Agree strongly	24%	14%
Agree somewhat	59	49
Disagree somewhat	13	25
Disagree strongly	3	12

* Results significant at p<.05

- **Women are four times more likely than men to think that women have to outperform men to get the same reward at their organizations.**

  - 81 percent of women executives agree that women have to outperform men for the same rewards, compared with 19 percent of men who agree with this statement.

Table 16: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current company?

Women have to outperform men to get the same rewards at my organization	Men N=522 *	Women N=587
Agree strongly	3%	45%
Agree somewhat	16	36
Disagree somewhat	39	14
Disagree strongly	42	5

* Results significant at p<.05

- **While almost all men think that women receive comparable pay to men, only slightly more than half of the women agree.**

    - 93 percent of men executives agree that women are paid a comparable salary to men for similar work, compared with 56 percent of women who agree with this statement.

Table 17: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current company?

Women are paid a comparable salary to men for similar work in my organization	Men N=519 *	Women N=583
Agree strongly	63%	21%
Agree somewhat	30	35
Disagree somewhat	7	33
Disagree strongly	1	11

* Results significant at p<.05

- **Many men feel that women are being promoted over comparable men; very few women agree.**

    - 61 percent of men executives agree that all other things being equal, a woman will be promoted over a man compared with 21 percent of women who agree with this statement.

This finding echoes some of the write-in comments to the survey, where a number of both men and women commented about the dangers of reverse discrimination favoring women over men.

TABLE 18: HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR CURRENT COMPANY?

All other things being equal, a woman will be promoted over a man in my organization	Men N=524 *	Women N=586
Agree strongly	21%	3%
Agree somewhat	40	19
Disagree somewhat	29	44
Disagree strongly	10	34

* Results significant at p<.05

- **There is no difference between men and women in their views about whether women have had enough time in the professional and management ranks to reach senior levels in significant numbers.**

  - 60 percent of both men and women disagree that the issue is simply one of not enough time for women to have broken through the glass ceiling.

TABLE 19: HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR CURRENT COMPANY?

Women have not been in the management and professional ranks long enough to have reached senior levels in significant numbers	All Executives N=1111
Agree strongly	10%
Agree somewhat	30
Disagree somewhat	30
Disagree strongly	30

The picture that emerges from all these results is one of sharp differences between women and men.

- **Men are more likely to feel that women now have an unfair advantage, while women continue to see themselves as disadvantaged when it comes to succeeding at their companies.**

We wondered whether and how these attitudes of men and women matter. And we find that they do make a difference in whether women executives have reduced their career aspirations.

- **Women who do not think that women have made significant progress are more likely to report they have reduced their aspirations, compared with women who do think progress has been made.**

    - There are no differences among the men.

While one might expect men who think that women have the upper hand to feel differently about their own careers, this is not the case. It is women who are affected by what they believe to be true about the progress of women in pushing up against the glass ceiling.

It is, of course, hard to know whether women's attitudes reflect or shape their experiences. Whatever the case, however, they affect ambition.

FINDING FOUR

Common Wisdom: Companies need to use different strategies to help women and men succeed.

Finding Four: Most executives—both men and women—see business-focused strategies (such as opportunities for leadership assignments) as the most helpful organizational strategies in their advancing.

Men, however, are somewhat more likely than women to list business-focused strategies as very helpful in their advancement, while women are more likely than men to list work-life and diversity strategies. We cannot fully test whether this is because women and men see different ways to the top, or because women and men are offered different types of opportunities.

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To begin our exploration of how organizations help people advance, we asked:
What have companies done to help their leaders succeed?

In the survey, executives were asked what their company has done that has been "very helpful" to their success.

- The most helpful organizational strategies are:

  - Provided opportunities for leadership positions (83 percent);

  - Gave me challenging assignments (80 percent);

  - Provided exposure to senior leaders early in my career (49 percent); and

  - Provided opportunity for international assignments (35 percent).

We then wondered how men and women differ on what they see as most helpful. We find that there are a number of statistically significant differences between men and women.

- Men are more likely to select <u>business-focused</u> strategies as very helpful:

  - Provided opportunities for leadership positions (87% men versus 78% women);

  - Gave me challenging assignments (86% men versus 75% women);

  - Provided opportunities for international assignments (47% men versus 23% women); and

  - Provided developmental programs for high-potential employees (15% men versus 11% women).

- Although women are more likely to select diversity or work-life efforts as very helpful, it is important to note that relatively small numbers of women (and men) select any of these individual options:

- Allowed me to have control over my work schedule (23% women versus 17% men);

- Focused on developing and promoting diverse talent (13% women versus 8% men);

- Provided leaves for personal and family reasons (6% women versus 1% men);

- Provided employee networks for women and minorities that serve as a resource for members and the company (5% women versus 1% men);

- Allowed me to work from home (4% women versus 1% men); and

- Provided help with child care (2% women versus 0% men).

• **Taken together, however, 32 percent of the executives selected at least one of the work-life or diversity policies as being very helpful to their success.**

- Women are more likely than men to have selected at least one of these policies (39% versus 23%).

Because women have lower status jobs than men on average, we thought job status might explain the differences between men and women in what they view as most helpful to their success. However, when we control for differences in job status, the findings remain essentially the same.

Table 20: When you think about how your current employer has helped you succeed, which of the following items have been VERY HELPFUL to you?

Organizational Strategy	All Executives N=1120	Men N=529 *	Women N=591
Provided opportunities for leadership positions	83%	87%	78%
Gave me challenging assignments	80	86	75
Provided exposure to senior leaders early in my career	49	NS	
Provided opportunities for international assignments	35	47	23
Provided leadership training	21	NS	
Allowed me to have control over my work schedule	20	17	23
Provided cross-functional or developmental job rotations development	19	NS	
Provided developmental programs for high-potential employees	13	15	11
Focused on developing and promoting diverse talent	11	8	13
Provided executive coaching	10	NS	
Provided opportunities for further education	10	NS	
Permitted me to decline travel or relocation without negative career repercussions	6	NS	
Provided leaves for personal or family reasons	4	1	6
Provided me with the opportunity to work from home	3	1	4
Provided employee networks for women and minorities that serve as a resource for members and the company	3	1	5
Provided a formal mentoring program	3	NS	
Directly addressed the subtle inequities in my organization	2	NS	
Provided help with child care	1	0	2
Provided help with elder care	0	NS	
Other	6	NS	

* Results significant at p<.05; NS = difference not statistically significant

These findings raise some further questions. For example, are women less likely than men to select business-focused strategies (such as "providing opportunities for leadership positions") because these are less helpful to them or because they have had less access to this kind of assistance? Unfortunately, our study cannot answer this question.

It is important to note, however, that three-quarters or more of the women point to business-focused strategies—specifically having opportunities for leadership positions and challenging assignments—as having been very helpful to them. This indicates that real experience is the best teacher. Catalyst has likewise found that the most important strategies for advancing women are typically job-related.

Another question raised by these findings is why relatively few executives select individual work-life and diversity strategies. Recall that one-third selected at least one of these strategies and one in five pointed to schedule control as very helpful.

The reason why fewer men than women select work-life and diversity strategies as being very helpful seems obvious—three-quarters (75%) of the male executives who are married or living with a partner have spouses/partners who are not employed and thus are presumably able to take care of family issues

The reason for women's choosing work-life and diversity strategies so infrequently is less obvious. Perhaps these strategies were less available to women in the formative stages of their careers (since some of these initiatives are relatively new). Or perhaps there are perceived penalties for taking advantage of these policies and programs.

