



CAREER ADVANCEMENT IN CORPORATE CANADA:  
A Focus on Visible Minorities ~ Survey Findings



The  
**Diversity  
Institute**  
in Management & Technology

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The Diversity Institute in Management and Technology is located in the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada. The Diversity Institute undertakes diversity research with respect to gender, race/ethnicity, disabilities and sexual orientation in the workplace. Our goal is to generate new, interdisciplinary knowledge about diversity in organizations to contribute to the awareness and the promotion of equity in the workplace.

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SAN JOSE 2825 North First Street, Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95134-2047; (408) 435-1300; (408) 577-0425 fax  
TORONTO 8 King Street East, Suite 505, Toronto, Ontario M5C 1B5; (416) 815-7600; (416) 815-7601 fax  
ZUG c/o KPMG Fides, Landis+Gyr-Strasse 1, 6300 Zug, Switzerland;  
+41-(0)44-208-3152; +41-(0)44-208-3500 fax  
**email: [caninfo@catalyst.org](mailto:caninfo@catalyst.org); [www.catalyst.org](http://www.catalyst.org)**

The Diversity Institute in Management & Technology, Ted Rogers School of Management,  
Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario M5B 2K3; (416) 979-5000 x.7268; (416) 979-5294 fax  
**email: [diversity.institute@ryerson.ca](mailto:diversity.institute@ryerson.ca); [www.ryerson.ca/diversity](http://www.ryerson.ca/diversity)**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Leveraging Diversity—A Business Imperative

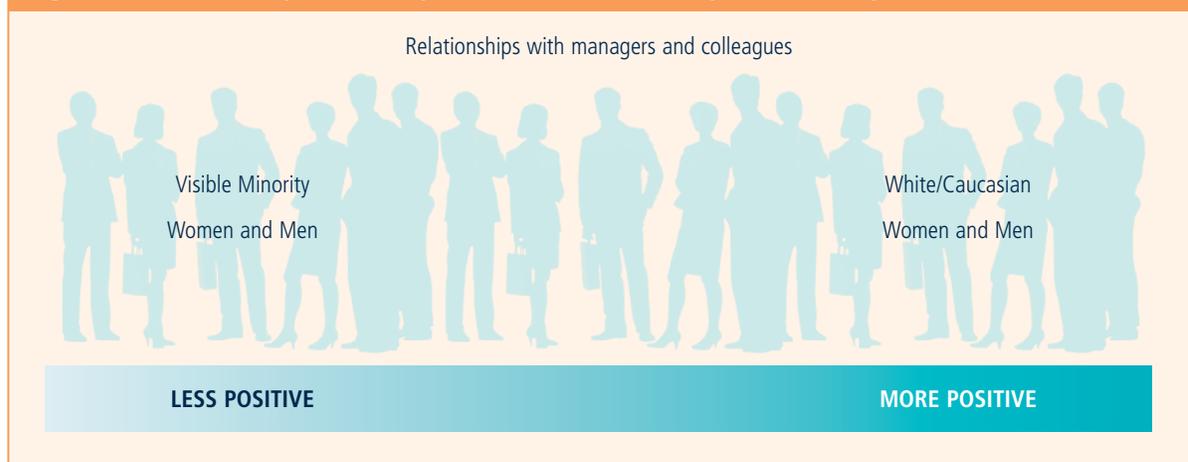
In today’s globally competitive marketplace, organizations cannot afford to underutilize any segment of the talent pool. Demographic shifts and globalization are exerting pressures on both the workforce and the marketplace. A growing proportion of Canada’s labour force consists of visible minority individuals, and these talented, hard-working women and men will be critical to the performance of Canadian companies and firms in the decades to come.

Yet, until now, little has been known about the experiences of visible minorities employed in Canada’s largest businesses—the place where skills and opportunity come together most directly.

This report begins to fill this gap by highlighting findings from the single largest national survey that focuses on the careers of visible minority managers, professionals, and executives working in corporate Canada today. More than 17,000 managers, professionals, and executives employed in 43 large publicly traded and privately held companies and professional service firms across the country responded to this survey.

We surveyed respondents from both visible minority and white/Caucasian groups on their perceptions and experiences regarding organizational commitment, career satisfaction, career advancement and development, relationships with managers and colleagues, and senior management commitment to diversity, as well as recognition of foreign educational credentials. Findings from a parallel employer survey on programs and practices are also included.

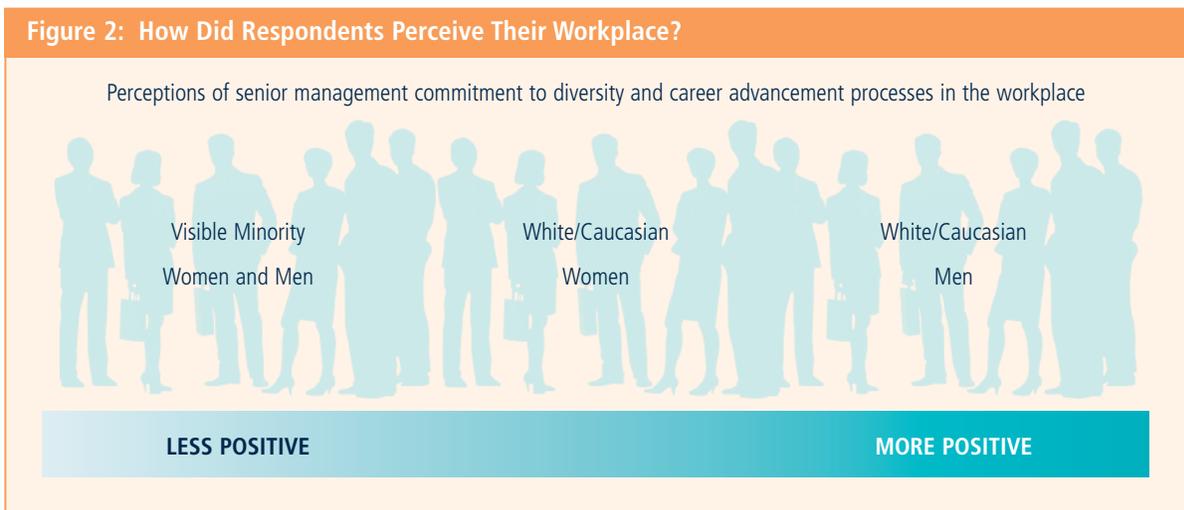
Figure 1: How Did Respondents Experience Their Relationships in the Workplace?



### The Need for Change Is Urgent

Previous research has shown that employee engagement is closely linked to higher productivity and profitability. Given that immigration is expected to account for 100 percent of Canada’s net labour force growth by 2011, and that three out of four immigrants to Canada are visible minorities, it is clear that to succeed in the future, Canadian companies and firms must create work environments where all employees believe they can succeed.

This study provides new evidence that this is not happening—visible minorities are less satisfied with their careers, less likely to report positive experiences and perceptions regarding their workplaces (see Figures 1 and 2), and more likely to perceive workplace barriers than their white/Caucasian colleagues. The good news is that organizational commitment remains strong and leaders and managers have the ability to positively influence the career satisfaction of visible minority employees, which in turn will strengthen employee engagement and organizational performance.



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

### Organizational commitment is strong.

- A majority of respondents from all self-identified groups expressed commitment to their organization; respondents were willing to put in extra effort to help the organization succeed, proud to tell others about the organization, and intended to stay with their current employer.

### Visible minorities report lower levels of career satisfaction than their white/Caucasian colleagues.

- While respondents from all self-identified groups expressed strong attachment to their organization, visible minority respondents were clearly less satisfied with their careers than white/Caucasian respondents were.
- Individuals with foreign educational credentials were more likely than respondents without foreign educational credentials to feel their education and training were being underutilized in their current job. Individuals who felt that their skills, education, and training were being underutilized reported lower levels of career satisfaction.

### Visible minorities experience the workplace differently than their white/Caucasian colleagues.

- Visible minorities tended to report similar experiences and perceptions of their workplace, regardless of gender (see Figures 1 and 2) or visible minority group.
- More white/Caucasian respondents than visible minority respondents agreed that their organization's talent identification processes were fair.
- Fewer visible minority respondents than white/Caucasian respondents reported that they received one or more developmental opportunities in the last three years. This finding held even after controlling for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics.
- Fewer visible minority respondents than white/Caucasian respondents believed that senior management in their organization was committed to cultural diversity. Visible senior management commitment to diversity is a pivotal factor in how fair visible minorities perceive their organization's career advancement processes to be.

