

## Connections that Count:

*The Informal Networks of  
Women of Color in the United States*



## ABOUT CATALYST

Catalyst is the leading research and advisory organization working with businesses and the professions to build inclusive environments and expand opportunities for women at work. As an independent, nonprofit membership organization, Catalyst conducts research on all aspects of women's career advancement and provides strategic and web-based consulting services globally. With the support and confidence of member corporations and firms, Catalyst remains connected to business and its changing needs. In addition, Catalyst honors exemplary business initiatives that promote women's leadership with the annual Catalyst Award. With offices in New York, San Jose, and Toronto, Catalyst is consistently ranked No. 1 among U.S. nonprofits focused on women's issues by The American Institute of Philanthropy.

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Catalyst's work on women leaders has focused on barriers that keep women from reaching top jobs. In the *Barriers* report series, we examine these obstacles in greater depth and make recommendations to business organizations for dismantling them.

The first report of the series, *Women "Take Care," Men "Take Charge:" Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders Exposed*, examined top managers' stereotypes of women and men leaders and their effects on women's advancement. Other topics that will be explored in forthcoming *Barriers* reports include gender-based stereotypes in the European workplace; how women perceive their contributions to be valued in financial services firms; and the role of formal mentoring programs in helping women navigate business organizations.

In this second report of the *Barriers* series, we focus on another key barrier cited by women: lack of access to networks of influential colleagues. This issue is particularly pronounced for women of color who face double exclusion in the workplace, based on both their race/ethnicity and gender. This lack of access was one of four major barriers to the advancement of women of color identified in earlier research.<sup>1</sup> Influential colleagues are those who can, because of their level or power within the organization, connect women of color with information, resources, or other contacts that can help them advance in their careers.<sup>2</sup>

Women of color may seem to be functioning well within the organization, but not progressing as fast as their white female and/or male counterparts. The obstacles they face are not necessarily obvious to others, who unfortunately rely on stereotypes or perceived wisdom—often just because it's easier. Managers may not even be aware of the barriers that keep women of color in particular from reaching their full potential.

<sup>1</sup> Catalyst, *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Opportunities and Barriers* (1999).

<sup>2</sup> In this report, we have chosen to use the following terms for women of color groups: "Asian" is used to include any people of Asian or Pacific Islander descent who live and work in the United States; "Latina" encompasses those who identify as either Hispanic women or Latinas; and "African-American" is used to refer to those who identify as Black or are people of African descent who live and work in the United States.

Catalyst research in this report identifies how women of color deal with these barriers and suggests how managers and senior executives can help tear the barriers down. Lack of access to networks of influential colleagues underlies all major barriers identified by women of color, including lack of influential mentors or sponsors (as one needs connections with others to obtain mentors and sponsors); lack of company role models of the same racial/ethnic group (reflecting a shortage of similar others who might form part of an influential network); and lack of high-visibility assignments (which are often facilitated by personal relationships with those wielding influence). Women of color themselves find ways to get around these barriers as best they can. According to one Latina:

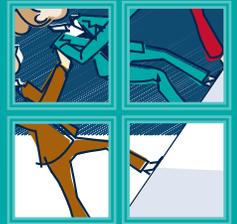
***“When I came here, the advice I got ... was that you really have to build your network. If you don't have a network, you are nobody ... Insure that the network that you build ... can have some positive impact on you. So if you don't get in touch with some people that are ... in higher positions or a visible type position, you're never going to get beyond where you are.”***

According to this Asian woman:

***“If you're not competent, you know, you're not even in the ball game. But then, to progress from there, it's relationships and it's all of these other things.”***

If women of color, despite their best efforts, do not gain access to networks of influential colleagues, to whom do they turn for help with job issues? What are the implications of their networking strategies on their successes within, and their connection to, their organizations? How much more effective and impactful on the business could they be with more help from company leadership to facilitate the key connections these women of color struggle to find?

To answer these questions, we examined the characteristics of informal networks of women of color and how different networking strategies linked to the women's promotion rates and organizational commitment. We end the report with recommendations to CEOs, managers, and human resources executives on how this barrier—lack of access to networks of influential colleagues—can be addressed.



## UNDERREPRESENTATION OF WOMEN OF COLOR IN SENIOR POSITIONS

As many in the business community are aware, the demographics of both the talent pool and consumers are shifting. Because there are many more women and people of color in the labor pool than in the past, it is critical for business organizations to expand traditional recruitment to attract the diversity of talent that exists. Fostering a diverse and inclusive environment helps companies increase productivity by tapping top talent, motivating employees to do their personal best, and maximizing the value of diverse teams regarding innovation, creativity, and quality. Furthermore, a diverse and inclusive culture helps to reduce turnover across demographic groups and to minimize litigation costs.<sup>3</sup>

To this end, the business community needs to understand an important component of its talent pool: women of color. In this report, we specifically investigate the African-American women, Asian women, and Latinas<sup>4</sup> in the workforce.

The low number of women of color at the top of corporations sets the context for the experiences of women of color in corporate management. White women have made minor progress into senior management roles, with 14.2 percent in corporate officer roles, but the presence of women of color at senior levels is minuscule.<sup>5</sup> At this point, only 0.9 percent of corporate officers are African-American women and substantially less than one percent are Asian women (0.4 percent) or Latinas (0.3 percent).<sup>6</sup> This is well below these groups' representation in the labor pool.

Latinas and African-American women comprise similar proportions of the labor pool—5.2 percent and 5.8 percent, respectively—but Latinas comprise less of the upper levels than do African-American women. Similarly, Asian women make up 1.9 percent of the labor pool, a much lower level than Latinas, but their representation at upper levels is on par with that of Latinas.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, Latinas, as compared with other women of color, are particularly underrepresented at top levels. This could be partly due to the fact that Latinas, as a group, skew younger. Latinas are, on average, three to four years younger than other women of color in the labor force (median age is 35.9, compared with 38.8 for African-American women and 39.9 for Asian women).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Catalyst, *Making Change: Creating a Business Case for Diversity* (2002).

<sup>4</sup> In this report, Hispanics are referred to as "Latinos;" Hispanic women are referred to as "Latinas."

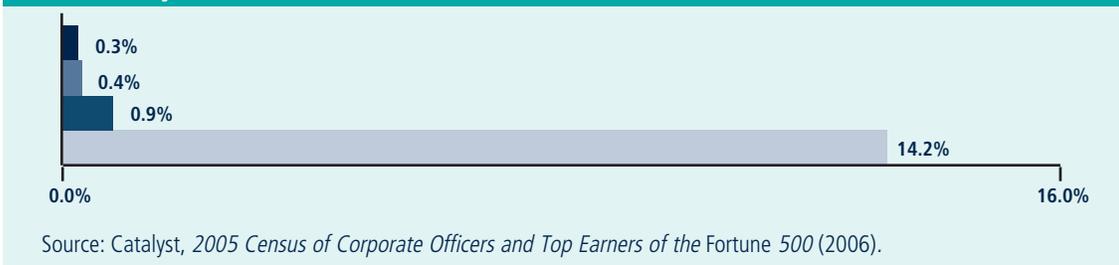
<sup>5</sup> Data on race/ethnicity was not publicly available. Catalyst gathered this information from 260 companies that agreed to provide it. Data was collected on women corporate officers of the following racial/ethnic groups: African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and Other. To calculate the percentages of women corporate officers of color, we included the 67 *Fortune* 500 companies that had no women corporate officers for a total of 327 companies used in this analysis.

<sup>6</sup> Catalyst, *2005 Census of Corporate Officers and Top Earners of the Fortune 500* (2006).

<sup>7</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Populations Survey, Annual Averages, unpublished data (2005).

<sup>8</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Populations Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (2005).