Families and Work Institute's research has found that one of the greatest benefits of programs and policies is that they tend to alter the way that people behave toward each other and change the workplace culture with regard to work-life and diversity. These two factors—the supportiveness of people and the culture—again and again make the biggest difference for employees in managing their responsibilities on and off the job. Thus, we see these programs as necessary, but not sufficient to helping employees manage their work-life responsibilities and advance.

In sum, work-life and diversity programs can add real value for executives but they shouldn't be seen as a be-all and end-all in what companies can do to help women and men manage their work and home responsibilities and to help them advance.

FINDING FIVE

Common Wisdom: Men and women use different personal strategies to succeed.

Finding Five: Our study finds that executive women and men describe the <u>personal</u> strategies that have helped them succeed as much more alike than different. These include both so-called "masculine" strategies, such as "taking risks and challenges" and "standing up for what I think," as well as so-called "feminine" strategies, such as "being collaborative."

When we adjust for differences in job status, only two out of a list of 19 potential differences between men and women are confirmed: women are more likely than men to say that having very high personal standards for their work and being able to navigate the politics of their organizations have been very important to their success.

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After focusing on organizational strategies that have been important to advancement, we now turn to <u>personal</u> strategies and ask: What personal strategies have individuals used that have been the most important to their success?

Executives were asked to select the four most important things <u>they</u> have done that have been important to their success:

- The top rated personal strategies are:

    - Being adaptable and able to manage change (50%);

    - Taking risks and challenges (38%);

    - Being able to motivate others (38%);

    - Having very high personal standards for my work (37%);

    - Being a hard worker (32%); and

    - Being an effective problem solver (30%).

These strategies are all related to managing well in the turbulent waters of today's business climate.

- The strategies selected less frequently, on the other hand, pertain more to luck and to softer skills:

    - Trusting my instincts (10%);

    - Having an optimistic approach to my work (10%);

    - Having a sense of humor (8%);

    - Having a certain amount of luck (7%); and

    - Being very curious (3%).

Do women and men differ in their selections? We have been to a number of business conferences lately where it has been argued from the podium that women and men approach work very differently. Sometimes these differences are described as genetic and inborn, sometimes as cultural, but typically they are described as representing opposite but complementary ends of a continuum—the yin and yang of human capacities.

An example of the different ways that men and women are characterized comes from a recent speech given by a CEO. He described men as assertive, authoritarian, and connoisseurs of the fight. He said, "men—alleged to come from Mars—are sometimes like sumo wrestlers trying to shove one another out of the ring." In contrast, he described women as having "soft values," as putting a premium on maintaining good relationships, and on expressing their feelings.

- **In contrast, our study finds that executive women and men describe the strategies that have helped them succeed as much more alike than different.**

Out of 19 items, women and men differ significantly on just five:

- Men are more likely (25%) to see having a vision for the future as more important than women do (17%).

- Men are more likely (43%) to select the interpersonal skill of motivating others than women (33%).

- Women are more likely to select skills that speak to their situation of having less power than men: 41 percent of women select having very high personal standards for my work compared with 32 percent of men.

- Women are also more likely (33%) to select being an effective problem solver than men (27%).

- And 9 percent of women select navigating the politics of my organization compared with 4 percent of men.

Table 21: When you think about factors that have helped you succeed, which of the following items have been the four most important to you?

Personal Strategy	All Executives N=1120	Men N=529	*	Women N=591
Being adaptable and being able to manage change	50%		NS	
Taking risks and challenges	38		NS	
Being able to motivate others	38	43		33
Having very high personal standards for my work	37	32		41
Being a hard worker	32		NS	
Being an effective problem solver	30	27		33
Standing up for what I think	24		NS	
Having a vision for the future	21	25		17
Delivering more than is expected of me	22		NS	
Having relevant skills	20		NS	
Being collaborative	20		NS	
Being energetic	15		NS	
Being good at assessing my strengths and weaknesses and making improvements	11		NS	
Trusting my instincts	10		NS	
Having an optimistic approach to my work	10		NS	
Having a sense of humor	8		NS	
Navigating the politics of my organization	7	4		9
Having a certain amount of luck	7		NS	
Being very curious	3		NS	

* Results significant at p<.05; NS = difference not statistically significant

Because women executives have lower status jobs than men on average, we thought this might help to explain differences between men and women in the strategies they identify as most important to their success.

And indeed, when we adjust for differences in job status, some of the differences between men and women executives disappear, while a few other differences emerge. The findings are a mixed bag and impossible to interpret with confidence.

- **Only two differences are confirmed by all of the analyses we conducted:**

  - Women are more likely than men to say that having very high personal standards for their work and being able to navigate the politics of their organizations have been most important to their success.

This result is very consistent with Catalyst's findings in a number of studies—that because a woman is more likely to be an "outsider" in the corporate network than a man, she needs to excel to prove herself and she has to more consciously learn to navigate the politics of her company in order to advance (Catalyst, 1996).

Obviously, our study neither observed executives to determine whether there are differences between men and women, nor did it survey the people whom the executives supervise. It is a self-reported finding.

Nevertheless, the finding that women and men are more alike than different in what they do to succeed is important. Anything that dispels gender stereotypes that consign people into rigid boxes is extremely beneficial because it opens the door to men and women being valued for their individuality rather than for some presumed gender traits.

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

Among executives who are citizens of the country in which they work, there are very few differences between those in the U.S. and Canada, Asia-Pacific and Western Europe in which personal strategies are very helpful in their success, providing no real interpretable patterns.

We think that companies can use this finding to clarify essential leadership skills for senior managers that include a diversity of accepted leadership styles. They can also use it to compile real stories of how men and women have made it to the top that include a range of paths and skills needed.

FINDING SIX

Common Wisdom: Men and women face different organizational obstacles in advancing.

Finding Six: Having support from higher-ups in the organization is paramount for both women and men to advance. However, women report facing many more obstacles than men—specifically being excluded from important networks, having a limited number of role models, having limited opportunities for experiences in line or in general management, facing gender stereotypes, and being in dual-career families.

<div align="center">⊕</div>

We continue the exploration of what helps executives succeed by looking at the obstacles to . **Our initial question is:** *What do executives think that their organizations have done that stands in the way of their career development?*

The senior executives in our study were asked what organizational obstacles have been "very limiting" to their careers. They were asked to respond to 18 items.

- The top rated obstacles are:

    - A limited number of mentors (24%);

    - Exclusion from the important networks (19%);

    - A limited number of role models (19%);

    - Not fitting the company image of how a leader should look and behave (18%);

    - A limited number of sponsors (17%); and

    - Limited understanding and recognition of my strengths and abilities on the part of managers (17%).

These obstacles primarily concern the availability and quality of support one receives from <u>the people</u> in one's organization—whether they are managers, mentors, role models, sponsors (someone who acts as an advocate, opening doors and providing opportunities), or networks.

- The lowest rated obstacles are:

    - stereotypes about my commitment or abilities based on my gender (10%);

    - a limited number of job openings (9%);

    - being in a dual-career family (9%);

    - my personal limitations—for example, problems with the way I manage (8%);

    - a limited number of opportunities to learn skills that would help me advance (7%);

    - stereotypes about my commitment or abilities based on my race, ethnicity, national

origin, language skills or cultural norms (5%); and

- not feeling motivated because of a hostile work environment (harassment, intimidation, or disrespectful behavior (4%).

