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Founded in 1962, Catalyst is the leading nonprofit membership organization working globally with businesses and the professions to build inclusive workplaces and expand opportunities for women and business. With offices in the United States, Canada, and Europe, and more than 400 preeminent corporations as members, Catalyst is the trusted resource for research, information, and advice about women at work. Catalyst annually honors exemplary organizational initiatives that promote women's advancement with the Catalyst Award.

# LEADERSHIP GENDER GAP IN INDIA INC.

## Myths and Realities

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# A **अर्ध-वर्ष** **दर्श** for India Inc.

Women's leadership talents are routinely underrepresented and underutilized around the globe.<sup>2</sup> In India, with a gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of approximately 7 percent, and a projected talent gap, or shortage of skilled labor to sustain this growth, of more than 5 million by 2012, it is alarming that India Inc. continues to underutilize its female talent pool.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1 highlights the representation of women in corporate India<sup>4</sup> and provides a country snapshot of the prevalent gender gap—the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities in India—in education, economic participation, political participation, and health.<sup>5</sup> Women represent just 11 percent of India Inc.'s CEOs—a statistic skewed by the fact that more than half the women CEOs hail from the banking and financial services industry, and one-third come from the business promoter/owner families.<sup>6</sup> Scaling the corporate ladder continues to be an arduous task for women.

**Women, as half of the human capital of India, will need to be more efficiently integrated into the economy in order to boost India's long-term competitive potential.<sup>1</sup>**

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1. World Economic Forum, *The India Gender Gap Review 2009*, p. 21 (2009).
  2. *2009 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 Women Corporate Officers and Top Earners* (2009); *2009 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 Women Board Directors*, *2009 Catalyst Census: Financial Post Women Board Directors* (2009); World Economic Forum, *The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010* (2010).
  3. Diana Farrell, Don't be Afraid of Offshoring, *BusinessWeek*, 22 March 2006 (2006); *Skill Development for Indian Workforce—A View Point* by Kazim Ali Khan, <http://www.articlesnatch.com/Article/Skill-Development-For-Indian-Workforce---A-View-Point-By-Kazim-Ali-Khan/908954>.
  4. Society for Human Resource Management, *Perspectives on Women in Management in India* (2009); Corporate Women Directors International, *Comparative Percentage of Women Directors-Countries* (2007-2008); World Economic Forum, *The India Gender Gap Review 2009* (2009); World Economic Forum, *The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010* (2010).
  5. World Economic Forum, *The India Gender Gap Review 2009* (2009).
  6. EMA Partners International, Gender Splits, [http://www.ema-partners.com/center/quest2010/gender\\_splits.php](http://www.ema-partners.com/center/quest2010/gender_splits.php)

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This is the first report in Catalyst's Advancing Women in India series, which focuses on building awareness and offering action steps for developing and advancing women in corporate India. *Leadership Gender Gap in India Inc.: Myths and Realities* presents workplace perceptions and experiences of women and men leaders working in multinational companies in India. We also offer recommendations and examples of how other organizations have successfully approached and improved their gender leadership gap. The next report will describe effective talent management practices for building inclusive workplaces where *all* talent can thrive.

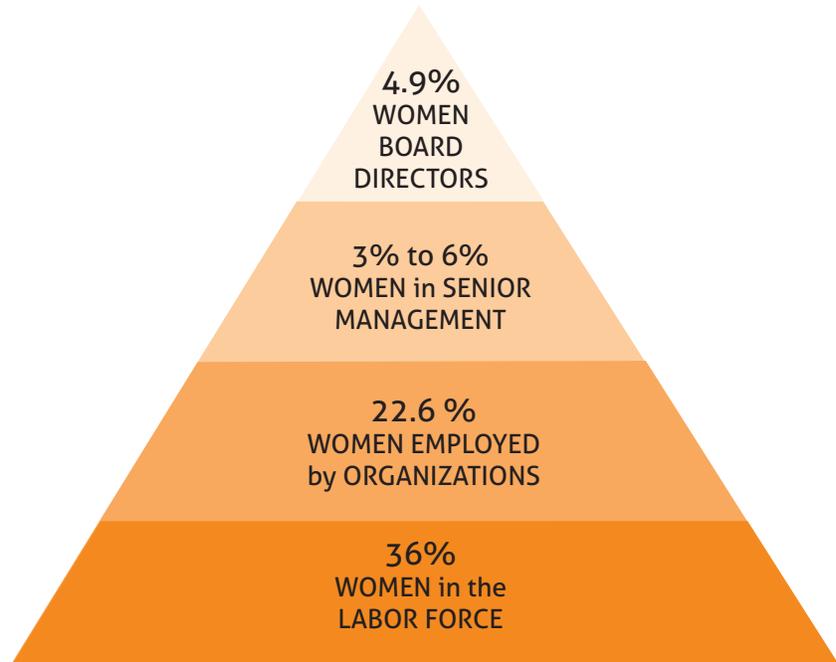
## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

Senior leaders, human resources professionals, and individual employees can use this report to:

- Build awareness regarding the business case for gender diversity in corporate India.
- Increase knowledge about the regional and gender differences about the barriers to advancement and work-life emphasis as reported and experienced by women and men leaders working in multinational corporations (MNC) in India, Europe, and the United States.
- Understand workplace perceptions, aspirations, and experiences of women and men leaders working in MNCs in India to create effective programs and policies that foster inclusion.
- Develop a strategic framework, or strengthen an existing one, to address the corporate leadership gender gap based on recommendations from women and men leaders in the study, and decades of Catalyst research on women's leadership.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Gender Gap Snapshot**

### LEADERSHIP GENDER GAP IN INDIA INC.



Sources:

Society for Human Resource Management, *Perspectives on Women in Management in India* (2009).

Corporate Women Directors International, *Comparative Percentage of Women Directors-Countries* (2007-2008).

World Economic Forum, *The India Gender Gap Review 2009* (2009).

World Economic Forum, *The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010* (2010).

### INDIA GENDER GAP

- India ranks 114th out of 134 countries covered by the Global Gender Gap Index that measures the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities in the country.
- Of Brazil, Russia, India, and China (BRIC), India holds last place on the Index and second to last place in South Asia, ahead of only Pakistan.
- Women's labor force participation, at 36 percent, is less than half of the labor force participation rate of men (85 percent).
- India's performance has improved in the last four years, narrowing the gap on education, economic participation, and political participation. However, the gap is widening on health, including lower healthy life expectancy for women and unfavorable sex ratio at birth.