### Visible minorities perceive barriers to their advancement.

- Visible minority respondents were more likely to perceive workplace barriers than their white/Caucasian colleagues. These barriers included perceived lack of fairness in career advancement processes, an absence of role models, inequality in performance standards, and fewer high-visibility assignments.
- Although many respondents agreed that their organization strives to create a climate supportive of all individuals, some visible minority respondents reported subtle forms of bias that detracted from their sense of being included.

### Great potential exists for making positive change.

- Leaders and managers have the ability to positively influence career satisfaction and maintain high levels of organizational commitment by improving perceptions of fair career advancement processes, building on positive relationships with managers and colleagues, and improving perceptions of senior management commitment to diversity.

## What Companies and Firms Can Do

With this study, Catalyst Canada and the Diversity Institute add a new level of knowledge to what it takes to be an “employer of choice” for visible minorities in Canada. By pursuing a set of key “action steps,” companies and firms can proactively tap into the competitive advantage offered by Canada’s changing labour force—key to a productive, profitable, and sustainable organization.

Based on our understanding of what it takes to build an inclusive workplace, the findings presented in this report, and the suggestions offered by visible minorities, we recommend six action steps for companies and firms.

- 1. Assess your environment.** Visible minority respondents confirmed that organization leaders need to better understand their challenges and aspirations. Building a fact base around visible minority career advancement experiences will be helpful to organizations and would create a suitable channel for visible minority managers, professionals, and executives to provide input to senior management.
- 2. Make diversity a strategic priority.** The importance of visible minorities to the future economic success of Canada cannot be over-emphasized. By elevating diversity to a strategic priority, companies and firms can begin to shift the culture of their organizations so that the barriers that may impede the advancement of visible minorities are recognized and addressed.
- 3. Encourage top management commitment to diversity.** Commitment from the top is essential to any business initiative, including diversity. In fact, demonstrated commitment to diversity by senior leadership can have a direct and positive impact on visible minorities’ perceptions of fairness and ultimately improve organizational commitment and career satisfaction.
- 4. Implement career development systems that are formal and transparent.** Visible minorities were less likely than white/Caucasians to perceive their organizations’ talent management practices as fair. Transparent career development policies and practices that foster an equitable environment and support employee development are needed to reduce the perceived influence of informal mechanisms on career advancement opportunities.
- 5. Develop a robust accountability framework around diversity.** Metrics and accountability were the least frequently reported diversity and inclusion practice by employers, yet Catalyst research shows that implementing a clear accountability framework for diversity outcomes is a critical component for creating inclusive workplaces. Strong accountability systems require clear and relevant metrics to measure change.
- 6. Provide support mechanisms.** Many visible minority respondents had specific and creative suggestions for programs that would address their needs, including providing mentors and role models, networking opportunities, high-profile assignments, and actions that reflect sensitivity to other cultures. Support mechanisms like these offer potentially excluded employees, such as visible minorities and women, the opportunity to share experiences, make important connections, and receive guidance regarding personal and career strategies.



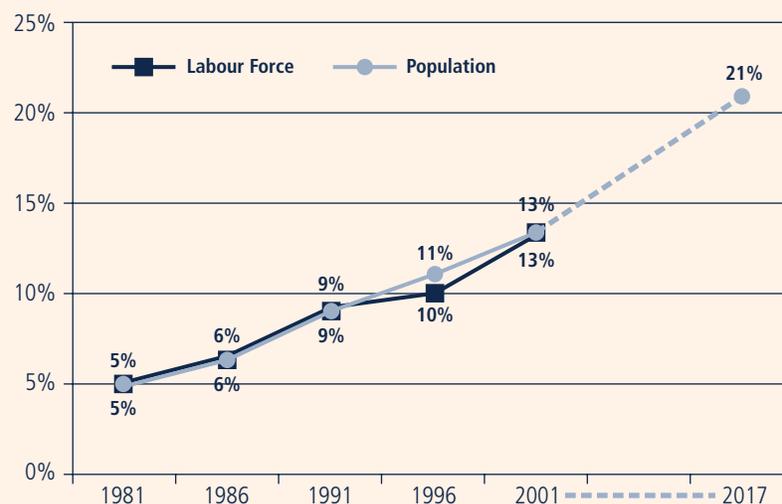
## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The importance of visible minorities to the future economic well-being of Canada cannot be over-emphasized. Some estimates predict that by the year 2010, Canada will face a shortfall of 950,000 workers.<sup>1</sup> One way to address this impending shortage of workers is through immigration. Indeed, immigrants are expected to account for a full 100 percent of Canada's net labour force growth by 2011.<sup>2</sup>

While earlier waves of immigrants, who came to Canada largely from European countries, tended to be white/Caucasian, today more than three out of every four recent immigrants belong to a visible minority group.<sup>3</sup> It is expected that within the next decade visible minorities will represent approximately 20 percent of Canada's population.

A growing reliance on immigrants as a source of skills and much-needed workers is just one trend that is shaping Canada's labour force. Other key drivers have also emerged—for example, advancing technologies and the current knowledge-based economy have created an urgent demand for workers in highly skilled occupations. In addition, the aging of Canada's labour force is creating pressure on employers who face losing their most experienced managers and employees to retirement.

Figure 3: Visible Minority Representation in Canada, 1981 to 2017<sup>4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> C.I. Petros, "From the Chairperson," *Forum: National Visible Minority Council on Labour Force Development Newsletter*, (Summer 2003): p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Frank T. Denton and Byron G. Spencer, "Population Change and Economic Growth: The Long-Term Outlook," QSEP Research Paper, no. 383 (July 2003).

<sup>3</sup> Barbara A. Mitchell, "Canada's Growing Visible Minority Population: Generational Challenges: Opportunities and Federal Policy Considerations," *Canadian Heritage* (2005). [http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/canada201717\\_e.cfm](http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/canada201717_e.cfm)

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada, *Population Projections of Visible Minority Groups, Canada, Provinces and Regions, 2001-2017* (2005); Employment Equity Branch, Employment & Immigration Canada, *Employment Equity Availability Data Report on Designated Groups* (1987, 1989); Human Resources Development Canada, *Diversity at a Glance, 1994, 1999, 2004* (Spring 2006). Numbers in Figure 3 have been rounded to the nearest percent.

Canada is certainly not alone in this situation. Countries around the world face similar looming talent shortages in their respective markets which, along with an accelerating demand for skilled workers, may impede opportunities for growth.<sup>5</sup>

In 2001, approximately four million visible minority persons were living in Canada. According to recent projections, by the year 2017 this number will increase to between six and eight million visible minority persons.<sup>6</sup> This suggests significant changes in the composition of the Canadian labour force. In 2001, visible minority workers and staff made up roughly 13 percent of the Canadian labour force.

## A BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

These trends have created a business imperative for Canadian companies and firms—to invest in creating work environments where all employees can excel and succeed. But recent research suggests this is not happening.<sup>7</sup> There is evidence that corporate Canada is simply not maximizing the “brain gain” created by the influx of skilled immigrants, most of whom belong to a visible minority group:

- Despite the educational attainment of visible minorities, their labour force representation rates are lower than the national average.<sup>8</sup>
- Advancement for visible minorities appears to have stalled; the proportion of visible minorities in senior management positions has hovered around three percent.<sup>9</sup>

This business imperative was the impetus for Catalyst Canada, in partnership with the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario, to undertake the largest national survey ever conducted focusing on visible minority managers, professionals, and executives in corporate Canada. The project builds on our collective expertise in researching issues about gender, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Results from a recent survey found that 41 percent of employers around the world are already facing challenges in recruiting talent. Manpower, *Talent Shortage Survey: 2007 Global Results* (2007).

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada, *Population Projections of Visible Minority Groups, Canada, Provinces and Regions, 2001-2017* (2005).

<sup>7</sup> Jeffrey G. Reitz, “Immigrant Skill Utilization in the Canadian Labour Market: Implications of Human Capital Research,” *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, vol. 2, no. 3 (2001): p. 347-378; Royal Bank of Canada, *The Diversity Advantage: A Case for Canada's 21st Century Economy*, (October 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Human Resources and Social Development Canada, *Fact Sheet on Members of Designated Groups* (1996, 2001).

<sup>9</sup> Human Resources and Social Development Canada, *Employment Equity Act Annual Reports* (1997 to 2006).

<sup>10</sup> For example, since 1997, Catalyst has released a continuous stream of research that sheds light on the career experiences of women of color in corporate management in the United States. Also see the Diversity Institute in Management and Technology, *The Diversity Edge: Implications for the ICT Labour Market* (2007).

