Women in the Workplace

—

2021

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About the study

Women in the Workplace[1] is the largest study on the state of women in corporate America. In 2015, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company launched the study to give companies insights and tools to advance gender diversity in the workplace. Between 2015 and 2021, over 750 companies participated in the study, and more than a quarter of a million people were surveyed on their workplace experiences. This year, we collected information from 423 participating organizations employing 12 million people, surveyed more than 65,000 employees, and conducted interviews with women of diverse identities, including women of color,[2] LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities. Our 2021 findings focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion on the experiences of women and the state of work more broadly.

Sign up to participate in the 2022 study at womenintheworkplace.com.

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No single story can capture the range and diversity of women's experience. The data-driven narratives in this report shed light on some of the distinct experiences of Asian women, Latinas, Black women, lesbian and bisexual women, and women with disabilities in corporate America, but they are by no means comprehensive. Women have multiple and intersecting identities, which profoundly shape their experiences at work. It's critical that companies and coworkers are aware of these dynamics, so they can more effectively advance equity and inclusion for all women.

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The state of women hangs in the balance

A year and a half into the COVID-19 pandemic, women have made important gains in representation, and especially in senior leadership. But the pandemic continues to take a toll. Women are now significantly more burned out—and increasingly more so than men.

Despite this added stress and exhaustion, women are rising to the moment as stronger leaders and taking on the extra work that comes with this: compared to men at the same level, women are doing more to support their teams and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. They are also more likely than men to practice allyship. Yet this critical work is going unrecognized and unrewarded by most companies, and that has concerning implications. Companies risk losing the very leaders they need right now, and it's hard to imagine organizations navigating the pandemic and building inclusive workplaces if this work isn't truly prioritized.

There is also a disconnect between companies' growing commitment to racial equity and the lack of improvement we see in the day-to-day experiences of women of color. Women of color face similar types and relative frequencies of microaggressions as they did two years ago—and they remain far more likely than white women to be on the receiving end of disrespectful and "othering" behavior. And while more white employees see themselves as allies to women of color, they are no more likely than last year to speak out against discrimination, mentor or sponsor women of color, or take other actions to advocate for them.

The impact of the last year and half on women is still far from clear. But the risks to women—and the companies that depend on their leadership—are very real.

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The state of women in corporate America

Women made gains in representation last year, but burnout is still on the rise

In spite of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, women's representation had improved across most of the corporate pipeline at the end of 2020. This is an encouraging sign—and worth recognizing after an incredibly difficult year. But there are also persistent gaps in the pipeline: promotions at the first step up to manager[3] are not equitable, and women of color lose ground in representation at every level.

There is still a "broken rung" at the first step up to manager. Since 2016, we have seen the same trend: women are promoted to manager at far lower rates than men, and this makes it nearly impossible for companies to lay a foundation for sustained progress at more senior levels. Additionally, the gains in representation for women overall haven't translated to gains for women of color. Women of color continue to lose ground at every step in the pipeline—between the entry level and the C-suite, the representation of women of color drops off by more than 75 percent. As a result, women of color account for only 4 percent of C-suite leaders, a number that hasn't moved significantly in the past three years.
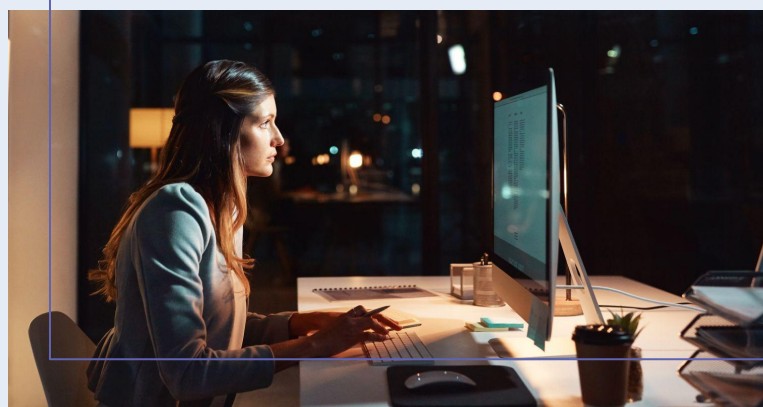
The representation of women is only part of the story. The pandemic continues to take a toll on employees, and especially women. Women are even more burned out than they were a year ago, and burnout is escalating much faster among women than men. One in three women says they have considered downshifting their careers or leaving the workforce this year, compared to 1 in 4 who said this a few months into the pandemic.[4] Additionally, 4 in 10 women have considered leaving their company or switching jobs—and high employee turnover in recent months suggests that many of them are following through.[5]

Despite important gains, women are still underrepresented

Women's representation has increased across the pipeline since 2016. However, women—especially women of color—remain significantly underrepresented in leadership.[6]

REPRESENTATION IN THE CORPORATE PIPELINE BY GENDER AND RACE[7]

■ MEN ■ WOMEN

% of employees by level at the start of 2021

	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER/ DIRECTOR	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
WHITE MEN	35%	42%	50%	56%	61%	62%
MEN OF COLOR	17%	17%	15%	13%	12%	13%
WHITE WOMEN	30%	28%	27%	24%	22%	20%
WOMEN OF COLOR	17%	12%	9%	7%	5%	4%
2021 TOTAL WOMEN	48%	41%	35%	30%	27%	24%
% CHANGE FROM 2016-2021	5%	9%	6%	6%	14%	27%
% POINT CHANGE FROM 2016-2021	+2pp	+4pp	+2pp	+1pp	+3pp	+5pp

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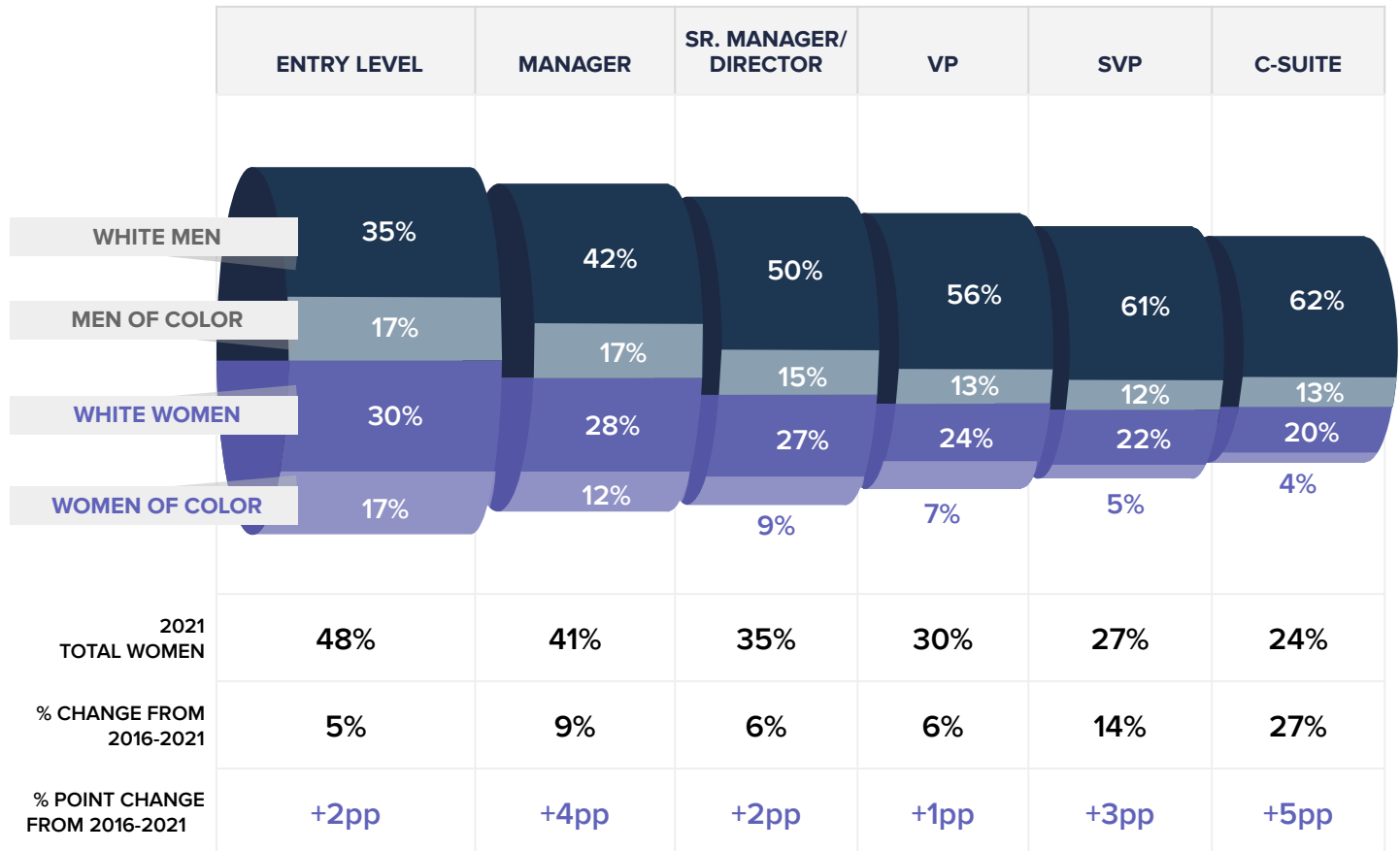
Women of color lose ground at every step in the pipeline

Representation of women of color falls off relative to white employees and men of color at every level of the corporate pipeline—leaving women of color severely underrepresented at the top.

"I've talked to white men who started off in the warehouse and now they're at the VP level. I've also talked to a lot of Black and brown employees that have been here for 15 years and are at the same level they started at or they're a little bit higher. But they're nowhere near their white peers."

BLACK WOMAN, SENIOR MANAGER, CAREGIVER TO AN ADULT

A DETAILED LOOK AT REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN OF COLOR

% of employees by level at the start of 2021

A Asian employees   L Latinx employees   B Black employees   White employees

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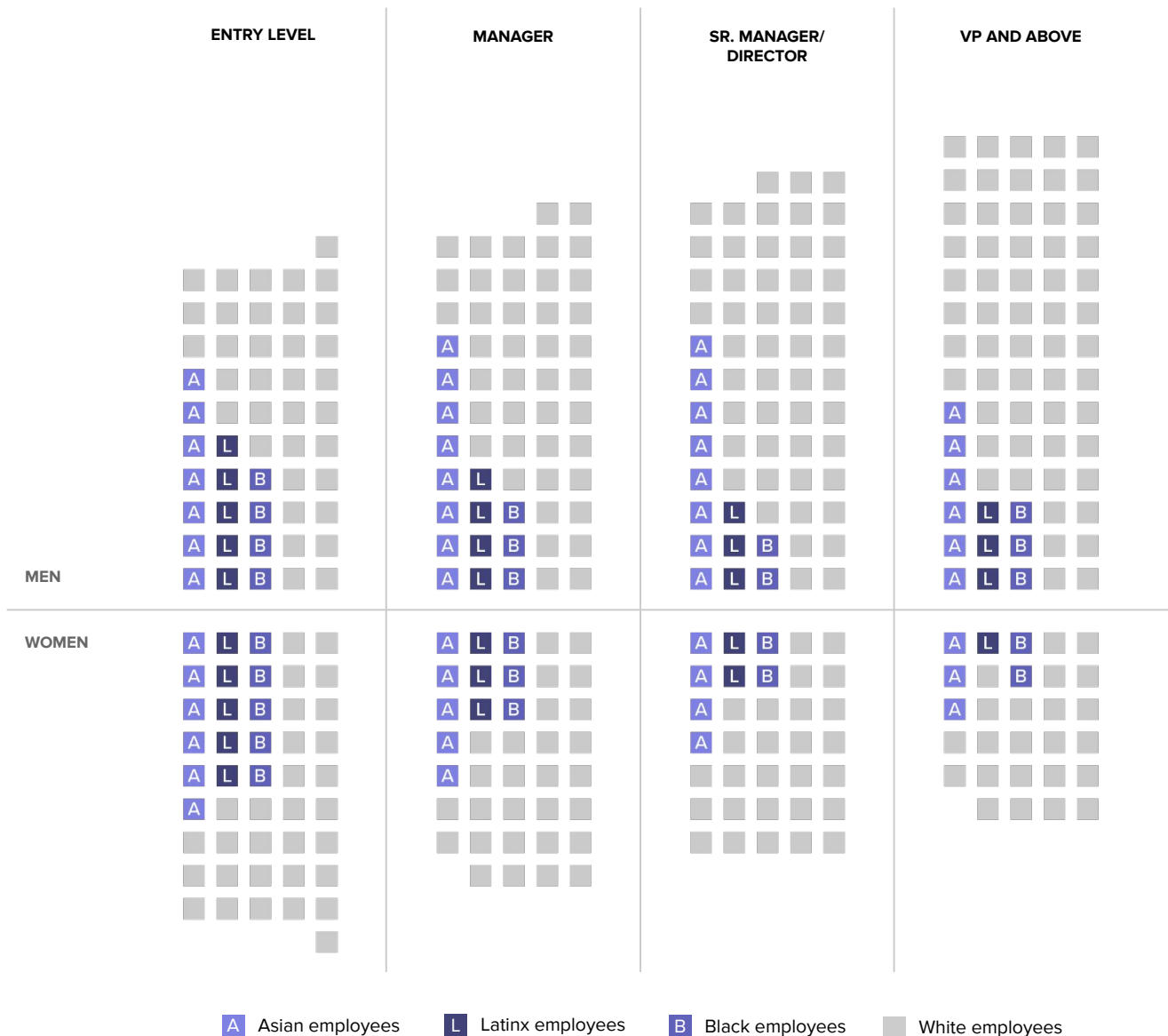
INTERSECTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Asian women

Asian women are often unfairly overlooked at work. Even when their overall performance ratings are strong, Asian women are less likely than other groups of women to receive positive feedback on their leadership abilities.[8] They have fewer informal interactions with senior leaders. And they are less likely to be seen and noticed as individuals. More than 1 in 6 Asian women say they are frequently mistaken for someone else of the same race, and because of this, colleagues and managers may overlook their specific contributions.

"

I feel like I've had to work harder. Compared to my peers, I've had to do more to prove myself and to show that I'm worthy of advancement. I feel like the bar for me is higher when it comes to just getting recognized. I also think that I have this reputation of, 'Oh, she'll be able to fix it.' And maybe it's because they expect that I'm probably going to work myself to death to get something done. I just feel like the expectation is different."

SOUTHEAST ASIAN WOMAN, VP, CHILDREN UNDER 10, IMMIGRANT

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These biases make it significantly harder for Asian women to advance. They are less likely than women to be promoted even when they receive strong performance feedback: Asian women account for 1 in 15 women in entry-level roles but only 1 in 50 women in the C-suite.

For the many Asian women who work in professions dominated by men, the challenges are even more acute. Asian women who are "double Onlys"—often both the only woman and the only Asian person in the room—have a particularly bad experience. They're more likely to experience microaggressions, to feel that promotions aren't based on objective criteria, and to be unhappy with their company.

On top of all this, Asian women have had to contend with a sharp increase in anti-Asian hate during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our data shows that 1 in 4 Asian women—and an even greater share of East Asian women—has been personally impacted by racial trauma in the past year, and some sources suggest this number is much higher.[9]

Despite these challenges, Asian women remain highly motivated. Compared to women overall, they are more likely to ask for promotions and far more likely to want to be a top executive. And when they rise, they lead with purpose. Asian women are significantly more likely than women overall to say they want a top role so they can make a positive impact on the world.