**Figure 1: Percentage of Corporate Officers, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender**



Because less than 2 percent of top-level positions are filled by women of color, it is clear that few women of color are promoted through the ranks. Those women of color who actually make their way into top positions often report relying on a mentor, a sponsor, or an influential network of colleagues to guide them to important career assignments and provide needed advice, introductions, connections, and moral support.<sup>9</sup> Mentors tend to mentor those who are or look similar to themselves. As this Latina states:

***“I am at a director level and there is no one [who is a Latina female] in our company that is at a higher level ... In my case, there is no one from a Latina female standpoint to look to as a mentor.”***

Since few women or people of color occupy positions at the top, the odds of women of color connecting with influential people within their organizations are quite slim.<sup>10</sup>

Prior research by Catalyst has indicated that of all factors necessary to success, forging connections with influential colleagues appears to be the most difficult, multifaceted task women of color in corporations face. According to one senior African-American woman:

***“There is not a lot of familiarity in [my company] with a Black female who is relatively sharp, who clearly manages a huge piece of the business—it’s just not normal. It’s not ordinary. But most things are not done by presenting the facts and making a decision. Things are done by negotiation, by compromise, by friendliness, and by establishing a comfort level between people. So the things that depend on that, which is everything, require more time.”***

How do women of color connect with others who may help them advance in their careers, despite the relative absence of senior managers who look like them at the top of their organizations? What types of people do they go to for job advice? What are the effects of these connections on how quickly they advance and how committed they feel to their organizations?

<sup>9</sup> Catalyst, *Women of Color Executives: Their Voices, Their Journeys* (2001).

<sup>10</sup> Taylor H. Cox and Stella M. Nkomo, “A Race and Gender Group Analysis of the Early Career Experiences of MBAs,” *Work and Occupations*, vol. 18, no. 4 (November 1991): p. 431-446.

## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report will clarify how women of color use networking strategies to help navigate corporate environments, within the constraints Catalyst has uncovered. The report's ultimate goal, however, is to demonstrate to organizations how to improve the work environments for women of color and to pose the strong possibility that women of color could advance more rapidly with the *help of their companies, rather than despite their companies*. To be able to make such improvements, senior managers need to understand the current state of organizational experiences of women of color.

Most of the information in this report is based on secondary analysis of Catalyst's substantial data on women of color. Catalyst conducted more than 50 focus groups and interviews, and collected survey data from 1,735 Latina, Asian women, and African-American women professionals and managers in 30 *Fortune* 1000 companies (see Appendix for more details on methodology). For this report, we also collected additional qualitative information on networking experiences from a small sample of women of color.

In the following chapters, we describe, for African-American women, Asian women, and Latinas:

- The four or five people each woman reported going to when she needed advice related to her job.
- The link between informal network characteristics and advancement (as measured by rate of promotion).
- The link between informal network characteristics and commitment (the overall attachment and sense of identification that each woman experienced with her employer).

## HETEROGENEITY AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN, ASIAN WOMEN, AND LATINAS

Women of color are not, as some may still assume, a homogeneous group. Each of the major racial/ethnic groupings that constitute "women of color" has a vastly different set of economic, immigrant, and cultural circumstances that has shaped the personal and employment experiences of its members in the United States. For this reason, the networking experiences of each racial/ethnic group in this report are examined separately.

For example, African-American women as a group are mostly born in the United States (a small portion of the African-American group, 8 percent, is Afro-Caribbean or African). While three-quarters of Latinas in our survey group were born in the United States, they come from diverse national and geographic origins, such as Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Mexico. The heterogeneity within the Latina group is so great that, while some report barriers based on accent and appearance, others report they are indistinguishable in appearance from white women.

Asian women's national and geographic origins also varied—they came from East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. Approximately two-thirds of Asian women in the managerial women of color database were born outside the United States, although some of these women immigrated to the United States as young children, and were acculturated by attending schools in the United States and using English at an early age.

According to Catalyst’s database of women of color in corporate management, the African-American women whom we surveyed perceived that, of all women of color, they are most subject to negative racial stereotyping. This is linked to the historical elements of slavery; legally enforced segregation; and lower-class status relative to whites and other immigrant groups.<sup>11</sup> Asian women report facing stereotypes that they are not “managerial” material and are, in fact, least likely of all three groups to hold managerial positions. And many Latinas report facing family challenges that are not always adequately addressed by corporate work-life policies, specifically those relating to the inclusion of the extended family in work-life policies and practices.<sup>12</sup>

### **DISTINCTION BETWEEN INFORMAL NETWORKS AND FORMAL NETWORKS**

It should be noted that in this report we focus on informal networks rather than formal networks. Networks, in general, serve to connect people to each other and provide access to information and support. A woman’s work-related informal network can be thought of as the group of acquaintances, colleagues, family, friends, and other contacts that she has personally developed over time and to whom she may turn for assistance with a variety of issues related to the job. Informal networks exist for everyone, of course, but there is a greater chance of being successful for those with easy access to influential colleagues.

Alternatively, formal networks are company-sponsored groups with pre-defined memberships, and have often been instituted by corporations in response to the needs of traditionally marginalized employee groups. Formal networks create opportunities for members to build relationships and also assist with professional development. As such, they can expand the informal networks of traditionally marginalized groups.

The emphasis in this report is on the informal relationships that women of color have established to help with job issues. While some people in the informal networks of women of color might have come from a formal group, examination of formal networks is beyond the scope of this research (no data were collected on formal network memberships).

### **AUDIENCES FOR THIS REPORT AND WHAT THEY WILL LEARN**

This report is intended for organizations that need to understand and learn how to better leverage an important segment of their talent pool.

#### **CEOs and human resources executives will learn:**

- How networking strategies of women of color employees may affect their advancement within the organization
- How commitment to the organization is affected by networking strategies of women of color
- How they can improve the connection of women of color to their organizations

#### **Managers will learn:**

- How their colleagues who are women of color may experience the organization
- How to create a more inclusive work environment for direct reports and colleagues who are women of color

<sup>11</sup> James M. Jones, *Prejudice and Racism*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 1997): p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> Catalyst, *Advancing Latinas in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* (2002); Catalyst, *Advancing Asian Women in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* (2003).

## CHAPTER 2: DIFFERENT NETWORKING STRATEGIES AND WHAT MAY AFFECT THEIR USE



### KEY LEARNINGS AT A GLANCE

- **Women of color are faced with different strategies to networking: “blending in” versus “sticking together.”**
  - The “blending in” strategy encourages women of color to form relationships with those who have power in organizations, typically those who are white and/or male.
  - The “sticking together” strategy encourages women of color to seek informal networks made up of those similar to themselves, particularly those who are racially/ethnically similar.
- **African-American women followed a “sticking together” strategy.**
  - They were most likely to have same-race members in their informal networks.
  - African-American women had the largest number of women of their race in their networks.
- **Latinas followed somewhat of a “blending in” strategy given high numbers of white members, but also evidenced a “sticking together” strategy on a gender basis (e.g., mainly female members).**
- **Asian women followed a “blending in” strategy.**
  - More than one-half of their network members were white.
  - Asian women had a majority of men in their networks (53 percent), unlike the other two groups.

### FORMATION OF INFORMAL NETWORKS AND COMPETING STRATEGIES

In this report, we examine the networking strategies of women of color. There are two different strategies we focus on here: “blending in” versus “sticking together.”

## Challenges for Women of Color in Forming Informal Networks

Because corporate environments typically do not reflect the behavioral norms common to the cultural backgrounds of women of color, these women may have to go to great lengths to adjust to the corporate environment and to network effectively. As one Latina states:

*“My experience as a Latina, having been born and raised outside of the United States, has been of a closer personal relationship, a more intimate relationship, even within the work[er] environment where you have a greater sense of community, of bonding, of participation with the other individuals. When you bring that into the corporate setting in the United States, my feeling is that it's more transactional and less relationship at the personal level. There are relationships, but they are more distant. So you need to make adjustments to function in an environment where there isn't as much of the warmth or the self that is shown and that is shared. That causes somewhat of a disconnect and you need to make adjustments [in] your own expectations as well as in your behavior.”*

The extent of similarity between a pair of individuals has been shown to be directly related to how easy it is for them to be part of an informal network. People often wish to associate with others who are similar, and tend to receive greater emotional support from these similar others.<sup>13</sup> Emotional support can play a role in advice on job issues.

However, there are few women or people of color in influential positions at most business organizations. Therefore, women of color who want to make connections with others with whom they have little in common face difficulties that disadvantage them.

In contrast, if a new white male employee in a business organization needs information about how things work in the organization, and then meets others who are “similar” to him and who work in the upper echelons of the organization, that employee has an advantage over employees who have no “similar others” in high places.

Given both the importance of networking to career success and the difficulties inherent in forming networking relationships, women of color are faced with competing choices on what specific informal networking strategy is best in a corporate setting.