## What Do We Mean by “Visible Minority”?

In Canada, the term “visible minority” refers to a person who is not an Aboriginal person\*, who is non-Caucasian in race or who is “non-white” in colour, as defined under the *Employment Equity Act*. The following population groups\*\* comprised the total visible minority group in this study: Arab, Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Latin American, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Southeast Asian, West Indian, and multiple visible minority.\*\*\*

Respondents to our survey selected the group they most identified with.

We use the term “visible minority” in our research as it is widely understood within the Canadian context and as it is now firmly entrenched in Canadian legislation.

\*Our analyses excluded survey respondents who identified themselves as “Aboriginal” (North American Indian or member of a First Nation, Metis, or Inuk). Under the *Employment Equity Act*, aboriginal peoples are considered a distinct group and are therefore not considered members of a visible minority.

\*\*These categories are based on census population groups with slight modification as a result of early testing of the survey.

\*\*\*“Multiple visible minority” refers to those respondents who identified as belonging to more than one visible minority group.

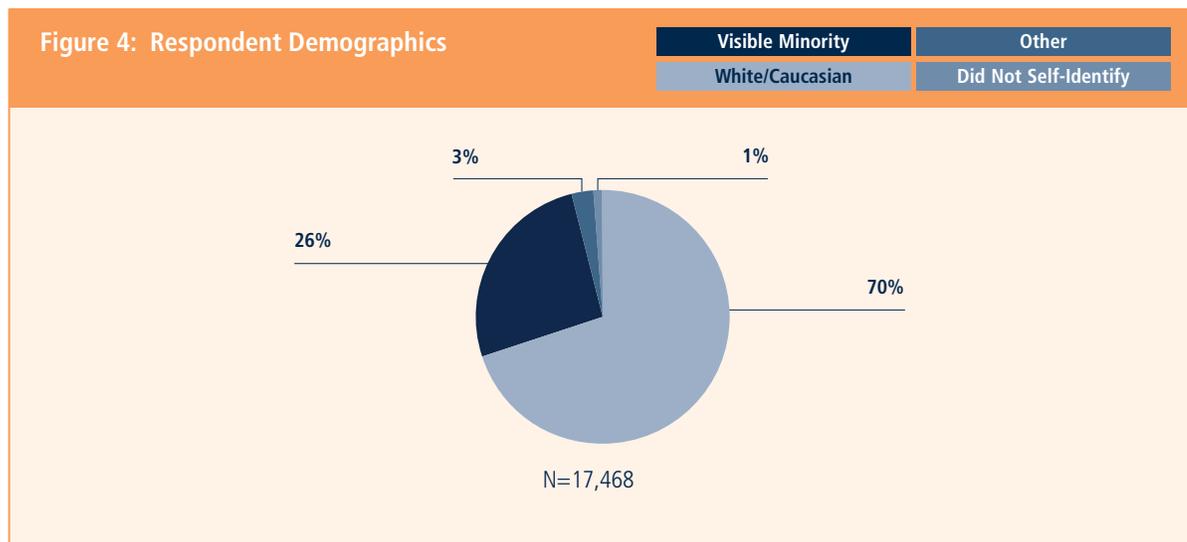
## A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF OUR SAMPLE

### The Survey

More than 60,000 randomly selected managers, professionals, and executives in large publicly traded and privately held companies and firms in corporate Canada were invited to complete our survey (called the "Employee Survey") in the fall of 2006 and winter of 2007.

A total of 17,908 people (29 percent of those invited) agreed to take part, representing 43 Canadian companies and firms. Nearly all of these respondents (17,468) were full-time employees at the time of the survey.<sup>11</sup>

Among these full-time employees, 94 percent (16,464) self-identified as either a member of a visible minority group or as white/Caucasian.<sup>12</sup> Most of the survey findings are based on data from these respondents.



There is some evidence that the perceptions and experiences of visible minority women and men born in Canada differed significantly from those who were born outside Canada. These differences are described and discussed within the report.

This report is the first phase of an ongoing study. The second phase, which Catalyst began in May 2007, involves conducting a series of focus groups and interviews with visible minority and white/Caucasian managers, professionals, and executives. The purpose of this second phase is to provide texture to quantitative survey findings in order to better understand subtle differences among and between white/Caucasian and visible minority groups as well as women and men.

This report is available on the Catalyst ([www.catalyst.org](http://www.catalyst.org)) and the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University ([www.ryerson.ca/diversity](http://www.ryerson.ca/diversity)) websites. Findings will also be presented at future conferences and events.

<sup>11</sup> This report focuses on full-time employees only.

<sup>12</sup> For a full sample description, see Appendix 2.

## The Employer Survey

We also designed some questions for employers (called the “Employer Survey”). Thirty of the 43 companies and firms represented in the Employee Survey also participated in the Employer Survey, providing data on organizational practices that support diverse and inclusive work environments.<sup>13</sup> More than 15,000 (88 percent) of our survey respondents were employed in these 30 organizations. Selected data from the Employer Survey are presented throughout the report.

### Why We Have Included Survey Findings on Gender

Previous research from Catalyst and the Diversity Institute demonstrates that women and men have different career advancement and development perceptions and experiences. Our research explored whether these gender differences persisted when considering separately the experiences of visible minorities and white/Caucasians.

We also examined whether visible minority women and white/Caucasian women had different experiences in corporate Canada. The current findings serve to demonstrate the importance of visible minority status when understanding the realities of women in corporate Canada.

<sup>13</sup> Thirty-eight companies and firms in total participated in the “Employer Survey” (see Appendix 1).



### KEY FINDINGS

- Many respondents reported feeling highly committed to their organizations. Roughly 80 percent of respondents agreed that they intend to stay with their organizations. This was true across all groups i.e., both white/Caucasian and visible minority groups.
- While organizational commitment was high in the study, respondents' levels of career satisfaction were lower, especially among visible minority respondents.
- Visible minorities born outside Canada were less satisfied with their careers than visible minorities born in Canada.
- Visible minority women were significantly less satisfied with their careers than white/Caucasian women. Visible minority men were also less satisfied than white/Caucasian men.

Our survey looked closely at two key features of workplace experiences in corporate Canada: organizational commitment and career satisfaction. Both these measures are important proxies for organizational performance. Previous studies have found organizational commitment and career satisfaction to be correlated with higher productivity and profitability and also with lower rates of absenteeism and employee turnover.<sup>14</sup>

- **Organizational commitment**<sup>15</sup> refers to how closely respondents identified with the goals and values of their employer and to their stated intentions to remain with the company or firm.
- **Career satisfaction**<sup>16</sup> refers to how satisfied respondents were with their progress toward their overall career goals, as well as income, advancement, and skill development goals.

<sup>14</sup> James K. Harter, Frank L. Schmidt, Theodore L. Hayes, "Business-Unit-Level Relationship Between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 87, No.2 (2002): 268-279.

<sup>15</sup> Results of the factor analysis indicated that several survey items taken together capture "organizational commitment." For further description of this composite measure, please see Appendix 3.

<sup>16</sup> Results of the factor analysis indicated that several survey items taken together capture "career satisfaction." For further description of this composite measure, please see Appendix 3.

## ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Many survey respondents expressed strong commitment to their organizations.

- More than three-quarters of respondents (visible minorities and white/Caucasians) reported that they identify with their current employer’s values and intend to remain with their current organization.
- Most respondents (92 percent) reported that they were willing to put in a great deal of effort, beyond what was normally expected, to help their organizations achieve success.
- Women and men were similarly committed to their organizations.<sup>17</sup>
- Nine out of ten respondents (visible minorities and white/Caucasians) agreed that they were proud to tell others that they worked for their organizations.
- Seventy-nine percent of visible minority respondents and 83 percent of white/Caucasian respondents reported that they intend to remain with their current employers. However, after we controlled for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics, visible minority respondents were just as likely to say they intended to stay with their organizations as their white/Caucasian counterparts.<sup>18</sup>

Figure 5: Intentions to Stay With Organization<sup>19</sup>



<sup>17</sup> The average organizational commitment scores for both women and men was 4.2.

<sup>18</sup> Logistic regression was performed to determine if the difference between white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents still held after taking into consideration the following: 1) human capital characteristics—including educational attainment, whether the respondent possessed any foreign educational credentials, and tenure with the organization; 2) job characteristics—including whether respondent was a manager/professional or executive, whether the respondent was in a staff/line role or both, annual income, region of work, and industry; and 3) demographic characteristics—including gender, age, marital status, whether the respondent identified as a person with disability or LGBT, and whether the respondent was born in Canada. See Appendix 4 for more details about logistic regression.

<sup>19</sup> A chi-square test was employed to determine if white/Caucasians and visible minorities responded to this item differently.