The lowest rated obstacles mainly concern <u>personal characteristics</u>—personal limitations, gender and race/ethnicity.

Do women and men differ with respect to the obstacles they have faced?

• **Whereas male and female executives don't report many differences in the skills they feel are important to getting ahead, they perceive many, many differences in the obstacles to their career advancement.**

Out of 18 obstacles, there are statistically significant differences between men and women on 12. And of these, in only two cases do men feel at a disadvantage.

• Men are more likely than women to feel that they have been set back by personal limitations such as the way they manage or by stereotypes due to race, ethnicity, national origin, or cultural differences.

• Women are more likely than men to feel that they have been limited by not enough support from the people at work—a lack of mentors, role models, or access to important networks.

• Women are also more likely than men to feel limited by lack of access to visible jobs, jobs that would give them line or management experiences, or provide national or international relocation opportunities.

• Women also feel the brunt of stereotypes about them because of their gender or because they don't fit the company image of a leader.

• Finally, women feel limited by family or personal life issues—being in a dual-career family or feeling that they have to sacrifice everything for work.

Some of these differences are quite dramatic. For example, no male executives feel jeopardized by assumptions about their gender, compared with 19 percent of women executives. And while 11 percent of men mention being excluded from important networks as an obstacle, 26 percent of women feel this way. And being in a dual-career family is an obstacle to 1 percent of the men compared with 15 percent of the women.

Table 22: Now we are going to turn to obstacles you face with your current employer. Which of the following have been VERY LIMITING to your career?

Organizational Obstacles	All Executives N=1120	Men N=529 *	Women N=591
A limited number of mentors	24%	21%	27%
Exclusion from the important networks	19	11	26
A limited number of role models	19	11	27
Not fitting the company image of how a leader should look and behave	18	14	21
A limited number of sponsors	17	NS	
Limited understanding and recognition of my strengths and abilities on the part of managers	17	NS	
A limited number of opportunities to obtain experiences that would help me advance especially in general or line management	14	9	18
The need to sacrifice everything for work within my company culture	15	12	16
A limited number of job assignments that are highly visible to key decision makers	12	10	14
Lack of an objective performance and management system that is fairly applied	13	NS	
The importance of relocation to advancement in my company	10	8	13
A limited number of job openings	9	NS	
Stereotypes about my commitment or abilities based on my gender	10	0	19
My personal limitations—for example problems with the way I manage	8	11	5
Being in a dual-career family	9	1	15
A limited number of opportunities to learn skills that would help me advance	7	NS	
Stereotypes about my commitment or abilities based on my race, ethnicity, national origin, language skills or cultural norms	5	6	3
Not feeling motivated because of a hostile work environment (harassment, intimidation, or disrespectful behavior)	4	NS	

* Results significant at p<.05; NS = difference not statistically significant

Some additional gender differences emerge when looking at the number of obstacles faced by executives. For instance, 19 percent of executives do not feel limited by ANY of the obstacles we asked about. Significantly more men (24%) than women (14%) did not find any of the obstacles very limiting. Also, fully 15 percent of women but only 4 percent of men marked 5 or more obstacles as being very limiting to their careers.

Since women have lower status jobs than men on average, we thought this might help to explain differences between men and women in the obstacles they feel that they face in career advancement.

And indeed, when we adjust for differences in job status, some of the differences between men and women executives disappear. However, a number of important differences remain.

Even women in high status jobs report the following obstacles more frequently than their male counterparts:

- **exclusion from important networks;**

- **limited number of role models;**

- **limited opportunities to obtain experiences that would help me advance in line or general management;**

- **stereotypes about my commitment or abilities based on gender; and**

- **being in a dual career family.**

Clearly, these issues—of subtle or not-so-subtle exclusion as a woman and of carrying more family responsibility—affect all women, whether or not they have achieved higher status jobs or not.

These findings are not surprising. Catalyst has documented these same obstacles to women's career development in numerous studies.[9]

Throughout this report, we have been attempting to determine why men executives have higher status jobs than women executives. In this inquiry, we have looked at many different possibilities—the differences in men's and women's demographics, job experiences, personal and family lives, and

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

Among executives who are citizens of the country in which they work, some interesting regional differences emerge regarding the obstacles to advancement executives have faced with their current companies.

In Western Europe:

- A higher percentage of executives in Western Europe feel that the importance of relocation to advancement is an obstacle (17%) than executives in the U.S. and Canada (9%).

- Significantly fewer Western European executives (9%) feel that they do not fit the company image of how a leader should act and behave than executives in the U.S. and Canada (20%).

- Men in Western Europe are more likely to feel they have a limited number of mentors than the women in Western Europe do (28% versus 15%). Interestingly, men are also more likely than women to feel limited by the need to sacrifice everything for work (20% versus 8%).

- Women in Western Europe, however, are more likely to feel limited by a lack of job openings than their male counterparts (85% versus 0%).

In Asia-Pacific:

- Executives in Asia-Pacific are more likely to say that they face stereotypes about their commitment or ability based on their race/ethnicity (21%) than are executives in the U.S. and Canada (4%).

- A higher percentage of executives in Asia-Pacific than the U.S. and Canada do not feel motivated because of a hostile work environment (15% versus 3%). Importantly, men in Asia-Pacific are much more likely than the women to say they feel this way (22% versus 10%).

- Executives in Asia-Pacific are less likely than executives in the U.S. and Canada to perceive a limited number of mentors as being an obstacle (13% versus 26%).

aspirations. None of these can fully explain why men have higher status jobs than women. So, we wondered if it is the obstacles that women face that make a difference.

To evaluate this hypothesis, we added obstacles to the statistical model previously used to predict job status. This model included a variety of factors representing personal background characteristics, job experiences and home life and aspirations. Perhaps surprisingly, even when obstacles are added to the predictive model, a significant difference in job status favoring men remains. As we have said before, something else is going on.

Although facing different obstacles can't explain away the differences in the advancement of women and men, obstacles do matter. It is clear that companies need to continue to work on reducing the obstacles that women face by using strategies they have used before as well as by developing new strategies.

One interesting new approach being used by some of the companies in this study is having senior women develop their <u>own</u> efforts to reduce barriers. These companies have found that when women leaders make a concerted effort themselves to bring about change, their efforts become a powerful force in reducing stereotypes, in promoting more diverse developmental experiences for women, in opening up networks, and in providing more role models.

FINDING SEVEN

Common Wisdom: It is higher level executives—male and female alike—who stand in the way or help those below them succeed.

Finding Seven: When asked about the person who has helped them the most, close to nine in ten (87%) refer to a man. Among women executives, however, 19 percent have been helped the most by a woman.

Women who have had a woman as the most helpful person are more likely to reached level 1 or 2 than women at lower levels.

Thus, while it is true that help and support of higher-level executives—both male and female—are essential to developing leaders, we find that women mentoring women is of special importance.

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Since the lack of mentors, role models and sponsors is seen as especially damaging to careers, we wanted to explore this issue further. We asked: *Who has helped these executives succeed?*

Other studies, especially those by Catalyst, have found that mentors make a significant difference in career development. Those who are more likely to succeed, according to their recent longitudinal study of *Women of Color: 3 Years Later*, have had multiple mentors. (Catalyst, 2002).