<sup>13</sup> Miller McPherson, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and James M. Cook, “Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 27 (2001) p. 415-444.

### “Blending In” Strategy

Some women of color blend in by seeking a network that reflects the characteristics of those in power. In U.S. organizations, this typically means white and/or male colleagues. Research has shown the benefits of forming relationships with influential others. For example, African-American managers with white male mentors, in one study, significantly outperformed African-American managers with people of color mentors in salary.<sup>14</sup>

“Blending in” can also mean choosing to network with colleagues from the same company, rather than with people from outside of the organization. A motivation for choosing to go to colleagues for job advice is that those who know the organization will likely provide better advice on the organization than those from outside (such as friends from the neighborhood or family members).

Successful implementation of a “blending in” strategy is reflected by a network high in:

- Whites
- Men
- Colleagues

### “Sticking Together” Strategy

Some women of color build networks composed mainly of members of their own race/ethnicity and/or gender. Motivations for following this strategy may differ. One motivation is the assumption that the greater the similarity between informal network members and a woman, the better the advice and support these people will give. Extensive research has shown that similarity breeds connections of every type, including marriage, friendship, and work advice.<sup>15</sup>

Minority professionals with significant same-race/ethnicity relationships may be more effective at maintaining a sense of self. Receiving affirmation and emotional support from a same-race/ethnicity support system should buffer the experience of stress at the workplace, and may, therefore, have a positive effect on success in the workplace. In one positive result of the “sticking together” strategy, high-performing African-American managers tended to have more same-race/ethnicity ties in their informal networks than did low-performing African-American managers.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> George F. Dreher and Taylor H. Cox, “Race, Gender, and Opportunity: A Study of Compensation Attainment and the Establishment of Mentoring Relationships,” *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 81 no. 3, (June 1996): p. 297-308.

<sup>15</sup> Miller McPherson, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and James M. Cook, “Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 27 (2001) p. 415-444.

<sup>16</sup> Stéphane Brutus and Ancella Livers, “Networking Characteristics of African-American Managers: Empirical Validation and Training Applications,” *International Journal of Training & Development*, vol. 4, no. 4 (December 2000): p. 287-294.

Another motivation for networking with similar others may be the difficulty involved in forming relationships with dissimilar others, especially those from dominant groups such as whites. Depending on the work environment, it may be difficult to form relationships at all with dissimilar colleagues, which would then lead a woman of color to turn to similar colleagues or people from outside the work organization for advice. As this Latina states:

***“I think for Latinas, if the networking doesn't happen internally within your company, then there's also that community component where you can get that issue addressed. You can network with other Latinas on a community level, if it doesn't exist within your company.”***

Successful implementation of the “sticking together” strategy is reflected by a network high in:

- Those of the same race/ethnicity
- Women
- Those who are not colleagues and probably represent community, family, or friends

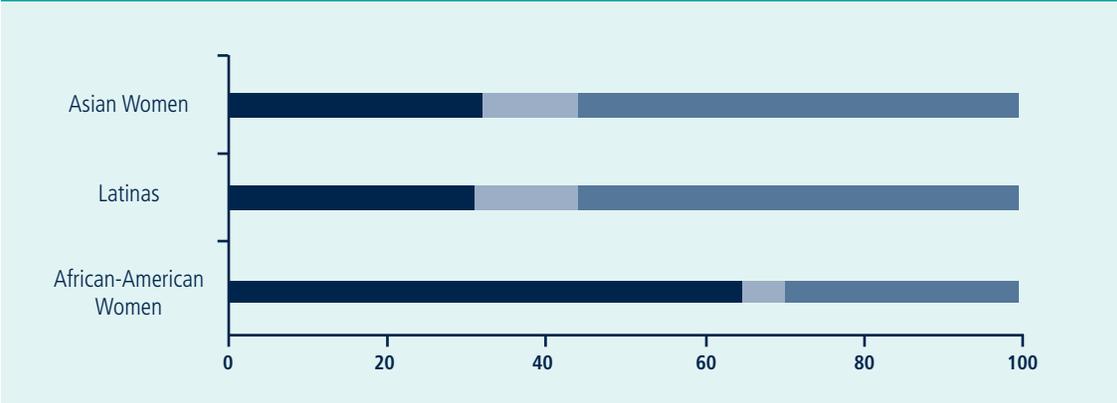
#### **RACE/ETHNICITY OF NETWORK MEMBERS**

Based on race/ethnicity, African-American women displayed more of a “sticking together” strategy in informal network characteristics, while Latinas and especially Asian women used more of a “blending in” strategy.

African-American women reported the lowest percentage of white members (29 percent). Correspondingly, African-American women had the highest concentration of same-race network members—on average, 65 percent of African-American women’s networks were made up of other African-Americans.

Asian women and Latinas had similar numbers of whites in their networks, as well as similar numbers of people of the same race. More than one-half of Asian women’s informal networks members were white (57 percent), while 31 percent of network members were Asian. More than one-half of Latinas’ informal network members were white (56 percent), while 30 percent of network members were Latino.

**Figure 2: Race/Ethnicity of Women of Color Network Members**



### GENDER OF NETWORK MEMBERS

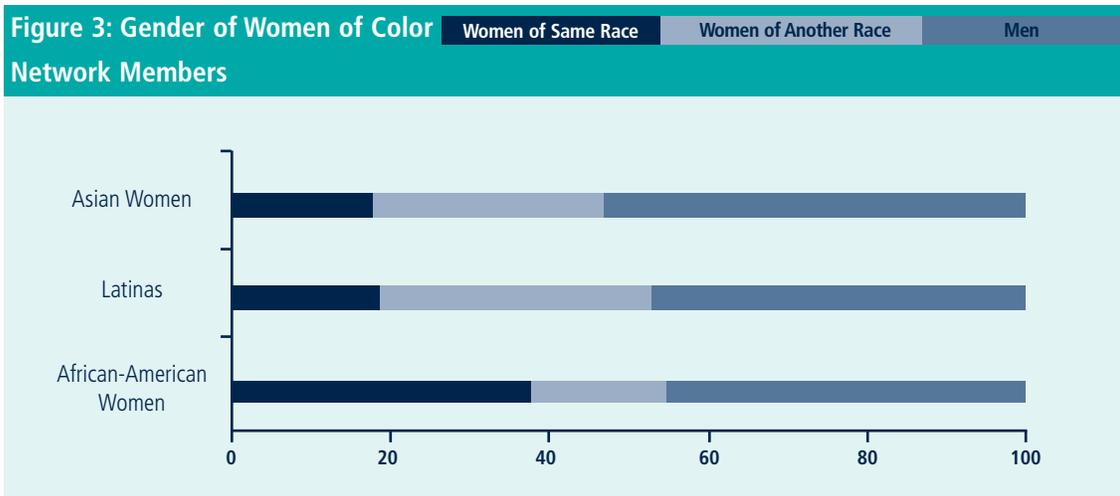
Asian women used more of a “blending in” strategy in that they had more men in their networks than Latinas or African-American women did. In fact, they were unique among the three groups because they had more men (53 percent) than women (47 percent) in their informal networks.

Latinas used a “sticking together” strategy to some extent; they had a higher percentage of women in their networks (53 percent) than men (47 percent).

African-American women displayed more of a “sticking together” strategy, having the highest concentration of same-race/same-gender network members. On average, a little more than one-half (55 percent) of African-American women’s network members were other women. Of these women, two-thirds were African-American women.

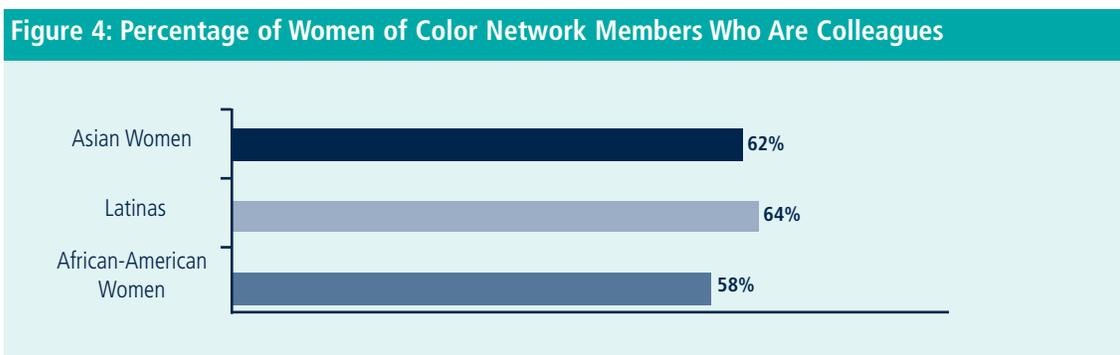
The numbers of women of the same race in Asian women’s and Latinas’ networks were lower. On average, 19 percent of Latinas’ network members were other Latinas and 17 percent of Asian women’s network members were other Asian women.

