McKinsey & Company

Gender diversity at work in Canada

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Preface

McKinsey has now been researching the case for gender diversity globally for almost two decades, with a more recent focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) as a whole. Over this time, we have shown that creating a workplace that has inclusion at its core and strives for equal representation across all genders and racial and ethnic backgrounds is a benefit to all. Diversity, equity, and inclusion **are not only strongly connected** to better business outcomes for organizations and higher productivity for the overall economy, but also create a stronger sense of purpose and belonging for all employees.

When we published our first Canadian-focused research in 2017, *The power of parity: Advancing women's equality in Canada*, we reported that Canada could stand to gain $150 billion in GDP by 2026, equivalent to 0.6 percent a year, from narrowing the gender gap. Our follow-up report in 2019, *The present and future of women at work in Canada*, revealed that gender diversity was more relevant to Canadian organizations than ever before. It also highlighted several challenges that hindered organizations' progress toward achieving gender equality as well as the systemic and structural barriers that made it difficult for women to participate fully in the workplace.

This year, our research focuses on the impact of COVID-19 and the intersectionality of gender and race and ethnicity. Specifically, our findings address the impacts on and challenges that women, and especially women of colour, face. Our report shows that women continue to remain largely under-represented at the senior levels of the corporate talent pipeline; it is also clear that organizations have made limited progress with this over the past 4 years. In addition, the report highlights the stark decline that people of colour, particularly women, face in representation along the talent pipeline.

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to loom front and centre. Blurred boundaries between work and personal life and the suspension of support services (such as childcare) have increased employees' stress and made it difficult for them to remain focused on and effective in their jobs. These challenges have disproportionally impacted women, potentially contributing to delayed progress toward DE&I. COVID-19 has amplified the need for supportive and flexible working models and has introduced an opportunity to rethink our ways of working to support diversity and an inclusive culture.

With these forces in mind, our 2021 research analyzes the progress organizations have made and the new challenges they face. Our findings suggest that, although DE&I is overwhelmingly prioritized across Canadian organizations, only marginal improvements in representation have occurred across the talent pipeline in the past four years. Despite their experiencing even more challenges, women have demonstrated more leadership than men have in supporting colleagues at work and assuming additional responsibilities at home. To embark on a journey of meaningful and sustainable change, organizations can take several steps, including increasing accountability for their DE&I commitments and putting in place the necessary policies and programs particularly supportive to women, recognizing that no one single initiative is the solution.

As McKinsey continues its path toward creating equal representation and full inclusion for all, we hope that other Canadian organizations will be motivated by these findings and proposed practices and use them to translate their inspirational commitments into concrete actions to create a better Canada for us all.

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Acknowledgments

Source: Lean In and McKinsey Women in the Workplace Study

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Executive summary

For the past seven years, McKinsey and LeanIn.Org have tracked the progress of women in corporate America. The latest Women in the Workplace report, released in September 2021, is based on data from 423 employers across the United States and Canada as well as a survey of more than 65,000 people from 88 companies. All data were collected between May and August of 2021.

To learn more about Canadian organizations specifically, we carved out the employer data of 51 Canada-based companies, which collectively employ over 1 million employees across 10 industries. We also isolated 5,317 survey responses from employees in Canada.

Over the past four years, improvement in representation across the talent pipeline has been limited. There are persistent gaps in the pipeline: promotions at the first step up to manager occur at different rates, and women of colour and men of colour lose ground in representation at every level. In this research, people of colour include people who affiliate with ethnic and racial demographic such as Indigenous, Black, Asian, Middle Eastern or North African, Hispanic or Latino/Latina/Latinx, etc.

Although attrition rates remain equal between women and men, women are promoted at lower rates than men, especially between entry-level and manager roles, and make up a smaller share of external senior hires, enabling leakage throughout the pipeline to continue. Women, especially women of colour, continue to be under-represented in all roles beyond entry level, with a significant drop in representation seen at the very first promotion point.

Moreover, women, especially women in senior roles and women of colour, continue to report experiencing bias and additional challenges in the workplace compared to men. Women have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as they have taken on additional responsibilities both at work and in the household; concurrently, a higher proportion are feeling exhausted and have recently considered downshifting or leaving the workforce altogether.

As the pandemic redefines the workplace and propels us into new ways of working, organizations have an opportunity to implement and refine their approach toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. To achieve sustained progress, organizations need to build diversity and inclusion into their everyday operating model.

Our research in this year's report highlights the key challenges and barriers women face and the best practices that top performing organizations on DE&I advancement[1] are taking to accelerate their progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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[1] Companies that have made improvements in representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, consistent year-over-year gains. They have higher women's representation than their industry peers and outperform on representation of women of colour.

People of colour, in particular women, remain largely under-represented at all levels of the corporate talent pipeline.

- In 2021, nearly 70 percent of employees reported that their organizations prioritize DE&I, yet only 35 percent of employees reported that their companies had substantially followed through on their commitments.

- Entry-level positions have gone from 45 percent representation of women in 2017[2] to equal representation between men and women in 2021,[3] although women's representation at the manager and senior manager levels has remained stagnant at 37 percent and 35 percent, respectively. Progress has been made in the representation of women at more senior levels, such as vice president (VP), senior VP, and C-suite, with an increase of between three and seven percentage points in the past four years—but women still remain largely under-represented.

- Women of colour still experience the greatest challenges as they progress along the talent pipeline, being less likely than men and White women to be promoted from entry level to manager level. They represent 17 percent of entry-level employees and drop to 6 percent representation by the C-suite level. This drop-off is also seen much earlier in the pipeline, with the largest decline occurring between the entry level and manager level.

- Men of colour also experience challenges with progressive decline throughout the pipeline compared to White men. They start at 14 percent representation at entry level, which drops to 9 percent at the senior VP level, while the representation of White men grows throughout the pipeline, from 37 to 59 percent.

More women experience microaggressions than men, feel unsafe speaking out against biases and perceived discrimination, and report facing retaliation when they do speak up.

- More women reported experiencing microaggressions than men. Women in senior roles reported even higher frequencies of these experiences. Two times as many senior-level women than senior-level men reported being interrupted or spoken over, and more than 60 percent of senior-level women reported experiencing at least one form of microaggression during their day-to-day work.

- Despite the prevalence of microaggressions, almost half of women reported not speaking out against bias or perceived discrimination, and more women than men cite feeling unsafe to do so. In addition, women are 2x more likely than men to report facing retaliation when speaking out, showing higher perceived or experienced barriers for women in managing these challenges.

[2] Data as of end-of-year 2016.
[3] Data as of end-of-year 2020.

Throughout the pandemic, women reported taking on more responsibilities in both the workplace and the household, including support of DE&I efforts within their organizations.

- The pandemic has placed a particularly heavy burden on women, as about 50 percent of women in heterosexual households reported taking on most or almost all the additional household responsibilities over the past year and a half. Women were also more likely than men to perceive their gender as a barrier to career advancement during this time.

- Women have stepped up as leaders within their organizations throughout this time of crisis. More employees with women managers stated that they received additional support from their managers this year compared to those employees with men managers.

- Women felt more personally responsible for and spent more time promoting DE&I at work than men. The difference is most substantial at the entry level—37 percent of women at the entry level spent time promoting DE&I outside their role responsibilities, compared to 29 percent of men. Women leaders are also more than twice as likely to spend a substantial amount of time on DEI work that is not central to their job.

Concurrently, a higher proportion of women reported feeling exhausted at work within the past year and have considered downshifting their responsibilities or leaving the workforce altogether.

- The COVID-19 crisis has created unprecedented challenges for all organizations and individuals, both men and women. One-third of all employees reported being less effective at work, unable to concentrate, or feeling more negativity over the past year. 41 percent of women and 34 percent of men reported being exhausted.

- A higher proportion of women than men have considered either leaving their jobs or reducing their responsibilities. The desire for downshifting was particularly high among women in leadership positions, with senior-level women being nearly twice as likely as senior-level men to consider downshifting or leaving the workforce altogether (31 percent vs. 17 percent).

There are several dimensions that organizations can and should consider to meaningfully improve diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Aspiration, commitment, and understanding of the challenge:** Best practice organizations are establishing robust fact bases to set and guide their DE&I aspiration and strategy. Top teams are setting compelling DE&I aspirations and clear strategic objectives, are committed, and own the DE&I strategy.

- **Governance and accountability:** Organizations have a significant opportunity to increase accountability on their DE&I efforts, as only 15 percent of employees believe their leaders are held accountable. Accountability requires clear metrics, a portfolio of initiatives, and tangible mechanisms to track progress and ensure successful implementation.

- **People policies, systems, and processes:** As promotion rates and hiring shares of women continue to lag those of men, organizations should revisit their processes and programs to ensure they are equitable and support women's advancement. Some best practices seen among top performing companies on DE&I progression include debiasing performance reviews and hiring processes, expanding the sourcing pool to seek out more diverse candidates, and strengthening professional sponsorship programs.

- **Supportive workplace and programs:** Organizations can use remote work and further invest in a supportive workplace and programs that foster connection. Best practice organizations are investing in flexible working models, parental support, and extended leave programs, and are normalizing these among all employees.

- **Inclusive mindsets and behaviours:** Building a sense of belonging and inclusive culture requires shifting employees' behaviours and mindsets. Organizations can deliver holistic inclusion learning programs that uncover deep-rooted biases and foster allyship, creating a better environment for all.

The *2021 Women in the Workplace* report, based on data from 423 employers across the United States and Canada, highlights several types of interventions related to these dimensions that top performing companies[4] emphasize: holding senior leaders accountable for progress on diversity, tracking diversity by gender and race and ethnicity, minimizing gender bias in hiring and performance reviews and promotions, providing sponsorship programs addressing the needs of under-represented groups, creating intersectionality and allyship education programs, and adjusting flexibility policies to better support employees' well-being.

As in previous years, our research showed that significant progress toward gender equality requires dedicated, persistent, and well-organized company-wide change across a range of actions. Organizations have taken a variety of steps toward their DE&I goals, but stronger accountability and dedicated action are necessary. Although the COVID-19 crisis has created additional barriers, it has also created opportunities to rethink our ways of working and push our organizations forward with the strategic policies, programs, and environments required to further women's development and advancement and close the gender gap.

[4] Companies that have made improvements in representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, consistent year-over-year gains. They have higher women's representation than their industry peers and outperform on representation of women of colour.

Women's representation across the talent pipeline has seen only marginal improvements over the past 4 years …

Percentage of men and women[1]

● Men   ● Women

	Entry level	Manager	Senior Manager	VP	SVP	C-Suite
Men	51%	63%	65%	68%	75%	70%
Women	49%	37%	35%	32%	25%	30%
% point change from end of year 2016 to end of year 2020	+4	~	~	+7	+3[2]	+4[2]
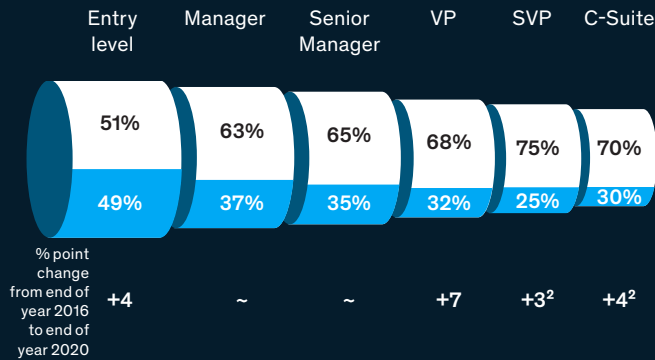
… and women of colour experience the greatest challenges as they progress through the pipeline

Percentage of men and women by race/ethnicity[1]

● White men   ● Men of colour   ● White women   ● Women of colour

	Entry level	Manager	Senior Manager	VP	SVP	C-Suite
White men	37%	49%	53%	60%	66%	59%
Men of colour	14%	14%	12%	8%	9%	11%
White women	32%	28%	25%	25%	21%	24%
Women of colour	17%	9%	10%	7%	4%	6%

[1]Data as of end-of-year 2020, [2]Change compared to 2019 given SVP and C-Suite data combined in 2017
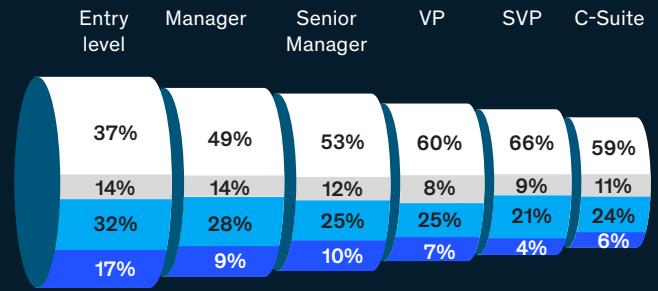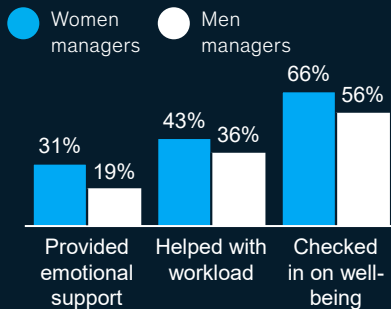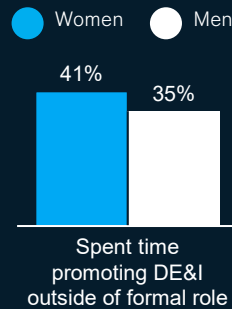Source: Lean In and McKinsey Women in the Workplace Study

Women have stepped up as leaders throughout the pandemic, reporting taking on more responsibilities both at work and at home
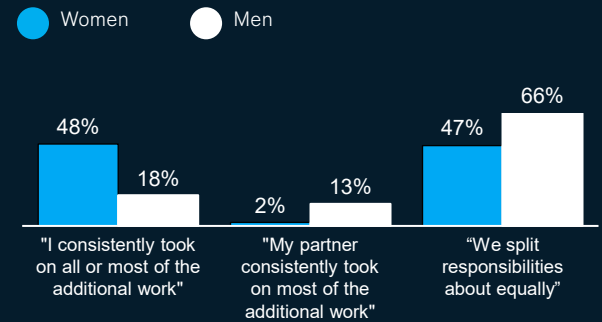
More women leaders were perceived to provide support for team members[4] …

● Women managers   ● Men managers

	Women managers	Men managers
Provided emotional support	31%	19%
Helped with workload	43%	36%
Checked in on well-being	66%	56%

…reported spending time promoting DE&I outside of their roles[5]…

● Women   ● Men

	Women	Men
Spent time promoting DE&I outside of formal role	41%	35%

… and many mention picking up more share of the additional tasks at home

● Women   ● Men

	Women	Men
"I consistently took on all or most of the additional work"	48%	18%
"My partner consistently took on most of the additional work"	2%	13%
"We split responsibilities about equally"	47%	66%

[4]Percentage of employees who report receiving support from their managers, [5]Percentage of respondents who report spending time promoting DE&I outside of role responsibilities

Concurrently, a higher proportion of women report feeling burned out and have considered downshifting their careers or leaving the workforce

All employees are more burned out than last year, but the gap between men and women has doubled
Share of employees consistently reporting feeling burned out at work

● Women   ● Men

	2020[6]	2021
	3% gap	6% gap
Men	26%	33%
Women	29%	39%
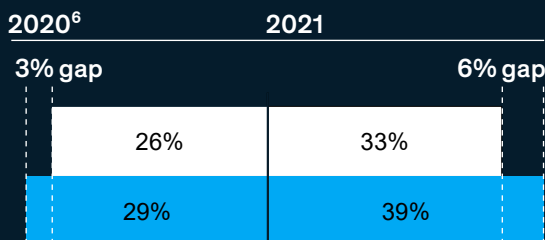
Employees who are burned out are **1.6x** more likely to downshift or leave their career

More than **2x** as many senior-level women as senior-level men considered downshifting or leaving the workforce within the past year

[6]2020 burnout figures for Canada uses the North America wide data to find the difference between 2021 and 2020

Organizations can take action across five dimensions to drive meaningful and sustained change

Aspiration, commitment, and understanding the challenges

Governance and accountability

People policies, processes and systems

Supportive workplace models and programs

Inclusive mindsets and behaviours

Chapter 1: The state of women in the talent pipeline

Despite many Canadian organizations increasingly prioritizing DE&I, the corporate talent pipeline has been slow to reflect gender and racial and ethnic diversity. Women and people of colour continue to lose ground in representation at every level of the talent pipeline.