Although corporate life is quite competitive, many women executives also stress the idea of both "climbing" and "pulling." In fact, at the Prague seminar in Phase II of this project, a number of the women talked about the importance of others to their own success. In the words of one:

> *We got here because someone helped us. If they hadn't helped us, we wouldn't be here.*

They likewise talked about helping others:

> *Turn around when you get to the top. Reach down to the people behind you.*

In the survey, we asked, "Who is/was the one person in your current company who has helped you <u>the most</u>."

- The largest proportion (45%) say that this person is/was their manager.

- The next largest proportion (39%) say it is/was a person at a higher level, but not someone to whom she or he reports.

- Very few indicate that the most helpful person is/was at their same level (only 4 percent).

We also asked whether the most helpful person is/was male or female. Not surprisingly, the

majority of these individuals are male (87%), though women and men differ on the extent to which they are or have been helped the most by women.

- 5 percent of men say that the person who has helped them the most is or was a woman compared with 19 percent of the women.

Table 23: Is/was this person male or female?

Person who helped them succeed	All Executives N=1071	Men N=507 *	Women N=564
Male	87%	95%	81%
Female	13	5	19

* Results significant at p<.05

In looking at the issue of the people who have been the most helpful more closely, an important finding emerged:

- **Women who have had a woman as the most helpful person are more likely to have reached Level 1 or 2 than women at lower levels.**

A number of studies on mentors have suggested that it doesn't matter whether mentors for women are women or men. However, when we ask about the one "most helpful person," then gender makes a difference for women.

Having highly placed women in the company who can serve as mentors, sponsors, and role models appears to especially facilitate women's advancement. Top women demonstrate that advancement is possible. Some can also demonstrate that advancement can be achieved without completely sacrificing one's family or personal life, and they can provide good counsel on how to get ahead.

In a recent retreat for the top women at one of our sponsoring companies, a very senior woman spoke up. After listening to the other women worry that they might be destroying their family lives and their children by advancing, she said, "I am here to tell you that it can be done. My children have grown up to be outstanding people. I did spend lots of time with them when they were growing up—though I did give up other stuff. I have a good husband. And we are a close family."

Some of the younger women looked at her incredulously. They said, "We don't hear that it can work very often."

So this may be part of what is behind this finding: that women can show other women a range of possibilities and how to make it all work.

In sum, while it is true that all higher level executives—both male and female—are essential to the next generation of leaders as role models and mentors, we find that women helping women is of special importance.

As one of the executive put it:

> *I would institute a culture where coaching and mentoring at all levels is expected, recognized and rewarded.*

Common Wisdom: Women executives are more likely to leave their jobs than men, and for different reasons.

Finding Eight: an equal percentage of men and women executives—44 percent— plan to leave their jobs in five years or less. This will constitute a large turnover in the top talent in these companies.

Almost thirty percent (29%) plan to leave in five years or less but do not plan to retire. There are more women than men in this category, perhaps in part because women executives are on average younger than men executives.

There are no differences between men and women in what they plan to do when they leave their companies.

While there are clearly some differences between men and women in the obstacles that have limited their careers, when men and women encounter these obstacles, their desire to stay with their companies is affected in the same way. Both men and women need to feel recognized for their performance and perceive the performance evaluation system as fair, both need to feel included in important networks, both need to see opportunities for growth and advancement, and both need sponsors and role models.

To retain top talent, companies must address these issues effectively, regardless of gender.

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Some executives plan or hope to advance, and we have been exploring these issues in depth. But it is also necessary to look at the other side of the coin: the turnover or retention of top leadership.

Of course, some attrition is unavoidable and may even be desirable from the company's point of view. But how much? By whom? And when? These are the questions that are a part of succession planning. Since our study includes the very top talent at these companies, looking at the issue of retention is a significant business inquiry. We asked: *How long do these top executives plan to stay with their companies?*

We find:

- **44 percent of executives plan to stay in their jobs for five years or less. This will constitute a large turnover in the top talent in these companies.**

    - There are no differences between women and men executives in how long they expect to remain with their current employers.

Table 24: How long do you expect to stay with your current employer?

Expectations	All Executives N=1031
Less than one year	4%
1-2 years	11
3-5 years	29
6-10 years	30
More than 10 years	27

This finding is important, first and foremost only a relatively small number of executives (5%) in our study are older than 55.

We asked what the executives are planning to do when they leave.

- The largest proportion (42%) plan to retire.

- Another large group (34%) plan to pursue another career.

  - There are no differences between men and women in what they plan to do when they leave their companies.

Table 25: What do you plan to do when you leave?

Plans	All Executives N=1079
Retire	42%
Take a similar job elsewhere	10
Drop out of the workforce temporarily	4
Pursue another career	34
Other	10

It is important to point out that this question presented response options in the order given in Table 25, encouraging executives to differentiate between "take a similar job elsewhere" and "pursue a different career." The fact that one-third of these executives plan to "pursue another career"—presumably doing something different than they are doing now—may be a startling finding to some.

Today, careers are typically seen as a race or marathon—one starts at the beginning and runs as fast as one can to reach the finish line—and then retires.

As the workforce ages and there are projected talent shortages, we may need a different image of careers that allows more flexibility and a maximum use of talent. Perhaps we should turn to the image of a series of sprints, as Loehr and Schwartz (2003) suggest. This imagery recognizes that careers are a long and should include periods of moving ahead and periods of recharging.

To explore the question of retention, we narrowed our focus to those executives who expect to leave within five years, but <u>do not plan to retire</u>.

- **Almost thirty percent (29%) of executives in our sample plan to leave their current company in five years or less but do not plan to retire.**

  - Importantly, more women (32%) than men (26%) are in this category. One reason for this difference is that men are older on average than women and therefore are more likely to be looking toward retirement.

Among this group of executives who plan to leave in five years or less but do not plan to retire:

- 56 percent plan on pursuing another career;

- 24 percent plan on taking a similar job elsewhere;

- 7 percent plan on temporarily dropping out of the workforce; and

- 14 percent have other plans.

There are no gender differences here. In other words, men and women who plan to leave in five years or less but not retire have the same types of plans for their future next steps.

Those who plan to leave within five years but not retire also tend to be younger and to have children:

- 82 percent are less than 50 years of age; and

- 58 percent have children under 18 living at home.

Although women are more likely to leave their companies when they are beginning their careers, there are few differences between the plans of women and men executives when they are close to the top.

Since so many do plan to leave in the next five years and this could constitute a major loss of talent to these companies, we explored the factors that might make a difference in the retention of this group. We begin by looking at the obstacles they reported as being "very limiting" to their career development (Table 22). We asked: *How do the obstacles to career advancement that executives perceive affect their plans to stay or leave their companies?*

- **Executives who don't think that they are working in a fair system—with objective performance reviews and recognition of their strengths and abilities—are more likely to plan to leave in five years or less than other executives.**

  - Those executives who do not feel that an objective performance and management system is applied fairly are much more likely to plan to leave than are executives who do think that a performance and management system is applied fairly (71% versus 52%).

  - Executives who feel there exists a limited understanding/recognition of their strengths and abilities are more likely to plan to leave in five years or less than executives who do not feel this is the case (67% versus 52%).

- **In addition, executives who feel excluded from important networks plan to leave earlier.**

  - 66 percent of executives who feel excluded plan to leave in 5 years or less compared with 52 percent of executives who do not feel excluded.