## THE BUSINESS CASE FOR GENDER DIVERSITY IS CLEAR

Companies with the highest representation of women on their top management teams experience, on average, better financial performance than companies with the lowest women's representation:

- Return on Equity: 35 percent higher
- Total Return to Shareholders: 34 percent higher.<sup>7</sup>

There is also a positive correlation between gender equality and the level of competitiveness of countries.<sup>8</sup> In the long-term, therefore, a nation's competitiveness depends significantly on investment in and utilization of female talent. Additionally, as diverse pools of employees become increasingly critical to success, the lack of women leaders is a significant business risk. It is imperative for organizations to invest in recruiting, developing, and advancing female talent to:

- Sustain growth and maintain a competitive edge by utilizing all resources and human capital.
- Address the scarcity in leadership talent.
- Leverage diversity in talent to impact the bottom line through diversity of thought, ideas, and innovation.
- Serve an increasingly female consumer base.<sup>9</sup>

## BRINGING MORE WOMEN INTO THE WORKPLACE IS HALF THE ANSWER

Despite being a small proportion of the formal Indian labor force, the number of female workers has grown faster in recent years than that of their male counterparts.<sup>10</sup> Women are increasingly represented in higher education and account for one-third of the students attending college.<sup>11</sup> They are also increasingly opting for an MBA as evidenced by the increase in the number of prospective women MBAs from 16 to 19 percent from 2004 to 2006.<sup>12</sup> India Inc. is also slated to hire more women this year, especially in the retail, telecom, hospitality, banking, energy, outsourcing, and infrastructure sectors.<sup>13</sup> However, women continue to be stuck at the junior to middle management levels and are sparse at the top rung of management.

India Inc. is also slated to hire more women this year, especially in the retail, telecom, hospitality, banking, energy, outsourcing, and infrastructure sectors.

7. Catalyst, *The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity* (2004).

8. World Economic Forum, *The India Gender Gap Review 2009*, p.11-12: "The correlation between the Global Gender Gap Index and the Global Competitiveness Index is evident despite the fact that the Global Gender Gap Index explicitly eliminates any direct impact of the absolute levels of any of the variables (e.g., life expectancy, educational attainment, labor force participation) on the Index."

9. Sandra Lawson and Douglas B. Gilman, *The Power of the Purse: Gender Equality and Middle-Class Spending* (Goldman Sachs Global Markets Institute, August 2009).

10. John E. Dunlop and Victoria A. Velkoff, International Programs Center, *Women of the World, Women and Economy in India* (January 1999): p.2 "The 1991 census shows that the number of male workers increased 23 percent since the 1981 census while the number of female workers increased 40 percent."

11. Victoria A. Velkoff, International Programs Center, *Women of the World, Women's Education in India* (October 1998).

12. *India Lags Behind as Women Around the World Use MBA to Break the Glass Ceiling*, www.topmba.com (August 2006).

13. *The Economic Times*, "India Inc May Hire More Women This Year," Mar 7, 2010 (2010).

## CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE—WHERE ALL TALENT CAN THRIVE—IS THE ANSWER

Familial and societal expectations regarding women’s roles in India and inflexible organizations make it extremely challenging for women to remain in the workforce. As men continue to dominate the leadership ranks and the informal networks

within organizations, the pervasive (male) thinking in organizations is saddled with stereotypes about women’s leadership. Women are labeled as “less assertive,” “less competitive,” and “less aggressive” in meeting the demands of a business situation.<sup>14</sup> The same research also suggests that women managers also have to deal with the male ego—often making it challenging for them to lead men in general and older men in particular.

### SAMPLE SNAPSHOT<sup>15</sup>

	Women	Men
<b>Total Sample (N=327)</b>	22.0% (N=72)	78.0% (N=255)
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 30 Years	44.9%	13.5%
Between 31 and 40 Years	42.0%	58.7%
Over 40 Years	13.0%	27.8%
<b>Educational Background</b>		
Bachelor’s	33.8%	39.1%
Master’s	64.6%	59.2%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single/Never Married	39.4%	9.5%
Married	56.3%	88.9%
<b>Number of Children</b>		
Zero Children	54.0%	24.0%
One Child	25.4%	32.1%
Two Children	19.0%	43.1%
<b>Dual Earner Families</b>		
Spouse works Full-Time	92.5%	28.7%
<b>Workforce Tenure</b>		
Less than 5 Years	29.0%	10.3%
5-10 Years	23.2%	14.7%
10 Years or More	47.8%	75.0%
<b>Current Company Tenure</b>		
Less than 5 Years	54.3%	35.3%
5-10 Years	21.4%	28.9%
10 Years or More	24.3%	35.7%
<b>Current Position Tenure</b>		
Less than 5 Years	92.9%	86.1%
5-10 Years	2.9%	9.6%
10 Years or More	4.3%	4.4%

14. Pawan S. Budhwar, Debi S. Saini, and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, *Women in Management in the New Economic Environment: The Case of India*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 179-193, (June 2005).

15 Please note that some of the data used come from a project on global leaders conducted in 2006–2008 with the Families and Work Institute. Other data come from The Promise of Future Leadership: A Research Program on Highly Talented Employees in the Pipeline, which surveyed graduates of leading business schools in Asia (including India), Canada, Europe, and the United States with the intent of assessing their career values, goals, and expectations; the developmental opportunities afforded them; and their strategies for managing work and family life.



# वेद बयनसिंह म्यथ्स

## Surrounding Women's Advancement and Leadership

**म्यथ्स:** Men and women have very different work values and goals.

**रिअलिटी:** Men and women leaders had similar work values and goals. Prior Catalyst research emphasizes six value dimensions that are closely related to job characteristics and workplaces that are often referred to as indicators of an effective workplace:

1. A challenging job,
2. A supportive workplace,
3. Strong values,
4. A good fit between life on and off the job,
5. Opportunities for high achievement,
6. Good compensation.

These effective workplace characteristics were also strongly predictive of job engagement.<sup>16</sup> The same study highlights findings across regions, including Anglo North America, Anglo Europe, Latin Europe, Germanic Europe, and Asia. Specifically, having a supportive workplace was ranked highest in Asia, Latin Europe, and Germanic Europe, and the value of having a good fit between life on and off the job was rated second highest in Asia and Anglo Europe revealing what appeals most to leaders in this diverse global economy.

16. Ellen Galinsky, Nancy M. Carter, and James T. Bond, *Leaders in a Global Economy: Finding the Fit for Top Talent* (Families and Work Institute and Catalyst, 2008).

We often hear that the reason women don't advance as far in business or are more apt to leave workplaces is because they have different work values and goals. As shown in Figure 2, our

India-specific analysis underscores no significant differences across gender—both women and men leaders emphasized similar workplace value dimensions.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Emphasis on Workplace Value Dimensions, by Gender**



**myth:** Women don't aspire to leadership roles.

**reality:** It is not about aspirations but about the barriers to advancement. Prior Catalyst research shows no gender difference in aspirations; 55 percent of women and 57 percent of men aspired to the CEO role.<sup>17</sup>

Data represented in Figure 3 relating specifically to India illustrates the trend that both women and men leaders want to move to a job with higher responsibility.<sup>18</sup> However, we also found that 70.4 percent women and 54.6 percent men reported downsizing their aspirations during their career thus far.