One reason for these low percentages of similar network members may be the lack of Latinas and Asian women in managerial ranks. In order to network at all, these two groups may be forced to turn to “blending in.” Another possible reason is that some segments within these groups (perhaps the more acculturated among Asian women or the more European-appearing among Latinas) may be more readily accepted by whites than are African-American women.



### COLLEAGUES AS NETWORK MEMBERS

Across the three women of color groups, more than one-half of network members were colleagues from the same company of the women. In comparison to Asian women and Latinas, African-American women were somewhat less likely to have colleagues in their informal networks. On average, 58 percent of African-American women’s networks were colleagues. Among all women of color groups, the colleagues in their networks were more likely to be white than people of color.<sup>17</sup>



### EXCLUSION IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT: AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN

As noted above, the informal networks of African-American women are much more racially homogeneous than those of Asian women and Latinas. One reason for this appears to be the significantly higher perception of workplace exclusion among African-American women.

Workplace exclusion occurs when dominant groups—often whites or men—do not accept those from “outsider” groups. This exclusion is usually based on negative stereotyping of outsiders and strong bonds within the inner circles. As well, an organization’s informal norms, which are often set and maintained by white men who have been in the organization for a long period of time and hold positions of power, can reinforce the exclusion of those from outsider groups.

<sup>17</sup> Significant correlations obtained between race of network member and colleagues: the more colleagues are in a network, the more likely the network members are to be white.

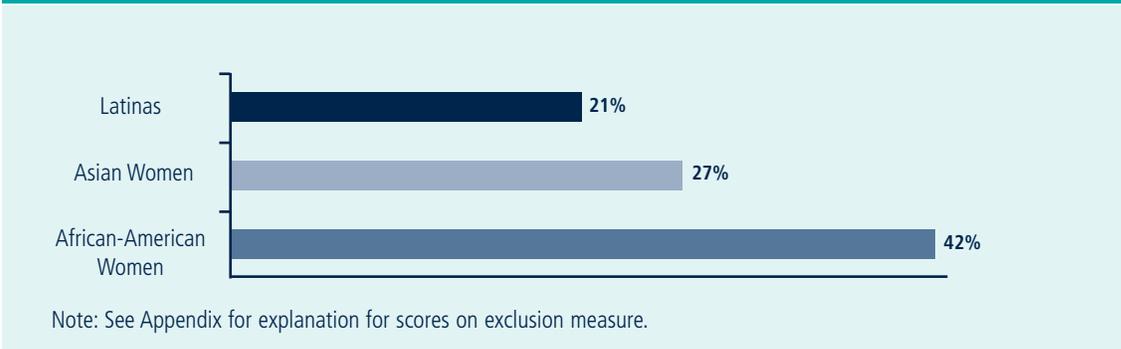
In these data, perceived levels of workplace exclusion were gauged by measuring perceptions of each woman of color on several aspects of her workplace environment, including the extent of stereotyping; appreciation of cultural differences; extent of sexist and racist commentary; and discomfort exhibited by colleagues around them.<sup>18</sup>

African-American women perceived the highest levels of workplace exclusion. This is consistent with prior work showing that African-American women perceived greater stereotyping directed at them. According to one senior African-American woman:

*“You come to the fork in the road, the majority female gets the nod primarily because, one, they try to emulate the majority male in their management and leadership ... [and because] the majority males have daughters and wives who look like them. And they know how they want their daughters and wives to be treated now that they’re out in the workforce, so they give them the nod.”*

Not surprisingly, perceived workplace exclusion was statistically linked to low percentages of white members in the networks of women of color (and African-American women were more likely to experience both high exclusivity and low numbers of whites in their networks). Clearly, it is hard for women of color to form relationships with the dominant group when they do not feel accepted.

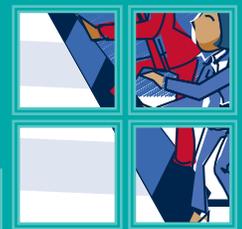
**Figure 5: Percentage of Women Who Perceive High Levels of Workplace Exclusion**



It is crucial to remember that the greater the perception of exclusivity, the greater the need for managers to institute inclusive measures.

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix for explanation of exclusion measures.

# CHAPTER 3: HOW ARE ADVANCEMENT AND COMMITMENT LINKED TO WHO IS IN THE NETWORK?

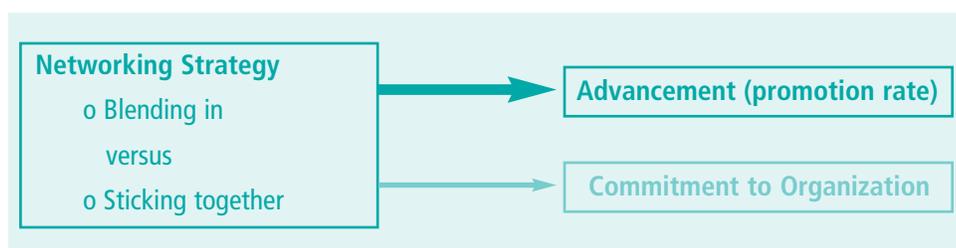


## KEY LEARNINGS AT A GLANCE

- The results of the “blending in” strategy of Asian women (the presence of whites and colleagues in their networks) predicted their promotion rates.
- The results of the “sticking together” strategy of African-American women predicted their promotion rates.
- No aspect of Latinas’ networks predicted promotion rates in this study.
- Among Latinas and African-American women, those with more colleagues in their networks were more likely to feel committed to their organizations.
  - Latinas and African-American women with high numbers of colleague network members reported greater effort toward work and more positive attitudes about the organization; greater congruence between their own and their organization’s values; and greater comfort around self-disclosure at work.
- Asian women’s commitment was not affected by the number of colleagues in their networks.
  - Asian women’s commitment was slightly positively affected by the presence of men in their networks.

In this chapter, we examine the links between network characteristics and advancement and commitment for each woman of color group. However, it should be noted that not all factors affecting advancement or commitment of women of color are explored in this report.

## WORKPLACE ADVANCEMENT AND NETWORK CHARACTERISTICS



The percentage of whites in Asian women’s informal networks was positively related to their promotion rates, supporting the “blending in” strategy for Asian women ( $p < .05$ ). Furthermore, it made somewhat of a difference whether the network members of Asian women’s networks were colleagues. As the number of network members who were colleagues increased, so did promotion rates ( $p < .1$ ).

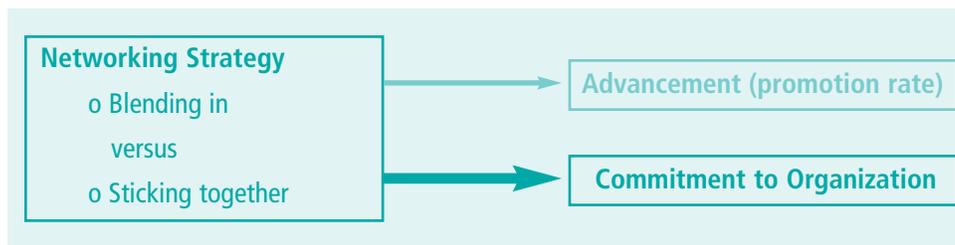
These findings are consistent with earlier findings showing that more acculturated Asian women tended to have higher levels of job satisfaction and perceived a better “fit” in their organizations. The more acculturated women were born in the United States or immigrated in childhood, and reported speaking English at home. The less acculturated women immigrated as teens or adults and reported speaking a second (non-English) language at home. The less acculturated group, in fact, was more likely to report “lack of access to networking with influential colleagues” as a barrier to advancement.<sup>19</sup>

The promotion rates of African-American women were positively related to the gender of their informal network members—the more women in the network, the higher the promotion rates for African-American women ( $p < .05$ ). On further analysis, it was shown that the presence of African-American women, specifically, in the networks was also positively linked to promotion rate ( $p = .05$ ).