In this chapter, we take a closer look at both gender and racial and ethnic inequality in today's workplace. We start by assessing how organizations are thinking about DE&I and how this has been reflected throughout the talent pipeline. We then look at three levers that affect the state of the pipeline and how these have impacted change over the past four years. Our findings are based on a talent pipeline survey of 51 organizations, which represent more than one million employees across more than ten industries in Canada.

Diverse companies are more likely to outperform non-diverse companies.

The 2020 *Diversity wins: How inclusion matters* report has shown a strong connection between diversity in leadership and a likelihood to outperform non-diverse companies on profitability (Exhibit 1).[5] And it makes sense. We know that companies that embrace diversity are also more likely to have access to a greater pool of talent, greater employee engagement, a greater ability to solve problems and drive innovation, and an increased likelihood of following other best practices.

By examining the current state of diversity within organizations and the inclusiveness of workplaces from employees' perspectives, we can see what the baseline is today and what actions will be necessary to move forward.

Exhibit 1

There is a strong connection between diversity in leadership and likelihood to outperform non-diverse companies on profitability

Difference in likelihood of outperformance of 1st vs. 4th quartile

Gender

15%	21%	25%
2014	2017	2019

Race and ethnicity

35%	33%	36%
2014	2017	2019
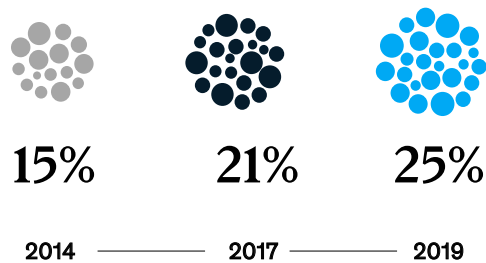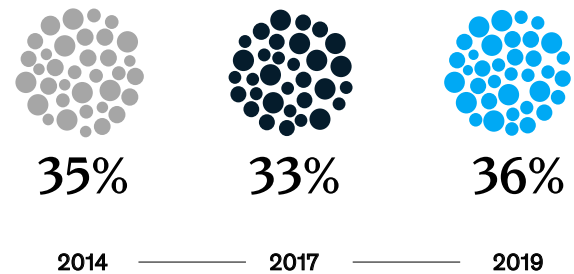
Source: *Diversity wins: How inclusion matters* report, 2020.

[5] Diversity wins: How inclusion matters, May 2020, McKinsey.com.
Source: Lean In and McKinsey Women in the Workplace Study

Canadian organizations are prioritizing DE&I, but employees struggle to see this commitment translating into substantial action.

In this section, we evaluate how employees perceive their organization's prioritization of DE&I and related initiatives, and how this differs from their perception of action on such priorities.

In 2021, nearly 70 percent of employees reported that their organization prioritizes DE&I (Exhibit 2). However, action appears to be lacking from the employee's perspective. Only 35 percent of employees reported that their company has substantially followed through on these commitments. As Exhibit 3 emphasizes, only 15 percent of employees stated that their managers and senior leaders have been held accountable for meeting their DE&I goals. This all suggests that organizations' commitments are not necessarily translating into action from the employees' viewpoint. There is also an opportunity to increase accountability for DE&I goals.

Exhibit 2

Employees see their organization prioritizing DE&I but struggle to see this translated into action

Employees' reporting of their organizations' DE&I prioritization vs. action

Percentage of emplyees who perceive

● Organization is prioritizing DE&I

● Organization is following through on DE&I commitments
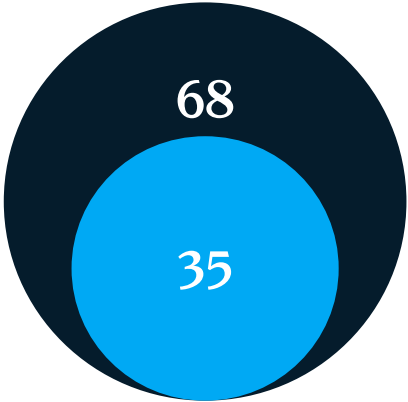
68

35

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut: Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Exhibit 3

Employees' reporting of the actions their organizations' have taken to promote DE&I

Percentage of employees who report

Senior leader spoke of the importance of DE&I	Managers and senior leaders were held accountable for meeting diversity goals	All employees received bias training	All employees received DE&I training	Employee's department took concrete steps to meet DE&I goals (e.g., requiring diverse slates in hiring or promoting)	Employee's department supported employee resource groups focused on DE&I	Employee's department invested more resources into promoting DE&I
59	15	42	37	22	48	45

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Despite prioritized commitments to DE&I, the corporate talent pipeline has seen only marginal improvements in the representation of women from entry-level to senior-level positions over the past four years.

Now that we have examined organizations' commitment to DE&I, we can explore the current state of women along the talent pipeline and how this commitment has translated into movement. We will also examine retention, promotion, and hiring, three levers that can make a significant difference in women's presence in the pipeline.
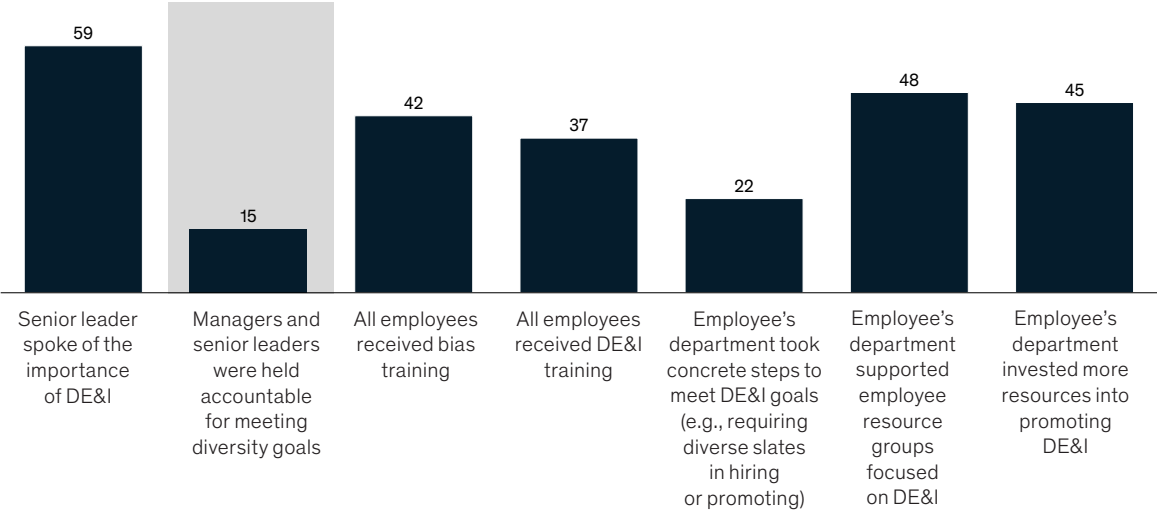
Despite small gains, women are still under-represented throughout the talent pipeline. Compared to 2017, the presence of women throughout the talent pipeline has only seen slight progress (Exhibit 4).[6] Entry-level positions continue to see an almost equal presence of women and men. However, beyond this level women begin to be significantly under-represented, with the gender gap increasing as positions move toward more senior levels.

As noted in the North American *Women in the Workplace 2021* report, there remains a "broken rung" at the very first promotion level, between entry level and manager level. Here, there is a 12 percentage point drop in the representation of women, which is the largest decline from one level to the next throughout the pipeline. The proportion of women from manager level to C-suite level then continues to fall another 7 percentage points, going from 37 percent to 30 percent in the most senior roles. While progress is being made at the entry point, work remains to be done in supporting women's advancement.

Although women continue to be significantly under-represented among more senior roles and remain challenged by the broken rung, slight gains occurred for women at the VP, senior VP, and C-suite levels between 2017 and 2021.[7] Notably, at the VP level, women's representation has increased 7 percent, the largest representation gain in the pipeline. Moreover, within the senior VP and C-suite levels, women's representation has increased by more than three to four percentage points, with women now holding almost one-third of the roles, up from one-quarter at end-of-year 2016.[8] While this shows that some progress has been made over the past two years, the results are marginal compared to organizations' stated commitments as under-representation remains high.

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[6] *The power of parity: Advancing women's equality in Canada*, 2017. Corporate talent pipeline reflects end-of-year 2016 data.
[7] The corporate talent pipeline data in this 2021 report reflects end-of-year 2020 data.
[8] Note that different companies opting in for data collection at different times may have impacted the results.
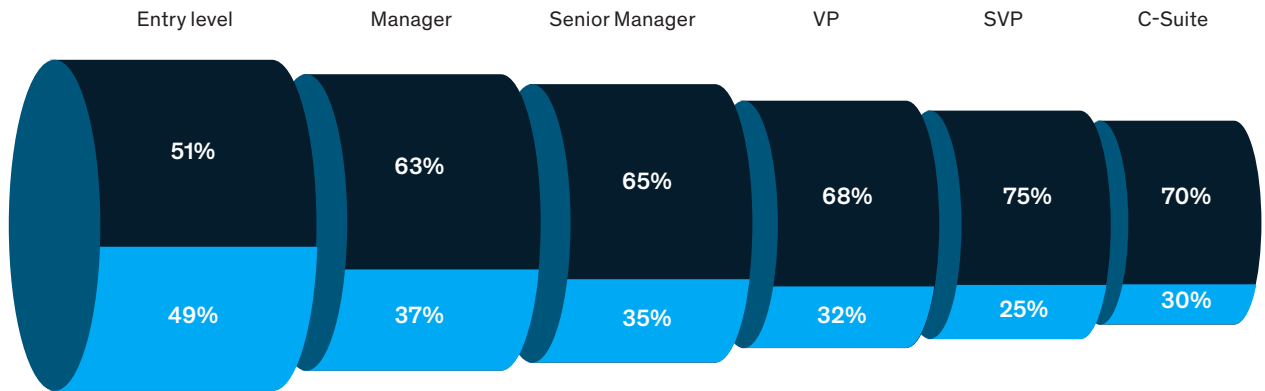
Exhibit 4

Women's representation across the talent pipeline has made marginal improvements over the past 4 years

Representation in the talent pipeline by gender[1,2]

Percentage of employees by level, 2021

● Women   ● Men

	Entry level	Manager	Senior Manager	VP	SVP	C-Suite
Men	51%	63%	65%	68%	75%	70%
Women	49%	37%	35%	32%	25%	30%

% point change from end of year 2016 to end of year 2020	+4	~	~	+7	+3[3]	+4[3]

Entry level: Employees who carry out discrete tasks and participate on teams, typically in an office or corporate setting

Manager: Employees who have management responsibility for a team or a small unit

Senior Manager: Seasoned managers with responsibility for multiple teams and discrete functions or operating units

Vice President (VP): Leaders of the organization who report directly to senior vice president

Senior Vice President (SVP): Senior leaders of the organization with significant business unit or functional oversight

C-Suite: CEO and Direct reports to the CEO, those responsible for company operations and profitability

[1]Sample size and self-selection biases could contribute to a more positive result. Canadian organizations that already prioritize gender diversity and have a good representation of women in senior leadership may have been more inclined to participate in our study.
[2]Data as of end-of-year 2020.
[3]Change compared to 2019 as SVP and C-Suite break down not available in 2017.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021; Talent pipeline survey 2021, 51 Canadian organizations representing more than 1 million total employees.
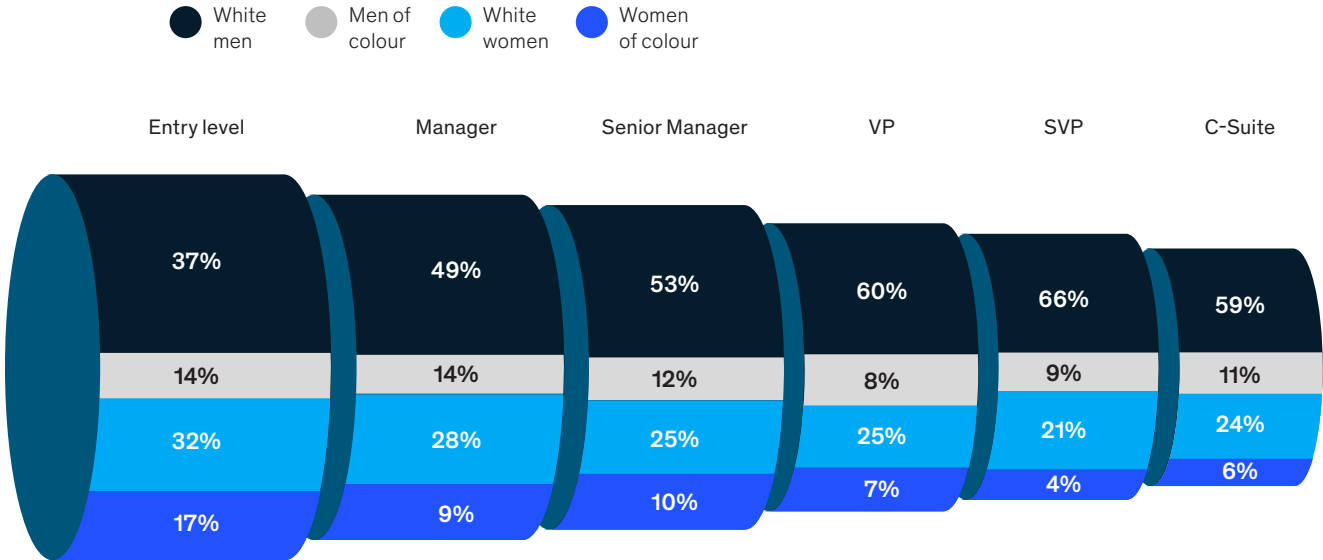
When looking at the pipeline at the intersection of gender and race and ethnicity, we observe that the representation of women of colour in more senior roles drops off to a greater extent than that of White women and all men. Men of colour also face a sharp decrease in representation along the talent pipeline.