### Job Categories Defined

This report contains findings across three professional job categories: managers, professionals, and executives.

**MANAGERS** are individuals in levels/grades/bands who are seen as being in the “pipeline” for senior management or senior leadership roles. In a professional service firm, they are individuals in administrative roles within the firm, such as Director of Human Resources or Manager of Associates.

**PROFESSIONALS** are predominantly individuals working in professional service firms. However, our sample also included professionals in companies (i.e., individuals who provide a particular skill or expertise, but who do not have direct reports or “people management” as key responsibilities).

**EXECUTIVES** are those who hold the most senior positions in the organization, including the CEO and those individuals reporting directly to the CEO. Executives are responsible for the organization’s policy and strategic planning and for directing and controlling the functions of the organization.

(For more information on the demographic composition of respondents, see Appendix 2: Sample Description.)

## CAREER SATISFACTION

While many survey respondents felt committed to their employers, respondents' levels of career satisfaction—including progress toward meeting overall career goals, and goals for income, advancement, and the development of new skills—were lower especially among visible minority respondents.

- Visible minorities were less satisfied with their progress toward overall career goals. Two-thirds of visible minority respondents (66 percent) reported feeling satisfied with their progress in this area compared to 78 percent of white/Caucasian respondents.
- Fifty-two percent of visible minority respondents reported feeling satisfied with their progress in meeting income goals compared to 65 percent of white/Caucasian respondents.
- Just over one-half (54 percent) of visible minority respondents reported feeling satisfied with their careers, specifically with their progress in meeting advancement goals, compared to more than two-thirds of white/Caucasian respondents (67 percent).
- Sixty-six percent of visible minorities reported feeling satisfied with their progress in meeting skills development goals compared to 73 percent of white/Caucasian respondents.

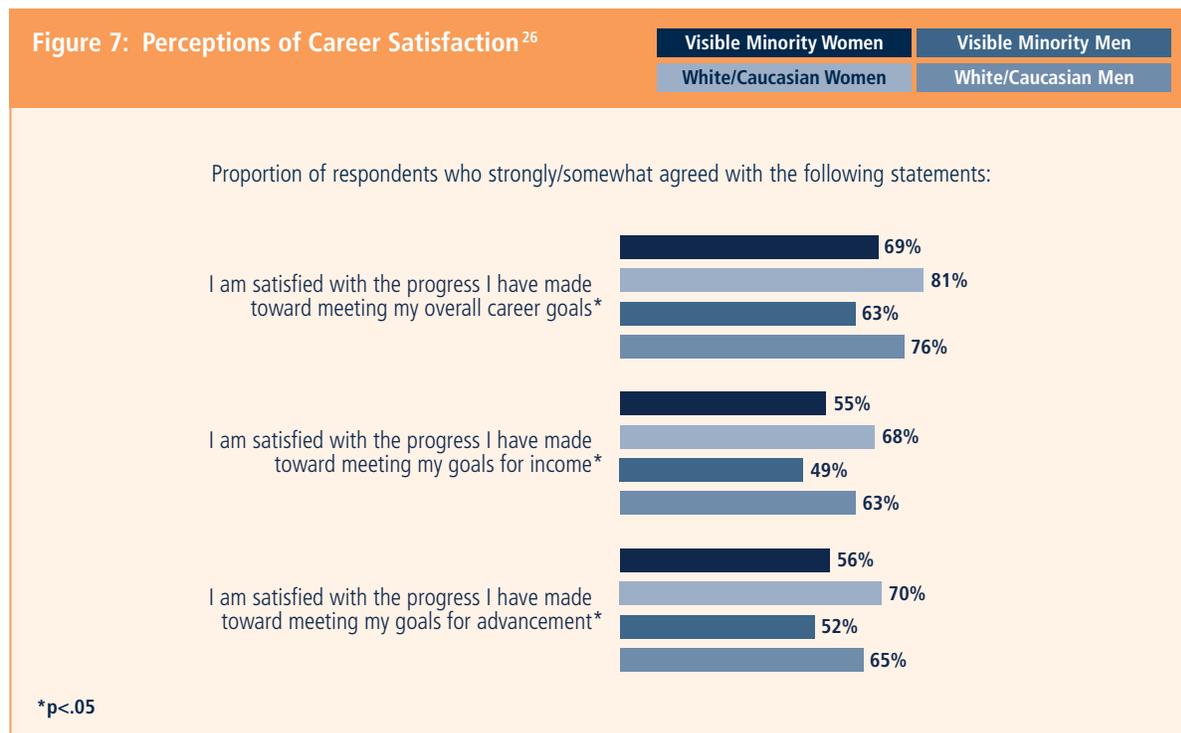


<sup>20</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to determine if white/Caucasians and visible minorities responded to these items differently.

- The differences between visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents' career satisfaction were observed across all visible minority groups. In other words, irrespective of visible minority group, visible minorities were significantly less satisfied with their careers than white/Caucasians.<sup>21</sup>
- Even after we controlled for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics, visible minority respondents were still significantly less satisfied than their white/Caucasian counterparts with their progress toward overall career goals and toward income, advancement, and skill development goals.<sup>22</sup>
- Finally, visible minority respondents who were born outside Canada were less satisfied with their progress on advancement, income, and overall career goals than those born in Canada:<sup>23</sup> for example, 60 percent of Canadian-born visible minority respondents felt they were satisfied in terms of meeting their advancement goals, compared to 51 percent of visible minority respondents who were born outside Canada.<sup>24</sup>

### Gender and Career Satisfaction

White/Caucasian women were most satisfied with their careers, followed by white/Caucasian men, visible minority women, and finally by visible minority men.<sup>25</sup>



<sup>21</sup> Pairwise t-tests were employed to determine if the average career satisfaction score for white/Caucasian respondents (3.7) was different than the career satisfaction scores for each of the visible minority groups (overall average visible minority score was 3.4). All comparisons were statistically significant at p<.05.

<sup>22</sup> Logistic regressions were performed to determine if the difference between white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents still held. See Appendix 4.

<sup>23</sup> A t-test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at p<.05.

<sup>24</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at p<.05.

<sup>25</sup> The average career satisfaction score for white/Caucasian women was 3.8, for white/Caucasian men 3.7, for visible minority women 3.5, and for visible minority men 3.4. T-tests were employed to ascertain that means for all groups are significantly different at p <.05.

<sup>26</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to determine if white/Caucasian and visible minority women and men responded to these items differently. All four groups were statistically significantly different at p<.05.



## Gender and Satisfaction with Meeting Career Goals

While our findings show that women have higher levels of career satisfaction than men, it is important to recall that these survey questions specifically asked how satisfied individuals are with the progress they have made toward meeting their career goals. It has been argued that gender differences in reported satisfaction are due to gender differences in job expectations.\*

Higher levels of satisfaction with meeting career goals should not be confused with having more positive experiences in the workplace. In the following chapters we explore differences in workplace perceptions and experiences by gender and visible minority status.

\* Andrew E. Clark, "Job Satisfaction and Gender: Why are Women So Happy at Work?," *Labour Economics*, vol. 4, no. 4 (December 1997): 341-372.

We found the following differences when exploring some of the elements of career satisfaction:

- Eighty-one percent of white/Caucasian women and 69 percent of visible minority women felt satisfied with their progress in meeting their overall career goals. This is compared to 76 percent of white/Caucasian men and 63 percent of visible minority men who felt the same way.<sup>27</sup>
- Sixty-eight percent of white/Caucasian women and 55 percent of visible minority women said they felt satisfied with their progress in meeting their goals for income. This is compared to 63 percent of white/Caucasian men and 49 percent of visible minority men who felt the same way.<sup>28</sup>
- Seventy percent of white/Caucasian women and 56 percent of visible minority women said they felt satisfied with their progress in meeting their goals for advancement. This is compared to 65 percent of white/Caucasian men and 52 percent of visible minority men who felt the same way.<sup>29</sup>
- However, after we controlled for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics, men were as satisfied with their careers as women within most self-identified groups.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that these differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>28</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that these differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>29</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that these differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>30</sup> Ordinary least squares regressions were performed to determine if the gender difference within each of the ethnic groups still held after taking into consideration the following: 1) human capital characteristics, including educational attainment, whether the respondent possessed any foreign educational credentials, and tenure with the organization; 2) job characteristics, including whether respondent was a manager/professional or executive, whether the respondent was in a staff/line role or both, annual income, region of work and industry; and 3) demographic characteristics, including gender, age, marital status, whether the respondent identified as a person with disability or LGBT and whether the respondent was born in Canada. See Appendix 4 for more details about regression. Results showed that men were as satisfied as women in most self-identified groups, except among white/Caucasians, Chinese respondents, and South Asians where women were more satisfied with their careers than men.