No aspect of Latinas’ networks predicted their promotion rates. One explanation is the vast heterogeneity among Latinas, as noted earlier. This heterogeneity may have made it difficult for clear findings to emerge about this group.<sup>20</sup> Also, this report does not examine every aspect of the work environment that may affect promotion rates.

### ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND NETWORK CHARACTERISTICS

Organizational commitment reflects the overall attachment to and sense of identification that employees have with their organizations. Our data show that the more a woman’s network members are part of insider groups—usually whites, men, or colleagues—the more attached she will feel to her organization.



For Asian women, the number of men in their informal networks was slightly linked to greater commitment, which represents a “blending in” strategy. The greater the number of men in their networks, the more likely they were to be committed to the organization ( $p < .1$ ). Race of members and whether or not they were colleagues did not affect commitment levels among Asian women.

The number of colleagues in African-American women’s and Latinas’ networks was linked with greater commitment. For African-American women and Latinas, the greater the number of colleagues in their informal networks, the higher the level of commitment to the organization ( $p < .01$  for both groups). Neither gender nor race of network members significantly affected commitment among African-American women or Latinas.

<sup>19</sup> Catalyst, *Advancing Asian Women in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* (2003).

<sup>20</sup> Catalyst, *Advancing Latinas in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* (2002).

### HOW SOME SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF COMMITMENT VARY BY THE NUMBER OF COLLEAGUES IN THE NETWORK

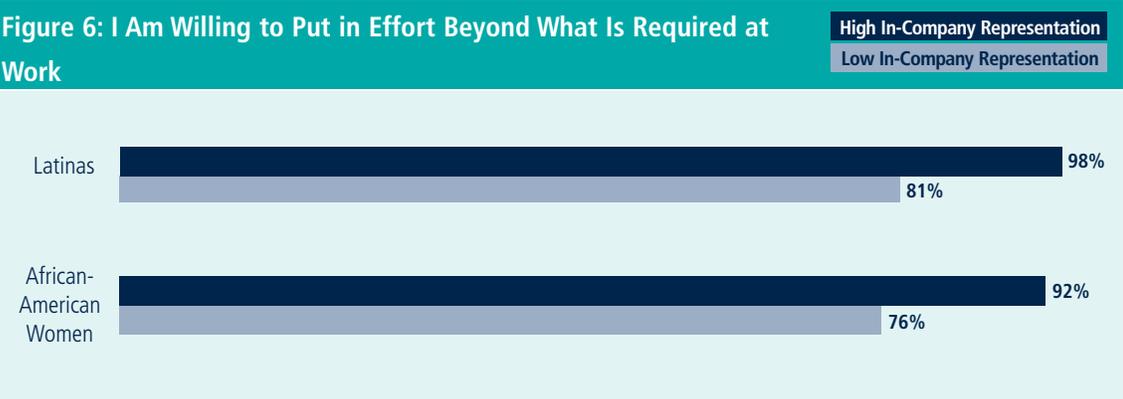
In the following section, we examine how aspects of commitment vary by how many network members are colleagues. We restrict these analyses to Latinas and African-American women, the two groups for whom number of colleagues in the network had a significant impact on commitment.

NOTE: Asian women did not experience a significant link between representation of company colleagues in their networks and organizational commitment, and, therefore, Asian women are not included in the following analyses.

#### Effort and Positive Attitudes

One measure of organizational commitment is willingness to put effort into work beyond what is required. Those with more colleagues in their networks were more likely than those with fewer colleagues to be willing to make efforts beyond what was required.

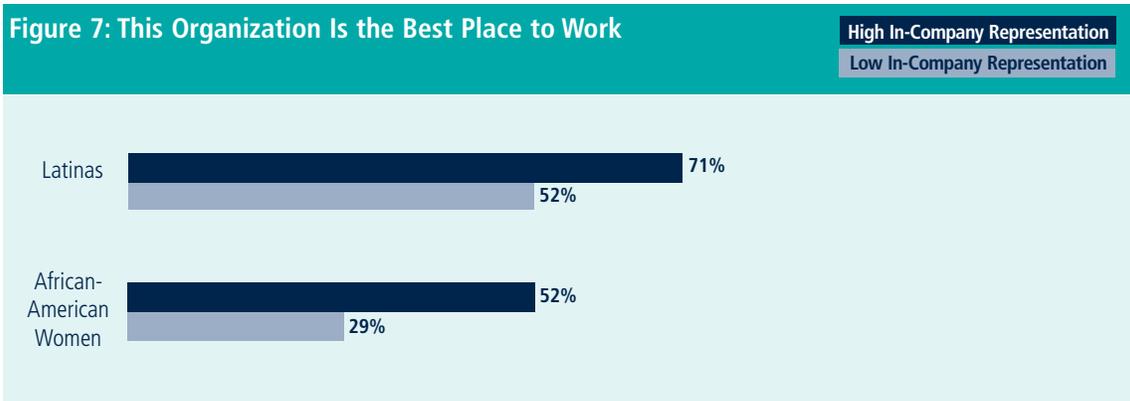
Among Latinas, those whose informal networks were composed solely of colleagues were more likely to agree that they were willing to put in effort beyond what is required (98 percent) than those with no or only one colleague member (81 percent). African-American women with high numbers of colleagues in their networks were more likely to agree with that statement (92 percent), as compared with those with fewer colleagues (76 percent).



#### Best Place to Work

Another component of organizational commitment was measured by how strongly a woman of color perceived that her employer was the “best place to work.”

Latinas with networks composed solely of colleagues were more likely to perceive their companies as the best organization to work (71 percent), as compared to Latinas with no or only one colleague in their networks (52 percent). African-American women with high numbers of colleagues in their networks were much more likely to agree with that statement (52 percent) than those with no company colleagues (29 percent). Overall, both categories of African-American women had lower levels of agreement with the “best place to work” statement than Latinas, probably reflecting the high levels of workplace exclusion that African-American women perceived.



### Greater Socialization to the Organization’s Values

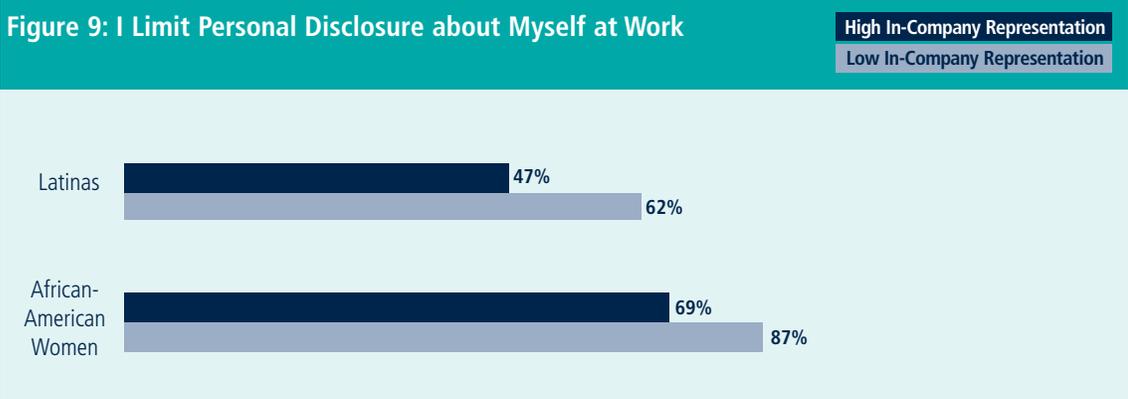
Those with a high level of colleague network members appeared to experience greater socialization to organizational values than those with lower numbers of colleagues. Latinas with higher numbers of colleagues in their networks were more likely to agree that their values were similar to those of the organization (67 percent) than Latinas with no or only one colleague network member (43 percent). African-American women with high numbers of colleagues in their networks were more likely to agree with that statement (56 percent) than those with no or only one colleague in their networks (39 percent).



### Greater Personal Disclosure

Establishing rapport by sharing one’s personal experiences is often key to building relationships; not doing so is a barrier to fitting in. While this is not a measure of organizational commitment per se, it is another indication of a personal connection with the workplace. For African-American women, especially, limiting personal disclosure was an issue. They were most likely of all women of color groups to limit such disclosure, probably because of the higher levels of workplace exclusion they perceived.