"
Having representation at work on a daily basis would make people like me more comfortable. As an Asian person, if I'm interacting with another Asian person, I never have to worry about whether what I'm doing is contributing to a stereotype."

EAST ASIAN WOMAN, ENTRY-LEVEL

This narrative offers a closer look at some of the distinct experiences of Asian women based on data collected this year, but it is by no means comprehensive. Women face intersecting and compounding biases in the workplace due to many aspects of their identity, and it's important to recognize this.

Asian women refers to women who self-identify as East Asian, South Asian, or Southeast Asian.

The "broken rung" is still holding women back

Women continue to face a "broken rung" at the first step up to manager: for every 100 men promoted to manager, only 86 women are promoted. As a result, men significantly outnumber women at the manager level, which means there are far fewer women to promote to higher levels. The broken rung likely explains why representation of women at the senior manager, director, and VP levels has improved more slowly than the pipeline overall.

This year, for the first time, women of color were promoted to manager at about the same rate as women overall: 85 women of color were promoted for every 100 men. This is important progress, and it will be critical that companies build on it to make promotion rates truly equitable.

WOMEN LOSE THE MOST GROUND AT THE FIRST STEP TO MANAGER

For every 100 men who are promoted . . .
86 women are promoted
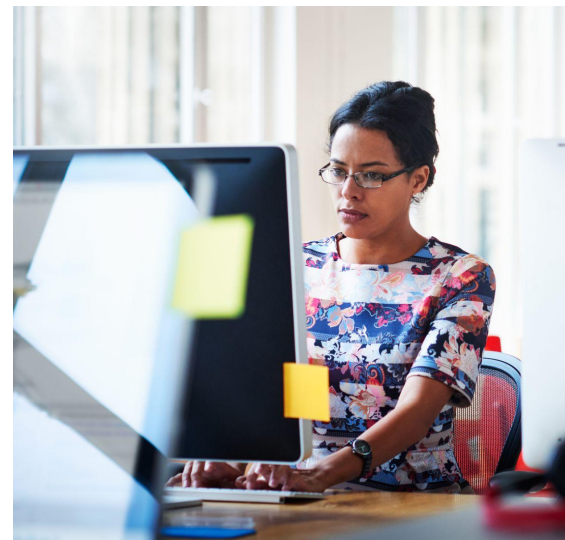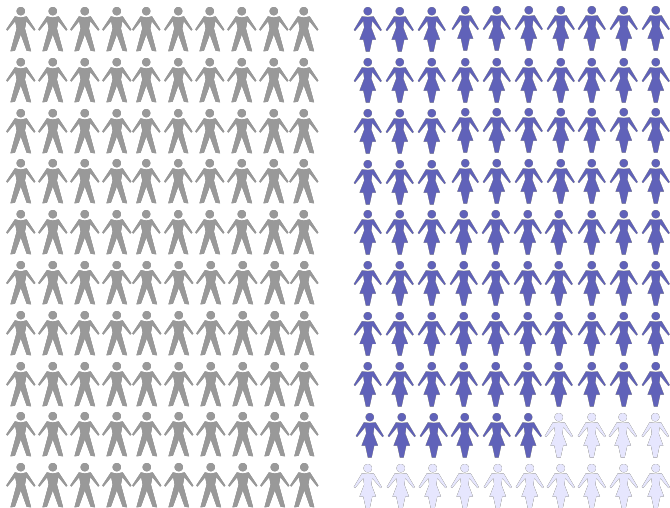
Representation of women in engineering and product roles—two of corporate America's fastest-growing job categories—trails the rest of the pipeline. Women hold only 34% of entry-level engineering and product roles and just 26% of first-level manager positions, compared to 48% of entry-level roles and 41% of first-level manager positions in the pipeline overall.

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Women are more burned out—and more so than men

Women are even more burned out than they were a year ago, and the gap in burnout between women and men has almost doubled. In the past year, 1 in 3 women has considered leaving the workforce or downshifting their careers—a significant increase from 1 in 4 in the first few months of the pandemic.

SHARE OF EMPLOYEES WHO ARE CONSISTENTLY BURNED OUT[10]

% of employees who say they are "often" or "almost always" burned out at work

42%

35%

32%

28%

42% of women say they have been often or almost always burned out in 2021, compared to 32% a year ago.

2020 Men
2020 Women
2021 Men
2021 Women
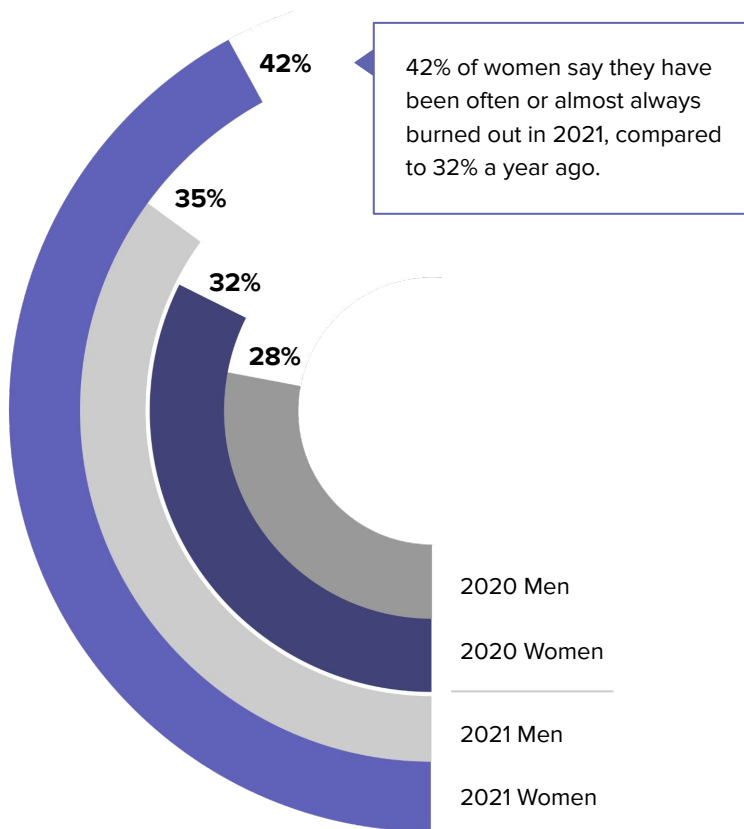
> " It's the only time I've ever seriously considered a less demanding job. I interviewed for a job with another company. I just felt burned out so often. I probably cried more days than not. I felt caught in the middle of everyone's emotional responses. I had to be the voice for a lot of different people, some of it was my job and some of it wasn't. It was the hardest working year of my life."
>
> WHITE WOMAN, SVP

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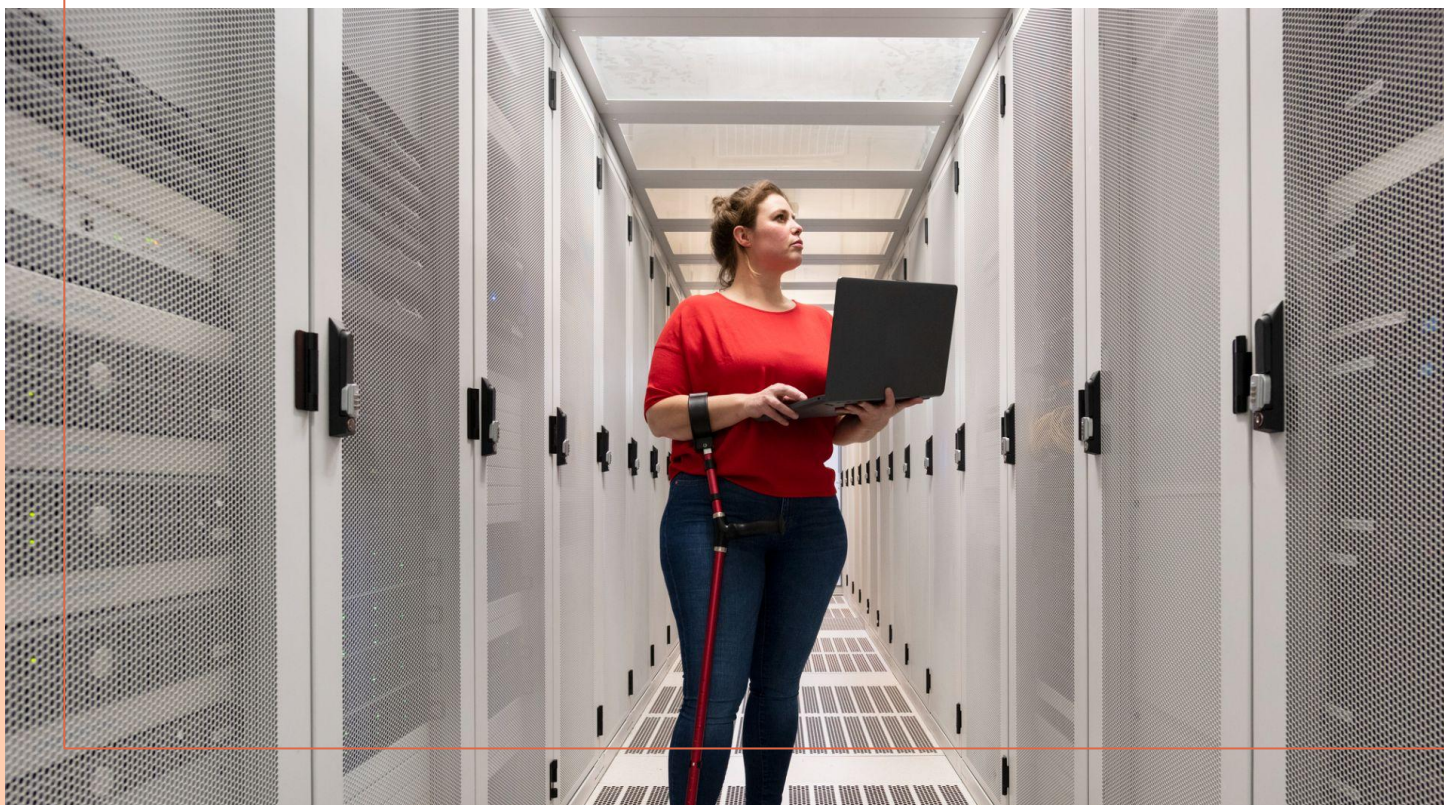
INTERSECTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Women with disabilities

About 1 in 10 working women has a disability. Disabilities can take many forms—including paralysis, pain, chronic illness, impaired hearing or vision, learning disabilities, and mental health diagnoses—but all disabilities have a negative impact on women's experiences and opportunities at work.

Women with disabilities are often overlooked and undervalued in their workplaces. They are far more likely than women overall to be interrupted, to have their judgment questioned, and to hear that they are too angry or emotional, and they are also less likely to feel supported by their managers. Less than half of women with disabilities feel they have equal opportunity for advancement, and almost a quarter say their disability has led to missing out on a raise, promotion, or chance to get ahead.

"

I've applied so many times to get promotions and job rotations. I've never gotten one, and I'm just so discouraged. I've often felt nobody's going to want me, like I don't deserve something better. I have this dream of working for an organization that welcomes me as a person with a disability and where I can excel and use my skills and be successful. That's a dream. And it shouldn't be a dream. It should be a normal part of my working life."

MIXED-RACE WOMAN, ENTRY-LEVEL, PHYSICAL DISABILITY

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" I haven't told my managers about my disability. It's not something I talk about at work. I'm very open with my personal life, but mental health is not something that's very openly talked about in my workplace."

WHITE WOMAN, ENTRY-LEVEL, LESBIAN, INVISIBLE DISABILITY

Most companies aren't taking enough action to address these problems. Only about 25 percent of employees say their company prioritizes disability in its DEI efforts, compared to more than 40 percent who say their company prioritizes gender and sexual orientation and almost 60 percent who say their company prioritizes race.

On top of this, the COVID-19 crisis has been especially challenging for women with disabilities. Remote work and flexibility have been critical to their health and safety, but they are also more likely than women overall to worry they will face negative consequences from working flexibly. Women with disabilities are about twice as likely as women overall to say that in the past year, setting boundaries around their availability or taking time off for mental health reasons has hurt their career. They are also more likely to feel judged for requesting or taking advantage of options to work remotely or work flexible hours. And their concerns may be justified: women with disabilities are more likely than women overall to say they have lost ground in their career development in the past year.

This added stress and bias is taking a toll. More than half of women with disabilities are often or almost always burned out, and almost half are consistently exhausted. Women with disabilities are also much more likely than women overall to have considered leaving the workforce or downshifting their careers.

This narrative offers a closer look at some of the distinct experiences of women with disabilities based on data collected this year, but it is by no means comprehensive. Women face intersecting and compounding biases in the workplace due to many aspects of their identity, and it's important to recognize this.

Women with disabilities refers to women who self-identify as having a disability.

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Women are setting a new standard for leadership

Women are rising to the moment as stronger leaders, but their work is going unrecognized

The events of 2020 put extraordinary pressure on companies and employees. COVID-19 shook the economy and turned people's lives upside down at work and at home. A heightened focus on racism and racial violence triggered a reckoning on diversity, equity, and inclusion.[11] Companies' priorities reflect these changes: an overwhelming majority say managers' efforts to promote employee well-being are critically important and that DEI is one of their key areas of focus.

Women leaders[12] are meeting the moment and taking on the extra work that comes with this. Compared to men at the same level, women managers are taking more action to support their teams, from helping employees manage their workloads to checking in regularly on their overall well-being. Senior-level women are twice as likely as senior-level men to spend more time than men on DEI work that falls outside their formal job responsibilities, such as recruiting employees from underrepresented groups and supporting employee resource groups. And women leaders are more likely to be allies to women of color. Compared to men in leadership, they are more likely to educate themselves about challenges women of color face at work, speak out against discrimination, and mentor or sponsor women of color.

When managers support employee well-being and companies prioritize DEI, employees are happier, less burned out, and less likely to consider leaving their jobs. In spite of all this, relatively few companies formally recognize employees who go above and beyond in these areas—and this needs to change.

Overlooking critical work around employee well-being and DEI has serious implications: It hurts women, who are investing disproportionate time and energy in these priorities. And it hurts companies and all employees, because progress is rarely made on efforts that are undervalued.

> If companies don't recognize and reward leaders' efforts to support employee well-being and advance diversity, equity and inclusion, this critical work is at risk of being relegated to "office housework"—work that contributes to the business but isn't taken into account in performance reviews, doesn't lead to advancement, and isn't compensated.[13]

Women managers are doing more to support their teams

Compared to men in similar positions, women managers[14] are consistently doing more to promote employee well-being—including checking on team members, helping them manage workloads, and providing support for those who are dealing with burnout or navigating work/life challenges.

HOW MANAGERS ARE SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES

% of employees who say their manager has consistently taken this action

	Manager is a man	Manager is a woman
Well-being		
Providing emotional support	19%	31% **(+11pp)**
Checking in on overall well-being	54%	61% **(+7pp)**
Workload		
Helping navigate work/life challenges	24%	29% **(+5pp)**
Working to ensure workload is manageable (e.g., shifting priorities or deadlines)	36%	42% **(+6pp)**
Helping take actions to prevent or manage burnout	16%	21% **(+5pp)**

Women leaders are doing more than their share of mentorship and sponsorship. Men in senior leadership[15] outnumber women 2 to 1—but employees are equally likely to say that women and men leaders have supported their career development. This means women are shouldering roughly double the load of mentorship and sponsorship.

" I feel so much responsibility for my team's well-being. There is no line between the workday and the after-work day. We're really underestimating the impact this is having on people personally and emotionally. I'm taking care of everybody. I will regularly have conversations with my team, 'How are you feeling? What do you need? Can I remove barriers?'"