This year, we examined the corporate talent pipeline not only from a gender perspective, but also at the intersection of gender and race and ethnicity (Exhibit 5). Overall, we found that both men and women of colour lose more ground than their White peers as they progress along the talent pipeline. They also make up a smaller proportion of employees at all levels than their respective proportions in the population at large. Men of colour appear to have more difficulty progressing to more senior roles compared to White men—the presence of the latter grows throughout the pipeline, from 37 to 59 percent.

Women of colour continue to experience the greatest challenges. Men of colour start at 14 percent representation at entry level, which drops to 9 percent at the senior VP level; women of colour start at 17 percent representation at entry level, which falls to a mere 4 and 6 percent at the SVP and C-suite level. Women of colour also experience a drop much earlier in the pipeline, with a 8 percentage point drop between entry level and manager level; comparatively, white women experience a smaller drop of 4 percentage points. This suggests that there are even larger barriers for women of colour at the first critical promotion point—a heightened broken rung.

Exhibit 5

The representation of women of colour drops off to a greater extent than White women and men of colour as roles become more senior

Representation in the talent pipeline by gender and race[1,2]

Percentage of employees by level, 2021

● White men   ● Men of colour   ● White women   ● Women of colour

	Entry level	Manager	Senior Manager	VP	SVP	C-Suite
White men	37%	49%	53%	60%	66%	59%
Men of colour	14%	14%	12%	8%	9%	11%
White women	32%	28%	25%	25%	21%	24%
Women of colour	17%	9%	10%	7%	4%	6%

[1]Data as of end-of-year 2020.
[2]Represents data collected from 29 Canadian organizations that track gender and race breakdown by role level. Calculated as (# of POC women(men) in X level/total EOY population in X level), averaged across companies in an industry, weighted average across industries.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021; Talent pipeline survey 2021, 51 Canadian organizations representing more than 1 million total employees, N=29 companies that track employee breakdown by gender and race.

Attrition rates remain comparable for both women and men, failing to account for the under-representation of women.

Three key levers can shift representation throughout the pipeline: recruiting, retention, and promotion. We first look at the key insights on retention and attrition across genders.

Voluntary attrition rates are comparable across both women and men (Exhibit 6). This remains in line with what was found in both 2017 and 2019, when women left at comparable rates to men. Therefore, the under-representation of women throughout the talent pipeline cannot be solely explained by women voluntarily leaving the workforce.

Similar rates of attrition between men and women throughout the pipeline may sustain the under-representation of women but are not the primary reason for the existing difference.

Exhibit 6

Attrition rates are comparable across men and women

2021 attrition[1]

Percentage of employees who left their jobs in the past year

Women 16%

Men 14%
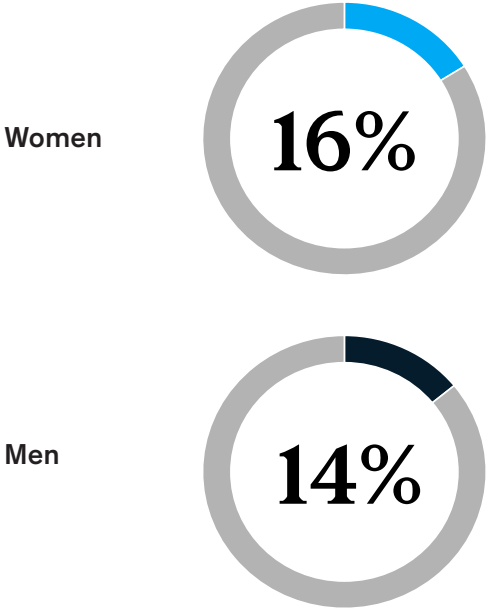
[1]Data as of end-of-year 2020.
Source: Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021,* LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Talent pipeline survey 2021, 51 Canadian organizations representing more than 1 million total employees.

Promotion of women from entry to manager level continues to lag that of men.

Overall, women are less likely than men to be promoted. This discrepancy contributes to the under-representation of women throughout the talent pipeline. Notably, women continue to face a broken rung at the first step to manager (Exhibit 7). We find that for every 100 men promoted from entry to manager level, only 85 women are promoted. This leads to a lower representationof women in manager-level roles and creates a smaller share of women to promote to leadership positions. This broken rung likely explains the lower presence of women in senior manager, VP, senior VP, and C-Suite levels and sheds light on why the senior manager level has been slower to improve. These findings are similar to those of the North American *Women in the Workplace 2021* study, which found that for every 100 men promoted from entry to manager level, only 86 women were.

However, some progress has been made in promotion rates over the past two years. For instance, in 2019 only 76 women were promoted from entry to manager level for every 100 men who advanced.[9] Focusing on and ensuring existing supports address and are meaningful for women's advancement and promotion can be a mechanism for further progress.

Women of colour are even less likely than White women to be promoted from entry level to manager level.

For every 100 White women promoted from entry level to manager level, only 63 women of colour advance. This large gap can draw organizations' attention to parity across genders in promotion and across the intersection of gender and race and ethnicity. Women of colour often face larger barriers in making it past the first promotion, which results in greater under-representation in senior roles in the talent pipeline.

Exhibit 7

Women are less likely than men to be promoted to manager

Number of women promoted for every 100 men

● Women ● Men

2019[1]
Entry level
to manager

76

100

2021[2]
Entry level
to manager

85

100
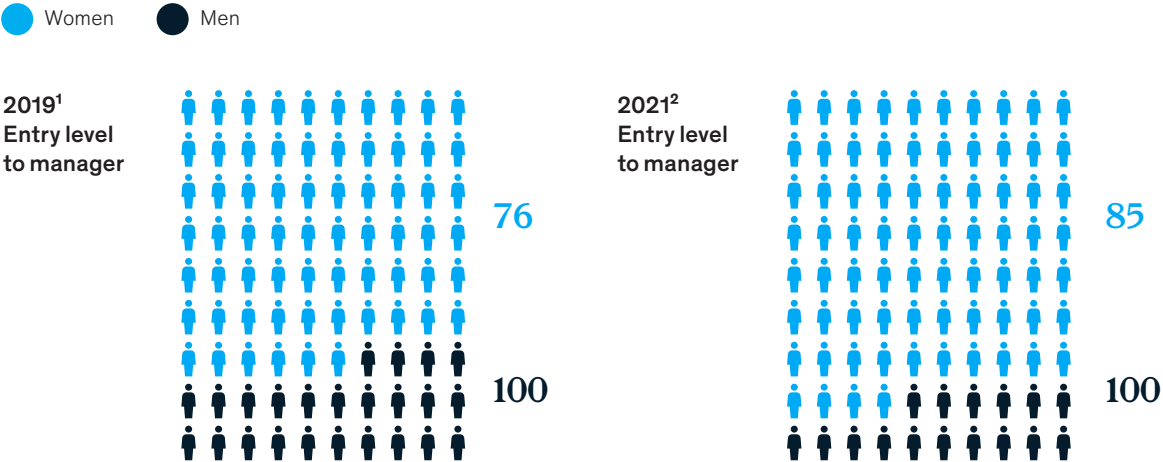
[1]Data as of end-of-year 2018.
[2]Data as of end-of-year 2020.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021,* LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021; Talent pipeline survey 2021, 51 Canadian organizations representing more than 1 million total employees.

[9] Higher promotion rates of women from entry to manager level from 2019 to 2021 may not translate into a higher representation of women in the manager-level role due to differences in participating organizations.

Less than a third of women expressed a desire to become top executives.

Overall, only 30 percent of women expressed a desire to become a top executive, compared to 37 percent of men (Exhibit 8). This result is consistent with the findings from the 2017 and 2019 reports. When asked why they did not want to become top executives, men and women cited the same reasons: lack of interest, company politics, and caregiving responsibilities (Exhibit 9). A slightly larger proportion of women compared to men reported the fear of burnout (24 percent vs. 19 percent).

A lower percentage of women want to become a top executive
Percentage of employees who want to become a top executive
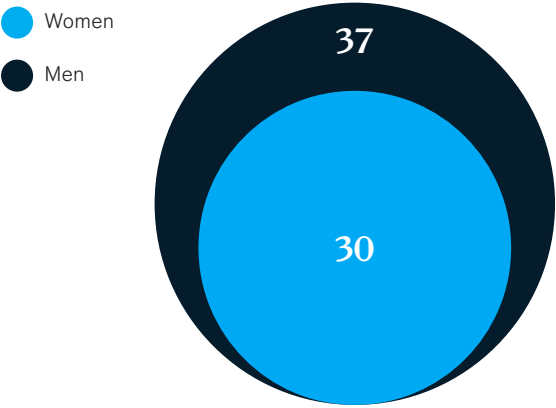
- Women
- Men

37

30

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021,* LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021; Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Reasons for not wanting to be a top executive
Percentage of employees who stated
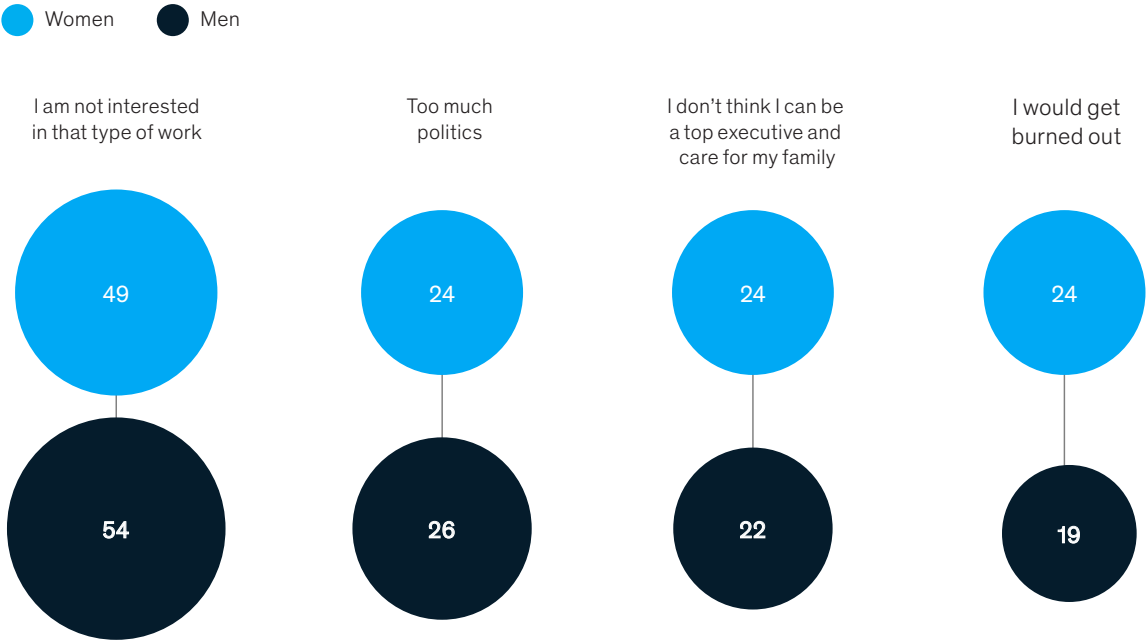
- Women
- Men

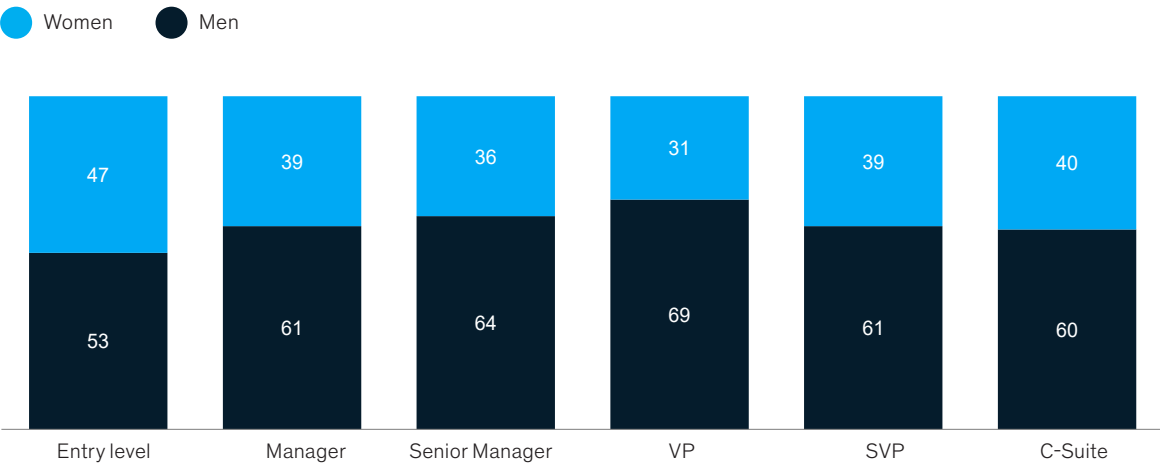| I am not interested in that type of work	Too much politics	I don't think I can be a top executive and care for my family	I would get burned out
49	24	24	24
54	26	22	19

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021,* LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021; Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Women represent a lower proportion of external hires across all positions in the talent pipeline.

Women make up less than half of all external hires at all levels (Exhibit 10). This is especially true at the VP level, where women only make up 31 percent of hires. Organizations that aspire to achieve gender parity can seize this lever, using it to identify and bring in women talent throughout varying levels of seniority and to meaningfully change women's representation.

Exhibit 10

Men represent a higher proportion of external hires

Share of external hires by gender

Percentage of men and women, 2021[1]

● Women   ● Men

	Entry level	Manager	Senior Manager	VP	SVP	C-Suite
Women	47	39	36	31	39	40
Men	53	61	64	69	61	60

[1]Data as of end-of-year 2020.
Source: Lean In and McKinsey *Women in the Workplace 2021*; Talent pipeline survey 2021, 51 Canadian organizations representing more than 1 million total employees.

Women, especially women of colour, remain under-represented throughout the corporate talent pipeline. While attrition is comparable across genders, promotion rates and hiring shares continue to be skewed toward men and are preventing organizations from closing the gender and race and ethnicity gaps.

Chapter 2: Understanding the challenges women face in the workplace

In this chapter, we examine some of the challenges that women encounter and how men and women experience the workplace differently. We find that women continue to face additional barriers and biases that hinder their ability to advance. Moreover, the extent to which women experience these barriers and biases in the workplace continues to be disproportionate to that of men, particularly for women of colour and those in senior positions. Such barriers may also contribute to their lower promotion rates and hiring shares. Identifying and addressing the barriers and biases women and people of colour face in the workplace should remain a priority for organizations.

More women, especially women in senior roles and women of colour, reported experiences with certain forms of microaggression at work.