- **Executives also need to perceive future opportunities for themselves within their company, both in actual job opportunities and in their ability to expand their own skills. If they do not, they are more likely to leave in five years or less.**

  - Executives who see a limited number of job openings in their companies are more likely to plan to leave in five years or less than others (68% versus 54%).

  - Similarly, executives who see a limited number of opportunities to learn the skills they need to help them advance are more likely to plan to leave sooner than are executives who do see these opportunities existing (56% versus 40%).

- **And finally, executives without adequate sponsors and role models are likely to leave sooner than other executives:**

  - Those executives who have a limited number of sponsors are more likely to plan to leave sooner than executives with more sponsors (66% versus 53%).

  - The same is true for role models: 63 percent of executives with limited role models plan to leave in five years or less compared with 53 percent of executives with role models.

We also looked at whether executives with more negative attitudes about gender and advancement (Tables 15-19) are more or less likely to plan to leave their companies, but these attitudes do not affect retention.

Additional analyses were conducted on the factors that do affect retention to see if they have differing impacts for men and men. They do not. **Both men and women need to feel recognized for their performance and perceive the performance evaluation system as fair; both need to feel included in important networks; both need to see opportunities for growth and advancement; and both need sponsors and role models. To retain top talent, companies must address these issues effectively for all, regardless of gender.**

We want to be clear that this finding should not be interpreted to indicate that men and women perceive themselves as facing the same obstacles, because, as we have reported previously, this is not the case: women feel that they face more obstacles. What this finding means is that when men and women do face the same obstacles, they appear to react in the same way—by wanting to and planning to leave their jobs.

Given that almost three in ten executives (29%) are planning to leave in the next five years, but not retire, this should be a significant business issue.

Common Wisdom: Retention strategies should focus on the "hard" issues of promotion and compensation, not the "softer" issues.

Finding Nine: In order to retain talented men and women in the executive ranks, employers need to attend not only to matters of promotion and compensation, but also to the so-called softer issues (which these analyses reveal are not soft at all)—issues like respect and acceptance of individual differences, support in the workplace, job quality, and flexibility.

Next, we turned to the issue of working conditions and retention. We asked: Do working conditions and job characteristics affect executives' decisions about staying with or leaving the company?

We find:

- **Executives who do not feel that they are treated with respect or that they can be themselves at work are much more likely than other executives to be planning to leave in five years or less.**

  - Fully 74 percent of executives who do not feel that they are treated with respect at their current company, plan to leave in five years or less compared with 47 percent of executives who feel they are respected.

  - 67 percent of executives who do not feel they can be themselves plan to leave in five years or less, compared with 48 percent of executives who are comfortable being themselves.

- **Executives who do not feel that they have a supportive workplace plan to leave sooner than other executives.**

A supportive workplace includes having the necessary equipment, resources, and support to do a good job.

  - Executives who do not feel that they have the necessary materials and equipment to do a good job are much more likely to plan on leaving in five years or less than are executives who feel they have the proper resources (63% versus 49%).

A supportive workplace also includes the support of coworkers.

  - 68 percent of executives (both male and female) who say the men they work with are NOT supportive of their career aspirations say they are going to leave in five years or less, compared with 44 percent of executives with supportive male coworkers.

  - The same is true for having supportive female coworkers: 62 percent of executives (both male and female) who say the women they work with are NOT supportive of their career aspirations plan to leave in five years or less, compared with 49 percent

of executives with supportive female coworkers.

- **Those executives with lower job quality are much more likely than others to plan to leave in five years or less.**

    - Executives who do not think they have the freedom to decide what they do on their jobs are more likely to say they will leave in five years or less than are executives who do have this autonomy (62% versus 50%).

    - Almost seven in ten (68%) executives who say that they spend a lot of time at work doing things that are a waste of time plan on leaving in five years or less, compared with 52 percent of executives who do not think this is the case.

- **Executives who do not have access to flexibility or support for their personal or family lives are much more likely to be planning on leaving in five years or less.**

    - 60 percent of executives without flexibility in their schedules are planning to leave in five years or less, compared with 49 percent of executives with flexibility.

    - 58 percent of executives who do not feel that their managers care about the effect that work has on their personal and family life plan to leave in five years or less, compared with 41 percent of executives with supportive managers.

Additional analyses were conducted to determine whether these relationships between job/workplace conditions and retention differ for male and female executives. They do not. **When they have the same working conditions, men and women are affected in the same way.**

There is one potential difference, however. Because men tend to be more senior, they may have more power to bring about change to these working conditions than women.

Thus, in order to retain talented men and women in the executive ranks, employers need to attend not only to matters of promotion and compensation, but also to the so-called "softer" issues (which these analyses reveal are not soft at all): issues like support in the workplace, job quality, flexibility, respect and acceptance of individual differences.

REGIONAL COMPARISONS[10]

Throughout this report, we have reported key regional differences among executives who are citizens of the countries in which they work. This section more fully explores some of the more interesting findings.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WESTERN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Differences between executives in Western Europe and the United States and Canada:

Overall, there are few differences between executives in these two regions, but the some of the differences that do emerge are telling.

- **Executives in Western Europe are struggling more than those in the U.S. and Canada with certain tensions between their work and their personal and family lives.**

    - Executives in Western Europe are *more* likely than those in the U.S. and Canada to cite the importance of relocating in order to advance as an obstacle to their success (17% versus 9%). This is not surprising, given that they work for U.S.-headquartered companies and may be under more pressure to relocate.

    - Executives in Western Europe are *less* likely than those in the U.S. and Canada to say they have the flexibility in their work schedules to manage their personal and family responsibilities (34% versus 53%).

- **Although executives in Western Europe are experiencing some work-life problems more than their U.S. and Canadian counterparts, they actually work fewer hours (an average of 59 hours in Western Europe versus 62 hours in the U.S. and Canada).[11]**

- Executives in Western Europe more closely resemble the top leadership of their company than executives in the U.S. and Canada in two important ways:

    - Executives in Western Europe are *more* likely to be of the same race/ethnicity as the top leaders in their company than executives in the U.S. and Canada (96% versus 86%).

    - Similarly, executives in Western Europe are *less* likely than those in the U.S. and Canada to feel they are limited by not fitting the company image of how a leader should look or behave (9% versus 20%).

Differences between men and women in Western Europe

- Western European men are *more* likely than women in this region to place a higher priority on their work lives over their personal and family lives, while executive men and women in the U.S. and Canada do not differ.

- 43 percent of Western European men place a much higher priority on work than their personal/family life, compared with 23 percent of Western European women.

- 25 percent of Western European men put the same priority on both, compared with 33 percent of women).

- Perhaps in response to this, men in Western Europe are *more* likely than women to feel limited by the need to sacrifice everything for work in their company culture (20% versus 8%).

In analyzing what these differences might mean, it is indeed possible that executives in Western Europe may feel more torn between work-family obligations because the work culture of Western Europe is different, i.e. it has historically been less of a 24/7 economy than the U.S. and Canada.

ASIA-PACIFIC AND THE UNITED STATES/CANADA[12]

Differences between executives in Asia-Pacific and the U.S. and Canada

- Executives in the Asia-Pacific region have made more tradeoffs in their personal/family lives than their U.S. and Canadian counterparts.

  - Executives in Asia-Pacific are *less* likely to be married or living with a partner than those in the U.S. and Canada (66% versus 88%).