WHITE WOMAN, SENIOR MANAGER

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Women leaders are more active champions of DEI

Compared to men at their level, women leaders are up to twice as likely to spend substantial time on DEI work that falls outside their formal job responsibilities—such as supporting ERGs, organizing events, and recruiting employees from underrepresented groups. They are also more likely than men to take allyship actions such as mentoring women of color, advocating for new opportunities for them, and actively confronting discrimination.

38% of senior-level women mentor or sponsor at least one woman of color, compared to only 26% of senior-level men.

HOW LEADERS ARE PROMOTING DEI[16]

% of managers and senior leaders who spend time on DEI work beyond their formal job

	Men	Women
Managers[17]		
Does informal DEI work	43%	49% (+6pp)
Spends substantial time on DEI work	7%	11% (+4pp)
Senior leaders		
Does informal DEI work	46%	54% (+8pp)
Spends substantial time on DEI work	9%	19% (+10pp)

Women leaders with traditionally marginalized identities are even more likely to contribute to DEI efforts. Among women at the manager level and above, Black women, LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities are up to twice as likely as women overall to spend a substantial amount of time on DEI work outside their formal job responsibilities.[18]

HOW LEADERS ARE SHOWING UP AS ALLIES TO WOMEN OF COLOR

% of employees who say they regularly take . . .

	Men	Women
Managers[17]		
. . . at least three different allyship actions	48%	61% (+13pp)
Senior leaders		
. . . at least three different allyship actions	64%	73% (+9pp)

"In my industry, there aren't many women, not a lot of women of color, and definitely not a lot of women in leadership roles. So I've always been intentional to try to give back and do what I could to inspire and encourage and motivate those who need an advocate."

BLACK WOMAN, SENIOR MANAGER

The work women leaders are doing drives better outcomes for all employees

When managers support employee well-being, employees are happier, less burned out, and less likely to consider leaving. The same is true of employees who have strong allies and believe DEI is a high priority for their company.

HOW SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND DEI AFFECTS EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES[19]

	. . . more likely to be happy with their job	. . . more likely to recommend their company as a great place to work		. . . less likely to be burned out	. . . less likely to consider leaving their company
When managers help employees manage workload, employees are . . .	26%	23%		32%	33%
When managers take action to support employee well-being, employees are . . .	27%	25%		28%	32%
When employees have strong allies, they are . . .	65%	86%		40%	53%

This critical well-being and DEI work is going overlooked

Companies see the value of women leaders' contributions. Almost 70 percent of companies say that the work employees do to promote DEI is very or extremely critical, and an even greater number say this is true of the work managers do to support employee well-being. But less than a quarter of companies are recognizing this work to a substantial extent in formal evaluations like performance reviews.

❝

We've been told that our DEI work is above and beyond our day jobs. It's frustrating. We're working on DEI after hours in the evenings, on weekends, and on vacation. And there's no formal recognition of all the effort."

SOUTH ASIAN WOMAN, VP,
CHILDREN OVER 10, IMMIGRANT

IMPORTANCE VS. RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND DEI WORK

% of companies that say employee work to support well-being and DEI is critical vs. % that say this work receives substantial formal recognition

Work is critical[20]

Work is formally recognized[21]

87%

25%

Well-being

70%

24%

DEI

❝
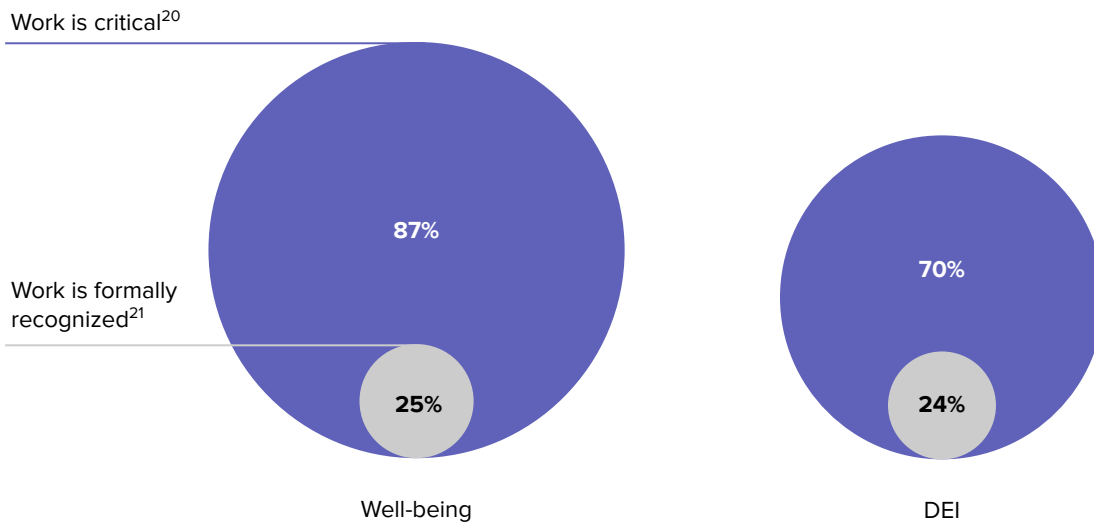
I definitely think emotional labor is being taken for granted. We're so focused on revenue as opposed to the skills required to manage teams remotely in a COVID world. I don't think those skills and emotional labor are being formally recognized or that there's any strong awareness around it."

EAST ASIAN WOMAN, VP, CHILDREN UNDER 10, IMMIGRANT

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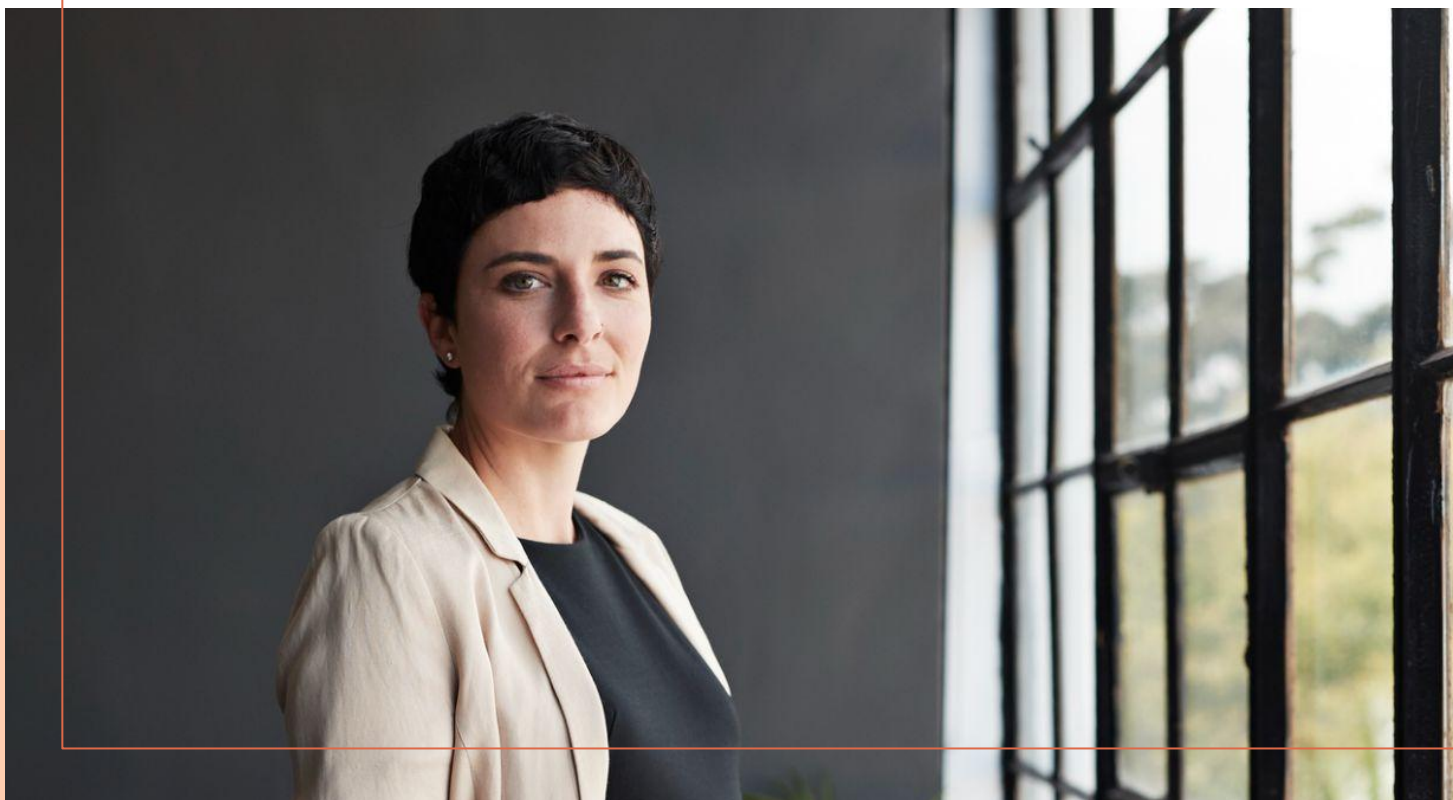
INTERSECTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Lesbian and bisexual women

Lesbian and bisexual women often face disrespectful and "othering" behavior in their workplaces. They are more likely than women overall to experience most microaggressions, including being interrupted or spoken over, having their judgment questioned, and being expected to speak on behalf of all people with their identity. Additionally, although they are about as likely as women overall to receive positive feedback on their job performance, they are more likely to hear negative feedback related to how they present themselves at work, such as being told that they are too outspoken and confrontational.

"I told my coworker that I'm gay and I'm married to a woman. And he said, 'Whatever you do, don't tell our manager because he's homophobic. Gay marriage is not something he believes in. And he most likely will treat you differently.' So ever since then, I have stayed in my shell and kept my personal life private."

WHITE WOMEN, VP, LESBIAN, CHILDREN UNDER 10

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Given these negative experiences, it's not surprising that lesbian and bisexual women often don't feel comfortable bringing their full selves to work. Almost half of lesbian and bisexual women feel as though they must be careful when talking about their personal lives in their workplace, and they are significantly more likely than women overall to feel uncomfortable sharing their work/life challenges or experience of burnout with colleagues. On top of this, they are often the only person of their sexuality in the room, which means they are more likely to feel isolated and scrutinized.

Despite the challenges they face personally, lesbian and bisexual women are powerful advocates for other women with traditionally marginalized identities. More than half of lesbian and bisexual women say they consistently take a public stand to support gender and racial equity, compared to only a third of women overall. Lesbian and bisexual women are also significantly more likely than women overall to advocate for new opportunities for women of color, publicly acknowledge them for their contributions, and speak out when they see bias and discrimination against women of color at work.

This narrative offers a closer look at some of the distinct experiences of lesbian and bisexual women based on data collected this year, but it is by no means comprehensive. Women face intersecting and compounding biases in the workplace due to many aspects of their identity, and it's important to recognize this.

Lesbian and bisexual women refers to women who self-identify as bisexual or pansexual, or gay, lesbian, or homosexual. Although the research sample for this study includes transgender and gender nonbinary individuals, sample sizes are not large enough to draw general conclusions about their experiences.

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A CLOSER LOOK

In addition to taking on more work, women leaders often face greater challenges

As women move into leadership roles, their day-to-day experiences often get more difficult. Compared to entry-level women, they are more than twice as likely to say they are "Onlys", i.e., often the only or one of the only women in the room at work. They are also more likely to face microaggressions that challenge their competence—such as being interrupted, hearing comments on their emotional state, or having their judgment questioned. Men face these challenges more rarely and do not face them at greater rates as they gain seniority.

" The only other woman in leadership left as a result of burnout. She and I faced a lot of pushback when we tried to support employees during the pandemic. It disproportionately fell on us to offer that support. Some of the men in leadership wanted everyone to work in person more often, even at the height of the pandemic. It was very contentious, and I did not feel at all backed up by the men on the exec team."

WHITE WOMAN, SVP

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP ARE MORE LIKELY TO FACE CERTAIN MICROAGGRESSIONS

MEN ☐   WOMEN ■

% of entry-level employees and senior leaders who report each microaggression

	ENTRY-LEVEL	SENIOR LEADERS
Being interrupted or spoken over more than others	24% / 14%	36% / 15%
Having your judgment questioned in your area of expertise	27% / 22%	34% / 22%
Having others comment on your emotional state	15% / 10%	20% / 11%
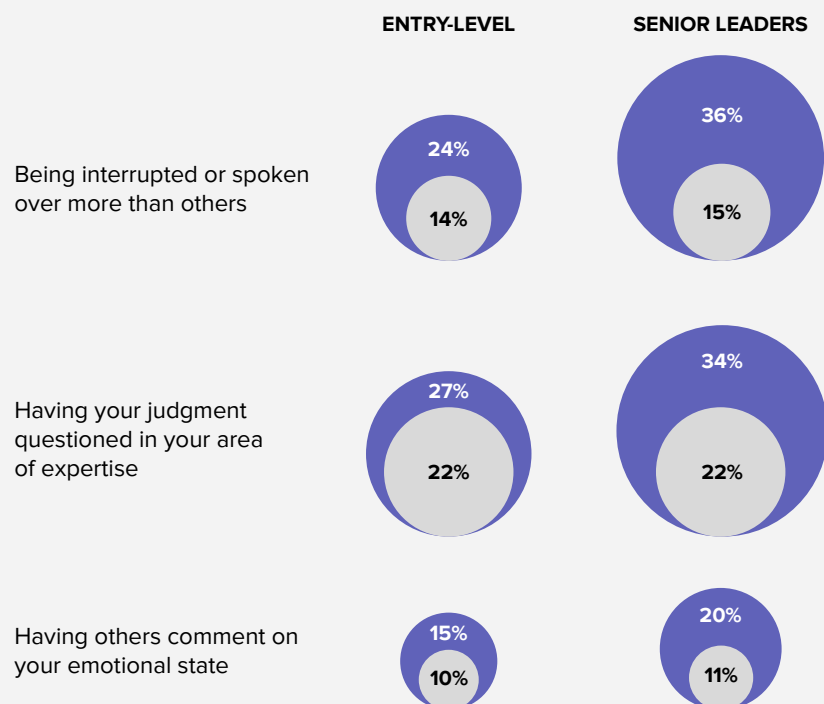
Women leaders who manage teams are especially likely to be burned out and considering downshifting. More than 50% of women who are responsible for managing teams are often or almost always burned out, and almost 40% have considered leaving the workforce or downshifting their careers.

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INTERSECTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Latinas

Latinas are less likely than other women to have a high degree of flexibility in their jobs, which makes balancing work and life especially difficult. Compared to women of other races and ethnicities, Latinas are less likely to say they have the flexibility to take time off for family or personal reasons, and they are also less likely to be able to step away from work to deal with unexpected events. For Latinas who identify as immigrants, these numbers are even lower.

This lack of flexibility takes a toll—especially given that, compared to most other groups of women, Latinas are often juggling a heavier load at home. They are more likely to be responsible for all their family's housework and caregiving and to say that these responsibilities have increased during the pandemic. Forty-three percent of Latinas are currently spending five or more hours per day on housework and caregiving, compared to only 34 percent of women overall. And almost a third of Latinas are on "double duty"—caring for children and an adult, such as an elderly family member—which adds significantly to their workload. Double-duty caregivers are more likely than women overall to be burned out and to have considered downshifting their careers or leaving the workforce.

The combination of significant personal obligations and limited work flexibility leaves many Latinas without the time they need to recharge and reset. Compared to women overall, Latinas are less likely to take regular breaks and prioritize their own well-being when they work from home.