The manifestation of bias and gender, racial and/or ethnic microaggressions range from subtle to overt workplace discrimination. Microaggressions are brief but frequent verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities that communicate hostile, derogatory, sexist, or racist slights and insults.[10] They can take the form of facial expressions, body language, terminology, exclusion, or remarks.[11]

Such microaggressions differ from other forms of sexism or racism in that the offenders' may be well-intentioned, their biases may be unconscious, or they might view their actions as harmless. They pose a complex challenge, as their actions can be interpreted differently by the offender and the recipient. Whether intentional or unintentional, such incidents or interactions that may seem harmless on the surface can have a negative cumulative impact on the recipients, significantly affecting their everyday experience and reflecting the inequalities of the workplace.[12]

[10] Michele A. Paludi, "Gender microaggressions: Perceptions, processes, and coping mechanisms of women," *Psychology for Business Success,* Volume 1, March 2013.
[11] *Women matter: The present and future of women at work in Canada*, June 2019, McKinsey.com.
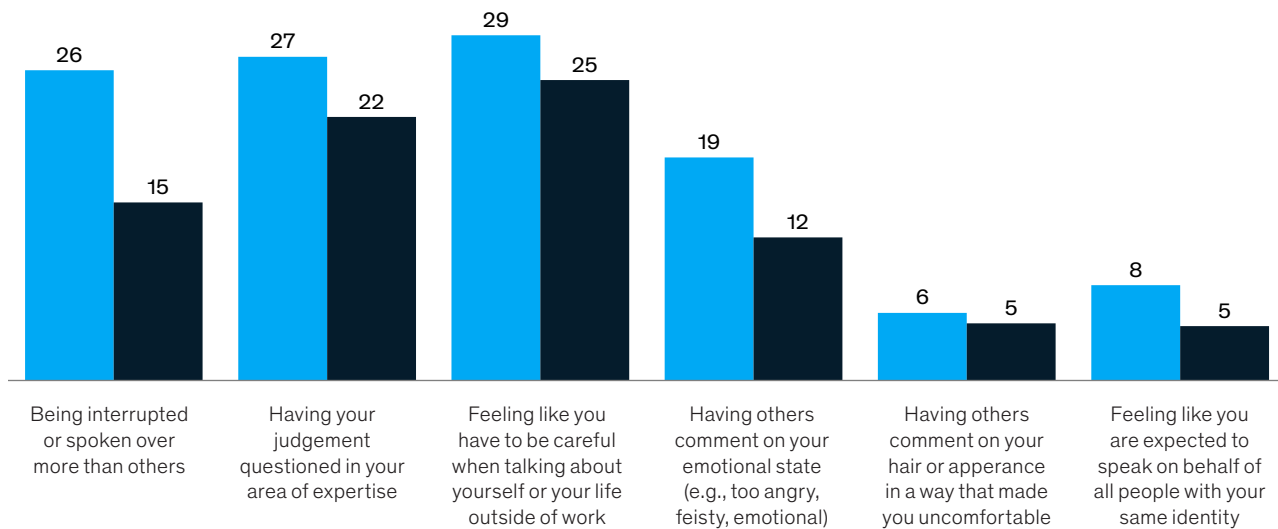[12] Ibid.

Our findings show that more women at all levels than men at the same levels reported experiencing micro-aggressions in the workplace (Exhibit 11). These findings are similar to those in the North American *Women in the Workplace 2021* report, which concluded that women are more likely than men to face microaggressions that undermine them professionally—such as being interrupted or having their judgement questioned.[13] The 2019 edition of this report also showed that more women reported facing these additional barriers in the workplace relative to men.[14]

Exhibit 11

More women than men reported experiencing microaggressions

Percentage of employees who report experiencing[1]

● Women ● Men

	Being interrupted or spoken over more than others	Having your judgement questioned in your area of expertise	Feeling like you have to be careful when talking about yourself or your life outside of work	Having others comment on your emotional state (e.g., too angry, feisty, emotional)	Having others comment on your hair or apperance in a way that made you uncomfortable	Feeling like you are expected to speak on behalf of all people with your same identity
Women	26	27	29	19	6	8
Men	15	22	25	12	5	5

[1]Note that the experience with microaggressions is self reported and perception of such experiences may differ from one employee to the next. Employees reported on microaggressions experienced in the last year.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

>60% of women in senior leadership roles, and **~70%** of women of colour, report experiencing at least one microagression during their regular working day over the past year.

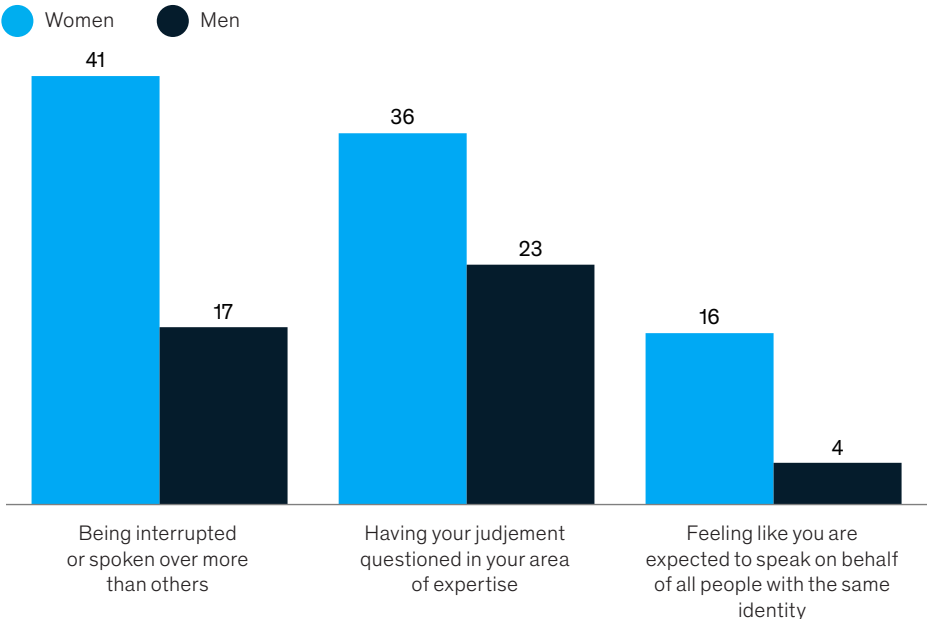[13] *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.
[14] *Women matter: The present and future of women at work in Canada*, June 2019, McKinsey.com.

Not only did more women than men overall report experiencing microaggressions, but a greater number of women in more senior roles reported such encounters. For example, twice as many senior-level women as senior-level men reported being interrupted or spoken over.

Moreover, more than a third of senior-level women reported that they have had their judgement questioned in their area of expertise (Exhibit 12), compared to less than one-quarter of senior-level men. Notably, more than 60 percent of senior-level women also said they faced at least one form of microaggression while completing their day-to-day work.

Exhibit 12

Senior women reported experiencing an even greater level of microaggressions compared to senior men

Percentage of senior leadership[1] who report experiencing[2]

● Women ● Men

41	36	16
17	23	4
Being interrupted or spoken over more than others	Having your judgement questioned in your area of expertise	Feeling like you are expected to speak on behalf of all people with the same identity

[1]Includes Senior managers, VPs, SVPs and C-Suite.
[2]Note that the experience with microaggressions is self reported and perception of such experiences may differ from one employee to the next. Employees reported on microaggressions experienced in the last year.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.
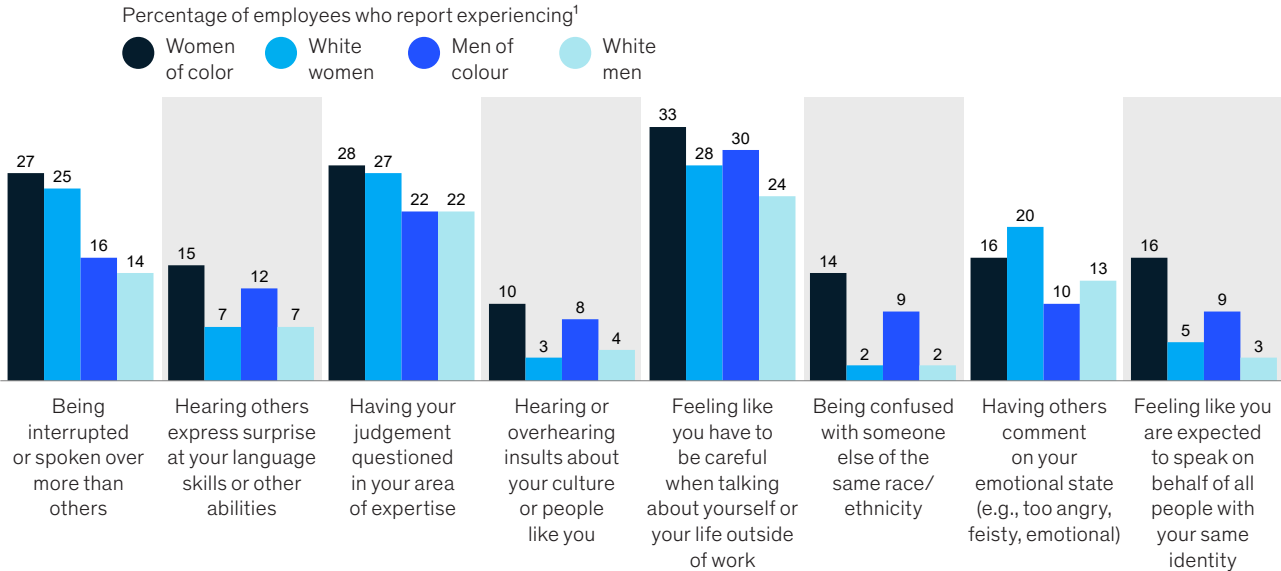
Women in senior leadership roles are 10x more likely than men in the same roles to be the "only" in the room.

In this year's edition of the report, we examined microaggressions through a more granular lens, looking at not just how women are impacted, but what this looks like for women of colour specifically (Exhibit 13).

Exhibit 13

Women of colour face the greatest challenges at work when it comes to microaggressions

More women of colour report experiencing certain types of microaggressions than do any other group of employees

Percentage of employees who report experiencing[1]

- Women of color
- White women
- Men of colour
- White men

	Being interrupted or spoken over more than others	Hearing others express surprise at your language skills or other abilities	Having your judgement 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 of work	Being confused with someone else of the same race/ ethnicity	Having others comment on your emotional state (e.g., too angry, feisty, emotional)	Feeling like you are expected to speak on behalf of all people with your same identity
Women of color	27	15	28	10	33	14	16	16
White women	25	7	27	3	28	2	20	5
Men of colour	16	12	22	8	30	9	10	9
White men	14	7	22	4	24	2	13	3

[1]Note that the experience with microaggressions is self reported and perception of such experiences may differ from one employee to the next.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

We found that women of colour report experiencing microaggressions at an even higher frequency than White women. Additionally, more women of colour come up against specific microaggressions — certain microaggressions that far fewer White women and men (white or of colour) reported experiencing. Most notably, more women of colour reported hearing others express surprise at their language abilities and insult their culture, being surprised at seeing other people of their race and ethnicity, and feeling like they are expected to speak on behalf of all people within their identity.

Women are more likely than men to experience being the "only" at work, especially in senior positions, which can leave them more vulnerable to certain workplace challenges.

Being the only woman in a meeting can result in an environment more conducive to microaggressions—and women are three times more likely than men to experience being the only one of their gender in a room or work setting.[15]

For women of colour, this situation is often magnified: almost half of the women of colour in this study reported that they were the only one of their race and ethnicity on their teams at work, compared to only 4 percent of White women who experienced this. Women of colour were also the only one of their race and ethnicity on their teams at work more often than men of colour; almost 10 percent more women of colour than men of colour reported this situation.

[15] *Women matter: The present and future of women at work in Canada*, June 2019, McKinsey.com.

Moreover, the gender gap in leadership roles means that being the "only" is especially true for women in senior positions, where women are

10x more likely to experience this situation than men.

Women experience various workplace biases that can hinder their ability to advance.

In particular, more women than men felt negatively judged for taking on additional household responsibilities, like caregiving (Exhibit 14).
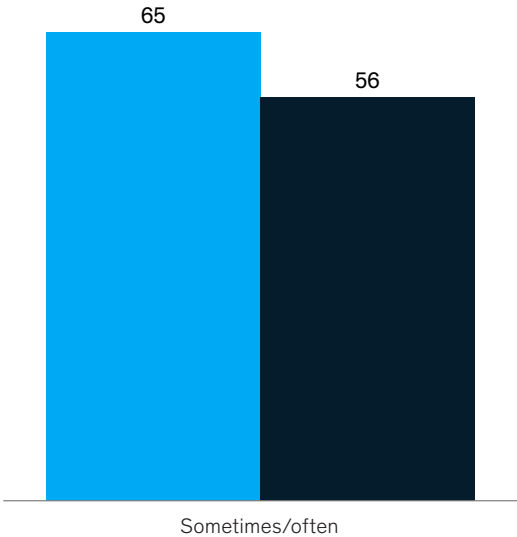
Exhibit 14

Women often perceive being judged because of caregiving responsibilities

How often do you worry about being negatively judged at work because of your caregiving responsibilities?

Percentage of employees who answered

● Women   ● Men

65

56

Sometimes/often

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

These findings align with those from the North American *Women in the Workplace 2021* study, which concluded that women feel more likely to be judged than men when taking advantage of options that make it easier to balance work and life, such as working from home or working non-standard hours.[16]

Men, particularly those in senior roles, are more likely than women to not notice microaggressions or acts of bias against others at work, and therefore do not speak out when such instances occur.

Despite common occurrences of microaggressions and acts of bias, almost half of employees fail to speak out against them. One of the most common reasons cited by employees for not speaking out against bias or perceived discrimination directed at others is simply that they did not notice or recognize it. This is particularly prominent among men in senior roles, where almost all of the surveyed men who reported not speaking out against bias said the reason they did not do so was because they did not notice it (Exhibit 15).

While women seem to be slightly more aware of bias and potential discrimination than men are, a large proportion of women who stated that they have not spoken out against the bias or potential discrimination also said this was because they did not notice it. In other words, although women commonly experience perceived discrimination at work, many of their peers may not even notice it when it happens.

Organizations should take the critical first step toward resolution—microaggression awareness for all employees.

