

# Catalyst Europe AG CORE

The source of new ideas and fresh thinking for the greater Catalyst Europe community

## START

A few opening words from Catalyst Europe



### The flip side

Changing the workplace is a tall order. To date, organizations have yet to find a magic formula for attracting good people, especially women, and encouraging them to stay on. Our ongoing strategic work with Members suggests that heavy doses of commitment, honesty and creativity are often integral to the most vibrant and inclusive internal cultures. Good intentions, however, do not guarantee the outcome. Sometimes, all it takes is a simple glance at management, because if there is no senior-level personification of a successful policy or approach – otherwise known as a compelling role model – then the odds for everyone else aren't promising.

The obvious question is: What can be done? Yet, solutions can also be found in the *not* doing. Sometimes the real barriers to change can be better understood by stepping back, looking elsewhere and studying factors that are seemingly unrelated to the problem at hand. Exploring the flip side can be especially helpful to understanding engagement and retention levels of senior-level leaders, who may fall outside of an organization's most valiant efforts.

This issue of CORE encourages readers to think about the space between all of the policies, programs and best intentions, because it is often not as empty as it appears.

Best wishes,  
The Catalyst Europe Team

## VIEWPOINT

Perspectives from a Catalyst Europe Member or Thought Leader



### Heart and soul

“Once leaders become convinced of the value of a gender-balanced organization, they begin to seek it out, become aware of their own views and change their behavior. This becomes almost like a self-fulfilling prophecy because once they believe there are benefits, they start seeing positive results. On the other hand, rarely have I found a punitive position (e.g. required increase in women) to be a sustainable approach. Often it brings a temporary spike in hiring women, but little in terms of creating an inclusive environment that retains women.”

“The main problem we see in engagement and retention is the lack of inspiring leaders. The main reason many talented employees leave a company, or lose their energy and enthusiasm, revolves around the immediate manager and peer group. When inspiration, leadership, support, feedback and attention are lacking, motivation drops and so does engagement. This is even more apparent in middle management than at the top of a company where, by definition, we can and luckily do find more inspiring leaders.”

(In order of appearance) **Lisa Kepinski** is the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer of AXA, having previously held senior D&I positions at Microsoft and Hewlett-Packard. **Christiane Bisanzio** is the Head of Human Resources at AXA for Northern, Central and Eastern Europe.

## PRACTICES-IN-MOTION

A real-world example of a Member program, policy or approach that is effecting positive change in the here-and-now



### No more straight lines

When the leaders of Deloitte's Women's Initiative revamped its vision and agenda, they realized that both women and men were struggling to meet their work and life priorities. Deloitte also recognized that the corporate ladder – characterized by a traditional hierarchy, a single path upward and assumptions that workers' needs remain constant over time – has evolved into what the firm calls a "corporate lattice."™ Rather than a straight line, professional career trajectories increasingly look more like sine waves, with rising and falling levels of engagement over time.

Deloitte is redefining how careers are built using an innovative framework, Mass Career Customization™. The MCC framework, rolled out to all U.S.-based employees in 2008, deconstructs careers into four dimensions:

- Pace, or how quickly an employee assumes increasing levels of responsibility (scale ranges from decelerated to accelerated);
- Workload, or the quantity of work performed (scale ranges from reduced to full);
- Location and Schedule, or where and when work is performed (scale ranges from restricted to not restricted);
- Role, or the category of an employee's position, job description and responsibilities (scale ranges from individual contributor to leader).

The framework provides several options along each of the core dimensions and makes explicit the inter-connection among them. While the framework gives employees choices, it also helps them understand the trade-offs connected with those choices. In this way MCC provides a structured approach that facilitates collaboration between employees and their managers in order to design career paths that make sense within their broader life contexts.

MCC is proving to foster transparent, comprehensive career conversations, help employees and managers work more collaboratively in discussing career paths and time frames, and identify mutually beneficial situations that support employee goals and business needs. Within the first six months of the MCC roll-out, 62 percent of employees said that MCC had a positive impact on their likelihood to recommend Deloitte to others as a great place to work. In addition, retention of high performers in the roll-outs was higher than retention of this group within the firm overall.

*For more on Deloitte & Touche LLP's Mass Career Customization at Deloitte: A New Model for Building Careers and Developing Talent, please [click here](#) (Members only).*

## DOUBLE TAKE

An unexpected finding from Catalyst research



### The limitations of mentoring

With mentoring programs coming under more scrutiny, the debate about mentoring versus sponsorship continues to evolve. The difference is clinched in a [recent Catalyst report](#): “In openly recommending high-performing employees for assignments, opportunities or promotions, sponsors leverage their own power and reputational capital. Therefore, sponsorship is high stakes – for the person who puts his or her reputation on the line, for the person on the receiving end of the sponsorship who must ‘deliver the goods’ and for the organization itself.”