* In this report, "Latinas" refers to women who self-identify as Latinx, Latina, or Hispanic.

This narrative offers a closer look at some of the distinct experiences of Latinas based on data collected this year, but it is by no means comprehensive. Women face intersecting and compounding biases in the workplace due to many aspects of their identity, and it's important to recognize this.

"
I identify as a Latina, first-generation Mexican American. And in our culture, one of the biggest things is we live in multigenerational households. So my nephews, my parents, my siblings, we all lived together during the pandemic. I had to be very cautious about working on-site because I would put a lot of my family members at risk if I got sick with COVID. It was extremely stressful. At the beginning of the pandemic I was still being asked to come into the office. I just had to say no. I do think it hindered my career. Later, when a position opened up, I found out that a director in my group had said, 'Oh, we can't count on her. Let's move on to someone else.'"

LATINA, MANAGER

Women of color continue to have a worse experience at work

Women of color face more challenges and get less support

Even after a year of increased focus on DEI and racial equity in corporate America, women of color continue to face significant bias and discrimination at work. They are experiencing similar types of microaggressions, at similar relative frequencies, as they were two years ago.[22] And although the number of white employees who identify as allies to women of color has increased over the past year, the number taking key allyship actions has not.

While all women are more likely than men to face microaggressions that undermine them professionally—such as being interrupted or having their judgment questioned—many women of color experience them at a higher rate. And women of color are much more likely than white women to face disrespectful and "othering" microaggressions that reinforce harmful stereotypes or cast them as outsiders. These experiences can take a heavy toll: women who regularly experience microaggressions are twice as likely as those who don't to be burned out, more than twice as likely to report feeling negatively about their job, and almost three times as likely to say they've struggled to concentrate at work in the past few months due to stress.

Not only do women of color still face higher rates of microaggressions, they also still lack active allies. We continue to see a troubling gap: although more than three quarters of white employees consider themselves allies to women of color at work, less than half take basic allyship actions such as speaking out against bias or advocating for new opportunities for women of color. On top of this, there's a notable disconnect between the allyship actions women of color find most meaningful and the actions white employees prioritize.

Given the day-to-day challenges women of color face, it's not surprising that they are less optimistic than white women about their company's commitment to DEI. Women of color are much less likely than white women to say their company prioritizes gender and race in DEI efforts—and less than half feel their company has substantially followed through on commitments to racial equity.

Women of color face a wider range of microaggressions

All women are more likely than men to face microaggressions at work. But for women of color and women with other traditionally marginalized identities, these experiences are more frequent and reflect a wider range of biases. For example, compared to white women, Black women are more than three times as likely and Latinas and Asian women are twice as likely to hear people express surprise at their language skills or other abilities—and we see a similar pattern for other common microaggressions.

LGBTQ+ women and women with disabilities are also significantly more likely than women overall to experience microaggressions. Women with disabilities, in particular, are much more likely than women overall to have their competence challenged or undermined at work.

WOMEN OF COLOR ARE MORE LIKELY TO FACE DISRESPECTFUL AND "OTHERING" MICROAGGRESSIONS[23]

BETTER EXPERIENCE ▬▬▬ WORSE EXPERIENCE

ALL MEN	ALL WOMEN	LGBTQ+ WOMEN	WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES		WHITE WOMEN	ASIAN WOMEN	LATINAS	BLACK WOMEN
				Challenges to competence				
15%	28%	34%	40%	Being interrupted or spoken over more than others	27%	29%	27%	32%
24%	31%	37%	46%	Having your judgment questioned	31%	25%	29%	38%
12%	18%	25%	30%	Having others comment on your emotional state	18%	13%	16%	21%
				Disrespectful and "othering" behavior				
6%	8%	10%	13%	Hearing people express surprise at your language skills or other abilities	5%	11%	13%	18%
7%	7%	12%	14%	Hearing or overhearing insults about your culture or people like you	5%	9%	9%	16%
5%	7%	9%	9%	Being confused with someone else of the same race/ethnicity	4%	17%	6%	17%
6%	9%	16%	13%	Feeling like you are expected to speak on behalf of all people with your identity	5%	14%	11%	31%
4%	6%	11%	11%	Having others comment on your hair or appearance	5%	5%	5%	14%

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LEAN IN
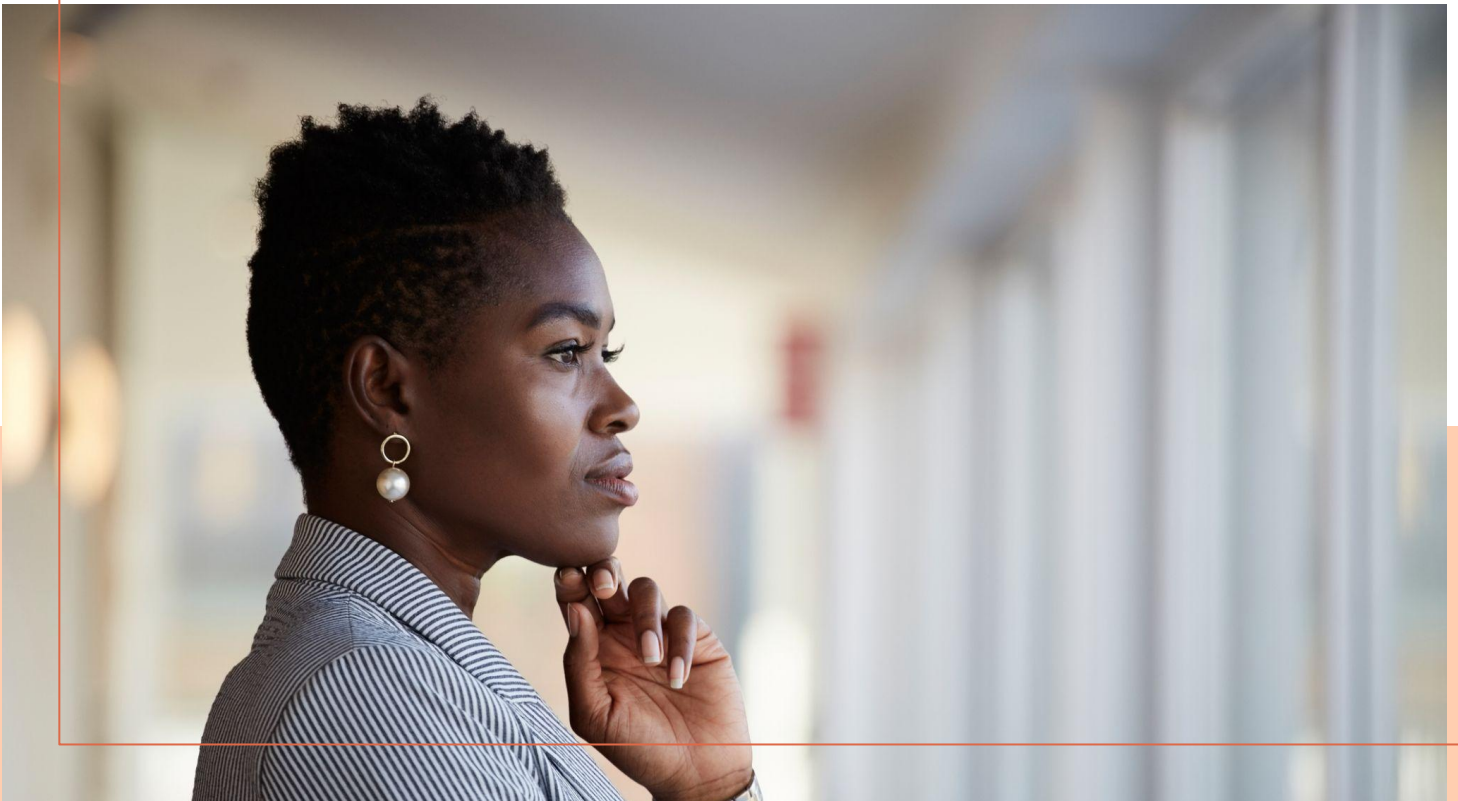
INTERSECTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Black Women

By almost any measure, Black women are facing disproportionately high barriers in the workplace. They are heavily impacted by bias in hiring and promotions; Black women are promoted at a significantly lower rate than white women at the first step up to manager, and more than a quarter of Black women say their race has led to them missing out on an opportunity to advance. They experience more microaggressions than other groups of women, and are three to four times as likely as white women to be subjected to disrespectful and "othering" comments and behavior. They are also less likely to report that their managers check in on their well-being or help them balance priorities and deadlines.

"
As a member of a minority, there's additional stigma that I've had to face. When I would go to court to represent a client, people would constantly say, 'Where's your attorney? Where's the attorney?' They would assume that I was either an administrative assistant or a mail clerk, and that I couldn't possibly be an attorney."
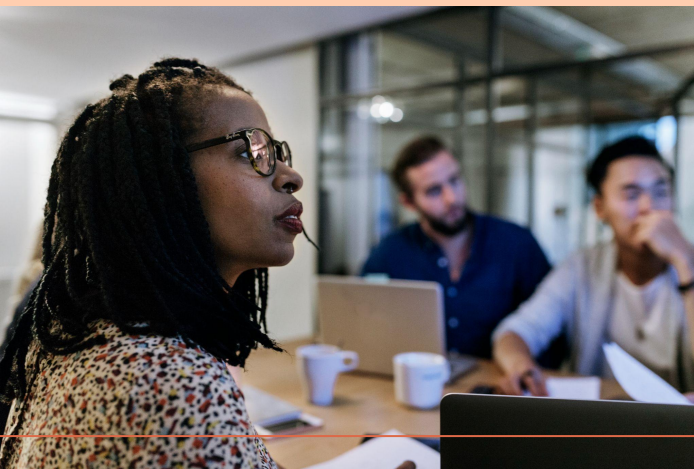
BLACK WOMAN, SENIOR MANAGER

To add to their burden, Black women are far more likely than other employees to be coping with the impact of racism and racial trauma. More than 60 percent of Black women have been personally affected by racial trauma in the past year.

Given that they face bias on a regular basis at work, it should come as no surprise that Black women are relatively pessimistic about their company's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Black women are twice as likely as women overall to say their company has not followed through on their commitments to racial equity, and less than half of Black women feel that DEI is an important priority at their company.

Even as they navigate an incredibly difficult experience, Black women are pushing their companies to do better. Black women are more likely than any other group of employees, including men of color and women of other races and ethnicities, to spend a substantial amount of time on DEI work that falls outside their formal job responsibilities. They are more likely to speak out against bias and discrimination at work—and more likely to experience retaliation for doing so. And they are more likely than any other group of employees to step up as mentors and sponsors to other women of color. Many Black women say they do this work because they feel it wouldn't get done otherwise—which speaks to the urgent need for employees with more privilege to show up as allies.

* In this report, "Black women" refers to women who self-identify as Black, African American, or Black Canadian.

This narrative offers a closer look at some of the distinct experiences of Black women based on data collected this year, but it is by no means comprehensive. Women face intersecting and compounding biases in the workplace due to many aspects of their identity, and it's important to recognize this.

"

Someone told me I was 'so articulate.' They thought they were paying me a compliment. It's frustrating to hear those comments, to have your decisions questioned, to be perceived as the angry Black woman. It is very stressful. The average person has no idea about the stress that women and people of color carry. They have no idea about the small ways that women and people of color get humiliated, that make them feel undermined or made to feel smaller than they are. It happens all the time."

BLACK WOMAN, SENIOR MANAGER

The "allyship gap" persists

Allyship from more privileged colleagues can make a big difference in women of color's experiences: when women of color feel like they have strong allies at work, they are happier in their jobs, less likely to be burned out, and less likely to consider leaving their companies. But although more than three quarters of white employees consider themselves allies to women of color at work, far fewer are consistently taking key allyship actions.

HOW WHITE EMPLOYEES ARE SHOWING UP AS ALLIES[24]

% of employees who say they are allies to women of color vs. % who consistently take allyship actions

77%					
	ALLYSHIP ACTIONS				
				45%	
			43%		
		39%			
	21%				10%
Consider themselves allies to women of color at work	Advocate for new opportunities for women of color	Actively confront discrimination against women of color	Give credit to women of color for their ideas and work	Educate oneself about the experiences of women of color	Mentor or sponsor one or more women of color
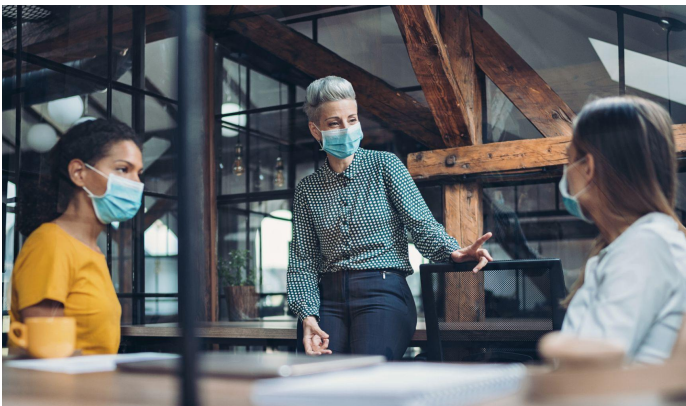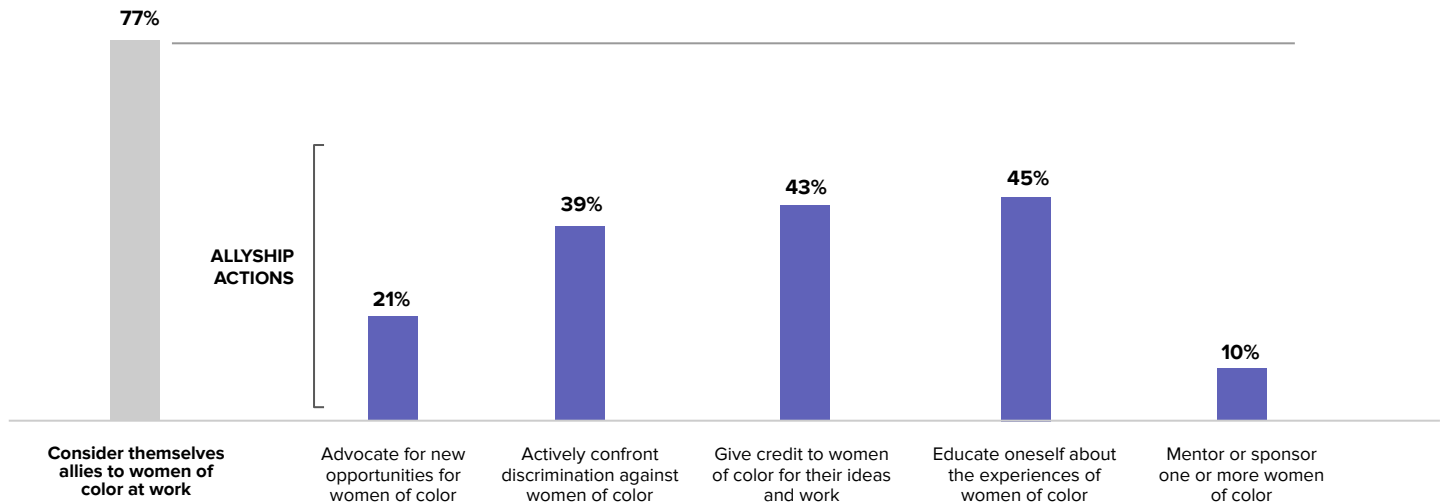
It's critical that white allies actively confront bias and discrimination against women of color. When women of color take a stand, they too often experience retaliation—32% of Black women who've spoken out against bias and discrimination at work report experiencing retaliation, compared to just 6% of white men.