Both African-American women and Latinas with high numbers of colleagues in their networks were less likely to limit disclosure about themselves at work. These data suggest that having very few colleagues as network members may exacerbate the difficulty of sharing personal information.





As past research has shown, major barriers to advancement for women of color stem from a lack of connections with networks of influential colleagues in the work environment, including potential mentors and sponsors. A question addressed in this report was: Given their lack of access to networks of influential colleagues, to whom do women of color turn for help with job issues, and what are the implications of their networking strategies for their experiences in the workplace?

### THE CONTEXT FOR NAVIGATING THE CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT DIFFERS ACROSS WOMEN OF COLOR GROUPS

Women of color groups operate at a disadvantage within the corporate environment. For all groups—African-American, Asian, and Latina—this includes low representation of women of their racial/ethnic background at senior levels in their organizations.

However, the situation they face is not uniform across groups. African-American women are proportionately more highly represented in top positions than Asian women or Latinas, which may be due, in part, to the longer history of African-American women in the U.S. labor market. While Latinas' percentage of the labor pool is 5.2 percent, they hold only 0.3 percent of top positions. African-American women are 5.8 percent of the labor pool, which is close to the representation of Latinas in the overall labor pool, but their representation in top positions at 0.9 percent is about three times greater than that of Latinas. Asian women are 1.9 percent of the labor force at present, and at 0.4 percent of corporate officer top earner positions, they are more underrepresented than African-American women, but are not quite as underrepresented as Latinas.<sup>21</sup>

Another difference is that African-American women perceive significantly higher levels of exclusion in the work environment than do Asian women and Latinas. As mentioned earlier, workplace exclusion occurs when dominant groups—often whites or men—do not accept those from “outsider” groups. This exclusion is usually based on negative stereotyping of outsiders and strong bonds within the inner circles. This finding is consistent with prior work showing that African-American women perceive greater stereotyping directed at them.<sup>22</sup>

It should be noted, however, that about one-quarter of Asian women and a similar proportion of Latinas perceive their workplaces as highly exclusionary. Variations in background and experiences within these groups of women lead to a variety of perceptions of exclusion with some segments within each group perceiving high exclusion.

<sup>21</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Populations Survey, Annual Averages, unpublished data (2005); Catalyst, *2005 Census of Corporate Officers and Top Earners of the Fortune 500* (2006).

<sup>22</sup> Catalyst, *Advancing African-American Women in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* (2004).

**NETWORKING STRATEGIES VARY ACROSS WOMEN OF COLOR GROUPS**

Table 1 illustrates the major findings regarding informal network member characteristics for each racial/ethnic group, and whether there was a positive link between particular types of network members and a woman’s rate of promotion or commitment to the organization.

Table 1: Summary of Findings					
	Networking Strategy				
	Sticking Together			Blending In	
	Same Race/ Ethnicity Women	Women	Company Colleagues	Whites	Men
Asian Women			✓ Promotion	✓ Promotion	✓ Commitment
Latinas		✓	✓ Commitment	✓	
African- American Women	✓ Promotion	✓ Promotion	✓ Commitment		

✓ = high percentage of this type of network member (relative to other types of network members)  
 “Sticking together” = network high in those of the same race/ethnicity or gender, and low in colleagues  
 “Blending in” = network high in men, whites, or colleagues

There appears to be a continuum of usage of strategies from “blending in” (having a network high in whites, men, or colleagues) to “sticking together” (having a network high in those of the same race/ethnicity or gender, and low in colleagues) for Asian women, Latinas, and African-American women.

- Asian women had the highest number of whites and men in their networks, representing a “blending in” strategy.
- Latinas had a high number of whites in their networks, representing a “blending in” strategy, but on average, more than one-half of their networks were female, which represents a “sticking together” strategy.
- African-American women had the highest number of other African-Americans in their networks, and also the highest concentration of women of their racial/ethnic group, which represents a “sticking together” strategy.

**Asian Women Appear to be Relatively Successful at Leveraging Relationships with Whites, Men, and Colleagues**

Having whites and colleagues in their networks was positively linked to promotion for Asian women, while having men in their networks was positively related to organizational commitment.

Not all Asian women had networks high in whites, men, and colleagues, but those who did appeared able to leverage those relationships to their benefit, at least within the limited context of organizations employing extremely few senior Asian women role models.

However, going to whites and men for advice about the job does not necessarily mean that Asian women are completely accepted as insiders in corporate environments. As a Chinese-American woman scientist stated in another study:

*“The network of the inner group is so tight that it is not possible to break into it.”<sup>23</sup>*

### **When African-American Women Succeed in the Workplace, They May Do So Without Being Accepted as Insiders**

Number of colleagues was linked to organizational commitment for African-American women. Having women, particularly other African-American women, in their networks was positively tied to promotion rates for African-American women, reflecting relatively successful usage of the “sticking together” strategy. African-American women’s use of this strategy may be due in part to the high levels of exclusion that they perceived in the work environment.

These findings, along with African-American women’s relatively greater representation at upper corporate levels as compared with Latinas and Asian women, suggest the possibility that African-American women succeed in corporate environments without being accepted as insiders. This is consistent with prior research, which found a *negative* relationship between promotion rates for African-American women and feeling accepted by white men.<sup>24</sup>

### **Other Factors We Did Not Investigate in this Study May Affect Latinas’ Success**

Unlike findings for the other two groups, nothing we measured about Latinas’ network characteristics was linked to their rates of promotion, although number of colleagues was linked to organizational commitment.

As noted earlier, this report does not examine every aspect of the work environment that may affect success or commitment among women of color, or the effectiveness of their networks. For example, we did not ask about the quality or type of the advice that was provided. The effectiveness of networks in helping Latinas cope with work-life issues, for example, might have factored into promotion rates, but we did not ask about that aspect of networks.

<sup>23</sup> Esther Ngan-Ling Chow, “Asian American Women at Work,” in Maxine Baca Zinn and Bonnie Thornton Dill, eds., *Women of Color in U.S. Society*, (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1994), p. 211.

<sup>24</sup> Ella L. J. Edmondson Bell and Stella M. Nkomo, *Barriers to Workplace Advancement Experienced by African-Americans* (a monograph prepared for the Glass Ceiling Commission, March, 1994).

## CATALYST VIEWPOINTS

### What will informal networks be like for women of color under better circumstances?

While the findings suggest that different women of color groups have more successfully leveraged different networking strategies than others, it remains to be seen what successful networking strategies of women of color would look like if there were more equitable representation of women of color at higher levels, and more inclusive workplaces.

For example, it is heartening that African-American women have been able to succeed, to some extent, despite their feeling of exclusion. Nevertheless, how much more could they offer and achieve if they could enjoy the less stressful ambiance of more inclusive environments? A parallel question for Asian women and Latinas is whether they might have a better chance of succeeding if there were more role models who looked like them at the top of their organizations, and also more women of the same racial/ethnic groups in their networks.

Ideally, everyone should be able to choose from a wide range of networking opportunities. Women of color should not be limited to networking only with people of their own race or ethnicity, nor should they feel compelled to network exclusively with others in the work environment who do not share their cultural backgrounds.

The vision of an inclusive environment that facilitates open networking among diverse employees is best described by this Latina interviewee:

*“The most important step ... is to increase the capacity of the organization to incorporate and absorb differences and to give us as individuals, as teams and, then, as the organization as a whole the capabilities to manage those differences. So our circle is enlarged ... then people won't feel they are so different—the differences are in fact welcomed everywhere within the organization. Because you have the tent [that] is that much bigger, so you belong inside the tent. You're not the different person coming in under the tent, but the tent is about you also.”*

### What are the implications of the link between colleagues in networks and commitment to the organization?

Both Latinas and African-American women in our study experienced greater commitment to the organization when they had several colleagues from the company in their networks. This suggests that it would be beneficial for organizations to facilitate the development of relationships between women of color and those already in the company, for the purposes of cultivating greater commitment to the organization.