  - Executives in Asia-Pacific are *less* likely than executives in the U.S. and Canada to have children of any age (53% versus 77%).

  - Asia-Pacific executives are *less* likely to have children under the age of 18 currently living at home at least half time than they are in the U.S. and Canada (33% versus 54%).

  - Executives in Asia-Pacific are *more* likely than U.S. and Canadian executives to have made the conscious choice of not marrying or entering a committed relationship because of their job (8% versus 2%).

- **Executives in Asia-Pacific also rate themselves as being less successful in their personal and family lives (6.7) compared with executives in the United States/Canada (7.2).**

- **Executives in Asia-Pacific are also more likely than executives in the U.S. and Canada to see themselves as facing stereotypes and a hostile work environment.**

  - Executives in Asia-Pacific are *more* likely than those in the U.S. and Canada to say that they are limited by stereotypes about their ability based on their race/ethnicity (21% versus 4%).

  - Executives in Asia-Pacific are *more* likely than those in the U.S. and Canada to say that they are limited by not feeling motivated because of a hostile work environ-

ment (15% versus 3%).

- Executives in Asia-Pacific are *less* likely than their U.S. and Canadian counterparts to agree that they feel comfortable being themselves at work (50% versus 68%).

- Executives in Asia-Pacific are *more* likely than those in the U.S. and Canada to think that women have made progress and are being paid comparably to men.

• **Not surprisingly, executives in Asia-Pacific are also much less likely to say that they are of the same race/ethnicity as the top leadership in their companies (15% versus 86% of executives in the U.S. and Canada).**

Differences between men and women executives in Asia-Pacific

• **Much of the differences in tradeoffs between executives in Asia-Pacific and those in the U.S. and Canada are due to the experiences of the women in this region.**

- Asia-Pacific women are much *less* likely than Asia-Pacific men to be married or living with a partner (45% versus 100%).

- Women in Asia-Pacific are much *less* likely than their male counterparts to have children of any age (31% versus 89%).

- Women in Asia-Pacific are *more* likely than men in Asia-Pacific to have chosen not to marry or enter a serious relationship because of their job (13% versus 0%).

• **It is interesting that a higher percentage of men in Asia-Pacific than women feel that they are not motivated due to a hostile work environment (22% versus 10%).**

- In addition, men in Asia-Pacific (33%) are much *less* likely than the women (60%) to say that they are comfortable being themselves at work.

- Finally, women in Asia-Pacific are *more* likely than the men in region to say they will be leaving their current companies sooner: 62 percent of women in Asia-Pacific expect to leave their companies in five years or less, compared with 33 percent of the men.

The Asia-Pacific region appears to be experiencing more of a clash with its traditional ideology (men should work/women should be at home) and today's realities than the U.S. and Canada. Executives, especially women are making more personal and family tradeoffs. But men are feeling less comfortable being themselves in the workplace than women.

ACTION STEPS SUGGESTED BY EXECUTIVES

The last words in this report come from the executives themselves. They were asked: *What one change would improve the advancement of the next generation of women? What one change would improve the advancement of the next generation of men?*

The most frequent recommendation is to change the career development and management systems for both women and men.

- 57 percent of executives recommend changes to the career development and management systems as their one change for women and 59 percent cite it as their one change for men.

This category includes: **objective and inclusive performance management systems; key developmental experiences; and networking and mentoring**.

- Overall, executives urge their companies to **create objective and inclusive performance management systems**. To do so, they suggest a review of these systems, from recruitment to compensation to ensure they are aligned with business needs and that they are objectively surfacing the best talent. Even though the participating companies have put a lot of thought and effort into their performance management systems, the write-in comments reveal that there is much more work to be done.

  The comments indicate that companies are not being as strategic and supportive as they could or should in terms of recruiting the best talent, identifying high potentials, developing the future leaders, objectively evaluating performance, rewarding the right things, and clarifying what it takes to advance to the top of the organization.

  - By far, the most frequently cited recommendation in this category is that rewards should be aligned with business goals, clearly communicated, and consistently used as the basis for compensation, promotions, and other opportunities.

    Develop a clear standard for promotion that makes no consideration of sex, race, ethnicity, but rather, is based on results and leadership behaviors.
    (man on change for men and women)

    Current reward system is highly subjective and therefore can favor relationships over performance. (woman on change for women)

    Make sure people (men and women) are truly promoted and rewarded based on all values, not just results. (man on change for men)

- Executives also recommend that their companies **provide access to key developmental experiences** to enhance leadership, managerial, and technical skills. The suggestions range from ensuring employees have: challenging and visible assignments to demonstrate their talents to senior leaders; cross-functional assignments to broaden their exposure and skill set; line experience to learn the "business of the business"; and expatriate assignments to gain a global perspective.

Increase diversity of opportunities to develop breadth of experience & skills (cross-division, cross-function, cross-region). (woman on change for women and men)

Ensure they get challenging and visible assignments as early in their career as possible. (woman on change for women and men)

- Executives likewise recommend that their companies **foster professional connections through networking and mentoring**. They describe the need to develop or enhance mentoring programs and activities aimed at both men and women. There are also some references to the need to banish the "old boys network" and "cronyism."

  I would institute a culture where coaching and mentoring at all levels is expected, recognized and rewarded. (woman on change for women and men)

The second most frequent recommendation is creating an inclusive work environment.

- 32 percent of executives recommend creating an inclusive work environment as their one change for women and 29 percent cite as their one change for men.

This category includes: **broadening acceptable leadership styles; educating the workforce about diversity and inclusion; providing equal opportunities; and guarding against reverse discrimination.**

- Executives describe the need to **broaden acceptable leadership styles**.

  To broaden the definition of what a successful leader looks and acts like. The model here has become increasingly narrow and the "old boy" networking arenas have become the way in which opportunities, mentoring, and promotions are obtained. (woman on change for men)

- Executives call on their companies to **educate the workforce about diversity and inclusion**. Some executives refer to the need to educate managers and leaders on the business benefits of a diverse workforce.

  Provide more recognition for the unique skills and contributions women can bring...but it's more than 'recognition'. It requires changing the culture to truly value the contributions of women—both business and organizational results. (woman on change for women)

  Provide a good understanding and importance of a diverse work force. (woman on change for men.)

- Others focus on the need to **provide equal opportunities** and **to guard against reverse discrimination**.

  From the bottom of the workforce on up, to look at the pool of women and see that they truly have equal opportunities for challenging and high profile work, equal access to mentoring and feedback, equal access to all job openings. (woman on change for women)

Stop forced diversity, grow the female population by recruiting and employing only the best women and then focus on keeping those women by improving the working environment. (man on change for women)

The third most frequent recommendation is addressing the work-life needs of those in the pipeline.

- 21 percent of executives recommend addressing work-life quality and supports as their one change for women and 11 percent cite it as their one change for men.

This category includes: **addressing cultural values and expectations by providing role models and supporting involvement in activities outside of work; and reducing the intense work hours expectations and rethinking careers.**

- Executives see the need to **address cultural values and expectations**:

   Find a way to eliminate the culture that giving up family time for work on a constant and extreme basis is necessary and expected for those who will succeed. (woman on change for women)

   Nurture environment that allows for better balance between family and work. (man on change for women)

   Encourage men to have more balanced lives and spend more time with family so that these choices are not solely women's issues. (woman on change for women)

- Executives see the need to **reduce the intense work hours expectations**.