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White employees don't fully understand what allyship is

There's a notable disconnect between the allyship actions women of color say are most meaningful and the actions white employees prioritize. Although white employees recognize that speaking out against discrimination is critical, they are less likely to recognize the importance of more proactive, sustained steps such as advocating for new opportunities for women of color and stepping up as mentors and sponsors.

WOMEN OF COLOR ARE MORE LIKELY TO SAY ADVOCACY, MENTORSHIP, AND SPONSORSHIP ARE CRITICAL ALLYSHIP ACTIONS[25]

Actions that women of color and white employees say convey the most meaningful allyship to women of color

	WOMEN OF COLOR		WHITE EMPLOYEES
1	Advocating for new opportunities for women of color	1	If seeing discrimination against women of color, actively working to confront it
2	If seeing discrimination against women of color, actively working to confront it	2	Publicly acknowledging women of color for their ideas and work
3	Publicly acknowledging women of color for their ideas and work	3	Advocating for new opportunities for women of color
4	Educating oneself about the experiences of women of color	4	Educating oneself about the experiences of women of color
5	Mentoring or sponsoring one or more women of color	5	Actively listening to the personal stories of women of color about bias and mistreatment
6	Actively soliciting the perspectives of women of color when making decisions	6	Actively soliciting the perspectives of women of color when making decisions
7	Actively listening to the personal stories of women of color about bias and mistreatment	7	Taking a public stand to support racial equality
8	Taking a public stand to support racial equality	8	Mentoring or sponsoring one or more women of color

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A CLOSER LOOK

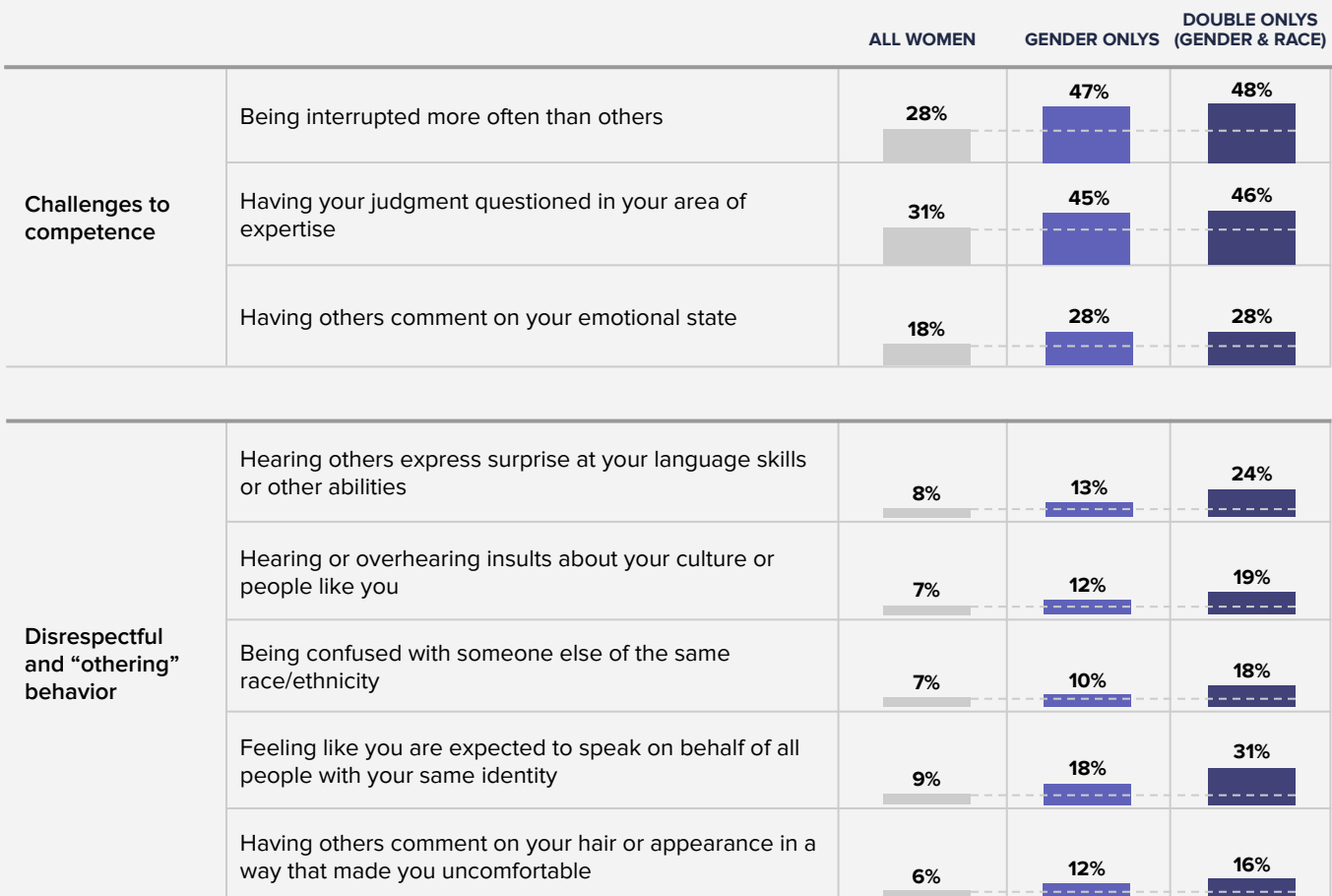# Women who are "Onlys" and "double Onlys" have a much worse experience

Women who are "Onlys"—often one of the only people of their race or gender in the room at work—have especially difficult day-to-day experiences. Onlys stand out, and because of that, they tend to be more heavily scrutinized. Their successes and failures are often put under a microscope, and they are more likely to encounter comments and behavior that leave them feeling othered, excluded, and reduced to negative stereotypes.[26]

Being an Only for one dimension of identity is already difficult. But women of color sometimes have to contend with being Onlys on two dimensions—both as the only woman in the room and as the only person of their race. "Double Onlys" face even more bias, discrimination, and pressure to perform, and they are even more likely to be experiencing burnout.

"Because I'm the only woman of color on my team, there's a visible difference between me and the other people on the screen. And that can be intimidating. It makes me want to be cautious and more reserved about what I say or do. I feel like in those spaces, I'm representing either women or my race or ethnicity."

EAST ASIAN WOMAN, ENTRY-LEVEL

WOMEN WHO ARE ONLYS ARE MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE MICROAGGRESSIONS

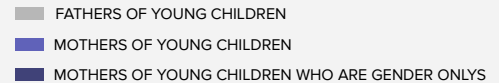|		ALL WOMEN	GENDER ONLYS	DOUBLE ONLYS (GENDER & RACE)
Challenges to competence	Being interrupted more often than others	28%	47%	48%
	Having your judgment questioned in your area of expertise	31%	45%	46%
	Having others comment on your emotional state	18%	28%	28%
Disrespectful and "othering" behavior	Hearing others express surprise at your language skills or other abilities	8%	13%	24%
	Hearing or overhearing insults about your culture or people like you	7%	12%	19%
	Being confused with someone else of the same race/ethnicity	7%	10%	18%
	Feeling like you are expected to speak on behalf of all people with your same identity	9%	18%	31%
	Having others comment on your hair or appearance in a way that made you uncomfortable	6%	12%	16%

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LEAN IN

Being an Only can amplify the challenges of being a working mother

Being an Only or double Only can dramatically compound other challenges women are facing at work. Mothers of young children[27] are one example of this; mothers already face more bias and barriers than fathers and women overall, and when they are often the only woman in the room, their experience is even more difficult.

Compared to mothers of young children who regularly work with other women, those who are Onlys are significantly more likely to be burned out and to have considered leaving their companies. They are more likely to feel judged when they take advantage of options that make it easier to balance work and life, such as working from home or working nonstandard hours. And they are less likely to feel comfortable sharing their personal challenges with colleagues, which may make it harder to get support.

MOTHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN HAVE A MORE DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE WHEN THEY ARE ONLYS

Legend:
- ▬ FATHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN
- ▬ MOTHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN
- ▬ MOTHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN WHO ARE GENDER ONLYS

Burnout

	Fathers	Mothers	Mothers who are Gender Onlys
Uncomfortable discussing burnout	27%	32%	39%
Feel burned out often or almost always	38%	47%	55%

Feelings when working flexibly

	Fathers	Mothers	Mothers who are Gender Onlys
Judged	12%	19%	25%
Worried that it will hurt my career	18%	27%	34%

Concerns about working remotely more often than others

	Fathers	Mothers	Mothers who are Gender Onlys
Being viewed as less committed	36%	41%	51%
Having to work harder to get noticed	26%	33%	42%

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The road
to progress

As companies continue to manage the challenges of the pandemic and look to build a more equal workplace for the future, they need to focus on two key priorities: 1) advancing all aspects of diversity and inclusion, and 2) addressing the increasing burnout that all employees—but particularly women—are experiencing.

1

How companies can advance diversity and inclusion

Although we have seen important gains since 2016, women are still significantly underrepresented at all levels of management. On top of this, women continue to have a worse day-to-day experience at work. Women are more likely than men to have their competence questioned and their authority undermined, and women of color and other women with traditionally marginalized identities are especially likely to face disrespectful and "othering" behavior.

To drive change, companies need to invest deeply in all aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This starts with taking bold steps to ensure that women of diverse identities are well represented, but diversity of numbers isn't enough on its own. Companies also need to create a culture that fully leverages the benefits of diversity—one in which women, and all employees, feel comfortable bringing their unique ideas, perspectives, and experiences to the table. When women are respected and their contributions are valued, they are more likely to be happy in their jobs and to feel connected to their coworkers.

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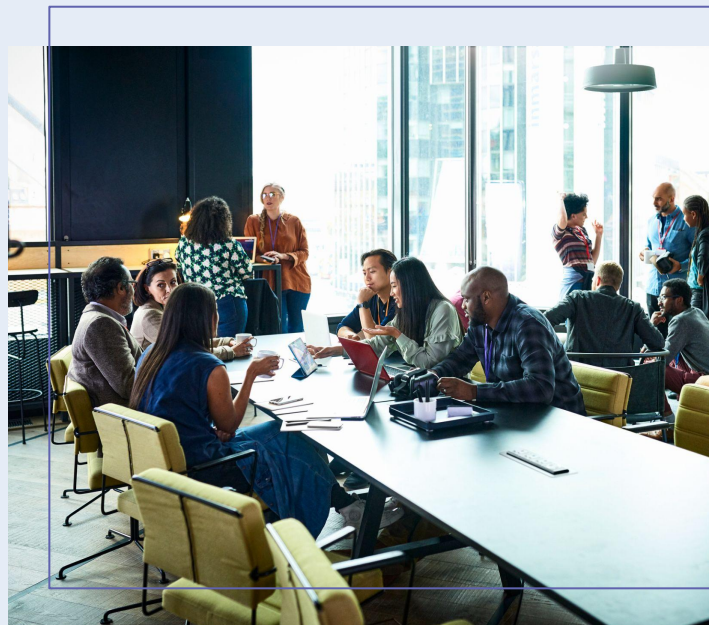
Where companies should focus to improve diversity

Over the last few years, more companies have implemented practices to ensure fairness in hiring and performance reviews, from requiring diverse slates for open roles to providing bias training for evaluators. These changes have produced positive results: companies that have made the greatest strides in women's representation are more likely to have these practices in place.

However, gains since 2019 have been much greater in the C-suite than at lower levels, and they have benefited white women more than women of color. To drive sustainable progress for all women, companies need to take action to address two systemic weak points in the corporate pipeline: the "broken rung" in promotions at the first step up to manager, which leaves women dramatically underrepresented in mid-level management, and the sharp drops in representation of women of color at every level of advancement. These gaps largely explain why we see so few women—and almost no women of color—in senior leadership.

Although there are no quick fixes to these challenges, there are steps companies can take. First, they should ensure they are applying the same best practices, with the same level of rigor, across both hiring and performance reviews. Companies are currently doing more to reduce bias in hiring—for example, almost two thirds of companies offer bias training focused on hiring, compared to less than half of companies that offer this for evaluators involved in performance reviews. But performance reviews largely determine promotion outcomes, which means making them more equitable is critical to fixing the broken rung and advancing more women across the pipeline.

TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES
are more likely to provide bias training and reminders of how to avoid bias before starting a hiring process or performance review cycle.

See page 50 for details.

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LEAN IN

Second, companies need to more fully track representation, as well as hiring and promotion outcomes.[28] Although most companies track representation for women overall, far fewer do this for women of color, which means many companies are missing the critical visibility they need to make progress. Companies would also benefit by tracking hiring and promotions to determine whether women, and especially women of color, are being hired and promoted at similar rates to other employees.[29] If they see gaps, they may need to fine-tune their hiring and promotion processes—and, more broadly, ensure that all women are getting the mentorship, sponsorship, and professional development needed to advance.

TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES

are more likely to track hiring outcomes, such as the percentage of interviewees and hires who are from underrepresented groups.

See page 50 for details.

To accelerate progress for all women, on all fronts, companies need to double down on accountability. Despite saying that gender and racial diversity are among their most important business priorities, only about two thirds of companies hold senior leaders accountable for progress on diversity goals, and less than a third hold managers—who play a critical role in hiring and promotion decisions—accountable. Moreover, among companies that hold senior leaders accountable, less than half factor progress on diversity metrics into performance reviews and far fewer provide financial incentives for meeting goals. Companies need to treat diversity as they would any business priority, and that includes tying progress toward goals to advancement and compensation.

> " At my company, inclusion and diversity is part of our publicly broadcast objectives and goals. Managers each take a piece of that responsibility and have skin in the game."
>
> BLACK WOMAN, SENIOR MANAGER, CHILDREN UNDER 10

TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES

are more likely to hold senior leaders accountable for diversity goals and to provide financial incentives for progress.

See page 50 for details.

Companies put more emphasis on reducing bias in hiring than performance reviews

Since 2019, the number of companies implementing best practices to reduce bias in hiring and performance reviews has increased significantly. This is a step in the right direction—but there is a sizable gap between the share of companies that apply certain best practices to hiring, and those that apply the same practices to reviews.

Only 65% of companies track promotion rates by gender, and only 35% track promotions specifically for women of color (i.e., by the intersection of gender and race).

HOW COMPANIES ARE WORKING TO ENSURE FAIRNESS IN HIRING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEWS[30]

2019　2021

% of companies that take actions to ensure fairness in hiring/in the performance review process

	HIRING		PERFORMANCE REVIEWS	
	2019	2021	2019	2021
Clear and specific evaluation criteria established before the review process begins	71%	73%	72%	76%
Tracking outcomes to check for bias	42%	71%	39%	55%
Bias training for evaluators	52%	63%	45%	47%
Reminders of how to avoid unconscious bias before the review process begins	45%	60%	33%	47%
Requiring diverse slates of similarly qualified candidates to be considered	48%	61%	18%	23%

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LEAN IN

Companies can do more to hold leaders accountable for progress on diversity

More than two thirds of companies say senior leaders are held accountable for progress on diversity goals—but less than half as many hold managers accountable. In addition, among companies that hold senior leaders accountable, less than half say diversity goals are a component of their performance reviews, and less than a quarter offer financial incentives for progress.
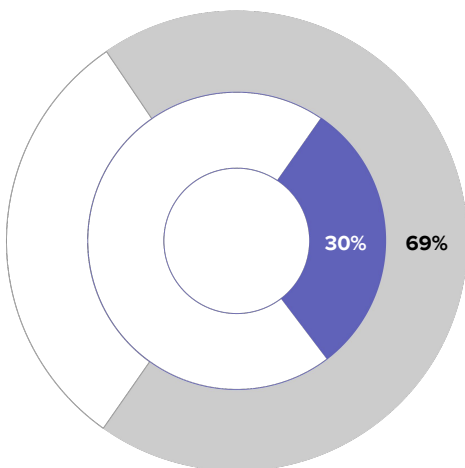

" What gets measured gets done. Putting a target in place allows you to analyze the process end to end and truly assess the impact using real data and not 'gut feel.' We've really deepened our understanding of the systemic barriers in place and have been able to address them more effectively by tracking and setting numerical goals and targets."