### KEY FINDINGS

- **Most respondents reported positive relationships with managers and colleagues.** However, fewer visible minority women and men agreed that their colleagues include them in informal networking compared to white/Caucasian women and men.
- **Visible minority respondents were more likely to perceive workplace barriers indicative of systemic disadvantages than their white/Caucasian colleagues.** Barriers included perceived lack of fairness in talent management practices; lack of role models; being held to higher performance standards; and lack of high-visibility assignments. Visible minority individuals also reported receiving fewer developmental opportunities than did white/Caucasian individuals. Many of these barriers are consistent with previous Catalyst findings on the barriers to advancement encountered by women in the corporate workplace.
- **Women in particular felt that “who you know” is more important than “what you know” in decisions about who gets ahead.** Both visible minority and white/Caucasian women were more likely than their male counterparts to feel this was true, and visible minority women were the most likely to believe that “who you know” is more important than “what you know.”
- **Visible minority women were less likely than white/Caucasian women to view career advancement and development processes positively.** Visible minority women were significantly less likely to perceive talent identification processes as fair than white/Caucasian women were.
- **White/Caucasian women were less likely than white/Caucasian men to view their career advancement processes as fair, especially in professional services firms.** Similar differences were not seen between visible minority women and men.



## Measuring Perceptions

Evidence suggests that it is critical for organizations to understand how employees perceive their work environment and how such perceptions differ among various minority and/or gender groups.

Perceptions may not always be accurate or correct. However, perceptions are real in their consequences and can influence employees' attitudes and behaviours. Perceptions of equity, for example, have been linked to employee job satisfaction and in turn to organizational outcomes such as employee productivity and retention.\*

\*Thomas R. Berg, "The Importance of Equity Perceptions and Job Satisfaction on Predicting Employees Intent to Stay," *Group & Organization Management*, vol.16, no. 3, 268-284, (1991); O. Jeff Harris and Sandra J. Hartman, *Organizational Behaviour* (Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, 2002).

Work environments set the context in which individuals negotiate career advancement. Existing cultural norms and values in work settings typically shape how easily different groups within organizations can access opportunities. In this chapter we examine work environments as perceived by visible minority respondents as well as their white/Caucasian counterparts.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH MANAGERS AND COLLEAGUES

A majority of respondents reported positive perceptions of their relationships with managers and colleagues.

### What Respondents Said About Relationship With Managers

- Women and men had similar positive perceptions of their relationships with their managers. Approximately 70 percent of respondents agreed that their managers give them helpful feedback about their performance, supported their attempts to acquire further training to enhance their careers, and provided assignments that serve to develop their existing strengths and skills. This was true for respondents across all self-identified groups.
- Seventy-eight percent of white/Caucasian respondents and 73 percent of visible minority respondents felt that their managers were fair in evaluating their performance on the job.<sup>31</sup> These positive perceptions of manager fairness existed across the different self-identified groups in our study.<sup>32</sup>
- Both managers and professionals agreed that they were treated fairly by their managers, within both company and professional service firm settings.
- Survey respondents repeatedly reported on the positive contributions their workplace relationships—particularly their relationships with their managers—have made to their career achievements and success.

*I have had several managers and a history of exceeding expectations due to my strong work ethic. However, my greatest levels of satisfaction and achievement occurred when a manager recognized my talent, loyalty, and commitment and took a personal interest to champion me internally. If I had others who had done the same at various stages, I would have achieved significant success in [meeting] my career goals.*

—Visible minority male manager

<sup>31</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>32</sup> Although all self-identified groups perceived their managers' evaluations as relatively fair, white/Caucasian respondents were more likely to agree these evaluations were fair than Black, Chinese, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and West Indian respondents. Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that these differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

*The [most significant experience in my professional development] was having a manager who genuinely showed concern for my career advancement, mentored me, promoted me, supported me in my career search and educational upgrade. Someone who was not afraid to speak up for what she believed in.*  
—Visible minority female manager

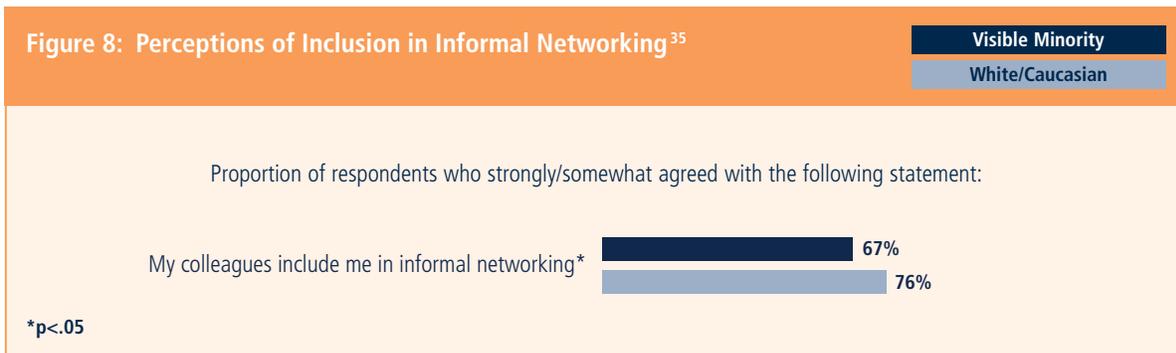
### What Respondents Said About Relationships With Colleagues

Strong perceptions of respect and fairness also characterized respondents’ relationships with their colleagues.

- Approximately 90 percent of women and men, across all self-identified groups, agreed that their colleagues treat them with respect.
- Eighty-five percent of visible minority respondents and 88 percent of white/Caucasian respondents agreed that they receive the support they need from other coworkers to meet their work objectives.<sup>33</sup>

However, visible minority women and men were less likely to report that their colleagues include them in informal networking.

- Sixty-seven percent of visible minority respondents, compared to 76 percent of white/Caucasian respondents, agreed that their colleagues include them in informal networking. This was true for managers, professionals, and executives across visible minority groups.<sup>34</sup>



*I do feel that had I been more acceptable to others in an informal networking setting, where contacts are made and projects assigned, I would be able to contribute a lot more to the organization than what I currently do.*  
—Visible minority female manager

*Networking with firm members at social events [has been a significant experience in my professional development]. This allows me to meet others, build friendships, and create an informal network. Information that I gather from this network guides my career choices and hence the direction of my professional growth. Attendance at these events also makes me more visible to others.*  
—Visible minority female professional

<sup>33</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at p<.05.

<sup>34</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that the difference between white/Caucasian and each of the visible minority groups were significant at p<.05, with the exception of multiple visible minority.

<sup>35</sup> A chi-square test was employed to determine if white/Caucasians and visible minorities responded to this item differently.

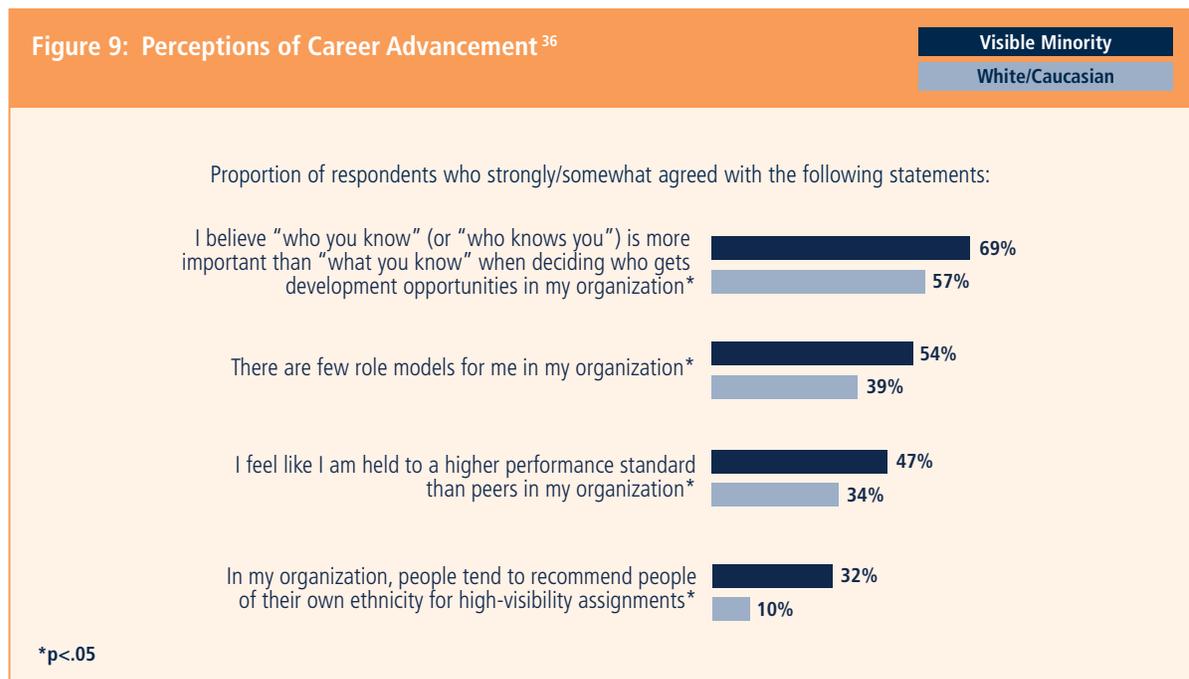


## CAREER ADVANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

In Chapter 2, we noted that visible minorities were significantly less satisfied than their white/Caucasian counterparts with their progress toward meeting their advancement goals. This section looks at some barriers to advancement for visible minority respondents.