   Change the 'work all hours' culture. (man on change for women)

- They ask their companies to develop work-life support programs, especially with regard to offering more flexibility.

   Provide more informal flexibility and require less face time. And evaluate everyone based on results rather than input of hours. (woman on change for men)

   Continue to expand the flexibility of work locations, habits, time, and work schedule. (woman on change for women)

- Executives also ask their companies to **rethink careers** including reducing the negative impact of flexible arrangements, leaves, and relocation requirements.

   Reduce emphasis on need to relocate. (man on change for women)

   More flexibility in career path. (woman on change for men)

Table 26: What one change do you recommend to improve the advancement of the next generation of WOMEN?*

Recommendation	All Executives N=969	Women N=504	Men N=465
Career Development & Management	57%	58%	56%
Foster an inclusive and diverse work environment	32%	36%	28%
Address work-life quality and supports	21%	24%	18%
Other	4%	3%	7%

*Some respondents had more than one change, and therefore percentages add up to more than -100%

Table 27: What one change do you recommend to improve the advancement of the next generation of MEN?*

Recommendation	All Executives N=927	Women N=462	Men N=465
Career Development & Management	59%	52%	66%
Foster an inclusive and diverse work environment	29%	36%	22%
Address work-life quality and supports	11%	16%	6%
Other	10%	10%	11%

*Some respondents had more than one change, and therefore percentages add up to more than 100%

We then asked: *Do men and women differ on the changes they recommend for the advancement of the next generation?*

Overall, there are few differences in the responses of men and women or in the recommended change for the next generation of executives.

- 40 percent of executives make the same recommendation to improve the advancement of women and for men. For some of these executives, facilitating the advancement of the next generation is not a gendered issue. In other words, they write exactly the same recommendation in response to the two questions.

- However, more men (50%) than women (30%) recommend the same one change for the next generation of both men and women.

- **Thus, women are more likely than men to take a gendered view of advancement issues.**

  - Virtually identical percentages of executives recommend ensuring **effective career management and development systems** for the next generation of women. However, more men (66%) than women (52%) recommend this change for the next generation of men.

- Women are more likely than men to suggest that there should be more **emphasis on values and leadership skills as rewards rather than just results** for the next generation of women and men.

- More men than women recommend **developmental experiences** for the next generation of men.

  - For the next generation of men, executives, particularly men, emphasize more **cross-functional opportunities**.

  - For the next generation of women, more women than men highlight the importance of gaining **line experience**, with the assumption that women tend to be disproportionately represented in staff functions.

    We also need to be willing to take risks and place women into stretch assignments earlier in their careers. (woman on change for women)

    Commit to putting women in critical roles across the company. Isolated pockets are progressing, but the choice to increase women in critical line roles in every function will change the culture and expectations of the organization. (woman on change for women)

- **Networking and mentoring are not mentioned as often as the other categories; however, one in five women cite this for the next generation of women.**

    Create more opportunities where male managers and execs are expected to mentor women in the business and include them in networking events.
    (woman on change for women)

- More women than men recommend **fostering an inclusive and diverse work environment** for both the next generation of women and of men.

  - For advancing women, the emphasis is on valuing the unique contribution women leaders can make to the organization.

  - When referring to the next generation of men, executives also observe that there is **diversity among men** in terms of style, background, race/ethnicity, and country of origin.

    We (the men in senior positions) need a MUCH better appreciation of the diversity of

style that many women offer; I see too many cases where women leaders are still expected to 'act like men'; we don't appreciate that they can get results with a different style. (man on change for women)

Remember all men and all leaders do not have to look, act or communicate the same. (man on change for men)

- When referring to equal opportunities, women, in particular, emphasize the need to advance **"qualified"** women, who will in turn serve as role models for the younger generation. Men are somewhat more likely to focus on hiring and filling the pipeline with women.

- Although some focus on promoting women, others worry about **reverse discrimination** when it comes to men. Interestingly, men and women write in about this issue in equal numbers, albeit small numbers. Men, however, are more likely advocate specifically against diversity quotas.

   Stop practicing reverse discrimination! There are too many decisions being made based on a person's sex or race versus ability to get the job done.
   (man on change for men)

- More executives recommend addressing **work-life quality and supports** for the next generation of women (21%) than for men (11%). In addition, more than twice as many women (16%) as men (6%) see this as a necessary change for the next generation of men.

   Hire women who have families and have been able to juggle these successfully.
   (woman on change for women)

   Make more, alternative career paths available to women who want career plus family. Today the alternative career paths are limited and tend to mean that you are making a sacrifice for having a family by accepting derailing/sideline/less interesting and meaningful work. (woman on change for women)

   Provide real career advancement options to women who choose to work part-time and various times in their career. Versus making them feel like that choice ends their career advancement. (woman on change for women)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Based on the findings of the study and the executives' suggestions for change for the next generation of women and men leaders, we list our recommendations for diversifying senior leadership in companies like the ones we studied.

Focus on Leadership: Review the senior leadership group in the company to assess the diversity of the group, going beyond race or gender demographics to include personal styles, family status, career paths, and nationalities. Clarify essential leadership skills for senior management, including requiring understanding and commitment to diversity. Broaden the range of accepted leadership styles in order to foster individuality. Communicate the business benefits of having a wider spectrum of leaders, demonstrating that there is more than one way to make it to the top.

- Examine the management committee or equivalent in the company to see how diverse the group currently is, going beyond race or gender demographics to include assessments of personal styles, family status, career paths, and nationalities. Explore the business benefits of having a wider spectrum of leaders represented at the top. To the extent that there is diversity among top leadership, communicate the range of paths they took to reach top positions more clearly throughout the organization.

- Broaden acceptable leadership styles. Evaluate the current situation to identify whether there is a dominant leadership style within the company (both perceived and real) and consider the relevance of that style to achieving business results. Determine which components are unnecessary to success and even detrimental to the health of the organization and which are necessary.

- Educate the workforce about diversity. Include the business benefits of a diverse workforce; the need to address and overcome stereotypes; and provide training to supervisors on how to manage a diverse workforce.

Focus on Key Developmental Experiences: Provide opportunities for learning and development on the job, for challenging and visible "stretch" assignments, reasonable risk-taking, and cross-functional roles that broaden all employees' exposure and skills. Invest in career planning programs and systems.

- Recognize that most learning and development occurs on the job and encourage taking on challenging, visible, "stretch" assignments, reasonable risk-taking, and cross-functional roles that broaden employees' exposure and skills.

- Help employees learn the business of their business globally in the context of helping prospective leaders take diverse paths to the top.

- Create tools for individuals to design their own career based on their aspirations, interests, skills, and experiences.

- Recognize that executives, especially women, will be making important life decisions around managing their work and personal life early in their working lives. Provide career workshops

that help all employees explore career alternatives and make informed decisions.

- Explore the new concepts of career development that include periods of moving ahead and periods of recharging. Develop ideas for how to integrate this concept into the daily operations of the businesses.

- Re-examine expectations for career development that may have a negative impact on personal or family lives, including rigid career paths and relocation requirements.

Focus on Rewards: Review performance management systems so that rewards are aligned with business goals and values, clearly communicated, and consistently used as the basis for recruitment, compensation, promotions, and other opportunities. Examine, reconsider, and make explicit the currently "unwritten" rules required for advancement.

- Reward the "right" things. Engage in a dialogue with senior leaders about the explicit and implicit criteria for advancement and what criteria they believe should be employed to reward employees and surface the company's future leaders.