SENIOR HR LEADER

HOW COMPANIES ARE HOLDING LEADERS AND MANAGERS ACCOUNTABLE

■ SENIOR MANAGERS ■ SENIOR LEADERS

% of companies that hold this group accountable for progress on diversity metrics and goals

30% 69%

Of companies that hold leaders at this level accountable, % that say they hold them accountable by . . .

Sharing diversity results within the organization
71%
31%

Making diversity goals a component of performance reviews
48%
27%

Offering financial incentives for making progress
24%
10%

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LEAN IN
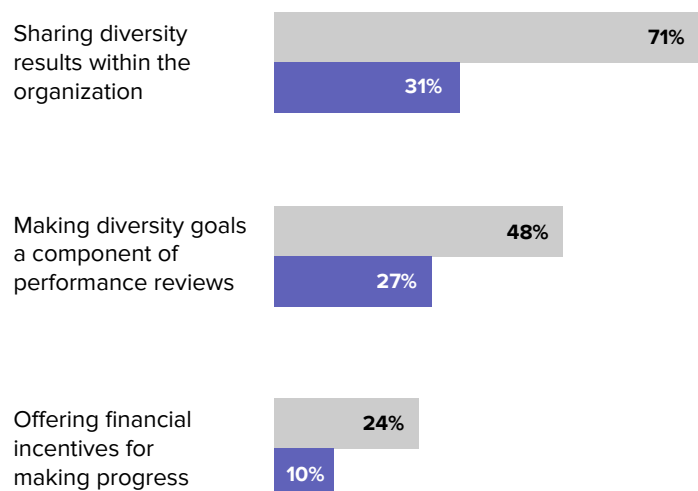
How companies can make their workplaces more inclusive

Companies have strengthened their commitments to DEI and racial equity over the past year, but creating a more inclusive culture for women of all identities will take deep work and sustained investment. HR leaders say two things are critical to driving progress: senior-level sponsorship and high employee engagement.

Senior leaders need to fully and publicly support DEI efforts. When leaders actively participate in programs and events to advance DEI, they signal that this work is important. Senior leaders also have a critical role to play in ensuring that DEI initiatives are appropriately resourced. This is just another reason why it's important that all company leaders, starting with the CEO, are held accountable for progress on diversity metrics.

But women's day-to-day experiences are primarily shaped by their interactions with their direct managers and colleagues, which means companies need to equip employees at all levels to be part of the solution. This starts with raising awareness. Employees need to understand the barriers faced by women, particularly women with traditionally marginalized identities, and the benefits of a more inclusive culture. Companies can promote awareness by sharing data on the experiences of women in their organization, bringing in thought-provoking speakers, and encouraging employees to openly share their experiences and ideas for advancing DEI.

It's important that DEI training covers the right material, with the right level of specificity. For example, only about half of companies say that their bias training addresses intersectionality—which means many employees are missing a crucial perspective on the experiences of colleagues with two or more traditionally marginalized identities, including women of color, LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities.

McKinsey & Company

LEAN IN

For employees to move from awareness to action, training is an important step. The number of employees receiving training on bias, anti-racism, and allyship is on the rise—but only 34 percent of employees have received anti-racism training in the past year, and just 14 percent have received allyship training. This suggests companies may need to take bolder steps to encourage participation, such as offering incentives or making training mandatory. They should also invest in ongoing employee education; it takes consistent reinforcement to reshape deep-rooted biases and change behavior, so a one-and-done approach to training is not enough. And companies need to be sure they are incorporating new ideas and tools from training into everyday processes, too. One example of this is sending out reminders of how bias can influence evaluations before hiring and promotion processes; research shows that this simple practice can improve outcomes for women and other people from underrepresented groups.[31]

Finally, companies should clearly communicate what's expected of employees and what it means to have an inclusive culture. Building this thinking into company values is a good place to start, but organizations would benefit from articulating the specific behaviors and actions that promote inclusion. In addition to signaling the importance of this work, clear guidelines will help set managers and all employees up for success.

TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES
are more likely to offer allyship and anti-racism training for employees.

See page 50 for details.
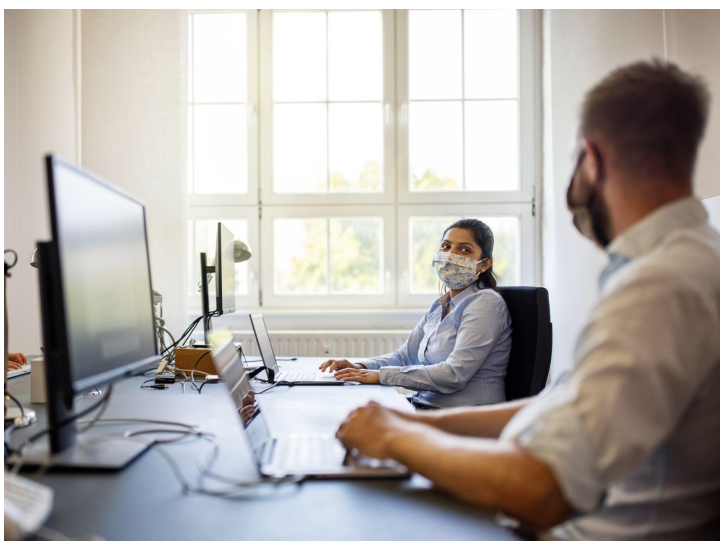
Companies can take steps to make the "Only" experience less common. Women who are "Onlys"—often the only person in the room of their gender, race or ethnicity, or both—have a significantly worse experience at work. To fully address this issue, companies need to improve the representation of women so there are fewer Onlys. Companies should also provide networking opportunities so women can connect across teams, and whenever possible managers should staff women on teams in groups of two or three.

Employees are receiving more training—but there's still room to improve

The share of employees participating in anti-racism, unconscious bias, and DEI training has increased significantly in the past year. But only 34 percent of employees have participated in anti-racism training, and, notably, only 14 percent have received allyship training—which may explain the gap we see between employees identifying as allies and taking the actions that are most meaningful to women of color.

SHARE OF EMPLOYEES WHO RECEIVED ALLYSHIP, ANTI-RACISM, AND BIAS TRAINING[32]

■ 2020   ■ 2021

% of employees that have participated in trainings at their company

100%

	Anti-racism training	Allyship training	Bias training
2020	19%	N/A	25%
2021	34%	14%	55%
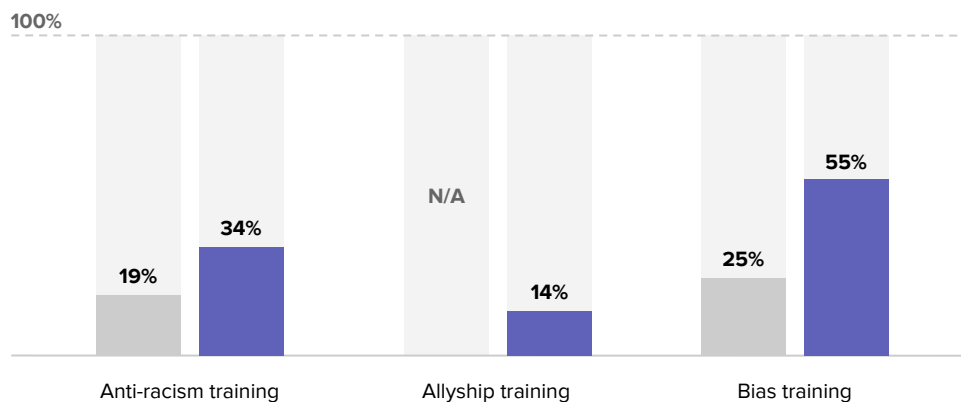
> "This work takes time. There is no one right way to solve diversity and inclusion issues. Leadership must be early adopters, and DEI must be ingrained in a company's culture and values. Additionally, DEI learning should be a journey—ongoing and continuous. It is important to make sure all employees get comfortable with being uncomfortable."

SENIOR HR LEADER

* Allyship training was not offered as a response option in 2020.

2

How companies can begin to address burnout

Companies have demonstrated a strong commitment to employee well-being over the past year. They have taken a wide range of steps to help employees weather the pandemic, including increasing mental health benefits, adding support for parents and caregivers, and offering more paid leave. These steps have led to better outcomes for all employees, and they have likely played a key role in helping women to stay in their jobs.

But burnout is still on the rise, especially among women. There is no easy fix, so continued investment will be critical. In addition to maintaining the successful policies and programs they've put in place, companies should look for opportunities to expand on them and try new approaches. It's also important that companies establish new norms and systems to improve employees' everyday work experiences—even with all the right policies and programs, employees will continue to struggle if the cadence and expectations of their work feel untenable.

Across all of their efforts to combat burnout, companies would benefit from embracing experimentation. There is no playbook for this unprecedented moment, but companies can make strides by listening closely to employees, exploring creative solutions, and trying something different if a new norm or program falls flat.

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LEAN IN

As companies embrace flexibility, they also need to set clear boundaries

Over the last 18 months, companies have embraced flexibility. More than three quarters of senior HR leaders say allowing employees to work flexible hours is one of the most effective things they've done to improve employee well-being, and there are clear signs it's working. Employees with more flexibility to take time off and step away from work are much less likely to be burned out, and very few employees are concerned that requesting flexible work arrangements has impacted their opportunity to advance.

However, many companies are missing a crucial piece: without clear boundaries, flexible work can quickly turn into "always on" work. More than a third of employees feel like they need to be available for work 24/7, and almost half believe they need to work long hours to get ahead. Employees who feel this way are much more likely to be burned out and to consider leaving their companies.

The fact that so many employees feel "always on" signals that companies need to more explicitly define expectations. Right now, many companies are leaving it to employees to establish their own boundaries when they work remotely or work flexible hours—and while employees should be empowered to carve out personal time, companies have a responsibility to put formal boundaries in place across the organization. Only 1 in 5 employees says their company has told them they don't need to respond to non-urgent requests outside of traditional work hours, and only 1 in 3 has received guidance around blocking off personal time on their calendars. Establishing or reinforcing work norms like these would go a long way toward reducing the feeling of being "always on."

As companies navigate the transition to increased remote and hybrid work—with more employees working different schedules across different time zones—the risk of feeling "always on" will likely increase. Putting clear boundaries in place now can help companies ease this transition.

Employees have always cared deeply about flexibility. In 2019, the need for more work/life flexibility was the number-one issue employees had raised with their employers.

"Someone saying, 'Hey, go take a couple days off to deal with this' would go a long way. The company I work for is really strict about time off, which I think has led a lot of people in the organization to become really burned out. I know it's caused me to get overly stressed and work more than I should to save up time to take off later, which just means you never recover from burnout."

WHITE TRANS WOMAN, ENTRY-LEVEL

Managers have an important role to play

Managers are on the front lines of employees' day-to-day experiences, which means their actions have a significant impact on employee burnout and well-being. To improve outcomes, managers should focus their attention in three key areas: modeling work/life boundaries, ensuring that performance is evaluated based on results, and supporting employee well-being.

Employees often look to their manager to understand unspoken company norms and expectations. This means managers need to respect company-wide boundaries around flexible work—if employees aren't expected to respond to emails during certain hours, managers need to abide by that norm. Managers can further reinforce the importance of these norms by celebrating employees who push back when boundaries are crossed and by encouraging candid conversations and problem-solving across the team if boundaries start to erode.

To underscore that employees are not expected to be "always on," companies and managers need to work together to make sure all employees are evaluated based on results rather than when or where they work. A results-oriented lens is critical in formal performance reviews, and managers should be mindful of the day-to-day feedback they deliver to ensure they aren't inadvertently signaling that long hours and face time are unspoken measures of performance.

It's also important that managers actively monitor employees for signs of burnout and adjust workloads as needed. Although some managers are stepping up on this front—especially women—a majority of employees report their manager doesn't check in on their well-being or help them shift priorities and deadlines on a regular basis. This suggests that managers need to touch base with their teams more consistently, and that these check-ins should be more explicit. Prompting employees to rate their level of stress and exhaustion on a one-to-ten scale, as opposed to generally asking them how they're doing, creates more space for open, honest discussion.

Finally, companies need to impress upon managers that the work they do to support employee well-being is critical to the health and success of the business. For this work to feel like a real priority, it needs to be tied to concrete outcomes for managers, including performance ratings and compensation.

Most employees don't unplug when they work remotely. Only a third of employees say they regularly disconnect from work communication when not working, and even fewer set clear boundaries around their availability. This points to the need for companies to make it clear that taking time away from work is encouraged.

" My manager allowed me to work from home with flexible hours so that I could take care of my ailing mother. It's always been just, 'We know that you'll get your work done, and we're not worried about that. Take care of your family first, because if you and your family aren't safe and healthy, then our company won't benefit from you as an employee.'"

WHITE WOMAN, MANAGER,
CAREGIVER TO AN ADULT

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Companies are taking a wide range of steps to support employees

Many companies have significantly increased support for employees in the past year—from expanding mental health supports, to adding support for parents, to increasing flexible work and paid leave options.

TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES
are more likely to provide childcare support to employees, including on-site childcare and emergency backup childcare services.
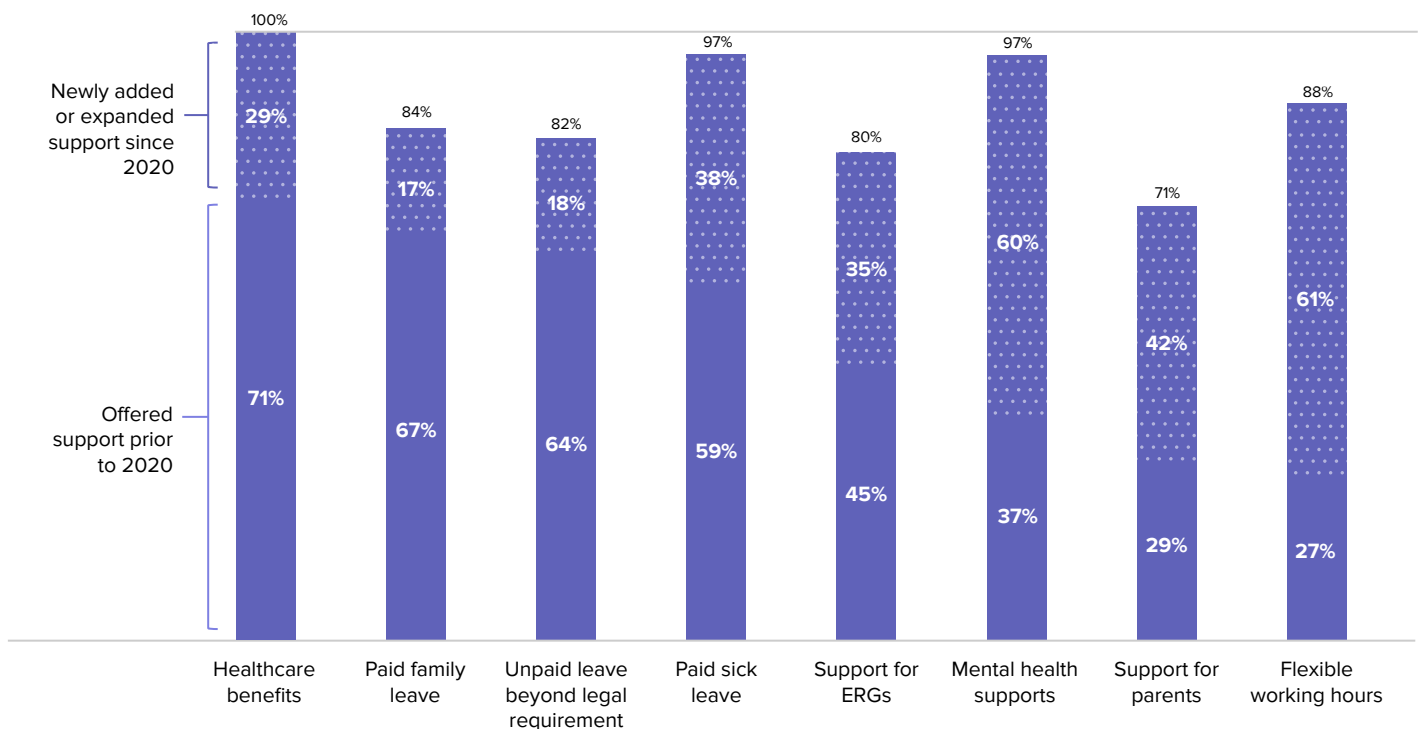
See page 50 for details.