It may also be positive, in some ways, for women of color to have networks not entirely composed of colleagues or other insiders. This is due in part to the “outsider within” perspective, which refers to bringing one’s role as an outsider to one’s role as a professional or managerial employee. Having a network made up entirely of company colleagues may lessen one’s ability to think critically about how things are done in the organization. Having an outsider perspective can help a person more readily recognize issues of unfairness or exclusion.<sup>25</sup>

### Does using a “blending in” strategy for a work-related network suggest losing one’s cultural identity?

In this report, both Asian women and Latinas in corporate settings were more likely to have networks made up of whites than were African-American women. However, having a job-related informal network made up primarily of whites does not necessarily mean abandoning one’s ethnic culture. For example, this comment from a Latina illustrates the importance of her cultural identity, along with recognition that there is no one of her background with whom to network at her company:

*“The gentleman that I met with today, he’s a Latina male. There is such a high dropout rate of Latina males out of high school within our city. I feel very compassionate to help him, and so I think you want to see people who are of similar ethnic background as yourself able to succeed. I said, I will work with you to give you the information you need to apply for the internship, and in ... the meantime, I would be willing to introduce you to the key people within that field for our company ... For me, that’s the disconnect because I can be his champion, but I need somebody to be mine, and I don’t see that within our company.”*

It has been demonstrated among Asian and Latino youth that those who go on to experience the greatest educational success are not the most acculturated youth, but instead those who have maintained a connection with their ethnic cultures.<sup>26</sup>

In another study that included analyses of the large Latino adult population in California, it was concluded that this racial/ethnic group did not necessarily perceive their ethnicity as a barrier to their upward mobility and economic integration.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Debra Meyerson and Maureen Scully, “Tempered Radicalism and the Politics of Ambivalence and Change,” *Organizational Science*, vol. 6, no. 5 (September-October 1995): p. 589.

<sup>26</sup> Cynthia Feliciano, “The Benefits of Biculturalism: Exposure to Immigrant Culture and Dropping Out of School Among Asian and Latino Youths,” *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 82, no. 4 (December 2001): p. 865-879.

<sup>27</sup> Aida Hurtado, “Understanding Multiple Group Identities: Inserting Women Into Cultural Transformations,” *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 53, no. 2 (Summer, 1997): p. 299-327.

Finally, the analyses in this report were limited to the informal networks that women of color accessed for job advice—not for other support. It is quite possible that the women in this study had a rich assortment of family, friends, and community that they used for non-career support, and who helped maintain their cultural identity. The importance of cultural identity is stated by this Asian woman:

*“The whole idea about being American is white. So one of the things that really is very typical of Asians is we look so different that it’s very difficult for you to be called American ... I don’t want to be known just as American. I want to include the Japanese American on it ... I have a strong ethnic identity, and I don’t want to lose that.”*



In this chapter, we provide recommendations for CEOs and managers, and for human resources executives, and provide descriptions of effective company practices.

### FOR CEOs AND MANAGERS

It is especially important that business leaders and managers work to create more inclusive cultures that facilitate interactions among the diversity of talent in organizations. Work environments need to be inclusive so women of color can participate fully in the work environment, and in turn be fully engaged, with the ability to access and leverage influential networks.

The benefits of creating more inclusive work environments should reach all women of color. While we recommend that individual women of color optimize their networks to the extent possible, it is impractical to assume that individuals can single-handedly transform an organization's culture. However, CEOs and managers can implement programs that will have wide-ranging effects on workplace culture.

Unless CEOs and managers take proactive steps to create a more inclusive work environment, they risk losing and/or not developing potential top talent. Through the creation of formalized mentoring and networking programs, there are clear opportunities to:

- Facilitate contacts between women of color and key influential leaders within a company.
- Decrease workplace exclusion through the institution and/or expansion of formal networks (such as expanding the scope of women's networks, which have traditionally been more oriented toward white women's needs, to be inclusive of women of color)
- Increase the recognition of competence and potential of women of color, thereby advancing a greater portion of talent to positions of leadership throughout the organization.

Strategies that facilitate relationship-building within work environments by building or reinforcing inclusiveness in the work environment include:<sup>28</sup>

- Eliminating cultural norms that give one group an advantage over others. This can be done through identification, by a diverse team, of critical norms in the dominant culture; leadership commitment to change/lead change; intense communication; modeling by influential champions at every level; formal guidelines where appropriate; and the use of rewards and consequences.
- Increasing understanding of differences and similarities through education and informal dialogues, one-on-one and in groups.
- Increasing the capability to bridge differences and manage the tensions inherent in a diverse workforce.
- Encouraging employees to use multiple connectors (i.e., different facets of their identities to form relationships with divergent groups).

<sup>28</sup> Jo Maitland Weiss, "Diversity Experts Respond," *The Diversity Factor*, vol. 11, no. 3 (Summer 2003).

The following company practice puts some of these suggested strategies to work.

**Company Practice: Addressing Race in BP America, Inc.**

BP America recognized a gap between the representation of people of color in management and executive positions within the company. In response, the company introduced numerous initiatives, including Race Summits and Women of Color Workshops, to address inclusiveness by encouraging dialogue between cross-sections of employees.

The main objective of the Race Summits was to open up new lines of communication and stimulate employee discussion about race. The initiative took in approximately 750 “thought leaders” at four Race Summits held over two days in Chicago, Houston, and Los Angeles in 2003 and 2004. The Summit participants, from all levels in the company and across gender and racial lines, focused on dialogue and learning from each other. Participants reported very high levels of satisfaction around the two-day learning experience and took the messages and dialogue to team members back in the office. By the end of 2003, an independent survey estimated between 8,000 and 13,000 employees in BP had engaged in a conversation about race as a result of the Summit activity.

The Women of Color Workshops began following two women of color focus groups held in 2003 at BP’s large U.S. facilities. In those sessions, the women identified the need to create opportunities for women of color to meet and network across racial and ethnic groups. As a result, Women of Color Afternoon Teas and Workshops were developed to focus on the women’s ability to empower themselves, to explore and reframe their experiences, network, and support one another. These workshops have inspired more intimate collaboration among BP’s women of color, and plans include the broadening of the workshops in the future for dialogue on ally behavior between women of color and white women.

In past studies, women of color have made clear that while their organizations’ diversity policies might be comprehensively written and their top leaders might express support, a culture of inclusion can break down at mid-level managers. According to one senior African-American woman:

***“I don't think the priority is high enough. The rewards for achieving the goals seem to be too small ... You need to get it deeper in the organization, beyond the president and the vice president of the individual unit. You need to get down to directors, to managers, [to ensure] that they will address these issues in a way that is meaningful to the organization, not just window dressing.”***

For this reason, it is essential that immediate managers of women of color role model inclusive behavior and otherwise support their direct reports. Suggestions for managers include:

- Encourage differences in behavioral and work style from all employees.
- Address exclusionary behaviors whenever they arise (e.g., a woman of color being interrupted in a meeting; subordinates or peers of a woman of color not recognizing her authority).
- Broaden the range of role models within the organization (e.g., invite guest speakers from diverse backgrounds).
- Model inclusive behavior by cultivating a diverse group of mentees.

### FOR HUMAN RESOURCES EXECUTIVES

Human resources executives can play a role in supporting programs instituted by CEOs or senior management by ensuring change management principles are followed. Any change strategy should be closely tied to business strategy; actively supported by senior leadership and by leadership at every level; well-communicated; tied to metrics; and definitively tied to accountability and consequences.

One purpose of formal women's networks is to expand the informal networks of traditionally marginalized groups. Human resources policies and practices can leverage existing formal women's networks and other networks in the following ways:

- Strengthen the links between members of women's networks (which have often traditionally been dominated by white women) and women of color by placing women of color in Executive Sponsorship positions for women's networks. Also provide opportunities for cross-network/cross-cultural gatherings.
- Assess network success by collecting rigorous measures on effectiveness among sub-groupings (e.g., How does the satisfaction level of women of color members of women's networks compare with that of white women members?).
- Institute programs that increase contact among employees of different levels, targeted against diverse employee groups. Formal mentoring programs provide one possibility; on-boarding programs that assign "buddies" to new employees are another.
- Finally, organizations that are perceived as highly exclusionary should recognize that meaningful support can come from others who are similar. Sponsor events where separate women of color groups have the opportunity to network with similar others and have a "safe space" for discussions. Of course, if an organization is perceived as highly exclusionary, strong efforts must also be made to increase racial/ethnic sensitivity for all employees.

Human Resources departments should also think creatively about ways to facilitate greater interaction among professional employees. The following company practice illustrates a creative approach.