**FIGURE 3**  
**Percent "Aspiring Higher" and "Downsizing Aspirations," by Gender**



17. Catalyst, *Women and Men in U.S. Corporate Leadership: Same Workplace, Different Realities?* (2004).

18. We report descriptive statistics in Figure 3 to designate trends. These differences between groups are not statistically significant, but illustrative.

**Given such a high percent of women AND men downsizing their aspirations, organizations must begin to understand and mitigate the underlying reasons to benefit from contributions by all talent.**

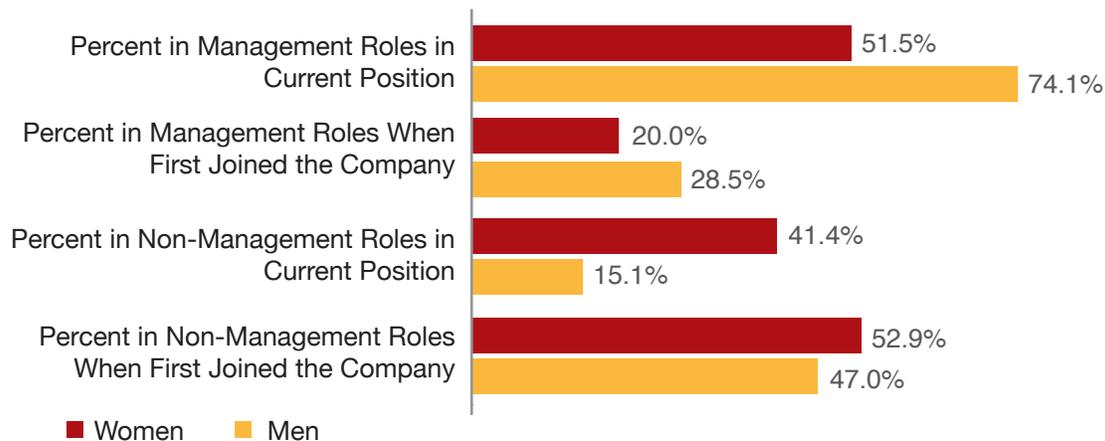
Catalyst’s report *Pipeline’s Broken Promise*<sup>19</sup> examines the conventional wisdom of the past two decades in which leaders have counted on parity in education, women’s accelerated movement into the labor force, and company-implemented diversity and inclusion programs to yield a robust talent pipeline where women are poised to make rapid gains. Findings revealed that instead of women and men being on equal footing and their career trajectories gender-blind, inequality remains entrenched. Among high-potential graduates from elite MBA programs—the very programs companies

count on for future leadership—women lagged men in compensation and advancement starting from their first job and were less satisfied with their overall careers.

Figure 4 demonstrates that our India-specific analyses support these findings:

- **When they first joined the company:** We found a slight difference in the percentage of women and men in non-management (52.9 percent of women and 47.0 percent men) and management roles (20.0 percent of women and 28.5 percent of men) when they first joined the company.
- **In their current position:** 51.5 percent of women and 74.1 percent of men reported being in management roles, and 41.4 percent of women and 15.1 percent men were in non-management roles.

**FIGURE 4**  
**Percent in Non-management and Management Roles, by Gender**



19. Nancy M. Carter and Christine Silva, *Pipeline’s Broken Promise*, Catalyst (2010); This is the second report from *The Promise of Future Leadership: A Research Program on Highly Talented Employees in the Pipeline* that develops timely reports on the retention and advancement of high potential women and men.

## BARRIERS TO ADVANCEMENT

For decades women around the world have told Catalyst about barriers to their career advancement<sup>20</sup> that ultimately impact their level of engagement with their jobs and companies. Research also suggests that senior and pipeline leaders were likely to experience the barriers to career advancement differently, depending on their gender, age, and geographic region. Senior women leaders in United States and Europe reported being disadvantaged by having few visibly successful role models, and senior women leaders in the United States reported being disadvantaged by a lack of access to informal social networks.<sup>21</sup> Pipeline and younger leaders were likely to cite having a

limited number of important job assignments that are highly valued by senior leaders as a barrier to advancement.<sup>22</sup> Despite differences in the barriers women perceive, the outcomes were the same:<sup>23</sup>

- Reduced rates of advancement
- Decreased commitment to both job and company
- Less commitment to working beyond expectations
- Higher potential for turnover
- Increased costs to the company

Figure 5 shows that, specifically for India, women were more likely than men to report lacking female role models as a barrier to advancement (26.2 percent of women vs. 9.0 percent of men).

**FIGURE 5**  
**Lack of Role Models as a Barrier to Advancement, by Gender**



20. Catalyst, *Women in U.S. Corporate Leadership* (2003); Catalyst, *Women and Men in U.S. Corporate Leadership: Same Workplace, Different Realities?* (2004); Heather Foust-Cummings, Laura Sabattini, and Nancy M. Carter, *Women in Technology: Maximizing Talent, Minimizing Barriers* (Catalyst, 2008).

21. Catalyst and The Conference Board, *Women in Leadership: A European Business Imperative* (2002).

22. Foust-Cummings et al.

23. Nancy M. Carter and Ellen Galinsky, *Leaders in a Global Economy: Talent Management in European Cultures* (Families and Work Institute and Catalyst, 2008).

## UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO ADVANCEMENT ACROSS REGIONS—INDIA, EUROPE, AND THE UNITED STATES

Analyses across several Catalyst research studies<sup>24</sup> underscores the following common advancement barriers faced by women, relatively more than men, across regions and industries:

- **Lack of key relationships** with influential others posed challenges in finding sponsors and mentors and in building informal networks.
- **Lack of role models** makes it difficult for women to believe that they can be successful in the workplace. It also makes it challenging to fight stereotyping about women's aspirations and abilities.

Specifically looking at India, Europe, and the United States, we found that **the following barriers to advancement were felt most severely by leaders—both women and men—in India compared to their counterparts in Europe and the United States:**

- Lack of key relationships: not having a sponsor, mentor, or champion; being excluded from important networks of key decision-makers
- Not receiving tough, honest feedback on performance
- Not understanding the unspoken company politics well enough
- Not having access to important or special job assignments that are highly valued by higher-level managers

Although we found no significant gender differences between women and men in India for these barriers—possibly due to a relatively small sample size—that does not by any means suggest there are none. Undoubtedly, this requires more research and analyses to better understand and address the barriers to advancement for *all* talent and, specifically, for women in India. **The above mentioned findings also suggest that as MNCs address the leadership gap, they must consider:**

1. How talent is defined globally and across regions and how that impacts local talent development and advancement, and
2. Within each region, salient gender differences in terms of access to information, visibility, assignments, networks, and opportunities for development and advancement.