"
Don't assume that you know what is going to make a difference. Employees appreciate it when you ask for their input."

SENIOR HR LEADER

"
We conducted many listening sessions with our ERGs to understand the challenges they faced during the pandemic and what the firm, leaders, and managers can do to support everyone. We found those sessions incredibly valuable—they surfaced a number of ideas, including strongly encouraging everyone to take time off and not scheduling meetings on Friday afternoons."

SENIOR HR LEADER

HOW COMPANIES ARE SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES

Newly added or expanded support since 2020

Offered support prior to 2020

	Healthcare benefits	Paid family leave	Unpaid leave beyond legal requirement	Paid sick leave	Support for ERGs	Mental health supports	Support for parents	Flexible working hours
Total	100%	84%	82%	97%	80%	97%	71%	88%
Newly added or expanded	29%	17%	18%	38%	35%	60%	42%	61%
Offered prior to 2020	71%	67%	64%	59%	45%	37%	29%	27%

Employees have considerable flexibility, but "always on" culture is still driving burnout
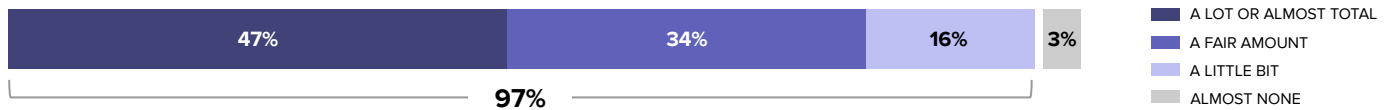
Almost all employees say they have at least some flexibility to take time off and step away from work. However, more than a third feel like they are expected to be "always on," and employees who feel this way are much more likely to say they are often or almost always burned out.

MOST EMPLOYEES HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY TO TAKE TIME OFF OR STEP AWAY FROM WORK

% of employees who have the flexibility to . . .

Take time off for family or personal reasons

47%	34%	16%	3%

97%

■ A LOT OR ALMOST TOTAL
■ A FAIR AMOUNT
■ A LITTLE BIT
■ ALMOST NONE

Step away from work to deal with unexpected events

45%	32%	18%	5%

95%
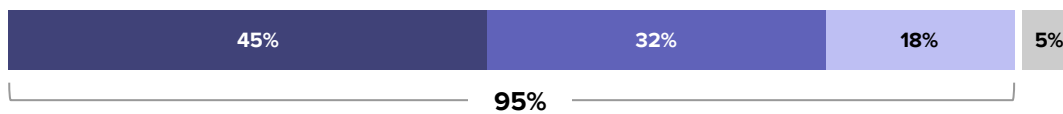
EMPLOYEES WHO ARE "ALWAYS ON" ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO BE BURNED OUT

15% Neutral/ Not sure

37% "Always on"

47% Not "always on"
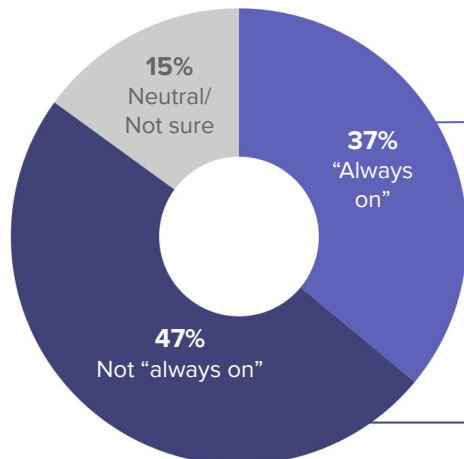
Of those who are expected to be always on or available 24/7 . . .

57% are burned out
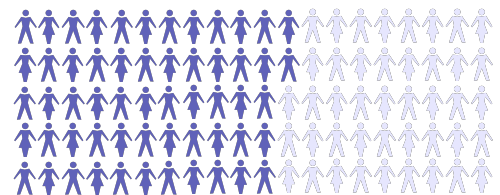
Of those who are NOT expected to be always on or available 24/7 . . .

26% are burned out

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LEAN IN
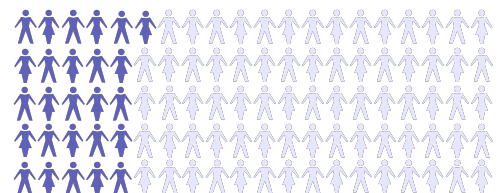
How top-performing companies are driving progress

Companies that are making consistent gains in women's representation across the pipeline are more likely to have certain best practices in place. The following data are based on an analysis of top performers—companies that have higher representation of women and women of color than their industry peers, have made progress at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years, and have achieved greater equity in promotions at the broken rung.

Type of policy, program, or practice	Detailed policy, program, or practice	Companies leading progress	Companies overall
IMPROVING DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION			
De-biasing hiring and performance review processes	Tracking hiring outcomes	100%	71%
	Offering bias training for hiring evaluators	92%	63%
	Providing reminders of how to avoid unconscious bias before the hiring process begins	85%	60%
	Offering bias training for performance review evaluators	69%	47%
	Providing reminders of how to avoid unconscious bias before performance reviews	85%	47%
	Encouraging reviewers to take COVID-19 into consideration when evaluating employees	83%	66%
Tracking internal diversity metrics by gender and race/ethnicity	Tracking and setting numerical goals for representation (e.g., women, people of color)	92%	60%
	Tracking representation of all employees by intersection of gender and race/ethnicity	77%	60%
	-Tracking differences in promotion rates	62%	35%
Holding senior leaders accountable	Holding senior leaders accountable for progress (or lack thereof) on diversity metrics/goals	100%	69%
	-Building diversity goals into performance reviews	77%	48%
	-Providing financial incentives for making progress (e.g., bonuses)	38%	24%
	-Imposing financial penalties for not making progress	38%	9%
IMPROVING INCLUSION			
Focusing on anti-racism, bias, and allyship education	Anti-racism training (i.e., training to actively identify and eliminate racism)	69%	42%
	Training on promoting DEI and/or reducing bias in a virtual environment	92%	55%
	Allyship training or programs	92%	53%
	Exploration of intersectionality as a part of their bias training	92%	54%
Providing mentoring and sponsorship programs for women of color and support for ERGs	Formal mentorship or sponsorship programs for employees from underrepresented groups	85%	52%
	Support for employee resource groups (ERGs)	100%	79%
Providing parental supports and childcare benefits	Paid family leave	100%	84%
	Emergency backup childcare services for parents	92%	49%
	On-site childcare	33%	12%
ACTIVELY WORKING TO REDUCE BURNOUT			
Taking steps to create a sustainable work culture	Increasing mental health supports	92%	60%
	Encouraging new hires to set boundaries around their time availability	58%	33%

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CONCLUSION

Looking ahead

CONCLUSION

This critical moment calls for critical commitment

The immediate challenge for companies is to help employees get through the pandemic—and the work to get this right is far from over. But companies also need to start to plan for the future. The disruption of the last year and a half is driving a fundamental change in the way we work. Companies are embracing flexibility and remote work at levels that would
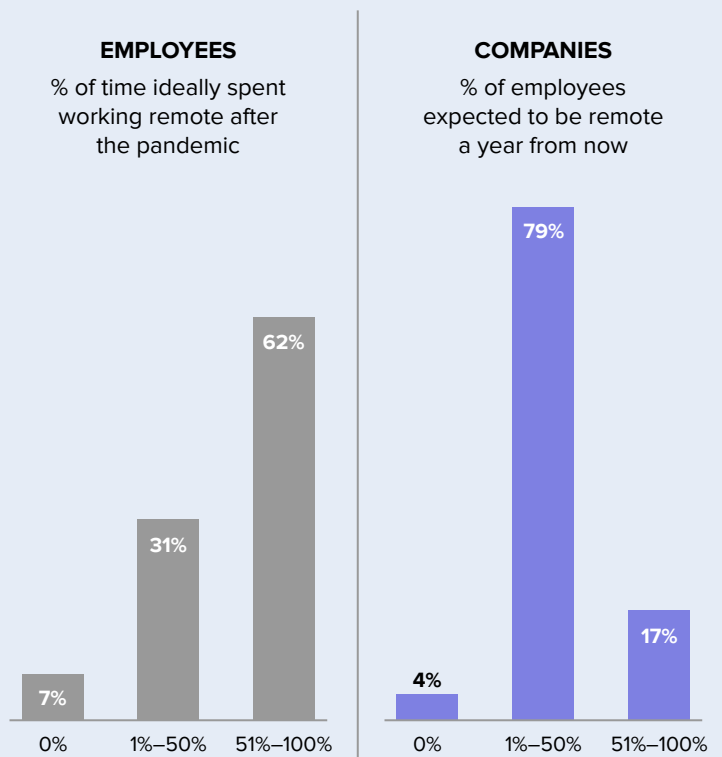have seemed impossible just a few years ago—and employees welcome the shift. It will take time for the full impact of the pandemic to come into focus, but one thing is clear: hybrid work is here to stay.

What's unclear is whether companies can capitalize on this seismic shift—and the growing cultural focus on employee well-being and racial equity—to create a better workplace. It will require pushing beyond critically important but smaller wins in the representation of women, and doing the deep cultural work necessary to create a workplace where all women, and all employees, feel like they belong.

This will demand a level of investment and creativity that may not have seemed possible before the pandemic, but companies have shown what they can do when change is critical. Now they need to treat women's equality and diversity, equity and inclusion with the same sense of urgency—and they need to reward the leaders taking us into the future.

HOW COMPANIES AND EMPLOYEES ARE ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF REMOTE WORK

EMPLOYEES
% of time ideally spent working remote after the pandemic

0%	1%–50%	51%–100%
7%	31%	62%

COMPANIES
% of employees expected to be remote a year from now

0%	1%–50%	51%–100%
4%	79%	17%

Acknowledgments

McKinsey & Company and LeanIn.Org would like to thank the 423 companies and more than 65,000 employees who participated in this year's study. By sharing their information and insights, they've given us new visibility into the state of women in the workplace and the steps companies can take to achieve gender equality.

We appreciate the continued help of Defined Contribution Institutional Investment Association (DCIAA), Equity Collaborative, Health Evolution, Healthcare Businesswomen's Association, Hygieia, Institutional Limited Partners Association (ILPA), International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), Massachusetts High Technology Council, Press Forward, SEMI Foundation, Women's Network in Electronic Transactions (WNET), and in convening participants in their respective industries.

We would like to thank IntelliSurvey for their help in conducting the surveys for this study and Getty Images for providing the photography from the Lean In Collection used in this report and website.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR COMPANIES

It's clear from this year's report that there's a gap between intent and action when it comes to allyship. LeanIn.Org's new **Allyship at Work** is designed to close this gap and empower employees to take meaningful action as allies. 94% of program participants feel more equipped to practice allyship and would recommend the program to a colleague. Find out why organizations like Amazon, Sony Music Group, and Walmart are using the program and how you can bring it to your company at **leanin.org/allyshipatwork**.

McKinsey & Company offers an award-winning executive training program to equip diverse leaders in the U.S. and Europe with the network, capabilities, and mindsets needed to achieve their professional goals. Since launching its **Black Leadership Academy** in September 2020, McKinsey has enrolled 17,000 participants from ~500 organizations. In 2021, McKinsey also launched the **Black Economic Mobility Institute** to examine the economic context and opportunities of Black and African Americans. This fall McKinsey & Company will launch Hispanic and Latino Leadership Academy and an Asian Leadership Academy. Visit **mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion** to explore McKinsey's full collection of research and insights on DE&I.

Report authors

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CORPORATE PIPELINE BY INDUSTRY

Industries have different talent pipelines

Although women are broadly underrepresented in corporate America, the talent pipeline varies by industry. Some industries struggle to attract entry-level women (e.g., Technology: Hardware; IT and Telecom; Engineering and Industrial Manufacturing), while others fail to advance women into middle management (Energy, Utilities, and Basic Materials) or senior leadership (Oil and Gas)

	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
ASSET MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS	50%	42%	35%	28%	21%	19%
BANKING AND CONSUMER FINANCE	51%	45%	37%	33%	30%	30%
CONSUMER PACKAGED GOODS	54%	50%	43%	40%	36%	31%
ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND BASIC MATERIALS	40%	27%	27%	23%	21%	21%
ENGINEERING AND INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	32%	24%	20%	22%	23%	22%
FOOD AND BEVERAGE DISTRIBUTION	46%	37%	32%	27%	20%	20%
FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING	52%	40%	36%	33%	33%	20%
HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS AND SERVICES	74%	69%	59%	44%	36%	28%
IT SERVICES AND TELECOM	37%	34%	29%	28%	26%	27%
INSURANCE	66%	55%	42%	33%	30%	29%

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	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT	51%	45%	40%	37%	27%	28%
OIL AND GAS	38%	25%	23%	20%	21%	10%
PHARMACEUTICALS AND MEDICAL PRODUCTS	56%	50%	45%	40%	30%	29%
PROFESSIONAL AND INFORMATION SERVICES	67%	60%	52%	41%	39%	38%
PUBLIC AND SOCIAL SECTOR	53%	46%	45%	45%	41%	38%
RESTAURANTS	58%	47%	40%	36%	33%	29%
RETAIL	57%	50%	45%	37%	32%	30%
TECHNOLOGY: HARDWARE	33%	22%	19%	14%	14%	14%
TECHNOLOGY: SOFTWARE	40%	38%	32%	27%	25%	22%
TRANSPORTATION, LOGISTICS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE	40%	36%	32%	21%	20%	16%

Methodology

RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

This report is based on research from 423 companies across the United States and Canada, building on similar research conducted annually by McKinsey & Company and LeanIn.Org since 2015, as well as research from McKinsey & Company in 2012.

Participating companies from the private, public, and social sectors submitted talent pipeline and/or policies and programs data. In addition, more than 65,000 employees from 88 companies were surveyed on their workplace experiences, and we interviewed women of different races and ethnicities, LGBTQ+ women,[33] and women with disabilities at all levels in their organizations working either remotely or on-site.