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[16] W*omen in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

Exhibit 15

Many employees do not speak up in instances of bias or discrimination because they do not notice it

Men are more likely than women to not speak up against bias or discrimination because they did not notice

Percentage of employees who cite "not noticing" as a reason for not speaking up against bias or discrimination
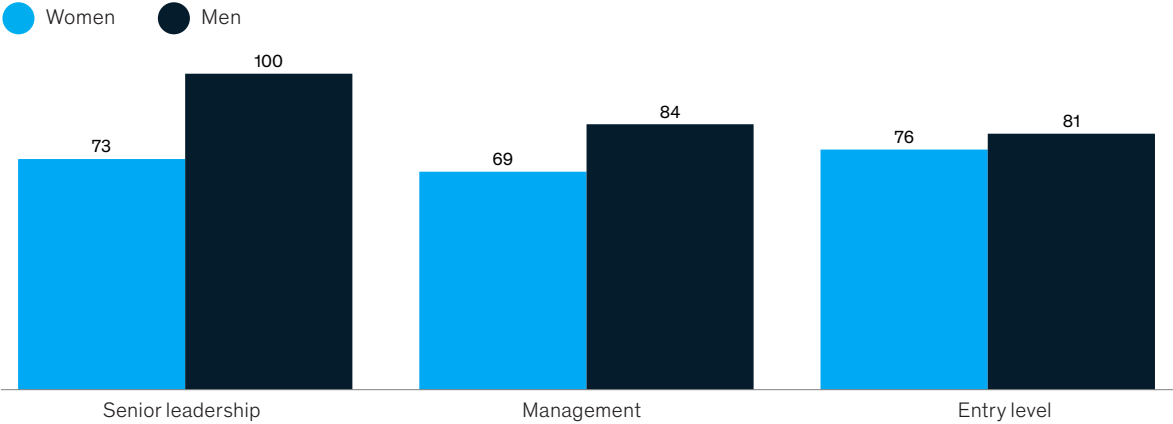
● Women   ● Men

	Senior leadership	Management	Entry level
Women	73	69	76
Men	100	84	81

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.
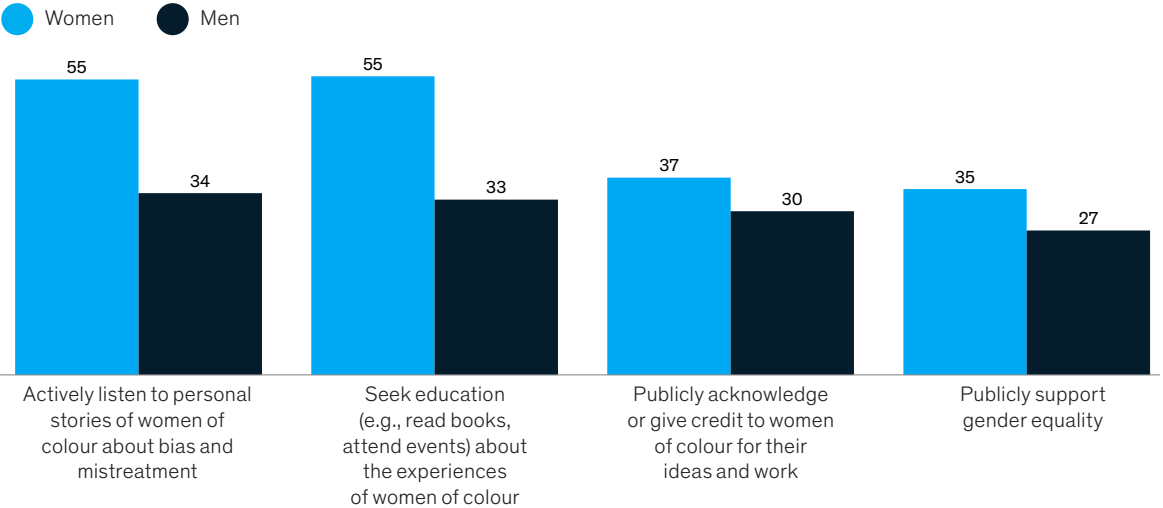
Despite the overwhelming percentage of men who do not recognize biases directed at others, few men actively seek out or engage in opportunities to become more aware of the challenges women, particularly women of colour, face in the workplace (Exhibit 16). Without a shared understanding of the challenges that employees of minority groups face, it is difficult to make progress toward full equality.

Exhibit 16

More women are taking action to support women of colour

Which of the following do you do on a consistent basis to support women of colour (including Black, Indigenous, Latina and Asian women) at work?

Percentage of employees who report that they ...

● Women   ● Men

	Actively listen to personal stories of women of colour about bias and mistreatment	Seek education (e.g., read books, attend events) about the experiences of women of colour	Publicly acknowledge or give credit to women of colour for their ideas and work	Publicly support gender equality
Women	55	55	37	35
Men	34	33	30	27

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Some women feel more unsafe speaking out against bias and perceived discrimination than men do and more often face repercussions if and when they do so.

In addition to experiencing greater bias and perceived discrimination at work, some women—even those in senior leadership positions—feel less safe speaking out against it than men do (Exhibit 17). This may be explained by the fact that more women than men reported facing negative repercussions, such as backlash, exclusion, or having such actions affect their evaluations negatively, when they do speak out.

More women of colour than White women cited experiencing repercussions when they have spoken out against bias or perceived discrimination. As a result, women of colour again face even higher barriers to equality in the workplace. As the North American *Women in the Workplace 2021* report underlines, it is critical that White allies actively confront bias and perceived discrimination against people of colour. [17]
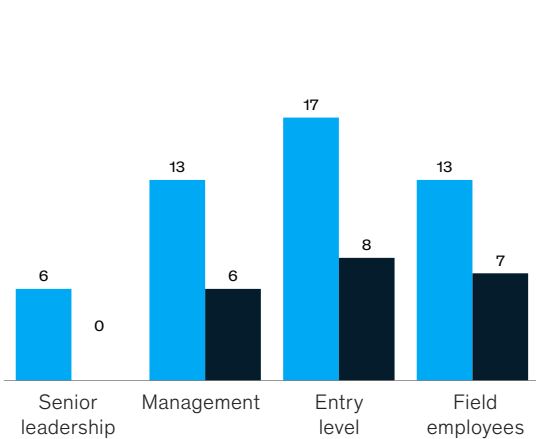
Exhibit 17

More women at every level report feeling unsafe to speak up[2]

Percentage of employees who did not speak up[1]

● Women   ● Men
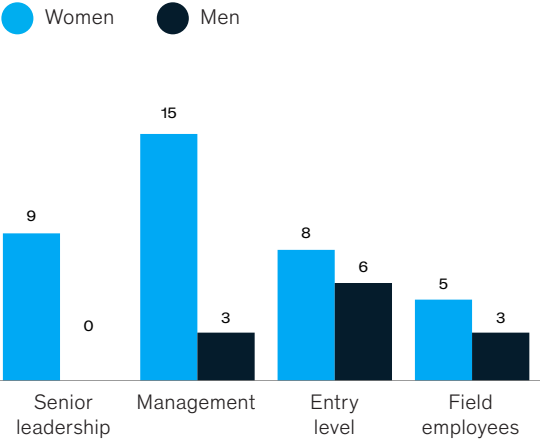
More women at every level report experiencing retaliation when speaking out

Percentage of employees who report receiving retaliation[2]

[1]Percentage of respondents who answered "I've noticed bias or discrimination, but I've never felt safe speaking out against it".
[2]Responded "yes" to receipt of retaliation in some way when they spoke out against bias or discrimination (e.g., given a poor evaluation, fired, excluded, or passed over for opportunities).
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

More women than men continue to face additional challenges in the workplace, from regular occurences of microaggressions to feelings of judgement about their responsibilities at home. Although situations of bias and perceived discrimination occur, many go unheard because they are not noticed or people fear to speak up. Organizations have the opportunity to address these challenges as part of their DE&I action plans.

[17] *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

Chapter 3: Challenges and inequalities amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic

Throughout 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted organizations and the traditional course of business. Many employees continue to struggle to focus on and be effective in their roles amid increased challenges and heightened stress. In this chapter, we explore the persistent impact of the pandemic on workplace experiences and examine how the prolonged challenges have disproportionately affected women. We also highlight how women have stepped up as leaders and reported taking on additional responsibility throughout this period, both at work and at home.

Covid-19 has left more than a quarter of employees exhausted, unable to concentrate at work, and stressed.
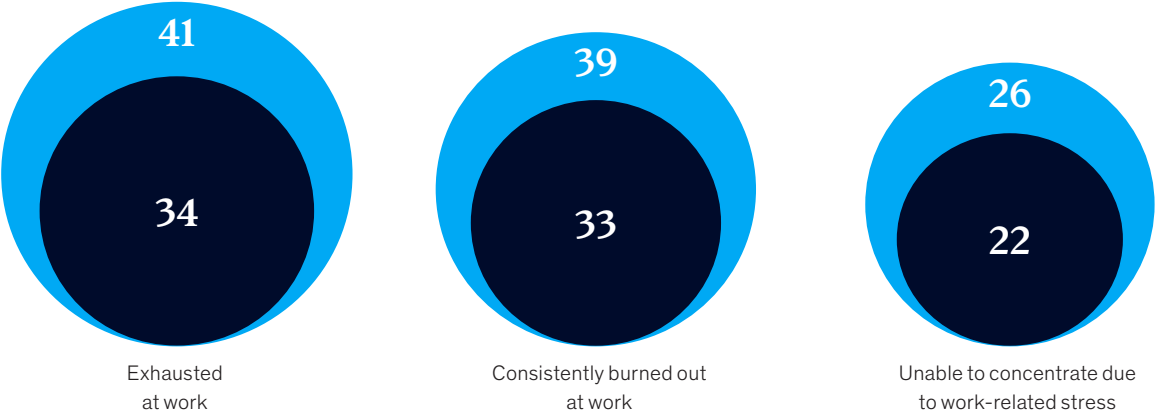
As the COVID-19 pandemic rages on, a considerable proportion of employees have experienced issues that have hindered their effectiveness at work (Exhibit 18). Over a third of both men and women reported feeling consistently burned out at work, with 41 percent of women compared to 34 percent of men reporting they are exhausted. The proportion of women citing chronic stress and distraction at work over the past year and a half is also slightly higher than men. These findings are comparable for organizations across North America.

Exhibit 18

More women report being exhausted or consistently burned-out at work

Percentage of employees who report feeling

● Women   ● Men

| Exhausted at work | Consistently burned out at work | Unable to concentrate due to work-related stress |
| 41 / 34 | 39 / 33 | 26 / 22 |

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Women reported concerns about the repercussions of requesting or taking advantage of workplace flexibility, despite benefitting from options such as remote work.

Women work remotely more frequently than men and have a greater desire to maintain the possibility of remote work in the future as well as to work remotely more days of the week (Exhibit 19).
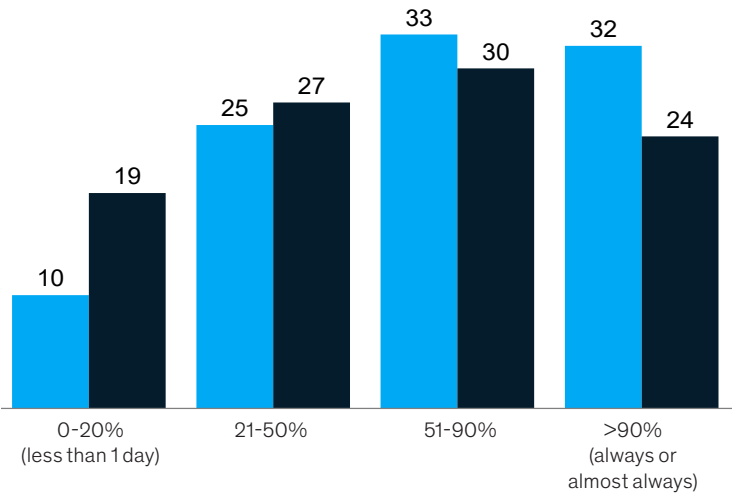
Exhibit 19

Proportion of week employees worked remotely in the past year

Percentage of employees

● Women   ● Men

	0-20% (less than 1 day)	21-50%	51-90%	>90% (always or almost always)
Women	8	3	6	83
Men	17	4	9	70
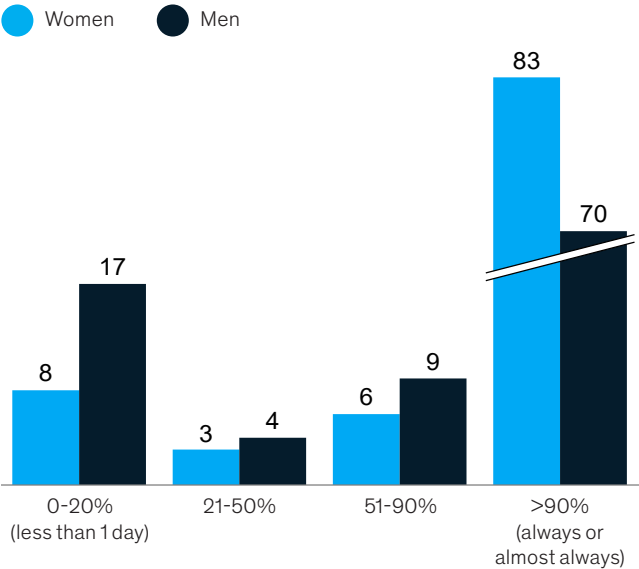
Proportion of week employees desire to work remotely after the pandemic

Percentage of employees

	0-20% (less than 1 day)	21-50%	51-90%	>90% (always or almost always)
Women	10	25	33	32
Men	19	27	30	24

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Women also perceive that they have less flexibility to take time off for personal or family reasons, to step away to deal with unexpected events, or to set their own schedules. Overall, only about one-quarter of all employees reported feeling supported to succeed with remote work (Exhibit 20). Moreover, more women than men are concerned about how they will work in a post-pandemic setting. Women are worried about being kept "in the know" about important work developments, being viewed as less committed to their work, and having to work harder for recognition. This can increase organizations' attention to creating flexibility options that are encouraged and normalized by all employees and breaking down barriers to support all ways of working.
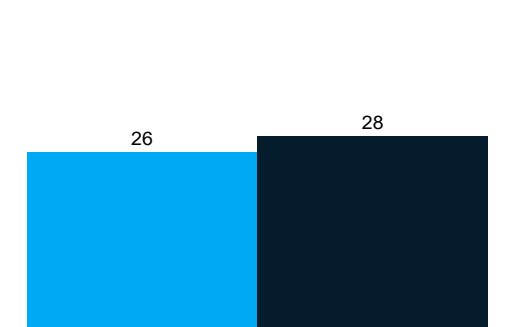
Exhibit 20

However, women are more concerned about the repercussions of requesting or taking advantage of flexibility at work now and in future
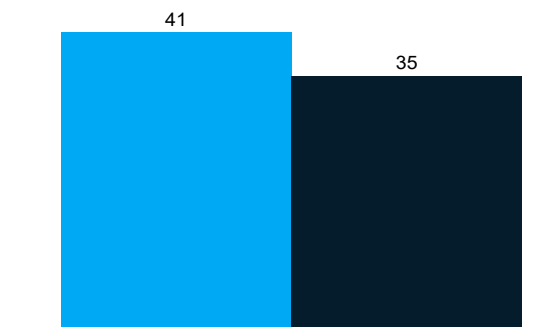
● Women ● Men

More than a quarter of men and women don't feel supported to succeed with remote work

Percentage of employees who do not feel supported[1]

Women are more concerned than men are about being kept in the know, viewed as committed, and recognized in the context of remote work

Percentage of employees who do not feel supported[1]

[1]Percentage of respondents who answered no to "I feel supported, set up to succeed, or like it's no big deal" about remote work.
[2]Percentage of employees who answered yes to "I feel judged, worried, or burdensome to my team" about remote work.
[3]Percentage of employees who reported feeling concerned about being kept "in the know" about important work developments, being viewed as committed to work, and having to work harder for recognition.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

During the COVID-19 pandemic women have stepped up as leaders and have provided more support to their colleagues compared to men.
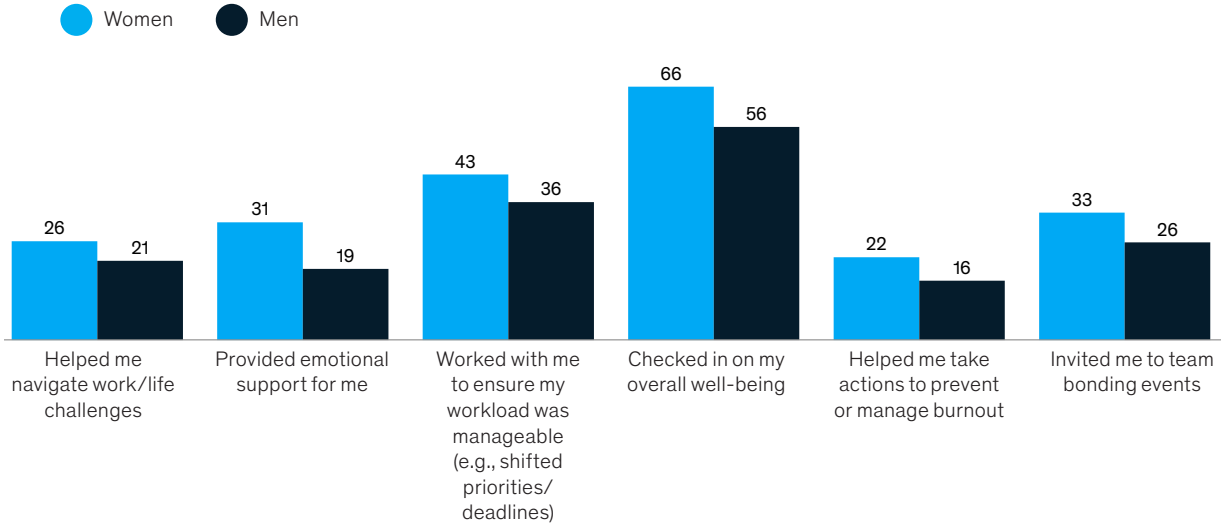
Although over 80 percent of employees feel their managers care about their well-being—i.e., provide both emotional and professional support—employees with women managers consistently feel greater levels of support than those with men managers (Exhibit 21). This is consistent with self assessments; nearly 10 percentage points more women than men reported they provided more support to their co-workers or teams throughout 2020 compared to previous years (Exhibit 22). These findings are comparable in organizations across North America.[18]

[18] W*omen in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company.