**म्युटुअलिटी:** Talent and results are all you need to advance.

**रेगुलिटी:** Just as talent and results are important, so is learning and playing by the rules. Although women and men have similar aspirations vis-à-vis advancement, there are differences in what and who women know in the workplace, and that impacts their development and advancement.

Catalyst also found that advancing in today's business world is often as much about learning and playing by the rules as it is about talent and results. Some rules are explicitly stated, but other rules are left implicit—unwritten—for employees to decipher on their own. Building professional relationships, whether through networks or with mentors, supervisors, and other individuals who can share knowledge emerged as particularly important for advancement.<sup>25</sup> In the same study, respondents wished they had known that “just” working hard is not enough to succeed or that they had been more aware of organizational politics and about the advantages of self-promotion. Regardless of gender and ethnicity, unwritten rules play a major role in career advancement. Career strategies involving communication and feedback, performance, career planning, increasing visibility, and relationship-building were particularly important to career advancement. The most effective strategies to learn the unwritten rules for advancement in the workplace were observation, seeking out mentors, and soliciting feedback.<sup>26</sup>

24. A factor analyses was used to uncover relationships among different questionnaire items on barriers to women's advancement across several Catalyst studies representative of the following regions: U.S., Canada, Europe, and Asia, and the following industries: Accounting, Financial Services, Hi Tech, Legal, and Services.

25. Laura Sabattini, *Unwritten Rules: What You Don't Know Can Hurt Your Career* (Catalyst 2008).

26. Laura Sabattini and Sarah Dinolfo, *Unwritten Rules: Why Doing a Good Job Might Not Be Enough* (Catalyst 2010).

# WHAT WOMEN AND MEN THINK ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES

*One should get appropriate assignments as per the skills and talent of the employee.*

— Woman

*I should be made aware of the different project openings for my skill sets.*

— Woman

*[Provide] constructive criticism on what can be improved further, or emphasize periodically what goals are more important for promotion, to help focus my work.*

— Man

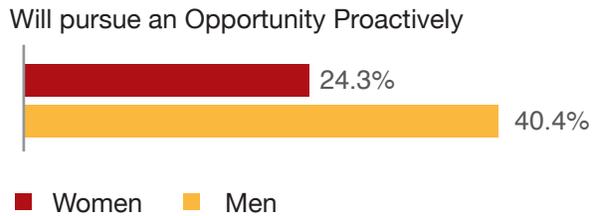
*[The Organization] must proactively invest in futuristic solutions and increase employees risk taking abilities.*

— Man

Prior Catalyst research also tells us that the top career strategies used by senior women in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada included consistently exceeding performance expectations and developing a style with which male managers are comfortable. In addition, women in Europe and the United States also reported having a recognized expertise, and having high visibility assignments as being critical. However, U.S. women were more likely to cite the importance of personal style and networks as being critical compared to European women’s emphasis on international and cross-functional experience.<sup>27</sup>

Our India-specific analysis highlights gender differences in approach and attitude toward opportunity. As shown in Figure 6, men leaders were relatively more proactive in pursuing a job opening in the company if it interested them.

**FIGURE 6**  
Percent Agree to Pursuing an Opportunity Proactively, by Gender



The perspectives represented in the sidebar further emphasize the way women and men leaders thought about opportunities: women leaders were more likely to adopt a “waiting for” rather than a “seeking” approach, whereas men were more future oriented.

27. Catalyst and The Conference Board, *Women in Leadership: A European Business Imperative* (2002); *Catalyst, Women in U.S. Corporate Leadership* (2003).

**Given the cultural context of valuing hierarchy and the possibility that women might not be as adept as men in actively pursuing an opportunity (due to lack of networks, gender stereotyping, and not knowing the unwritten rules<sup>28</sup>), the question to consider is whether this gender gap widens and disadvantages women in the long run, and do women need coaching/mentoring focused on learning the rules of advancement.**

**म्यथः Workplace flexibility is about accommodating the needs of a few employees, mostly women.**

**रक्षित्यः Work-life effectiveness is a mutually beneficial partnership between businesses and their employees (including both women and men).** In a large talent management survey of the values of pipeline and senior leaders in Asia, Europe, and the United States conducted by Catalyst and Families and Work Institute, having a supportive work environment ranked first for women and men, and having a good fit between life on and off the job ranked third.<sup>29</sup>

Talented employees expect their work to add value to the business, and they will not work to the exclusion of the other priorities in their lives. They want to work smart and be recognized for their contributions. Catalyst has advised many global corporations and firms on how to shape work cultures that accommodate the needs of both the employees and the organization. Our counsel is based on a sophisticated workforce approach we call work-life effectiveness (WLE)—moving away from flexibility as a request for “me” to an organizational tool for “us.” Flexibility is often understood as an employee benefit or accommodation, whereas WLE is built on a mutually beneficial partnership between businesses and employees that aims to identify solutions to common challenges such as lack of business agility, team inefficiencies, and employee burnout.<sup>30</sup>

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28. Laura Sabattini, *Unwritten Rules: What You Don't Know Can Hurt Your Career* (Catalyst 2008); Laura Sabattini and Sarah Dinolfo, *Unwritten Rules: Why Doing a Good Job Might Not Be Enough* (Catalyst 2010); Catalyst, *Women “Take Care,” Men “Take Charge:” Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders Exposed* (2005); Catalyst, *Different Cultures, Similar Perceptions: Stereotyping of Western European Business Leaders* (2006).

29. Ellen Galinsky, Nancy Carter, and James T. Bond, *Leaders in a Global Economy: Finding the Fit for Top Talent*, (Catalyst and Families and Work Institute (2008).

30. Lisa D’ Annolfo Levey, Meryle Mahrer Kaplan, and Aimee Horowitz, *Catalyst Making Change, Beyond Flexibility: Work Life Effectiveness as an Organizational Tool for High Performance* (Catalyst, 2008).

## KEY SAMPLE DESCRIPTORS

### Workforce Tenure:

Although the majority of leaders reported being in the workforce for more than 10 years, leaders in India were least likely to do so compared to their counterparts in Europe and the United States (69.2 percent in India, 84.6 percent in Europe, and 91.4 percent in the United States). Furthermore, as shown in Figure 7, relative to men, women in all three regions were less likely to be in the workforce for more than 10 years.