### Some Perceived Barriers to Career Advancement

We examined visible minority and white/Caucasian individuals' perceptions of career advancement processes including: lack of fairness in talent management practices, having few role models, being held to higher performance standards, and receiving fewer high-visibility assignments, to reveal differences in barriers to career advancement and development.



<sup>36</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that the differences between visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents were significant at p<.05.

### Perceived Barrier: Lack of Fairness in Talent Management Practices

Formal and transparent career advancement processes are an important element of effective and inclusive workplaces. Without such processes, it is likely that more subjective practices will be used to determine who receives development and promotion opportunities. In turn, a reliance on subjective processes reinforces employees' perceptions that important information about career paths and options is transmitted through informal channels and bypasses them.

Visible minority respondents, were more likely than their white/Caucasian counterparts to believe that advancement depends on connections with others.

- More visible minority respondents (69 percent) agreed that “who you know” is more important than “what you know” compared to white/Caucasian respondents (57 percent).<sup>37</sup>
- Significantly more white/Caucasian respondents (75 percent) than visible minority respondents (64 percent) agreed that they had the same chance of finding out about career advancement opportunities as their colleagues.<sup>38</sup> This finding contrasts with the 82 percent of organizations from the Employer Survey that reported that they had formal procedures for communicating advancement opportunities to their employees.
- More white/Caucasian respondents (46 percent) than visible minority respondents (38 percent) agreed that their organizations' talent identification processes are fair.<sup>39</sup> This pattern held for most visible minority groups (see Figure 10).

*Although the official focus is “equal opportunity” [in my organization] and there are all sorts of programs and information regarding that, the truth always seems to boil down to “it’s who you know.”*

—Visible minority male manager

*I had to move to a new company to get promoted. Other people at my prior company would get a “tap on the shoulder” and get promoted or move to the “high-profile” role that would put them on the fast track for advancement. Then the jobs would be posted to satisfy company policy, even though they had already been filled. Generally everyone is smart and capable; it’s a question of who is liked better by senior management.*

—Visible minority male manager

<sup>37</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ . Logistic regressions were performed to determine if the difference between white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents still held. Even after we controlled for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics, visible minority respondents were still more likely than white/Caucasian respondents to report that “who you know” is more important than “what you know.” See Appendix 4.

<sup>38</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>39</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that this difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

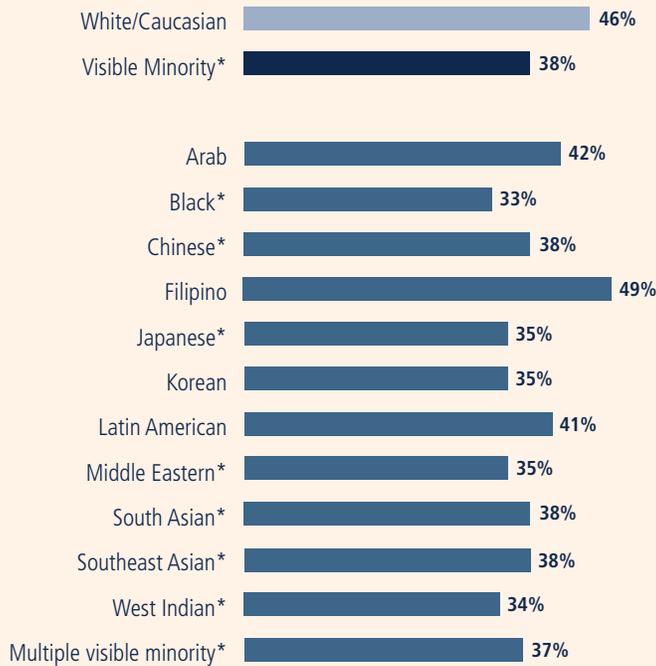


Figure 10: Perceptions of Organizations' Talent Identification Process <sup>40</sup>

Visible Minority  
White/Caucasian  
Visible Minority Groups

Proportion of respondents who strongly/somewhat agreed with the statement

"I believe my organization's talent identification process is fair":



\*p<.05

*Even in large, respectable organizations much of the supposed advancement of minorities is just lip service. Advancement is not afforded us in a fair and equitable manner. Management and senior management continues to reflect the status quo, i.e., white male or white female at best. Minorities in senior management are still absent.*

—Visible minority female manager

*From my perspective, my organization is a terrific place to work. However, if it is to retain and attract talent, regardless of the background, ethnicity, etc., of the talent, more needs to be done to develop people. Too much is left to the individual; as a result, decisions are not purely made on meritocracy...employment decisions are made, in some cases, more on reputation (and who knows whom) than merit.*