## LIGHT BULB MOMENT

An insight revealed by a participant at a Catalyst Europe event



### Checkpoint reality

“I keep hoping diversity will be like the Berlin Wall falling or some kind of popular movement that takes over, but it’s not. Maybe at some point we’ll hit critical mass, but we clearly aren’t there yet. The solutions we’ve been counting on need to be re-evaluated to make sure they help everyone. In short, men must be participants as well as receivers (of the benefits).”

*Source: Recent Catalyst Europe Learning Hub*

## TRENDING

A theme emerging from Catalyst Europe’s ongoing strategic advisory work



### The search for meaning

Some organizations are stepping away from big questions about policy and programs to focus on the less noticeable, day-to-day factors that shape an employee’s experience. This is because the informal culture of an organization may actually determine a given practice’s success, which is often dependent upon nuanced and intelligent execution.

As to the executors themselves, the managers who are most committed to change are not only asking themselves what they could be doing, but what information, insight or perspective they are missing. They are working to offset the growing sentiment that best practices are idealized, disconnected from reality, or transplanted generic practices that have little local relevance. While the tangible results of practices are important to assess, it is proving vital to understand how they play out among different levels, functions and profiles – on the surface and off the record. This can provide yet another layer of insight because in the end, small things can drive or drive away good people.



## CE CONVENE

Upcoming in-person or virtual events organized by Catalyst Europe or Catalyst Europe partners

For confirmation of final dates and times, as well as new events, feel free to [contact us](#).

### **BERN: 3 NOVEMBER 2011, 9:30-17:00**

#### **Annual diversity symposium**

Catalyst Europe General Manager [Eleanor Tabi Haller-Jorden](#) has been invited to speak at the annual [Diversity Roundtable Switzerland Symposium](#), which will be held at the Swisscom AG headquarters outside Bern in Worblaufen. The event will tackle timely topics, such as quotas, gender-specific targets and the benefits of combined teams, through panel discussions and presentations. Register [here](#).

### **ZURICH: 16 DECEMBER 2011, 9:00-11:00 (new date)**

#### **Senior-level women's forum**

Catalyst Europe is pleased to announce the launch of the invitation-only CE Executive Women's Platform. Hosted by [Ernst & Young](#) in Zurich, this new forum is an opportunity for senior-level women to share their perspectives on leadership and workplace change. [Contact us](#) for details.

### **ZURICH: 7 JUNE 2012**

#### **Inaugural Catalyst Europe CEO Summit**

This invitation-only event will bring together leaders of European and Europe-based organizations, policymakers and experts to identify strategies for effecting workplace change in Europe. The first CE-CEO Summit, entitled *Leadership Matters: Talent, Quotas & the New Workplace*, will be generously hosted by [Swiss Re](#) at the Swiss Re Centre for Global Dialogue in Rüslikon/Zurich. Event sponsors are being confirmed and will be announced shortly.

### **COMING UP: More CE events in your neighborhood**

[Catalyst Europe](#) is pleased to announce the appointment of two new Catalyst Europe Ambassadors: Dr. Isabelle Kuerschner in the Germanic region and Caroline Pickard for the Nordic region, who join UK and Latin Region CE Ambassadors Jane Dennehy and Pascale Marcou, respectively. CE Ambassadors are high-level professionals who serve as Catalyst Europe representatives in strategic European regions. [Contact us](#) for further details.

## OFF-THE-RECORD

Anonymous real-world comments that are timely and touchy – but important to consider before enduring change can take place



### The sponsorship blues

“When I stop and take a good look at the senior managers of my company, I don’t know if they’re very inspirational. And if one of them is my sponsor, I have to wonder what I’m getting myself into.”

*Recent Catalyst Europe Master Class*

## FIELDWORK

A sampling of the topics Catalyst Europe has recently tackled with Catalyst Europe Members



### Still tough at the top

On the heels of the most recent Catalyst Europe AG Regional Symposium, which took place in The Hague in June, Catalyst Europe has been working with Members all over Europe to identify the cultural obstacles to change, both in terms of corporate and national culture. In addition, there has been growing interest in the career paths of senior-level women and their unique perspective of the workplace. Discussions have revolved around clarifying their definitions of success and the external factors which steer them away from senior management positions.

For more information about Catalyst Europe master classes or Strategic Focused Interventions (SFI) – expert advice in real time – please [contact us](#).

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