We grouped companies by industry to create benchmarks that provide peer comparisons. The number of companies from each industry is as follows:[34]

- Asset Management and Institutional Investors—49
- Banking and Consumer Finance—34
- Consumer Packaged Goods—11
- Energy, Utilities, and Basic Materials—23
- Engineering and Industrial Manufacturing—17
- Food and Beverage Distribution—15
- Food and Beverage Manufacturing—17
- Healthcare Systems and Services—30
- Insurance—10
- IT Services and Telecom—17
- Media and Entertainment—9
- Oil and Gas—14
- Pharmaceutical and Medical Products—21
- Professional and Information Services—10
- Public and Social Sector—37
- Restaurants—17
- Retail—12
- Tech: Hardware—19
- Tech: Software—47
- Transportation, Logistics, and Infrastructure—9

Companies opted in to the study in response to invitations from McKinsey & Company and LeanIn.Org or by indicating interest through our public website. Participation in the Employee Experience Survey was encouraged but optional.

All data collection occurred between May and August 2021. Talent pipeline data reflects representation of men and women **as of December 31, 2020**, as well as personnel changes (e.g., due to promotion, hiring, attrition) during 2020. Therefore, **all talent pipeline data does not represent any changes that occurred during 2021.**

Human resource leaders and professionals provided information on policies, programs, and priorities on behalf of their company between June and August 2021. Additionally, employees were surveyed on their workplace experiences between June and August 2021. These datasets represent point-in-time snapshots and **reflect companies' responses and employees' experiences at the time that the survey was taken.**

Where appropriate, some statements describing women's experiences in the workplace were taken from past survey data that has been published in prior *Women in the Workplace* reports.

PIPELINE DATA AND ANALYTICS

Overall Metrics

All pipeline metrics (e.g., representation, promotion rates, hiring shares, attrition rates) were initially calculated for each participating company. Company results were then averaged for each industry and each industry's data were weighted by the composition of the Fortune 500 in 2020. This enabled us to avoid overemphasizing or underemphasizing particular industries and better estimate trends over time based on each year's sample of companies.

The industry breakdown of the Fortune 500 used for our weighting[35] was:

- Consumer—19%
- Energy and Basic Materials—16%
- Finance—16%
- Tech—12%
- Healthcare—10%
- Engineering, Automotive, and Industrial Manufacturing—10%
- Food and Restaurants—7%
- Media and Entertainment—4%
- Transportation, Logistics, and Infrastructure—5%
- Professional and Information Services—2%

Definition of Job Levels

Companies categorized their employees into six levels based on the following standard definitions, taking into account reporting structure and salaries. The levels and definitions provided were:

- L1—Executives: CEO and direct reports to CEO, responsible for company operations and profitability (board members are not included in our primary analyses unless they are also employees)
- L2—Senior vice presidents and other similar roles: senior leaders of the organization with significant business unit or functional oversight
- L3—Vice presidents and other similar roles: leaders within the organization, responsible for activities/initiatives within a subunit of a business unit or function, or who report directly to senior vice presidents
- L4—Senior managers: seasoned managers and contributors, with responsibility for multiple teams and discrete functions or operating units
- L5—Managers: junior managers and contributors, responsible for small teams and/or functional units or operations
- L6—Entry-level: Employees responsible for carrying out discrete tasks and participating on teams, typically in an office or corporate setting (field employees like cashiers or customer service representatives are not included in our primary talent pipeline analyses)

"Senior leaders" refers to L1–L3, and "Managers" may at times refer to L4–L5 and/or employees who disclosed in the survey that they manage teams.

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Methodology

Metrics and Analytics

Talent pipeline data included the representation of men and women (overall, in P&L versus support roles, and, optionally, by race/ethnicity and for engineering and product management roles). In addition, companies reported the number of men and women who were hired, promoted, and who left the company (overall and, optionally, by race/ethnicity and for engineering and product management roles).

Promotion and attrition rates were calculated for women and men, overall and by race, at each level. Promotion rates were calculated by dividing the number of promotions of that gender into a level by the number of employees of that gender in the level below at the start of the year. Attrition rates were calculated by dividing the number of each gender who left the company at a given level by the number of employees of that gender in that level at the start of the year.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE SURVEY AND ANALYTICS

Survey Participation

More than 65,000 employees from 88 companies elected to participate in the Employee Experience Survey. The survey questions covered multiple themes (e.g., job satisfaction, employee well-being, work flexibility, remote work, the state of diversity, equity, manager actions, allyship) as well as demographic questions (e.g., role, age, sexual orientation, family status).

Bivariate and Multivariate Statistical Reporting

Survey results were reported as an unweighted pooled average of responses across companies. Many of the questions offered a five-point labeled response scale (e.g., "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). Unless otherwise specified, analyses aggregated the top-two and bottom-two boxes of the response scale (e.g., "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree").

Where we highlight differences between genders or other groups, we highlight only those differences that are substantial and reliable. To that end, all differences noted in this report are statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level using a one-tailed test or reflect a difference of at least five percentage points between two groups.

Regression Analysis

We used regression analyses to identify the conditions and practices most predictive of employees' likelihood to report feeling burned out, to consider getting a job at a different company with a different work culture, and to consider leaving or downshifting their careers. As explanatory variables, we included a vector of employee-reported and a vector of objective work conditions.

Employee-reported perception of company culture included: company leaders recognized pandemic challenges, company leaders formally recognized work managers do to support employee well-being, company leaders value the work employees do to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, employees have work flexibility,6 company has become more open to discussing mental health in the last year, employees are expected to prioritize work above family, and employees need to work long hours to get ahead.[36]

Objective work conditions included: whether the respondent mostly worked on-site over the past year, the respondent is a people manager, and the respondent often finds her/himself as the only person of his/her gender or race in a room.

In all specifications, we controlled for a vector of demographic variables, including gender, ethnicity, whether the respondent is a parent, whether the respondent is above 30 years of age, disability status, and sexual orientation. Finally, we controlled for respondents' industries by including fixed effects for all industries participating in the survey. For all regression analyses, to account for the nested structure of the respondents, we calculated the standard errors of coefficient estimates using cluster-robust standard errors, clustering at the company level. Findings reported highlight the conditions and practices that are at least statistically significant at the 10 percent level—p-value < 0.10.

HR PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

Human resource professionals from 401 companies provided information on gender diversity policies and programs on behalf of their company. We report the percentage of companies that have a program, policy, priority, or position out of the total number of companies that submitted this type of data. In addition, this year, senior HR leaders (chief human resources officer or equivalent, head of diversity, equity, and inclusion or equivalent) from participating companies provided information on diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and practices they deemed to be most effective at their companies in achieving better outcomes. As part of this survey, HR leaders also provided qualitative comments in a free text form, which were coded using the constant comparative method. These comments may be used as anonymized quotes in the report.

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

We conducted individual interviews with 24 women from 20 companies across 15 industries, including Technology: Software; Public and Social Sector; Retail; Professional and Informational Services; Energy, Utilities, and Basic Materials; and Banking and Consumer Finance. Interviewees were volunteers selected to reflect a range of levels, departments, and demographic groups. Our interviews focused on women's workplace experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the quantitative findings from the employee survey. Individual names, company names, and any other identifying information were kept strictly confidential and individuals are anonymized in this report. Within the quotes, some identifying details may have been altered and/or withheld to protect the speaker's anonymity. Quotes have been edited for clarity.

LEAN IN

Endnotes

1 This report contains stock photographs for illustrative purposes only. Images do not reflect the identities of the women quoted. Within the quotes, some identifying details may have been altered and/or withheld to protect the speaker's anonymity.

2 In this study, women of color include Black, Latina, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or mixed-race women. However, due to small sample sizes, reported findings on individual racial/ethnic groups are restricted to Black women, Latinas, and Asian women.

3 Except where otherwise noted, "manager" refers to employees at the manager, senior manager, and director levels (L5 to L4 in Methodology).

4 "Leaving" or "stepping out" is defined in this report as taking a leave of absence or leaving the workforce altogether. "Downshifting" or "slowing down" is defined as reducing work hours, moving to a part-time role, or switching to a less demanding job.

5 *McKinsey Quarterly*, "'Great Attrition' or 'Great Attraction'? The Choice Is Yours," (September 8, 2021), https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/great-attrition-or-great-attraction-the-choice-is-yours.

6 Total percent of women and men per level in the race and gender pipeline may not sum to overall corporate pipeline totals, as the race pipeline does not include employees with unreported race data. Some percentages may sum to 101 percent due to rounding.

7 Pipeline data in this report is based on data from the end of 2020 and does not reflect changes through 2021.

8 Justine Tinkler, Jun Zhao, Yan Li, and Cecilia L. Ridgeway, "Honorary Whites? Asian American Women and the Dominance Penalty," *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World* 5 (2019): 1–13, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2378023119836000.

9 Research conducted by Pew Research Center in July 2020 suggests that nearly 1 in 3 Asian Americans has had racial slurs directed at them since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. See Pew Research Center, "Many Black and Asian Americans Say They Have Experienced Discrimination Amid the COVID-19 Outbreak," July 1, 2020, https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2020/07/01/many-black-and-asian-americans-say-they-have-experienced-discrimination-amid-the-covid-19-outbreak/.

10 Full question: "Consistently" burned out refers to respondents who indicated that they felt burned out "Often" or "Almost always." In the last few months, how often have you felt burned out at work? | Seldom; Almost never; Sometimes; Often; Almost always; Not sure.

11 "Racial violence" refers to incidents of violence against Black Americans committed by law enforcement officers beginning in early 2020 as well as to anti-Asian hate crimes linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

12 "Women leaders" refers to all women at manager level and above (L5 to L1 in Methodology).

13 Joan C. Williams and Rachel Dempsey, *What Works for Women at Work: Four Patterns Working Women Need to Know* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).

14 "Women managers" in this section refers to all women who manage teams (L5 to L1 in Methodology, excluding non-people managers).

15 "Senior-level" refers to vice presidents, senior vice presidents, and C-suite executives (L3 to L1 in Methodology).

16 This chart refers to leaders who spend a substantial amount of time or a great deal of time on DEI work outside of their formal job responsibilities. Full question: [asked only to those who said they spent time on DEI work outside of their formal job duties] In the last year, about how much time have you spent promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion at work? | A small amount of time (i.e., I do this occasionally or I spent a few hours on a single event); A moderate amount of time (i.e., I do this pretty regularly, but it doesn't take more than a couple of hours a month); A substantial amount of time (i.e., I typically spend time on this each week); A great deal of time (i.e., I spend time on this every day or almost every day).

17 "Managers" refers to first-level managers, senior managers, and directors (L5 to L4 in Methodology).

18 "Substantial amount of time" refers to those who reported spending either a substantial amount of time or a great deal of time on DEI work outside of their formal job responsibilities. See previous footnote for full question.

Endnotes

19 Data shown in this chart uses percent change in respondents who indicate they "Often" or "Almost always" feel burned out with and without managers who support employee well-being and DEI. Full question: In the last few months, how often have you felt burned out at work? | Seldom; Almost never; Sometimes; Often; Almost always; Not sure.

20 "Critical" work is defined as being "Very" or "Extremely" critical. Full questions: How critical is the work that managers do to support the well-being of team members (e.g., provide emotional support, monitor for signs of burnout, ensure workloads are manageable) to employee satisfaction? How critical is the work that employees do outside of their formal job responsibilities to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion to your company's ability to achieve its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals?

21 "Recognized" work is defined as work that is recognized "A substantial amount" or "A great deal." Full questions: To what extent is the work that managers do to support the well-being of team members (e.g., provide emotional support, monitor for signs of burnout, ensure workloads are manageable) formally recognized (e.g., in performance reviews)? To what extent is the work that employees do to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion formally recognized (e.g., in performance reviews) when it is not a formal part of their job description?

22 "Similar relative frequencies" refers to similar relative frequencies when women of color's experiences are compared to those of white women. Actual numbers may have changed as compared to 2019 data, but differences between women of color and white women remain similar.

23 Full question: In the last year, during the normal course of business, have you experienced any of the following? [Respondents selected from "Yes," "No," or "Not sure"] | Being interrupted or spoken over more than others; Hearing others express surprise at your language skills or other abilities; Having your judgment questioned in your area of expertise; Hearing or overhearing insults about your culture or people like you; Feeling like you have to be careful when talking about yourself or your life outside work; Being confused with someone else of the same race/ethnicity; Having others comment on your emotional state (e.g., you're too angry, feisty, emotional); Feeling like you are expected to speak on behalf of all people with your same identity; Having others comment on your hair or appearance in a way that made you uncomfortable; Feeling judged because a child interrupted or appeared on-screen in a video call.

24 Full question: Which of the following do you do on a consistent basis to support women of color (including Black, Indigenous, Latina, Asian women) at work? | [Select all that apply] I actively listen to the personal stories of women of color about bias and mistreatment; I publicly acknowledge or give credit to women of color for their ideas and work; I mentor or sponsor one or more women of color; I actively solicit the perspectives of women of color when making decisions; I take a public stand to support racial equality; I take a public stand to support gender equality; I educate myself (e.g., read books, attend events) about the experiences of women of color; I advocate for new opportunities for women of color; If I see discrimination against women of color, I actively work to confront it.

25 Full question: In your opinion, which of the following actions most convey meaningful allyship to women of color? | [Select up to three] Responses were selected from a list of nine possible responses and "None of the above" and are presented in order of frequency.

26 LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, *Women in the Workplace 2018*.

27 In this study, parents of young children are defined as parents with one or more children age 12 or younger.

28 Shelley Correll, "Reducing Gender Biases in Modern Workplaces: A Small Wins Approach to Organizational Change," *Gender & Society* 31, no. 6 (December 1, 2017): 725–50, https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/faculty-research/publications/reducing-gender-biases-modern-workplaces-small-wins-approach.

29 Ibid.

30 In 2019, responses to this question were recorded separately by level (L6, L5, L4, and aggregate L3 to L1; for definitions of level see Methodology). In 2021, responses to this question were recorded in aggregate for all employees. The 2019 data presented in this chart reflect the levels with the highest percentage of respondents who stated they received each kind of training. In both 2019 and 2021, respondents were not asked about blind résumé reviews for candidate screening in regard to performance evaluations. Full question: Which of the following does your company do to ensure fairness in hiring/in the performance review process? | Responses were selected from a list of 10 possible responses in 2019 / nine possible responses in 2021 and "None of the above" and are presented in order of frequency.

31 Joelle Emerson, "Don't Give Up on Unconscious Bias Training—Make It Better," *Harvard Business Review*, April 28, 2017, https://hbr.org/2017/04/dont-give-up-on-unconscious-bias-training-make-it-better; Correll, "Reducing Gender Biases in Modern Workplaces," 725–50.

Endnotes

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32   Question was the same in 2020 and 2021, but some response options differed. Full question [2021]: In the last year, which of the following have you participated in at your company or department? | [Select all that apply] Anti-racism training; Diversity, equity, and inclusion training; Allyship training; Bias training; Training on how to communicate and collaborate while working remotely; Training to support employees' mental health and wellness; Employee resource groups (ERGs); None of the above. In 2020, respondents were not given the option to select Allyship training; Training on how to communicate and collaborate while working remotely; and Employee resource groups (ERGs).

33   Due to small sample sizes, all women identifying as lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, otherwise non-heterosexual, and/or transgender were analyzed and reported in a single category as LGBTQ+ women.

34   Overall weighted pipeline is based on 381 private-sector firms and does not include Public and Social Sector organizations or Law Firms. Five Law Firms were excluded from this list as they did not meet the minimum benchmark threshold of seven companies per industry.

35   Percentages sum to 101 percent due to rounding.

36   Defined as having "A lot" or "Almost total" flexibility in at least one of the following: setting work schedule, taking time off for family or personal reasons, stepping away from work to deal with unexpected events, and working remotely.