Exhibit 21

Employees with a woman manager were more likely to receive various forms of support throughout the past year

Percentage of employees who stated receiving forms of support from their manager

● Women ● Men

|	Helped me navigate work/life challenges	Provided emotional support for me	Worked with me to ensure my workload was manageable (e.g., shifted priorities/deadlines)	Checked in on my overall well-being	Helped me take actions to prevent or manage burnout	Invited me to team bonding events
Women	26	31	43	66	22	33
Men	21	19	36	56	16	26

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Exhibit 22

Women reported providing more support to team members this year than in previous years

Percentage of employees[1,2]

● Women ● Men

56

48
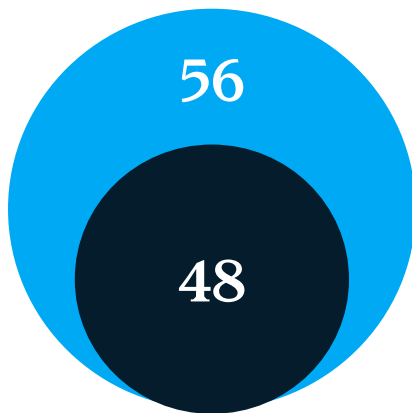
[1]In response to: "Compared to previous years, in the last year have you given more or less emotional support to your team members or other co-workers?".
[2]Note that "providing more support" is self reported by employees and is subject to employees' own interpretation of the support they provided over the past year.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Women also stepped up outside of pandemic-related support, championing DE&I progress within their organizations.

Many women reported feeling responsible for promoting DE&I at work and, over the past year, spent discretionary time on it.

Women have been championing multiple efforts throughout a challenging year and a half. Not only have more women than men taken on additional roles at work to support their teammates through the pandemic, but many of them have also taken on further responsibilities related to DE&I promotion.

More women at levels lower than senior leadership reported feeling personally responsible for promoting DE&I at work than did men at the same levels. In addition, more women than men across all levels have spent discretionary time on DE&I activities over the past year (Exhibit 23). Notably, senior-level women are 15 percentage points more likely to spend a substantial amount of time on DEI compared to senior-level men (Exhibit 24).

Women who reported spending time on DE&I when it is not central to their job function cited a deep belief in the benefits and importance of DE&I, as well as the need to create a safe space for under-represented groups (Exhibit 23). As seniority increases, the percentage of women and men who both feel responsible for promoting DE&I and actually spend time promoting DE&I outside of their core role responsibilities increases as well.

Exhibit 23

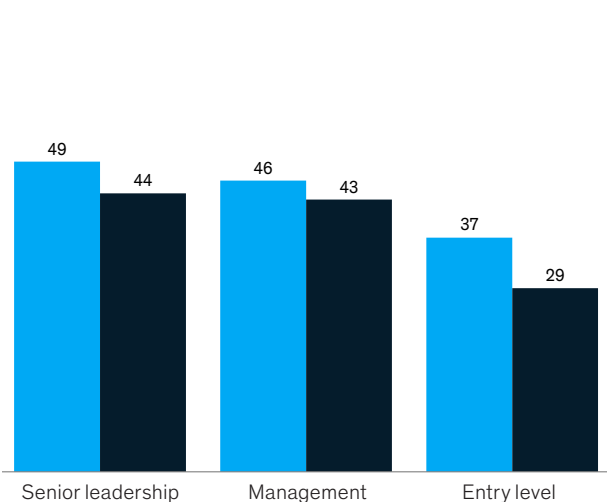**Many women feel reponsible for promoting DE&I at work ...**

Percentage of respondents[1]

● Women ● Men
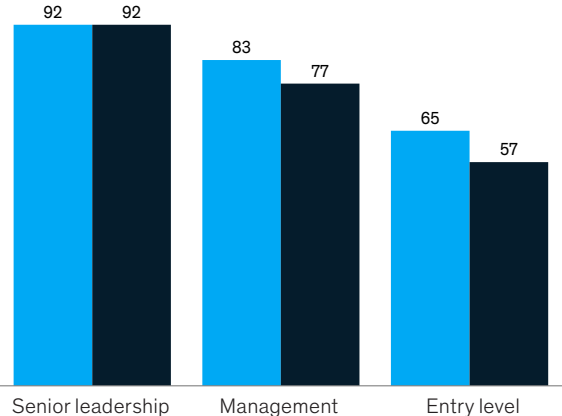
... and more women spend some portion of their time promoting DE&I outside of their role

Percentage of respondents[2]

[1]Percentage of employees who responded "Somewhat" or "Strongly agree". Caveat: these reflect self-reported results.
[2]Percentage of respondents who reported spending time on promoting DE&I outside of their role responsibilities.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Exhibit 24

Women leaders are up to twice as likely as men at their level to spend a substantial amount of time on DEI

In the last year, I have spent a substantial amount of time on DEI work that is not central to my job

● Women   ● Men

5pp

Manager[1]

Men: 5
Women: 10

+15pp

Senior Leader[1]

Men: 2
Women: 17

[1]Percentage of employees who responded "Somewhat" or "Strongly agree". Caveat: these reflect self-reported results.
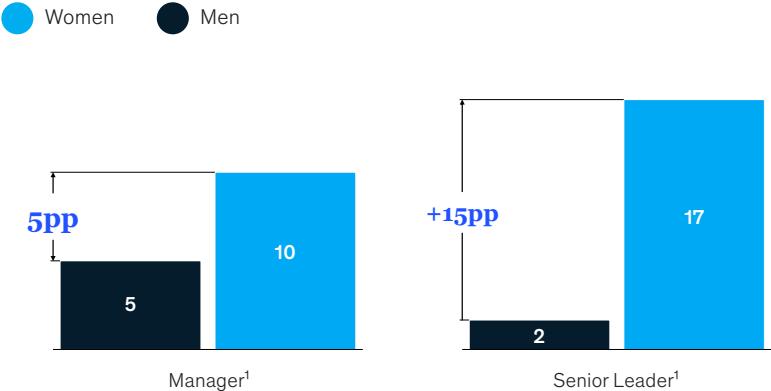[2]Percentage of respondents who reported spending time on promoting DE&I outside of their role responsibilities.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Additionally, nearly one-third of senior-level women, compared to less than one-fifth of senior-level men, reported engaging in five or more activities to support women of colour. These findings align with those of the North American *Women in the Workplace* 2021 study, which concluded that women at the manager and senior-leader levels generally carry out more regular allyship actions than men.[19]

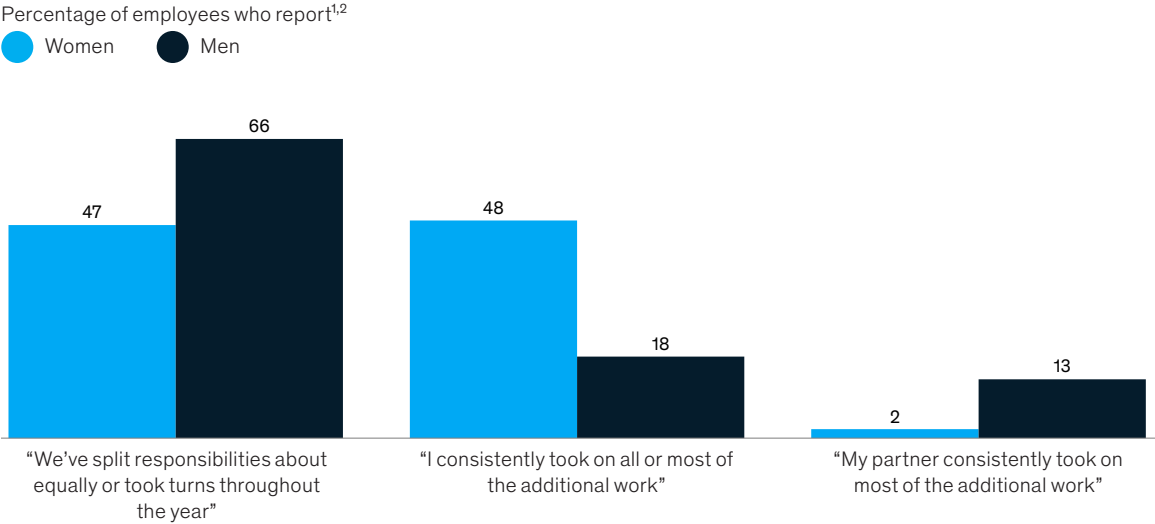[19] W*omen in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company.

Not only have many women taken on additional responsibilities at work, more women than men have seen their workload increase at home. In about 50 percent of heterosexual households, women perceive that the additional responsibilities that have surfaced due to the pandemic have been split equally between themselves and their partners (Exhibit 25), compared to 66 percent for men.

However, the other 50 percent of women in heterosexual households nearly all reported that they have taken on all or most of the additional responsibilities at home. In this edition of the report, deep into the first year of the pandemic, we found that working mothers' absorbed a disproportionate amount of child-care and homeschooling responsibilities and that their double shift had grown to a "triple shift".

Throughout the pandemic, there has been an increase in household responsibilities. While many partnerships split the additional work equally, a higher proportion of women than men reported taking on all or most of the additional work.

Exhibit 25

When it comes to the increased time you spent on household responsibilities related to the pandemic, would you say:

Percentage of employees who report[1,2]

- Women
- Men

	Women	Men
"We've split responsibilities about equally or took turns throughout the year"	47	66
"I consistently took on all or most of the additional work"	48	18
"My partner consistently took on most of the additional work"	2	13

[1]Note that this data reflects employees' perception of how household work is split between themselves and their partners.
[2]Caveat: this analysis is reflective of heterosexual partnerships.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

More than **2x** as many senior level women as senior level men reported considering leaving or downshifting over the past year

A greater proportion of women, particularly women in senior positions, considered downshifting or leaving the workforce over the past year and a half.

The overwhelming demands of work and pandemic-related stress have contributed to a major shift in the workforce. These demands appear to have had an even greater impact on women than men, as women have taken on more responsibilities at work and at home. Concurrently, more women than men considered leaving the workforce or downshifting their career in the last year. This difference between men and women is especially true at senior leadership levels, as more than twice as many women as men reported considering leaving or downshifting. With burnout being more prevalent than ever among all employees, but especially senior leaders, more than 45 percent of senior women and 35 percent of senior men reported that they often or almost always felt burned out in recent months. Organizations must be deliberate about redesigning the new workplace or they could risk losing talent, especially women (Exhibit 26).

Exhibit 26

A high proportion of employees, especially women senior leaders and managers, considered leaving the workforce or downshifting their career

Proportion of employees who considered leaving or downshifting their career

Percentage of employees who stated considering leaving the workforce or downshifting their career to a less demanding job
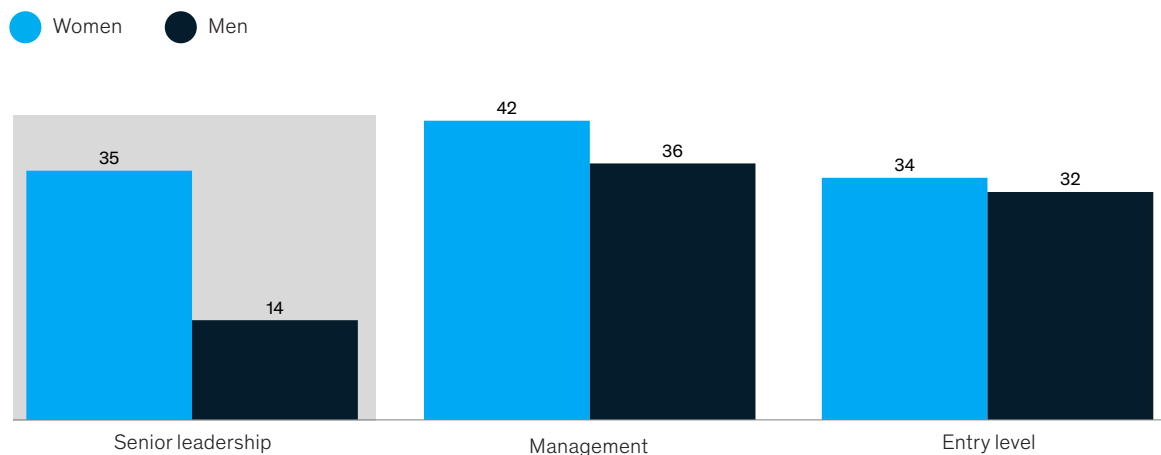
● Women ● Men

	Senior leadership	Management	Entry level
Women	35	42	34
Men	14	36	32

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

Now more than ever, organizations have a chance to redesign the way they work and implement supportive workplace programs for all employees so that they can thrive.
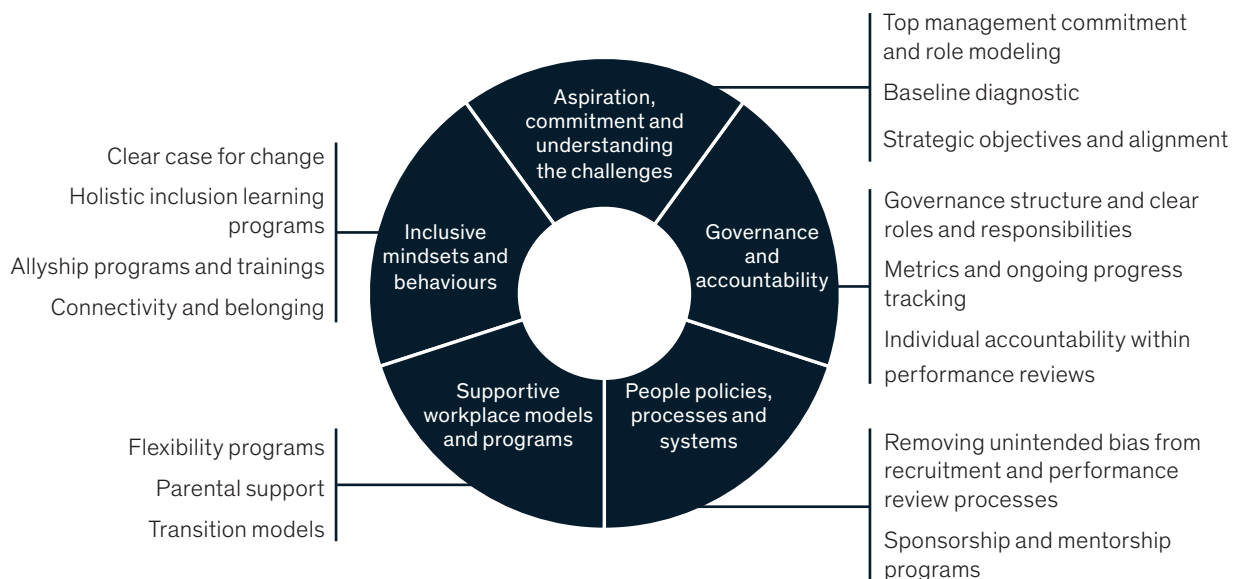
Chapter 4:
Making progress toward DE&I

Almost two decades of research leads us to believe that progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion, for women and other equity-seeking groups, requires action across five dimensions: 1) understanding, aspirations, and commitment from management; 2) governance and accountability; 3) people policies, processes, and systems; 4) supportive workplace models and programs; and 5) inclusive mindsets and behaviours (Exhibit 27). Although the actions we suggest focus on impact to women, they can be universally applied and will likely help all employees thrive.