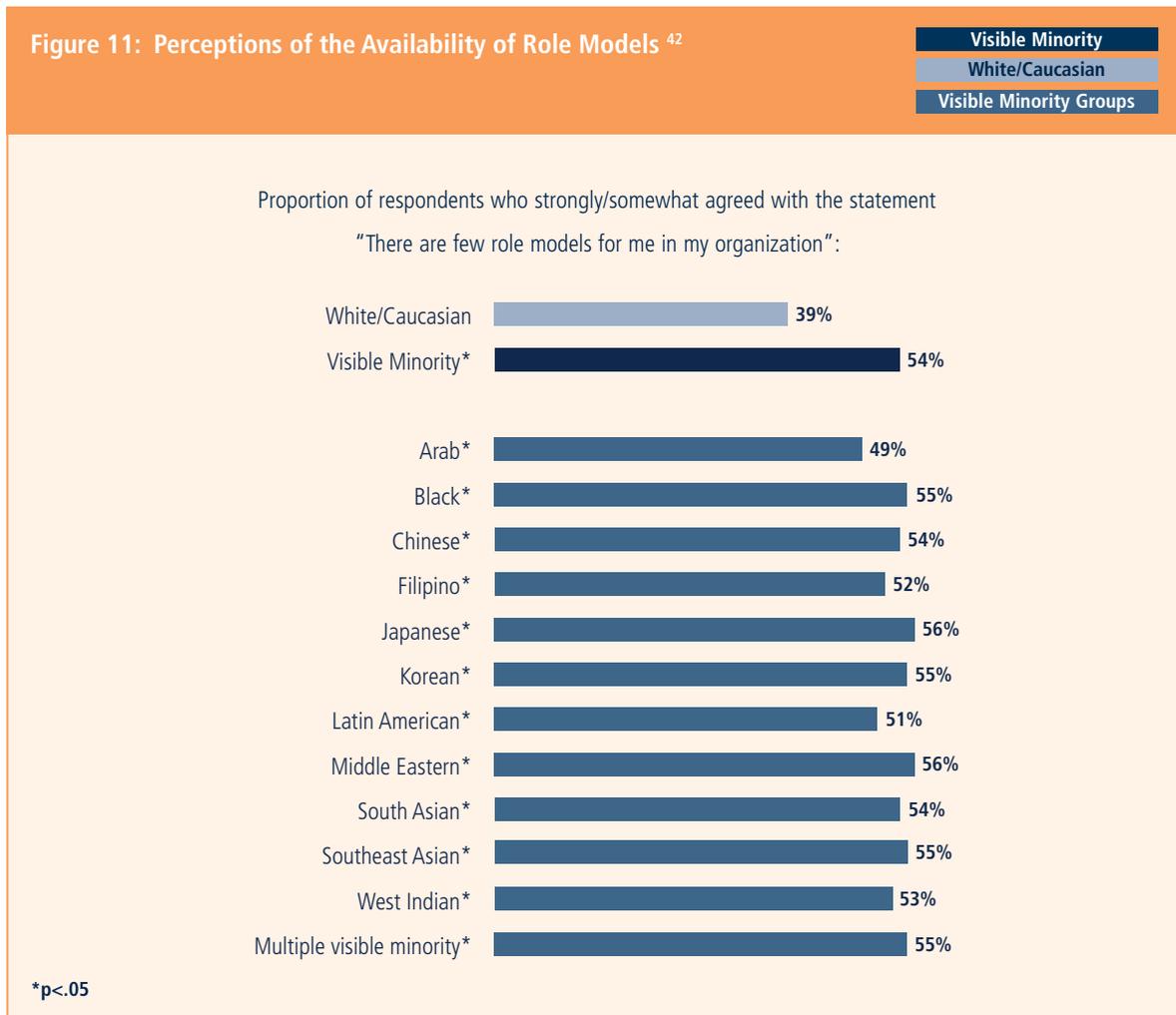
—Visible minority female manager

<sup>40</sup> A chi-square test was employed to determine if white/Caucasians and visible minorities responded to this item differently. Chi-square tests were also employed to determine significant difference between white/Caucasian respondents and respondents in each of the visible minority groups. Significant differences were observed at p<.05 between most visible minority groups and white/Caucasians, with the exception of Arabs, Filipinos, Koreans, and Latin Americans.

### Perceived Barrier: Absence of Role Models

Role models in organizations are those with whom an individual identifies in some way and who serve as examples of what the individual may achieve. For those in traditionally marginalized groups, the presence of role models of one’s own ethnicity and/or gender conveys the message that career advancement to senior levels is a possibility. Visible minority respondents more frequently agreed that there are few role models for them in their organizations than did white/Caucasians.<sup>41</sup>

Figure 11: Perceptions of the Availability of Role Models <sup>42</sup>



*Career progression/development seems to not be an issue only up to the senior management level. However, beyond senior management, promotions to partnership for visible minorities are extremely rare. Although I was born in Canada, there are no [role] models for me to follow within my organization as a visible minority...I believe that given the amount of work and effort I put forth (compared to others, as I am held at a higher standard), if I was “white” there would support for me and... a clear path for me to partnership.*

—Visible minority male professional

<sup>41</sup> Logistic regression was performed to determine if the difference between white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents still held. See Appendix 4.

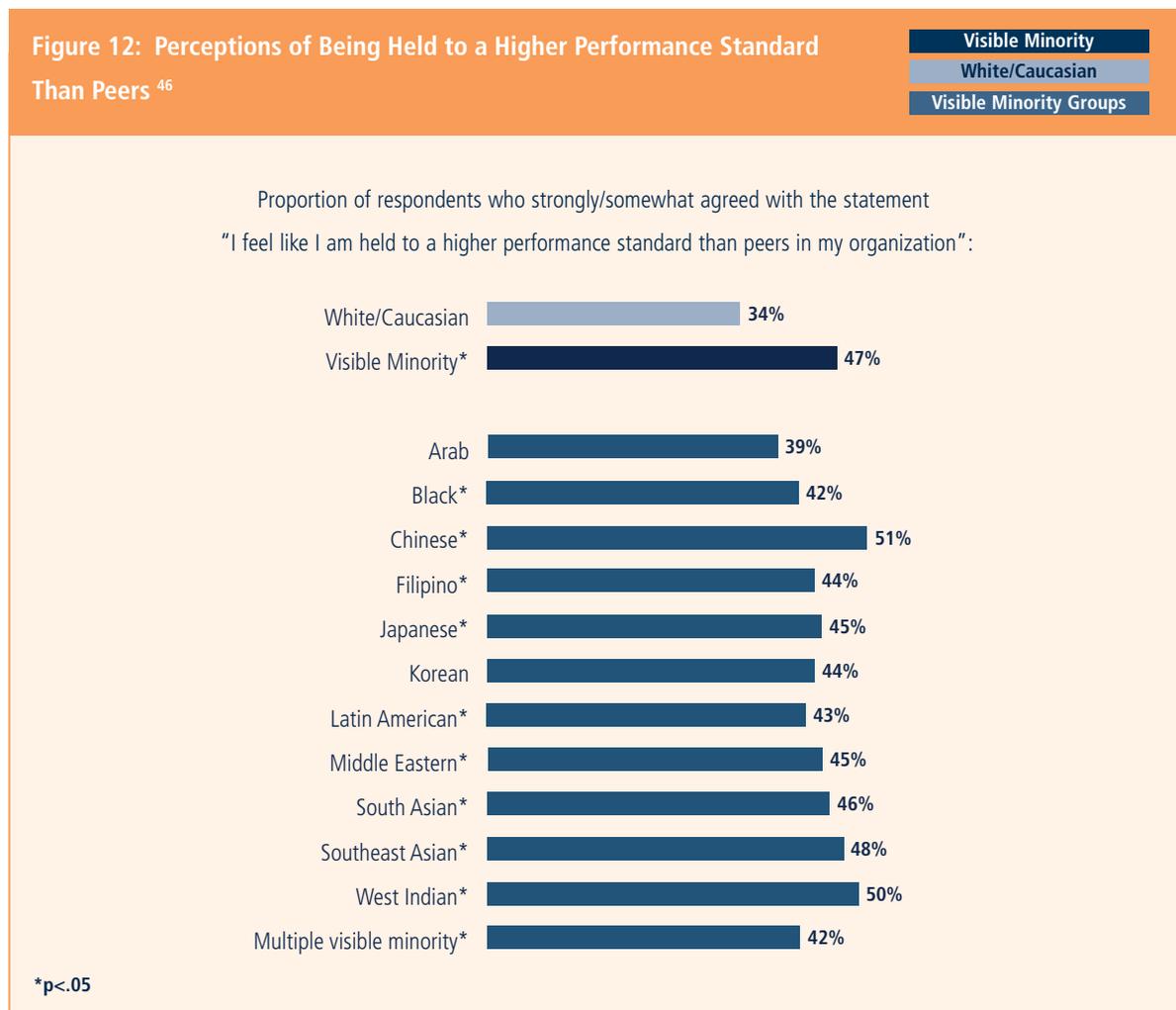
<sup>42</sup> A chi-square test was employed to determine if white/Caucasians and visible minorities responded to this item differently. Chi-square tests were also employed to determine significant differences between white/Caucasian respondents and respondents in each of the visible minority groups. Significant differences were observed at p<.05 between all visible minority groups and white/Caucasians.



- More visible minority respondents (54 percent) than white/Caucasian respondents (39 percent) reported having few role models in their organization. This was true across most visible minority groups.<sup>43</sup>
- Even after we controlled for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics, visible minority respondents were still more likely than their white/Caucasian counterparts to report having few role models within their organizations.<sup>44</sup>
- More visible minority respondents born outside Canada (56 percent) than those born in Canada (49 percent) reported having few role models.<sup>45</sup>

### Perceived Barrier: Held to Higher Performance Standards

Each workplace has its own set of informal and formal performance standards that affect which employees receive high-visibility assignments. Inconsistent application of performance standards may result in lack of opportunity for members of traditionally marginalized groups.



<sup>43</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>44</sup> Logistic regression was performed to determine if the difference between white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents still held. See Appendix 4.

<sup>45</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>46</sup> A chi-square test was employed to determine if white/Caucasians and visible minorities responded to this item differently. Chi-square tests were also employed to determine significant differences between white/Caucasian and each of the visible minority groups. Significant differences were observed at  $p < .05$  between most visible minority groups and white/Caucasians, with the exception of Arabs and Koreans.

- Forty-seven percent of visible minority respondents agreed that they are held to a higher standard of performance than their peers within their organizations. This is compared to 34 percent of white/Caucasians who felt the same way. Similar differences were found for respondents from most visible minority groups.<sup>47</sup>
- Forty-nine percent of visible minority respondents born outside Canada agreed that they were held to a higher standard of performance than those visible minority respondents born in Canada (41 percent).<sup>48</sup>

*Generally, I perceive that visible minorities have to work harder, achieve more results, prove that “I can do it too,” before they get a chance for promotion. It simply takes longer than those who are not visible minorities. There is definitely a ceiling in my career because I do not speak like them, I do not play like them...not that every visible minority is talented, but we are not given equal opportunities to prove it anyway.*

—Visible minority male manager

*To be considered as an executive candidate, minority employees must be twice as good with outstanding track records compared to our white/Caucasian candidates. We would never openly talk about it as it would be deemed as “rocking the boat” or “being non-corporate,” which is not an acceptable behaviour in the eyes of senior management.*

—Visible minority female manager

*Visible minorities have to work extra hard to prove themselves. Others will be promoted based on “potential” while visible minorities have to have a track record.*

—Visible minority female professional

### Perceived Barrier: Fewer High-Visibility Assignments

High-visibility assignments are often seen as a type of performance reward and also as a way for employees to become “noticed” by managers and executives who make career advancement decisions. Many senior executives have identified high-visibility assignments as key to their career advancement.<sup>49</sup>

- One in three visible minority respondents (32 percent) agreed that people tend to “recommend people of their own ethnicity for high-visibility assignments.” This is compared to one in ten white/Caucasian respondents (10 percent).<sup>50</sup>
- Even after we controlled for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics, visible minority respondents more frequently agreed that people tend to “recommend people of their own ethnicity for high-visibility assignments.”<sup>51</sup>

*Managers still have their favourites and these are, more likely than not, people in their same ethnic group.*

—Visible minority female professional

<sup>47</sup> Chi-square tests were employed (see Figure 12).