### Current Company Tenure:

Almost 40 percent of the leaders in India reported being in their current company for less than five years compared to 23.4 percent in the United States and 15.7 percent in Europe. Also, one-third of the leaders in India reported current company tenure of 10 years or more compared to 55.9 percent in the United States and 58.9 percent in Europe.

### Marital Status:

Women leaders in India were more likely to be working as single/never married/ widowed than women in the United States or Europe (43.7 percent of women in India, 22.9 percent in the United States, and 25.9 percent in Europe). Also, for those who were currently married/partnered, women in India were more likely to be in a dual earner family where their spouse/partner works full-time than were women in the United States or Europe: 92.5 percent women in India, 77.1 percent women in the United States, and 87.7 percent women in Europe.

FIGURE 7

Workforce Tenure Greater Than 10 Years, by Region and Gender

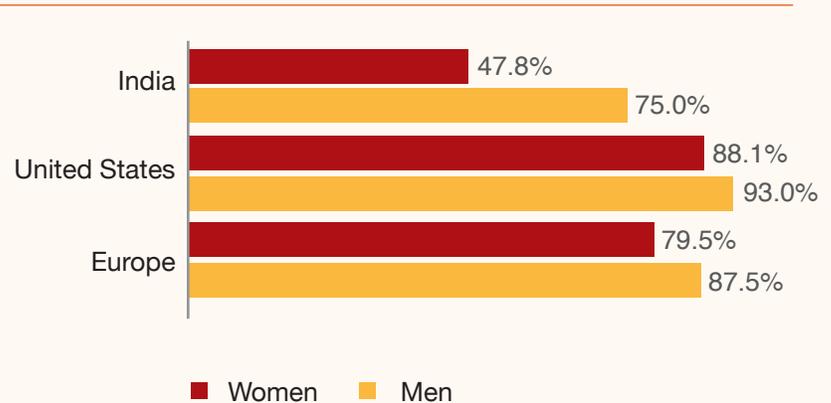


FIGURE 8

Current Company Tenure, by Region

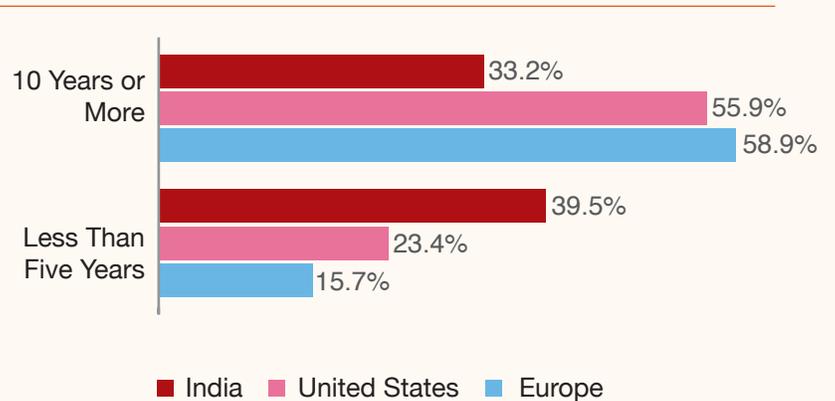
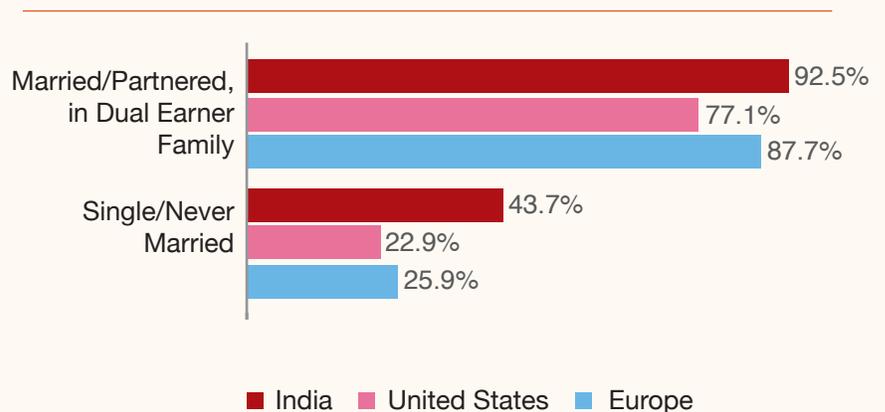


FIGURE 9

Women's Marital Status, by Region



## UNDERSTANDING WORK-LIFE EMPHASIS ACROSS REGIONS—INDIA, EUROPE, AND THE UNITED STATES

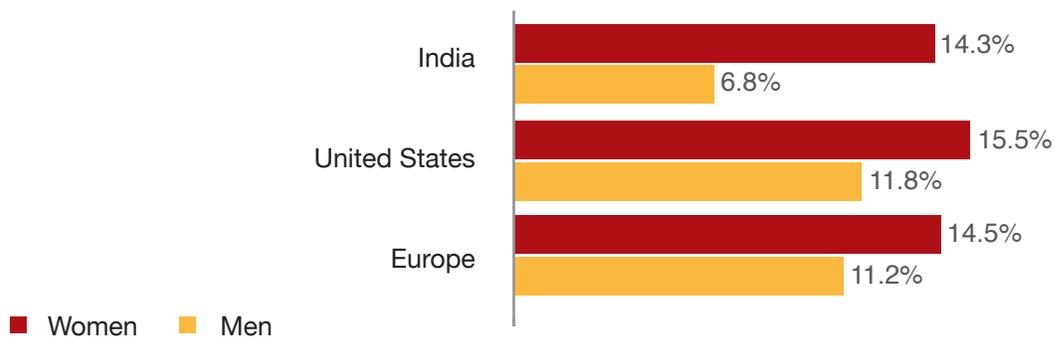
The following findings underscore work-life emphasis and needs of leaders in India, Europe, and the United States.

### Emphasized Job and/or Family

Of all leaders, 65.6 percent put job before family, and 12.4 percent put family before job. With the remaining 22.0 percent being dual-centric—placing similar emphasis on job and family. Looking across regions and gender (see Figure 10), we found that:

- Leaders in India and Europe were relatively more likely to put job before family compared to their counterparts in the United States—67.8 percent in India, 62.0 percent in the United States, and 66.9 percent in Europe.
- Women leaders were only marginally more likely to put family before job (see Figure 10). Of women leaders, 14–16 percent put more emphasis on family relative to 7–12 percent men leaders.