Exhibit 27

An ecosystem approach can help to unlock progress toward DE&I

Top management commitment and role modeling

Baseline diagnostic

Strategic objectives and alignment

Governance structure and clear roles and responsibilities

Metrics and ongoing progress tracking

Individual accountability within performance reviews

Removing unintended bias from recruitment and performance review processes

Sponsorship and mentorship programs

Clear case for change

Holistic inclusion learning programs

Allyship programs and trainings

Connectivity and belonging

Flexibility programs

Parental support

Transition models

Aspiration, commitment and understanding the challenges

Inclusive mindsets and behaviours

Governance and accountability

Supportive workplace models and programs

People policies, processes and systems

Meaningful actions from leaders, peers, and teams, along with accompanying overall organizational systems are required to foster an inclusive culture with a strong sense of belonging.

It is important to note that the dimensions in the model represent internal actions that organizations can take. To strengthen DE&I efforts and progress, organizations can also commit to external actions that incorporate DE&I into corporate and social responsibility, business operations (e.g., suppliers and investments), and core business strategy (e.g., markets, products).

While no two companies are the same and an ecosystem of initiatives is necessary to create meaningful change, we have seen top performing North American organizations implement a variety of actions across these dimensions.[20] Examples of such actions are included throughout this chapter.

These top performers reflect North American companies that have improved their representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, have shown consistent year-over-year gains, higher women's representation than their industry peers, and outperformance on representation of women of colour.

[20]Top performing organizations were analyzed as part of the 2021 Women in the Workplace research. *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021.

Investing in diversity, equity, and inclusion creates organization-wide benefits, from overall performance to a stronger sense of belonging for all.

1. Understanding, aspirations, and commitment from management

Nearly 70 percent of employees reported that their organizations have made a commitment to DE&I, yet only 35 percent of employees reported that their organizations have taken measurable action on this commitment.

Determining the baseline

Leading DE&I organizations develop an understanding of their DE&I starting point, both qualitatively and quantitatively, so they can set achievable aspirations and properly track progress toward them.

Determining this starting point can involve awareness and measurement of current internal DE&I metrics and identification of the goals around the programs that will make meaningful impact on DE&I progress within the organization. Organizations can approach this in a variety of ways, including conducting observations, interviews, and surveys of diverse employee segments, and performing certain tracking of HR representation to identify baselines and measure progress toward goals. These activities can identify the most significant diversity "pain points"—such as representation gaps in specific business units or geographies or acute attrition at particular phases of recruitment, retention, and advancement.

Combining both diversity and inclusion fact bases gives these organizations even greater insight into specific groups that experience challenges with inclusion and belonging, the obstacles that prevent these employees from bringing their full selves to work, and the changes that are required to resolve these issues.

Setting strategic objectives

Winning organizations that establish DE&I as a strategic priority set organization-wide strategic objectives that define success. They leverage the fact base, using it to identify clear, organization-specific pain points and set objectives to address them. These objectives go beyond diversity and include equity, inclusion, and allyship. They can also guide further goal setting and metrics tracking that cascade down into every level of the organization. These metrics are discussed further in Dimension 2.

Role modelling inclusive behaviours

Leaders at all levels can demonstrate their commitment to their DE&I aspirations through their day-to-day actions, and role model the practices they wish to see in their employees. In parallel, organizations can support all employees' adoption of these behaviours and encourage them to become leaders among their colleagues through formal sponsorship and allyship programs, as explored in Dimensions 3 and 4.

It is important that DE&I goals and behaviours are perceived as everyone's responsibility, not just that of women or people of colour within the organization. Our survey revealed that women feel more responsible for acting on DE&I initiatives and have played an increasing role in these efforts over the past year. For instance, 41 percent of women reported spending time promoting DE&I versus 35 percent of men. This difference was particularly visible on more nuanced initiatives such as seeking education about the experiences of women of colour; there, 55 percent of women reported doing so compared to 33 percent of men. All leaders and employees should begin adopting the desired mindsets and behaviours that can create holistic organizational change.

## 2. Governance and accountability

Although 70 percent of leaders state that their organizations are prioritizing DE&I, only 15 percent of their employees reported that these leaders are held accountable for implementing actions to achieve this. This underlines the clear need for better DE&I accountability mechanisms and increased transparency in tracking both organizational and individual accountability.

Actions organizations are taking:

Hold senior leaders accountable for progress on diversity

Governance and accountability

● Top performing companies[1]

● Companies overall

+31

100

69
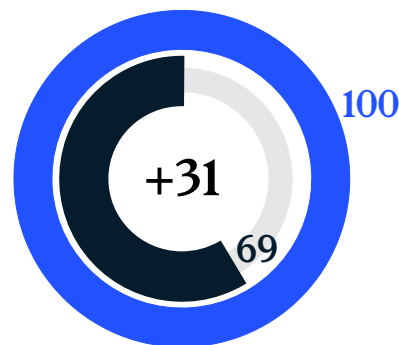
Senior leaders accountable for progress (or lack thereof) on diversity metrics or goals

[1]Companies that have made improvements in representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, consistent year-over-year gains. They have higher women's representation than their industry peers and outperform on representation of women of colour.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

Adopting and tracking organizational metrics

To increase accountability and make measurable progress more likely, leading organizations use their fact bases to understand their progress in connection with their goals and to share progress toward aspirations throughout the organization.

In just one example, setting and tracking quantitative aspirations for hiring rates can help organizations make progress toward accountability. These aspirations can focus on gender and race and ethnicity, each role level, and a specific time-period and can be leveraged to help identify gaps in the talent pipeline and share progress on goals throughout the entire organization to reaffirm its ongoing commitment. Such quantitative aspirations can also be used as accountability and transparency mechanisms.

It is important to note that while tracking and transparency improve awareness and accountability, all hiring, advancement, and personnel decisions should remain based solely on merit.

Actions organizations are taking:

Track diversity metrics by gender and race/ethnicity

Governance and accountability

● Top performing companies[1]

● Companies overall

+17

77

60
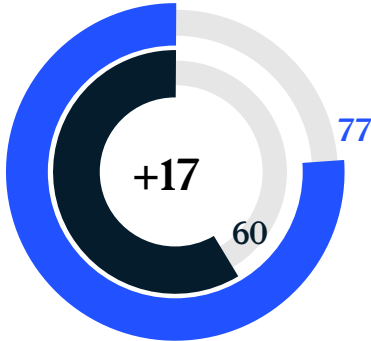
Track representation of intersection of gender and race for all employees

[1]Companies that have made improvements in representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, consistent year-over-year gains. They have higher women's representation than their industry peers and outperform on representation of women of colour.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

Addressing individual accountability

To build accountability at the individual level and generate a shared desire for and commitment to change, best practice organizations also incorporate DE&I aspirations into applicable performance reviews and create rewards for employees who successfully model inclusive behaviours. For example, organizations can conduct annual implicit bias training for all recruiters and hiring managers, can have members of the leadership team participate in two training or recruiting events focused on DE&I efforts, can prompt recruiters and hiring managers to attend three diverse hiring fairs, and can evaluate job descriptions for criteria that are not essential and may unnecessarily eliminate candidates from consideration.

Communicating and demonstrating that DE&I is a shared undertaking, rather than just a task for leadership or HR, gives all employees the opportunity to become leaders and contribute to the successful performance of the organization.

Embedding DE&I roles and responsibilities into the business

To realize their DE&I aspirations, best practice organizations can employ both enterprise-wide and complementary efforts in individual business units or functions. This operating model assigns DE&I roles and responsibilities to key leaders within the business units or functions, who can then drive accountability and help coordinate the organization-wide DE&I strategy with specific business unit strategies. Overall, this type of operating model can create a cohesive, synergistic program across the organization.

3. People policies, processes, and systems

Organizations continue to hire and promote women and people of color at lower rates than White men throughout the talent pipeline. Best practice organizations work to remove unintended bias from various organizational processes (including hiring and review processes) and create programs (like sponsorship) to help diverse groups find and attain opportunities. In addition, they make support and advancement mechanisms equally accessible to all employees.

Incorporating DE&I into hiring processes

Better representation of diverse groups can be partially achieved by reaching a wider pool of qualified diverse candidates. For many organizations, this may require rethinking the entire hiring process to ensure it is calibrated to meet their diversity representation aspirations.

Leading organizations often start by considering how candidates are sourced. Where are they sourcing from? How can they expand their reach to connect with more diverse candidates? What messaging is used to advertise roles? Does it resonate with diverse talent? Do the job requirements accurately reflect what is required to succeed? Or are legacy expectations limiting the talent considered eligible for the role?

Moreover, such organizations work to remove unintentional bias from hiring, such as in the application, resume screening, and interview processes. This can be accomplished by standardizing recruiting processes, redesigning interview questions, introducing diverse interview panels, diligently tracking hiring outcomes, and implementing bias training for all recruiters and interviewers.[21]

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[21] *Women in the Workplace 2021*, September 2021, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, McKinsey.com.

Debiasing performance reviews

In Chapter 1, we revealed that women, and specifically women of colour, are less likely to be promoted across the talent pipeline. Our research suggests that 10 percent of women believe their gender prevents them from getting a raise, a promotion, or a chance to get ahead.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, employees perceived that their organizations made few changes to their performance review processes. Only about 25 percent of employees reported that their company modified the review process to adjust productivity expectations or take pandemic-related circumstances into account. Moreover, only 6 percent of employees reported that their company increased its focus on reducing bias in the performance review process.

To address this, best practice organizations are evaluating their current review and promotion processes for unintended biases and are working to eliminate them. For example, they are providing performance review evaluators with bias training and bias checks and are ensuring review criteria are based on objective measures.[22]

Creating sponsorship programs

To address the difference in the advancement rates of men and women, such organizations also create and strengthen sponsorship programs that ensure equitable access and support for women. Sponsors play a critical role in creating and identifying opportunities for colleagues, which can be of vital importance for those seeking advancement within organizations. They are often knowledgeable about a company's positions and roles, understand how to advance to the next level on the career track, and have access to company resources to support their sponsored party. Robust sponsorship programs can be created for all levels of employees to ensure each employee group has access to similar advancement resources and feels supported in their day-to-day work.
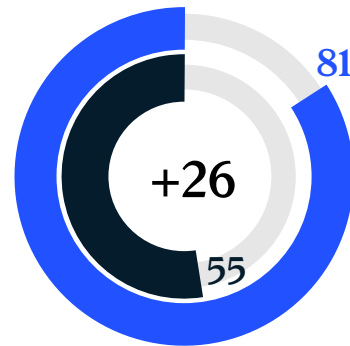
Actions organizations are taking:

Minimize gender bias in hiring and performance reviews/promotions

Governance and accountability

● Top performing companies[1]

● Companies overall

+26

81

55

Offer bias training for performance review or hiring evaluators

[1]Companies that have made improvements in representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, consistent year-over-year gains. They have higher women's representation than their industry peers and outperform on representation of women of colour.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

Provide sponsorship programs for women of colour and support employee resource groups (ERGs)

Governance and accountability

+30

82

52
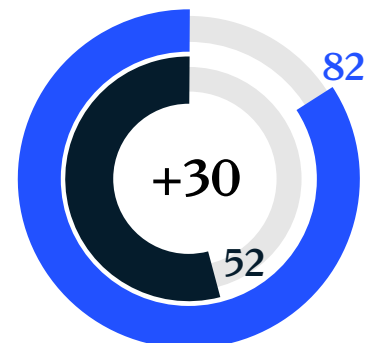
Offer formal sponsorship programs for employees from under-represented groups (e.g., women of colour)

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

[22] Ibid.

4. Supportive workplace models and programs

Overall, employees feel their organizations have responded well to the COVID-19 crisis and acknowledge the efforts of senior leaders to validate the challenges they are facing during the pandemic.

A comparable percentage of women (87) and men (86) reported being "somewhat" or "very" happy with their organization's response to COVID-19. Similarly, a high percentage of women (81) and men (79) reported that senior leaders regularly acknowledge the challenges employees have been facing during the pandemic.

More than half of increased organizational support during the COVID-19 pandemic focused on mental health (Exhibit 28). Interestingly, only one-third of the additional pandemic-related support included employee resource groups, and only 8 percent of employees reported that their organizations enhanced support for parents despite their increased responsibilities over the past year and a half.