- Include people management skills in performance evaluation systems.

- Ensure that the organization's ways of identifying and promoting talent are fair and inclusive.

Focus on Connections: Create a mentoring culture by recognizing and rewarding those who are effective mentors and coaches. Provide opportunities for executives to make professional connections across functions and geographies. Use workplace networks as an important resource for meeting the needs of underrepresented groups.

<u>Within companies:</u>

- Develop or enhance existing formal mentoring programs. Demonstrate senior-level commitment by having top leaders, including the CEO/Managing Director, reflect on and communicate the importance of mentoring in their own careers and take personal responsibility for being a mentor. Be sure to include the importance of mentoring diverse employees (gender, race, ethnicity, or nationality) that could serve the dual purpose of educating senior leaders about special issues faced by these groups. Recognize, reward, and promote effective mentors and coaches.

- Due to the low number of role models and mentors available to women and minorities in some companies/locations, create and encourage workplace networks that can provide importance resources for meeting the needs of underrepresented groups. "Developmental networks" offer many of the same supports as mentoring including peer coaching, psychological support, raising employee visibility, and referral and sponsorship of employees for key positions.

- Convene senior women from various parts of the organization together with women at all levels to discuss career and work-life issues, promote dialogue among women, and highlight role models.

- Convene small groups of senior and junior women for meetings to address the miscon-

ceptions each group has about the other and to jointly develop ways women can support each other across and within generations. Compile and disseminate the lessons learned from these company discussions.

Across different companies:

- If there are small numbers of senior women available in the company for networking and mentoring, join forces with other local companies or with industry-wide organizations. Convene these groups to discuss career development and work-life issues to promote dialogue, to highlight a variety of different role models, and to promote networking and mentoring.

- Host senior women from other companies at internal women's network events for networking purposes and share examples of a variety of role models.

- Share lessons learned about strategies that work about the advancement of women with other organizations.

Focus on Work-Life: Transform the company understanding about work-life, clarifying that it is possible to have a viable personal life and hold a senior management position in the company.

- Compile and disseminate stories about women and men in senior positions who also see themselves as successful in their personal lives. Use these for an educational campaign ("Here's what senior executives look like" or "Surprising things you didn't know about senior executives in business.") Create and disseminate a "how-to" booklet based on tips from leaders about having families and/or a life outside of work.

- Encourage all senior executives to serve as role models by including comments and references to their personal/family lives in their regular business communications; thereby encouraging more open conversations about these issues in the workplace.

- Address cultural values and expectations, shifting the focus away from the "more work hours equals greater value" syndrome.

- Minimize the negative impact of flexible arrangements. Share lessons learned about combating the assumptions that stand in the way of changing the work culture to be more flexible.

- Create alternative entry points for people who have been on leave to re-enter the company in meaningful ways.

Focus on Retention: Examine the factors that might cause executives to leave, such as lack of respect, job quality, supportiveness, and flexibility and address them in ways that can improve retention. For senior executives who are financially secure, different motivators need to exist for retention purposes.

- Include respect as a company value and reinforce this in company statements and in performance evaluations.

- Assess the quality of employees' jobs and the supportiveness of their workplace environ-

ment in company surveys. Reward good practice. Where change is needed, help facilitate it.

- Directly address the assumptions that stand in the way of improving the workplace environment.

- In work groups, assess how the quality of jobs and the supportiveness of the workplace can be improved in ways that help employees be more successful at work and in their lives outside of work. Make quality improvement plans and assess their effectiveness

CONCLUSION

Throughout our analyses, we have searched for the factors that can explain the differences between the status of women's and men's jobs. None of the factors we have explored independently or together—including differences in men's and women's demographics, work experiences, family lives, ambitions, and the obstacles they face in advancing—can fully explain why men have higher status jobs than women. It is very clear from these analyses, however, that each of these factors does make a difference, and can add up over time to limit women's careers more than men's.

These study findings and recommended changes from executives on how to improve the advancement of the next generation of leaders are critical to understanding what companies need to do in order to recruit, advance, and retain their top talent—both women and men— so that they remain productive and competitive in today's global economy.

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ENDNOTES

1 Ten companies participated in the survey. Analysis of open-ended responses was conducted for all 10 companies. Because the survey was greatly shortened and modified at one company, quantitative analyses could only be conducted for 9 of the 10 companies.

2 For the purpose of cross-region analysis only executives who are citizens of the country in which they are now working are included. This was done so that we could better understand the experiences of local nationals in these companies. As a consequence, sample sizes were too small to include comparisons with Latin America, Australia and New Zealand, Central Asia, and Africa. Regional comparisons were conducted using multivariate regression analyses that controlled for both age and gender to eliminate any influence these factors might have on the findings.

3 Ten companies participated in the survey. Analysis of open-ended responses was conducted for all 10 companies. Because the survey was greatly shortened and modified at one company, quantitative analyses could only be conducted for 9 of the 10 companies.

4 Each company was asked to provide a list of their highest level employees ordered by reporting level (i.e., reporting distance from the company CEO)—200 men and 200 women. From these lists an average of 125 men and 125 women were selected from each company for inclusion in the study sample. All employees at 0 – 2 reporting levels away from the CEO were included in the sample. The selection of additional employees to achieve a full sample size relied upon stratified random sampling by international region beginning at reporting level 3, sometimes proceeding to lower levels as needed given the organizational structure of the company. In the final sample, 83 percent of executives had positions within 3 reporting levels from the company CEO.

5 For the purpose of cross-region analysis only executives who are citizens of the country in which they are now working are included. This was done so that we could better understand the experiences of local nationals in these companies. As a consequence, sample sizes were too small to include comparisons with Latin America, Australia and New Zealand, Central Asia, and Africa.

6 In this study, Asia-Pacific refers to East Asia and does not include Australia and New Zealand.

7 The differences we report in this study are statistically significant at a minimum threshold of $p < .05$ level. This means that our reported findings represent real differences and relation- ships that would occur by chance no more than 1 in 20 times.

8 Throughout the report, except in the case of age, regional comparisons were conducted using multivariate regression analyses that controlled for both age and gender to eliminate any influence these factors might have on the findings. These same analyses tested whether or not gender effects varied by region, or in other words, analyses tested the interactions of gender and region. For the sake of simplicity, unadjusted sample statistics by region and gen- der are reported throughout, but they are only reported when differences reached statistical significance in regression analyses.

9 For example, Women in Corporate Leadership: Progress and Prospects (1996), Closing the

Gap: Advancement in Corporate and Professional Canada (1998), Women in Leadership: A European Business Imperative (2002)

10 Again, all regional comparisons control for the effects of age and gender. Sample statistics are ONLY reported if the results were significant in a multivariate regression analysis.

11 Due to legal issues, the lawyers at one company decided that its executives in Western Europe should not be asked about their work hours, thus the data for this question come from eight rather than nine companies.

12 In Asia-Pacific, there are 48 executives who currently reside and work in the country where they are citizens. Eighteen of these executives are men and 30 are women. Asia-Pacific does NOT include Australia and New Zealand. Again, these analyses controlled for age and gender. Although the sample size for Asia-Pacific is quite small, a large number of statistically significant differences are found because of the substantial magnitude of differences that exist.

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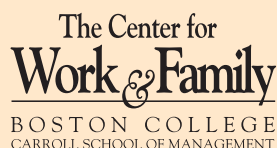
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