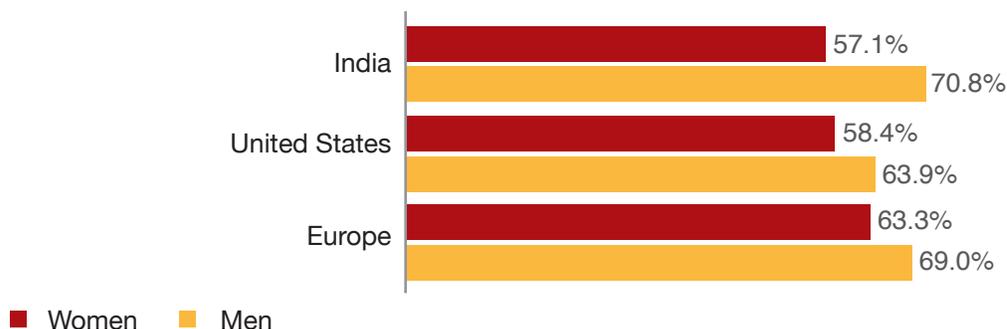
**FIGURE 10**  
Greater Emphasis on Family vs. Work, by Region and Gender



- Men leaders were more likely to emphasize job before family compared to women leaders across all three regions: 63–71 percent of

men leaders vs. 57–64 percent of women leaders (see Figure 11).

**FIGURE 11**  
Greater Emphasis on Work vs. Family, by Region and Gender

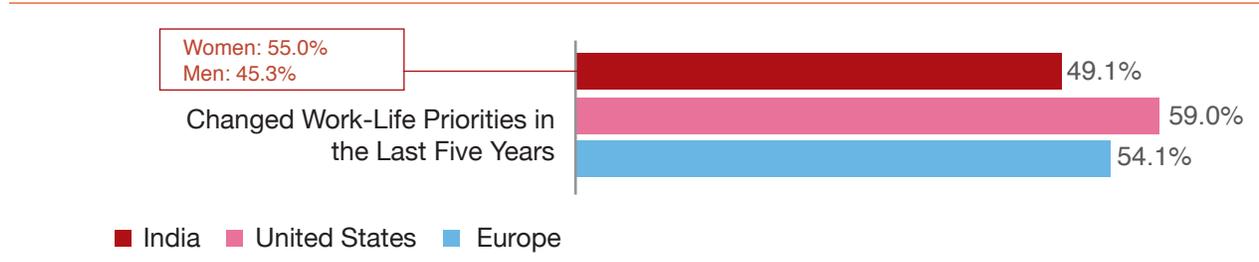


### Changed Work-Life Priorities

Of all leaders, 55.2 percent reported changed work-life priorities in the past 5 years across all three regions.

As shown in Figure 12, leaders in the United States were more likely to report changed priorities compared to their counterparts in India and Europe: 59.0 percent of leaders in the United States; 49.1 percent of leaders in India, including 55.0 percent of women and 45.3 percent men; and 54.1 percent of leaders in Europe.<sup>31</sup>

**FIGURE 12**  
**Changed Work-Life Priorities in the Last Five Years, by Region**



Also, women leaders in all three regions were relatively more likely to report changed priorities relative to their male counterparts: 60–63 percent of women leaders compared to 46–58 percent of men leaders.

- **Direction of Priority (Work or Family):** Of all leaders, 28.4 percent said work had become a greater priority, and 71.6 percent reported family as a greater priority.

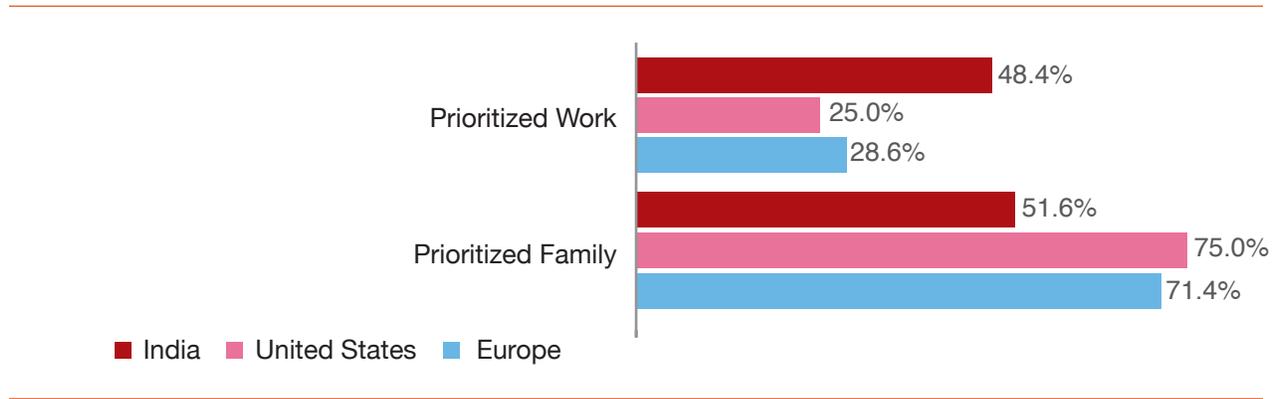
As shown in Figure 13, looking across regions we found:

- **Prioritized Work:** Leaders in India were more likely to have prioritized work

compared to their counterparts in the United States and Europe, with leaders in the United States being the least likely to have prioritized work (48.4 percent in India compared to 25.0 percent in the United States and 28.6 percent in Europe).

- **Prioritized Family:** Leaders in the United States were more likely to have prioritized family relative to their counterparts in Europe and India, with leaders in India the least likely to have prioritized family (51.6 percent in India, 75.0 percent in the United States, and 71.4 percent in Europe).

**FIGURE 13**  
**Direction of Priority, by Region**

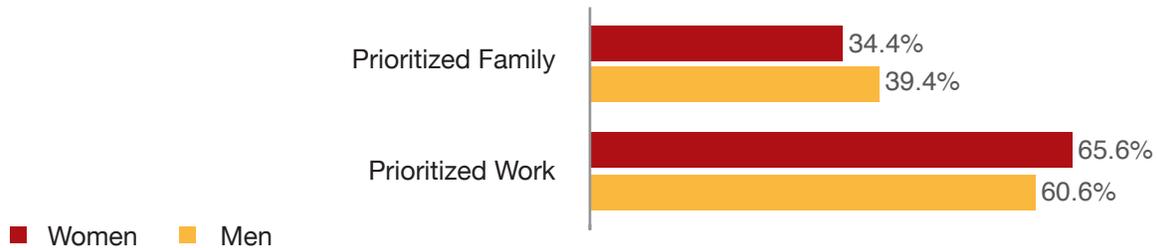


31. We report descriptive statistics in Figure 12 for data presented in the callout box—gender breakdown for India. These differences between groups are not statistically significant, but illustrative.