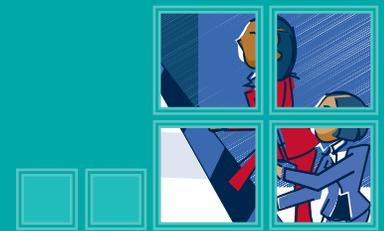
### **Company Practice: Empowerment through Networking and Career Development at Pitney Bowes**

The Pitney Bowes *Speed Networking* program is an informal networking program that aims to break down silos across business units and help participants create and build relationships. Through this program, the company believes it proactively facilitates effective, impactful mentoring relationships.

The program was piloted in 2004 as an initiative to help engage, retain, and advance women at the mid- and senior levels. It has since been expanded to include interns and people in the engineering function. Pitney Bowes describes the program as similar to “Speed Dating,” as the events are held as fun, fast-paced interactive exercises. During the sessions, participants engage in many roundtable discussions, moving from one table to the next, with the objective of meeting and talking with as many new people as possible. Roundtable discussions are held about a wide variety of topics, including the importance of internal and external networking, managing a flexible work schedule, influencing and communicating with authority, and how to manage a major project at Pitney Bowes.

Participation ranges from about 50 to 80 attendees per session, and usually represents individuals from many different business units and levels. Through this program, employees gain access to senior executives and peers from departments outside of their functional area. In doing this, they make new business contacts and share experiences, advice, and expertise. Some employees have reported that they have maintained formal relationships with table leaders and others they have met through this experience.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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Finally, a special thank you to our sponsors: Credit Suisse, DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund, and IBM.



**TECHNICAL APPENDIX A: SAMPLE**

Data are from a survey of 1,735 women of color, and include information from African-American women, Asian women, and Latina professionals and managers in 30 *Fortune* 1000 companies. Respondents were asked to whom they went for job-related advice and could list up to five people. For each informal network member, we ascertained race/ethnicity, gender, and whether or not they were employed by the respondent’s company.

Because our interest here is in the characteristics of the group of people the women went to for advice, we needed a minimum number of people to capture the effect of group membership. Less than three-quarters (69 percent) of the respondents listed five people in their networks, so we designated the minimum number of network members required for analysis at four. Seventy-nine percent of the women of color in the survey reported having informal networks made up of at least four members, providing a subsample for analysis of 1,351 women of color.

<b>Graduate education:</b>	<b>Supervisory responsibilities:</b>	<b>Foreign-born:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-Americans: 52%</li> <li>• Asians: 59%</li> <li>• Latinas: 38%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-Americans: 57%</li> <li>• Asians: 41%</li> <li>• Latinas: 58%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-Americans: 5%</li> <li>• Asians: 66%</li> <li>• Latinas: 27%</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting within three levels of the CEO:</b>	<b>Not married:</b>	<b>Bilingual:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-Americans: 13%</li> <li>• Asians: 6%</li> <li>• Latinas: 12%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-Americans: 48%</li> <li>• Asians: 30%</li> <li>• Latinas: 35%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-Americans: 13%</li> <li>• Asians: 77%</li> <li>• Latinas: 78%</li> </ul>

**TECHNICAL APPENDIX B: DETAILED MEASURES**

**Network Characteristics**

Survey respondents provided information for up to five people with whom they discussed important job and career issues. Five aspects of the informal networks were examined: the proportion of people who worked inside the company (i.e., colleagues); the proportion who were non-white; the proportion of women; the proportion who matched the respondent’s racial/ethnic group; and the proportion of members who matched the race/ethnicity and gender of the respondent.

A variable was created by adding the network members in the category of interest and then dividing by the total number of network members the respondent characterized. Each variable had a value between 0 and 1, which was interpreted as the proportion of network members who were colleagues of the respondent, non-white, female, members of the respondent’s particular racial/ethnic group, and members of both the gender and race/ethnicity of the respondent.

### Rate of Promotion

Rate of promotion was calculated by dividing the number of promotions each respondent reported receiving at her current company by the number of her total years with the company. The mean promotion rate for the sample as a whole was .276 (equivalent to an average of one promotion every 3.6 years). Analyses of variance revealed that race/ethnicity of the respondent did not have an effect on mean promotion rate, either among the sample as a whole or the analytic subsample that included women with at least four informal network members.

### Organizational Commitment and Exclusion Scales

Organizational commitment is a nine-item index that measured the overall attachment and sense of identification that respondents had to their current organizations. It was created from the means of nine items. The items used on this measure of organizational commitment were adapted from an attachment index used by Tsui et al.<sup>28</sup> The scale used questions based on a five-point agree/disagree scale (1=strongly disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=neither agree nor disagree; 4=somewhat agree; 5=strongly agree). An index was created from the means of the items (so the index also had a 1-5 scale).

The workplace exclusion index was created from the items in Table 3 and used the same five-point agree/disagree scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, and 5=strongly agree). “Low” exclusivity was defined as 1-3 average scores and “high” exclusivity was defined as 3.25-5 average scores. “High” exclusivity reflected 33 percent of the sample.

Table 3: Exclusivity and Organizational Commitment Scales		
Scale Name	Cronbach's Alpha (measure of internal consistency)	Items
Exclusivity of Climate	.77	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many stereotypes exist about women from my racial/ethnic group.</li> <li>- Talking about race is taboo.</li> <li>- Racist comments are tolerated.</li> <li>- Sexist comments are tolerated.</li> <li>- Many employees feel uncomfortable around members of my racial/ethnic group.</li> <li>- Employees make an effort to adapt to women of color (reverse coded).</li> <li>- Cultural differences of women of color are appreciated (reverse coded).</li> </ul>
Organizational Commitment	.86	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For me, this is the best of all possible organizations to work.</li> <li>- I talk up this organization to my friends as a great place to work.</li> <li>- My values and the organization's values are similar.</li> <li>- I am glad I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.</li> <li>- I am proud to tell others I am part of this organization.</li> <li>- Deciding to work for this company was a definite mistake on my part (reverse coded).</li> <li>- Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters (reverse coded).</li> <li>- I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.</li> <li>- I really care about the fate of this organization.</li> </ul>

<sup>28</sup> Anne Tsui, Terri D. Egan, and Charles O'Reilly, III, "Being Different: Relational Demography and Organizational Attachment," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 4, (1992): p. 549-579.

**TECHNICAL APPENDIX C: ANALYSES TESTING PERCEPTIONS OF EXCLUSION BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

ANOVA (analyses of variance) tests were used to determine whether the average (mean) ratings of perceptions of workplace exclusion varied by race/ethnicity of the respondent.

Respondent’s race/ethnicity	Mean	S.D.	N
African-American Women	2.98	.75	925
Asian Women	2.74	.67	413
Latinas	2.58	.70	364

F=30.27

Post hoc tests revealed that the mean rating of perceived workplace exclusion by African-American women was higher (more negative) than that for Asian women or Latinas ( $p < .001$ ). The mean rating of workplace exclusion was higher for Asian women than for Latinas ( $p < .01$ ).

**TECHNICAL APPENDIX D: REGRESSION ANALYSES**

**Analyses Predicting Organizational Commitment**

These analyses were based on linear regressions within each racial group of survey respondents and using organizational commitment index as dependent variable and all gender, race/ethnicity, and in-company network variables as independent variables and controlling for: years at company; presence of children under five; educational level, measured on a five-point scale ranging from high school to graduate degree; occupational specialty, which included 16 categories measured as a series of dummy variables; total annual income, measured on a continuous scale, including bonus and salary; age; and country of birth, measured as United States/non-United States.

**Analyses Predicting Promotion Rate**

These analyses were based on linear regressions within each racial group of survey respondents and using promotion rate as dependent variable and all gender, race/ethnicity, and in-company network variables as independent variables and controlling for: presence of children under five; educational level, measured on a five-point scale ranging from high school to graduate degree; occupational specialty, which included 16 categories measured as a series of dummy variables; total annual income, measured on a continuous scale, including bonus and salary; age; and country of birth, measured as United States/non-United States. Years at company was not included as a control variable as it was used in calculation of the dependent variable (number of promotions divided by years at company). When race/ethnicity/gender of the network members was used as an independent variable, the only other network variable used was in-company representation (because of high correlation between the combined race/ethnicity/gender network composition variable and the separate race/ethnicity and gender variables).

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