Actions organizations are taking:

Adjust policies to better support employees' wellbeing

Supportive workplace models and programs

- 🔵 Top performing companies[1]
- ⚫ Companies overall

+32

92

60
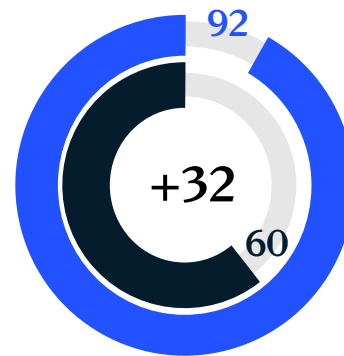
Increase mental health suppoorts (e.g., mental health programs, reimbrsement for therapy) and parental support
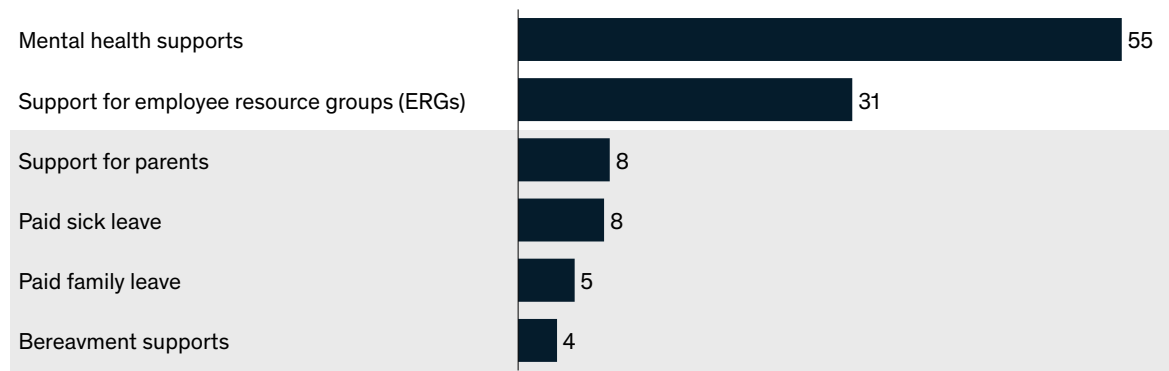
[1]Companies that have made improvements in representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, consistent year-over-year gains. They have higher women's representation than their industry peers and outperform on representation of women of colour.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

Exhibit 28

There is a opportunity to enhance flexible programs for parents and employees needing support, especially with the new way of working

Although most organizations increased mental health support throughout the past year, policies and programs for caregiving needs saw very little change

Percentage of employees that report increased support

Mental health supports	55
Support for employee resource groups (ERGs)	31
Support for parents	8
Paid sick leave	8
Paid family leave	5
Bereavment supports	4

Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317 employees.

The challenges that women face in the workplace intensified over the past year. Women already worked the "double shift"—a full day of work followed by many hours taking care of children and doing household labour—and with the suspension of several supports, such as in-person school and childcare, many women in heterosexual households reported taking on more responsibilities at home.[23] As discussed in Chapter 3, women have also stepped up in the workplace, providing more support to team members and championing DE&I actions and initiatives. Today more than ever, winning organizations are thinking about flexible workplace models that enable full gender equality and reduce the risk of more women downshifting or leaving the workforce altogether.

Providing a range of supports for all

The past year and a half left men and women feeling exhausted at work and appealing for more flexibility and support from their organizations (Exhibit 29). However, more women than men also reported fear about the repercussions on their career if they took advantage of workplace flexibility. To create truly flexible programs, many organizations are rethinking when (hours per day, days per week or month, timing of work, weeks per year, and extended leave), where (in the office, remotely, or a hybrid of the two), and how (job sharing, collaboration, roles and responsibilities, and technology) their employees work.

A cultural shift that accepts all these ways of working may be equally important, making sure all ways of working are normalized not only for women but for all employees. This can help ensure both men and women are able to reap the benefits and avoid the perception that this is an accommodation for individual groups.

Leading organizations also often support working parents with paid family leave, emergency backup childcare services, and/or on-site childcare. Moreover, they provide increased support for transitions to or from extended leaves,[24] helping ensure that women's progress is not significantly hindered by the prolonged periods of absence necessitated by pregnancy, adoption leave, parental leave, or childcare. They also try to make it clear that men have similar access to these programs and are encouraged to take advantage of them.

Exhibit 29

Significantly more women cited reasonable workloads and increased flexibility as actions that could have helped them overcome challenges over the past year

Percentage of employees reporting actions that would have helped prevent considerations of leaving the workforce, downshifting, or taking a job elsewhere
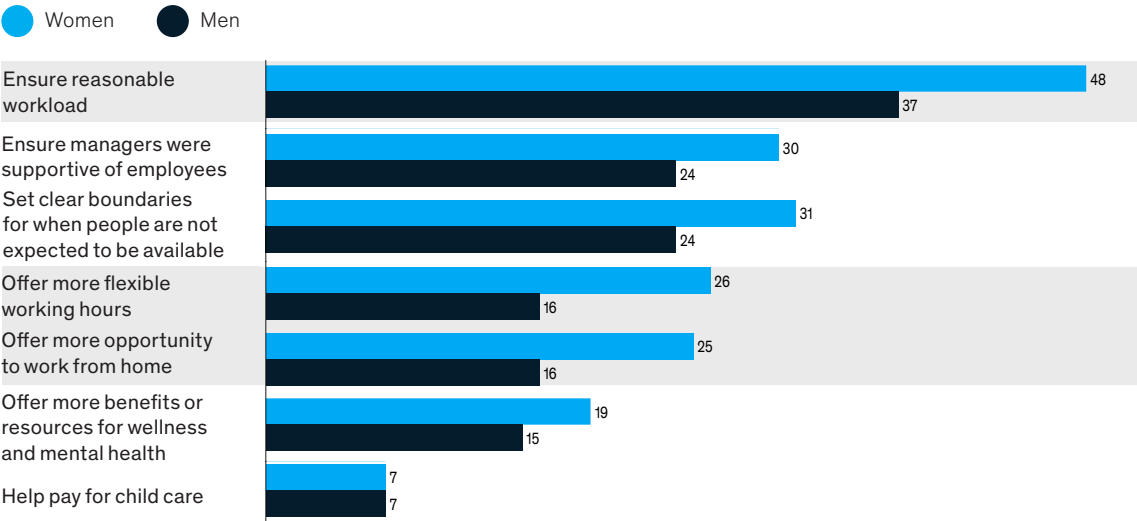
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, Canada's data cut; Employee Experience Survey 2021, 5,317.
[23] *Women in the Workplace 2021*, September 2021, McKinsey.com.
[24] *Women matter: The present and future of women at work in Canada*, June 2019, McKinsey.com.

5. Inclusive mindsets and behaviours

Inclusion is about how the workforce experiences the workplace. It is the degree to which employees perceive that they are accepted and respected. Inclusive organizations create a sense of belonging (e.g., promoting a positive connection for the employees to the organization and other employees) and openness (create safety to express thoughts, ideas, and concern). When measured and acted on comprehensively, it becomes a competitive advantage: our research shows that 90 percent of employees are more likely to go out of their way to help a colleague if they work in an inclusive organization and are 47 percent more likely to stay with an organization if they consider it to be inclusive.[25] Building inclusive mindsets among employees is vital to reap the benefits of other DE&I initiatives—it is the foundation of all the previous dimensions.

But how do best practice organizations get employees to truly start changing their behaviours? Organizations can move forward on their inclusion journey by creating engagement in the following three areas.

Building conviction by understanding the "why"

A critical step in embarking on a meaningful inclusion journey is asking "why". Although some employees may have fully bought into the case for inclusion, many may remain unfamiliar with the concept, the research supporting it, or the impact it can have on their teams, customers, and the organization. Organizations that make a strong case for change often launch a multi-faceted, sustained communication plan to help their employees learn about inclusion by hearing about their colleagues' lived experiences. When employees see leaders authentically talking about these concepts, it can create a wave of change within an organization.

Organizations' motivations for embedding DE&I into their overall strategy[26] can vary greatly—one organization may seek to increase DE&I to ensure access to top talent, whereas another may strive to spur innovation by creating more diverse and inclusive teams. Providing insight into this reasoning helps employees understand why the commitment is important and how it will impact the success of their team and business.

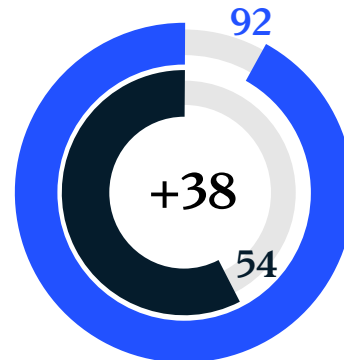[25] Inclusion assessment validation research, McKinsey.

[26] *Diversity wins: How inclusion matters*, May 2020, McKinsey.com.

Actions organizations are taking:

Focus on intersectionality and allyship education

Inclusive mindsets and behaviours

● Top performing companies[1]

● Companies overall

92

+38

54

Provide allyship training and exploration of intersectionality as a part of their bias training

[1]Companies that have made improvements in representation of women at most levels of the pipeline over the past four years and, in many cases, consistent year-over-year gains. They have higher women's representation than their industry peers and outperform on representation of women of colour.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2021*, LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, September 2021, McKinsey.com.

Delivering holistic inclusion learning programs

Inclusion learning programs should go beyond raising awareness about unconscious bias, microaggressions, and allyship to drive sustained behaviour changes. Best-in-class behaviour-change programs provide flexible, comprehensive programsthat give participants space to explore concepts and practice their new behaviours. These initiatives are more comprehensive in both their content (covering, for example, providing effective sponsorship, creating belonging, or addressing challenging topics at work) and modalities, such as small group discussions, voluntary inclusion "nudges", and assessments to measure organizational progress.

Creating allyship programs

Creating formal allyship programs can help organizations provide women, and especially women of colour, with the resources they need to feel heard, guided, and supported throughout their careers. Our research shows that women take more initiativesthan men do to support other women, especially women of colour. Only around one in four men publicly supports gender equality, compared to about one in three women, and only one in three men actively listens to the experiences with discrimination that their women-of-colour colleagues have endured, compared to about one in two women.

To address differences in support levels between colleagues, and specifically encourage men to support women, many organizations provide formal training on how to be an effective ally. These programs are provided for all employees and help address how non-affinity groups can show up as allies for women.Offering these programs can help create an inclusive and supportive workforce and strengthen the support network across the organization.

Fostering connectivity and sense of belonging

Building a sense of connectivity and belonging is a critical complement to the formal policies and training programs of an inclusion journey. Employees who feel confident that they belong also feel supported, accepted, and included, and research shows they perform better (for example, these employees receive 18 times more promotions in organizations than those who do not report feelings of belonging).

When employees feel such a sense of belonging, the whole organization benefits (for example, top performing organizations on this measure show 50 percent less turnover risk and a 56 percent increase in organizational performance).[27]

All employees can play a part in increasing belonging for others through intentional but subtle micro-behaviours. Leaders have an outsize role to play in creating this environment. They can reset leadership norms (by, for example, setting up recurring check-ins with each team member, hosting inclusive team-building events, and regularly asking for feedback through various channels), publicly express gratitude more often, and dedicate more time to coaching across the organization. Going the extra mile to build connections and understanding across the workforce may help to break down barriers and reinforce other DE&I efforts.

[27] Evan W. Carr, Andrew Reece, Gabriella Rosen Kellerman, and Alexi Robichaux, "The value of belonging at work," *Harvard Business Review*, December 16, 2019.

Conclusion:
Looking ahead

As we all do our best to navigate the unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic over the next few years, we must be prepared to adapt not only our expectations but also our ways of working and dealing with one another. Only then can we both live and thrive in the shifting environment of both work and home. Organizations will also have an unprecedented opportunity to drive fundamental changes in the way people work; seizing this opportunity will require a sharp, unrelenting focus on DE&I and better support of people facing gender, racial, and ethnicity challenges.

The research in this report revealed that, although organizations have made a start on DE&I, we still have a long way to go—particularly for people of colour and women of colour. Although almost all Canadian organizations treat DE&I as one of their top priorities, they are still finding it difficult to translate this into concrete impactful actions.

Our research also revealed that employees are desperately seeking a better work-life balance. This is particularly true for women, who have taken on more responsibilities both at home and in the workplace when compared to men. Organizations can offer specific support mechanisms that will help level the playing field and enable women to flourish in the new work environment.

The research also showed that such support mechanisms may be particularly critical for women of colour. While the pandemic has been a critical challenge for all, women of colour continue to face even more barriers in the workplace, like microaggressions, and remain under-represented, proportionally, in the context of promotions.

We believe that organizations can address these challenges and take advantage of the seismic shift that will occur in processes and policies. However, to do so, they must meaningfully invest in actions that move them measurably toward their DE&I goals. This will demand an inclusion-centred work environment, shifts in all employees' mindsets, and a clear understanding of how DE&I benefits everyone. Organizations must hold themselves accountable for their commitments and implement supportive programs and policies that ensure all employees have equitable access to workplace opportunities — now and in the future.

Appendix

Methodology

Research participation

This report is based on research from 51 companies across Canada, building on similar research conducted by McKinsey & Company in 2017 and 2019.

Participating companies from the private, public, and social sectors submitted talent pipeline data. In addition, more than 5,000 employees from participating companies were surveyed on their workplace experiences.

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

All data collection occurred between March 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.

Additionally, employees were surveyed on their workplace experiences between May and August 2021. These data sets represent point-in-time snapshots and reflect employees' experiences at the time that the survey was taken.

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 by industry and each industry's data were weighted by the composition of employment by industry in Canada.[28]

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 breakdown of employment by industry in Canada used for our weighting was:

- Wholesale and retail trade — 15%
- Health care and social assistance — 14%
- Manufacturing — 9%
- Professional, scientific, and technical services — 9%
- Educational services — 8%
- Construction — 7%
- Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing — 7%
- Public administration — 6%
- Accommodation and food services — 5%
- Transportation and warehousing — 5%
- Business, building and other support services — 4%
- Information, culture and recreation — 4%
- Other services (except public administration) — 4%
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas — 3%
- Utilities — 1%

[28] Statistics Canada, Employment by industry, monthly, as of end of year 2020.

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 president

- 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.

Metrics and analytics

Talent pipeline data included the representation of men and women (overall, in profit and loss (P&L) versus support roles, and, optionally, by race/ethnicity).

In this research, people of colour includes people who affiliate with ethnic and racial demographics such as Indigenous, Black, Asian, Middle Eastern or North African, Hispanic or Latino/Latina/Latinx, etc. 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

Survey participation

More than 5,000 employees from participating 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).

Breakdown of industries for Canada analyses

Types of organizations	Number of Canada companies
• Banking and Consumer Finance	4
• Asset Management and Institutional Investors	3
• Insurance	2
• Consumer Packaged Goods	1
• Food and Beverage Distribution	3
• Food and Beverage Manufacturing	2
• Retail	1
• Energy, Utilities, and Basic Materials	10
• Oil & Gas	4
• IT Services and Telecom	1
• Technology: Software	3
• Technology: Hardware	0
• Professional and Information Services	6
• Pharmaceuticals and Medical Products	1
• Public and Social Sector	5
• Transportation, Logistics and Infrastructure	3
• Engineering and Industrial Manufacturing	2

Types of organizations	
• Banking, Insurance, and Asset Management	9
• Consumer	7
• GEM (Oil & Gas and Energy)	14
• TMT (Telecom. Media, and Entertainment), and Professional and Information Services	10
• Public and Social Sector and Pharmaceuticals and Medical Products	6
• Transportation, Logistics and Infrastructure and Engineering and Industrial Manufacturing	5

Related McKinsey Global Institute and McKinsey research

Women in the Workplace 2021,
LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company,
September 2021

Understanding organizational barriers to a more inclusive workplace,
June 2021, McKinsey.com

The power of parity: Advancing women's equality in Canada,
June 2017, McKinsey.com

Diversity wins: How inclusion matters,
May 2020,

COVID-19 and gender equality: Countering the regressive effects,
June 2020, McKinsey.com

The future of women at work: Transitions in the age of automation,
June 2019, McKinsey.com