On further exploration of the India data, we found a marginal difference across gender. Women were slightly more likely to prioritize work, possibly

because of the presence of more single/never married women in the sample (see Figure 14).<sup>32</sup>

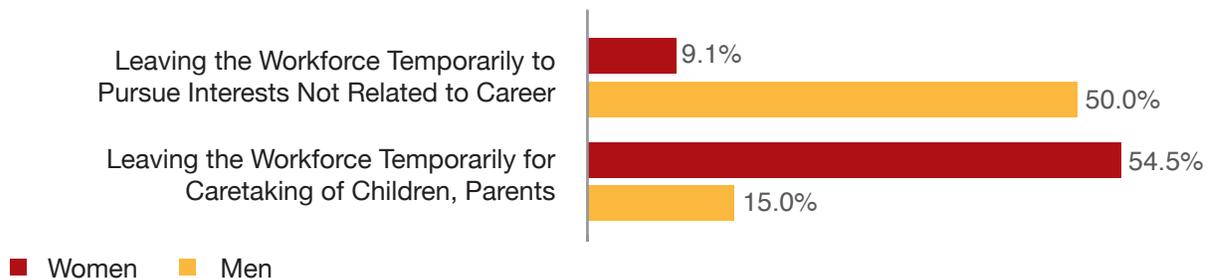
**FIGURE 14**  
**India Leaders Prioritizing Work or Family, by Gender**



However, inflexible organizations and familial/societal gender role expectations in India continue to pose challenges for working women.<sup>33</sup> Catalyst findings confirm that when asked about the reasons for leaving the paid workforce temporarily,

as shown in Figure 15, women leaders were more likely to cite care-taking responsibilities, whereas men were more likely report it was to pursue interests not related to career.

**FIGURE 15**  
**Top Reasons Reported by India Leaders for Leaving the Workforce Temporarily**



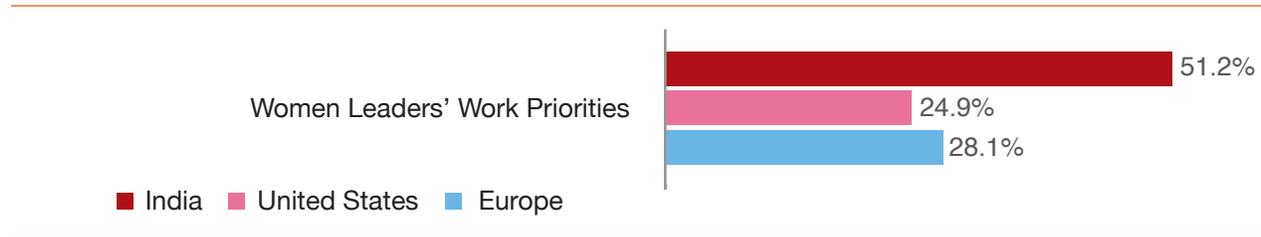
32. We report descriptive statistics in Figure 14. These differences between groups are not statistically significant, but illustrative.

33. Budhwar et al.; Boston College Center for Work & Family, Executive Briefing Series, Work-Life in India.

Women leaders in India were more likely to have prioritized work compared to female counterparts in the United States and Europe: 51.2 percent of

women in India compared to 24.9 percent of women in the United States and 28.1 percent of women in Europe (see Figure 16).

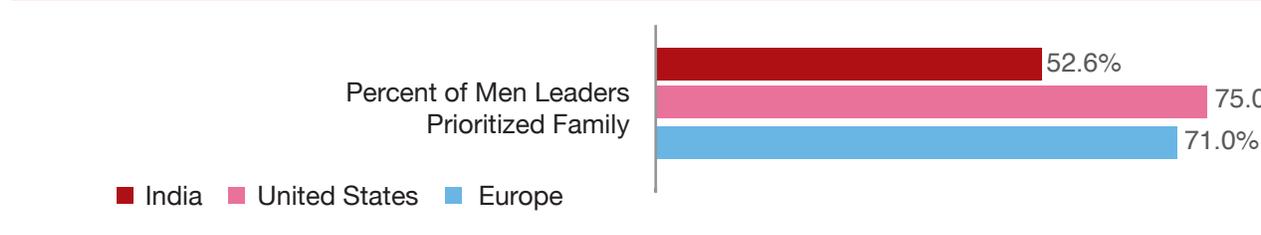
**FIGURE 16**  
**Women Leaders' Work Priorities, by Region**



Men leaders in the United States and Europe were more likely to have emphasized family than men in India: 52.6 percent of men in India compared to

75.0 percent of men in the United States and 71.0 percent of men in Europe (see Figure 17).

**FIGURE 17**  
**Men Leaders' Family Priorities, by Region**



# recommendations and considerations



Organizations that seek to advance diverse talent, including women, into leadership and capitalize on the potential of a more inclusive workplace should begin by making the connection between their diversity efforts and their business goals—creating a business case. After decades of experience, Catalyst knows that taking the time to build a solid fact base is a critical investment in your efforts to build a truly inclusive environment that leverages the talents of all employees.

A fact-based diversity strategy will better equip organizations to address issues around workforce, workplace, and marketplace. By engaging in the process of building a business case, organizations can learn about the issues that seem most compelling for their own organization. For example,

while some organizations seek to reduce high attrition rates among women, others cannot execute a growth strategy without attracting and retaining diverse talent. Still others are motivated by a vision of truly leveling the playing field so that talent can be spotted, developed, and advanced equitably. Not every company needs to use all of these approaches immediately. Only you will know which elements will be most persuasive to your leadership group.<sup>34</sup>

Culling from decades of Catalyst expertise as well as recommendations from women and men leaders in business in India, here are a few considerations, questions, and examples of how other organizations have successfully approached and improved their gender leadership gap.

### Create a Smart Organization:

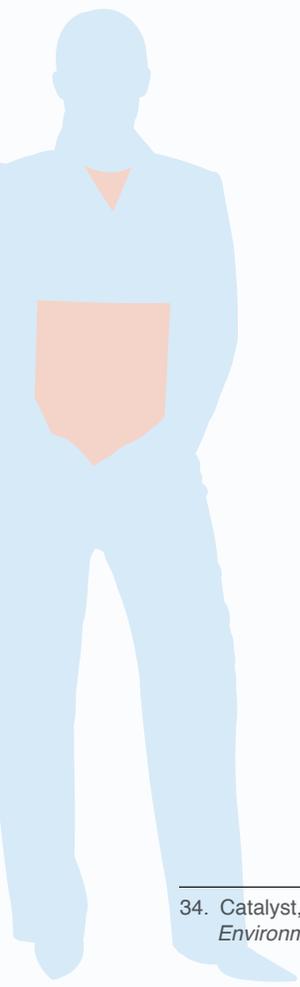
- What is the business case for a diverse workforce? Do senior leaders and people managers understand it? If so, how do they communicate and reinforce the business case for work-life effectiveness organization-wide?
- How is talent defined and characterized in written and verbal communication? Is it limited to typical male leaders and leadership traits?
- How is leadership talent identified and developed? Are practices in place that guard against gender inequities and stereotypes?

### Create an Agile Organization:

- What is the business case for work-life effectiveness? Do senior leaders and people managers understand it? If so, how do they communicate and reinforce the business case organization-wide?
- Is flexibility considered to be a “woman’s” or “family” issue, or is it about inclusion for all employees?
- Do senior leaders, HR professionals, and people managers understand the different work-life needs of its employee population?



# Recommendations from



## Talent Identification and Development

*Focus on leadership development. There is no mentoring for those on the cusp of becoming senior leaders in the company.*

—Woman

*Believe in local talent even if they look and talk differently.*

—Man

*There should be more access to seniors in the form of mentoring to mid level women.*

—Woman

*It would be great if there was a forum to know the current openings in the organization, which will help us find projects that meet our expectations, rather than relying on the manager.*

—Woman

### Ready People Managers for a Diverse Workforce:

- Can managers identify, develop, and advance diverse talent, including women?
- How are managers held accountable for the development and advancement of women?
- Are managers equipped to coach women about the unwritten rules and provide actionable feedback?

### Equip Women to Manage Their Own Career:

- Can women have an open discussion with their managers and leaders about their aspirations and career path?
- How do women connect with influential people and key opportunities in the organization?
- Are women equipped to seek feedback from managers, peers, and colleagues? Do they demonstrate readiness to accept feedback?

### Learn From Other Organizations:

- Telstra's Next Generation Gender Diversity initiative is aimed at increasing representation of women in leadership and pipeline.
- Infosys' Driving Work-Life Effectiveness Through Employee Empowerment initiative is aimed at creating a gender-sensitive workplace to attract, hire, and retain diverse talent.
- Baxter Asia Pacific's Building Talent Edge initiative is aimed toward cultivating a more effective, diverse, and sustainable organization.



# women and men leaders

## Accountability

*The supervisor should be judged by the number of leaders he has created.*

—Man

*360-degree feedback needs to be incorporated into career advancement and the supervisor needs to be held accountable for all career advancement.*

—Woman

## Work-Life

*Have a work-from-home policy. Measure people by outcome and results, not by number of hours in the office.*

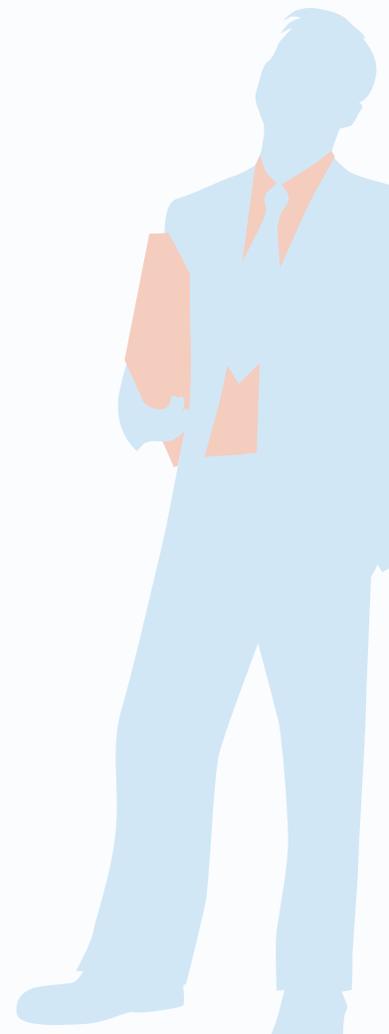
—Man

*Provide more flexibility in the mode of working instead of going for a tight schedule which, most of the time, is counterproductive for innovation.*

—Man

*Allow working from home one day a week. Not only will this help create more balance, but it will also alleviate the painful commute through hours of traffic each day.*

—Woman



**FIGURE 18**  
**Learning From Other Organizations**

**TELSTRA CORPORATION—NEXT GENERATION GENDER DIVERSITY  
 (2010 CATALYST AWARD-WINNING INITIATIVE<sup>35</sup>)**

Goals	Initiatives	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use an integrated approach to increase women’s representation at senior and pipeline levels.</li> <li>• Achieve change top-down by providing women role models and demonstrating the value of diverse leadership.</li> <li>• Close the gender pay gap.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring and gender leadership programs</li> <li>• Annual company-wide, comprehensive reviews to close the gender pay gap</li> <li>• Programs that identify talented employees</li> <li>• Variety of flexible work and leave options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased representation of women on the CEO leadership team from 6 percent to 31 percent</li> <li>• For women in the pipeline, total share of promotions grew steadily from 29 percent in 2006 to 41 percent in 2009</li> <li>• Number of women corporate officers has grown from 31 percent to 35 percent</li> </ul>

**INFOSYS—DRIVING WORK-LIFE EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH EMPLOYEE  
 EMPOWERMENT AT INFOSYS**

Goals	Initiatives	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a gender-sensitive environment to attract, hire, and retain top talent, including women.</li> <li>• Employ talented and diverse individuals who reflect their global clientele and provide these employees with multiple career supports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched a global council</li> <li>• Created the role of global counselors (female project managers and above), who ensure women and men are effectively supported in their careers and personal lives</li> <li>• Global counselors sensitize and educate other employees on gender related matters, including topics such as managing work and personal situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helped women seek flexible work arrangements, alternate roles, and mediate with managers</li> <li>• Provided individual employees with a voice and a role in these efforts has increased buy-in from all managers, especially men</li> <li>• Accelerated the dissemination of knowledge about the new work-life programs and policies</li> </ul>

35. <http://catalyst.org/publication/383/telstra-corporation-limitednext-generation-gender-diversity-accelerating-change-for-women-leaders>

**BAXTER INTERNATIONAL INC. – BUILDING TALENT EDGE**  
(2008 CATALYST AWARD-WINNING INITIATIVE<sup>36</sup>)

**Goals**

- Cultivate a more effective, diverse, and sustainable organization.
- Create a 50/50 gender balance across “critical” positions (upper management and above) throughout the 14 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

**Initiatives**

- Candidate slates, including those from search firms, must be 50 percent women.
- Leadership Acceleration Program for high-potential women and men.
- GROW program gives women and men who are lower in the leadership pipeline the opportunity to acquire the skills to advance.
- Fitness Training bolsters the clinical, product, and competitive knowledge of teams.

**Results**

- Women in management and executive positions increased from 31 percent in 2004 to 50 percent in 2008.
- From 2006 to 2008, women's representation on the Asia Pacific Leadership Team increased from 25 to 37 percent.

36. <http://catalyst.org/publication/286/baxter-international-incbuilding-talent-edge>

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