<sup>48</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>49</sup> Catalyst, *Women and Men in U.S. Corporate Leadership* (2004).

<sup>50</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>51</sup> Logistic regression was performed to determine if the difference between white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents still held. See Appendix 4.



### Further Evidence of Barriers in the Workplace: Lack of Developmental Opportunities

While similar proportions of visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents reported they had applied for developmental opportunities within their organizations during the previous three years, fewer visible minority than white/Caucasian respondents reported having actually received such opportunities.

- Almost identical proportions of visible minority (70 percent) and white/Caucasian (71 percent) respondents reported that they had applied for developmental opportunities in the previous three years.
- However, significantly fewer visible minority (64 percent) respondents than white/Caucasian (73 percent) respondents reported that they had received one or more developmental opportunities in the last three years of service with their current employers.<sup>52</sup>
- Even after controlling for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics, visible minority respondents were less likely to report they had received developmental opportunities than their white/Caucasian counterparts were.<sup>53</sup>

Did respondents think their organizations could do more to facilitate the advancement and development of their visible minority managers, professionals, and executives? Twice as many visible minority respondents as white/Caucasians—66 percent as compared to 32 percent—agreed that their organizations could do more to facilitate the advancement and development of their visible minority managers, professionals, and executives.<sup>54</sup> This was true for women and men across all visible minority groups.<sup>55</sup>

*The challenge for visible minorities in our company is no different, possibly larger, than what the female gender needs to do for career advancement. Partly it's the old boys' club mentality that still exists and partly the fact that as senior management becomes disconnected from working levels, they are not even aware that problems exist and to what degree. Short of painting with a broad brush and tainting every senior manager, it is important that when we provide promotions and other opportunities, it must be seen as deserving (and communicated to all as such) and not because the individual knew someone who was influential. This will remove any perception of unfair treatment to others who were passed over (including visible minorities).*

—Visible minority male manager

<sup>52</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>53</sup> Logistic regression was performed to determine if the difference between visible minorities and white/Caucasians still held. See Appendix 4.

<sup>54</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>55</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that the differences between white/Caucasians and each of the visible minority groups were significant at  $p < .05$ .

## Gender and Perceptions of Advancement and Development

There were some clear differences in women's and men's perceptions of advancement and development within their organizations. It is important to state that these differences were largely seen among white/Caucasian women and men;<sup>56</sup> similar differences were not observed between visible minority women and men. For example:

- More white/Caucasian men (49 percent) than white/Caucasian women (43 percent) perceived their organizations' talent identification processes to be fair.
- More white/Caucasian women (43 percent) than white/Caucasian men (36 percent) agreed that few role models existed for them within their organizations.
- White/Caucasian women (35 percent) were more likely than white/Caucasian men (30 percent) to agree that their organizations could do more to facilitate the advancement and development of visible minority managers, professionals, and executives.
- Sixty percent of white/Caucasian women compared to 54 percent of white/Caucasian men reported that "who you know" is more important than "what you know" in deciding who gets ahead.
- The differences between visible minority respondents' perceptions of advancement and development within their organization were negligible, with one exception: more visible minority women (72 percent) than visible minority men (67 percent) reported that "who you know" is more important than "what you know" in decisions about who gets ahead.

*[People] are "hand picked" for growth opportunities. These opportunities are not based on what you know or your level of competency when compared to others but on who you know and how "well-liked" you are by the decision-makers.*

—Visible minority female manager

## Visible Minority Women's Perceptions of Career Advancement

Our current survey found few gender differences in perceptions of career advancement between visible minority women and visible minority men. This suggests that visible minority status, rather than gender, was more relevant to visible minority women's perceptions of career advancement.

The survey did uncover significant differences in how white/Caucasian women perceived career advancement compared to visible minority women. For one thing, white/Caucasian women were significantly more satisfied with their careers than visible minority women. Some other key findings about gender and visible minority status follow.

<sup>56</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .



Visible minority women were less likely than white/Caucasian women to:<sup>57</sup>

- Perceive their organization's talent identification processes as fair (37 percent versus 43 percent).
- Report they had received developmental opportunities in the last three years of service with their current employers (66 percent versus 75 percent).

Visible minority women were more likely than white/Caucasian women to:<sup>58</sup>

- Believe that "who you know" is more important than "what you know" in how career development decisions are made (72 percent versus 60 percent).
- Report few role models in their organizations (56 percent versus 43 percent).
- Feel they were held to a higher standard of performance than their peers (47 percent versus 35 percent).
- Agree that people tend to recommend people of their own ethnicity for high-visibility assignments (30 percent versus 11 percent).

It should be noted that similar differences were found between visible minority women and white/Caucasian men. These differences were even more pronounced since white/Caucasian men had the most positive perceptions of career advancement among all respondents.

### Professional Services Firms—Some Unique Trends

There were some differences between the experiences of respondents working in professional services firms (i.e., law, accounting, consulting) and companies in our study.

White/Caucasian women and men reported differences in their career advancement experiences in both companies and firms. This gender difference was not found among visible minority respondents. In addition, some gender differences among white/Caucasian respondents were more pronounced in a firm setting than in companies.

We found that differences between white/Caucasian women and men concerning how fair certain career advancement processes were perceived to be were particularly pronounced in the firm environment:\*

- More white/Caucasian men (64 percent) than white/Caucasian women (48 percent) agreed that their firms' talent identification processes were fair.
- More white/Caucasian men (78 percent) than white/Caucasian women (68 percent) reported that their firms do a good job of promoting/admitting the most competent people into partnership.
- More white/Caucasian men (83 percent) than white/Caucasian women (70 percent) agreed that they had an equal chance of finding out about career advancement opportunities in their firms.

These significant differences between white/Caucasian women and men held even after we controlled for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics.\*\*

\*Chi-square tests were employed to determine that these differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

\*\*Logistic regressions were performed to determine if the differences between white/Caucasian women and men respondents still held. See Appendix 4.

<sup>57</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>58</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

### KEY FINDINGS

- Fifty-eight percent of the organizations that responded to the Employer Survey reported having a diversity council.
- Forty-eight percent of visible minorities agreed that their senior management was committed to cultural diversity.
- Respondents' perceptions of senior management commitment to diversity were associated with their career satisfaction—respondents who agreed their senior management was committed to diversity had higher levels of career satisfaction.
- While many respondents agreed that their organizations strive to create a climate supportive of all individuals, some visible minority respondents reported subtle forms of bias that detracted from their sense of inclusion. For example, they perceived that they had to make adjustments to “fit in” with the dominant workplace culture to be successful.
- Respondents who indicated that certain employer programs and practices existed in their organizations had higher levels of career satisfaction than respondents who did not. These programs and practices included mentoring and networking programs, career advancement practices that promote transparency, and the tracking of diversity metrics.

How inclusive did survey respondents perceive their organizations to be? While a majority of visible minority respondents (78 percent) reported that their organizations strive to create a climate supportive to all, they were significantly less likely to think so compared to white/Caucasian respondents (85 percent).<sup>59</sup>

A clear and demonstrable commitment to diversity by senior leadership contributes critically to inclusive organizational cultures. When asked about the diversity and inclusion practices in place in their organizations, more than one-half of the respondents to the Employer Survey (58 percent) included diversity in the organization's mission statement. Most also cited the existence of a diversity council (58 percent). More than one-half of these diversity councils were headed by the organizations' CEOs.

Did respondents think their senior management was committed to cultural diversity? We found that a little less than one-half (48 percent) of all visible minority respondents thought their senior leaders demonstrated a commitment to cultural diversity within their organizations, while white/Caucasian respondents were more likely to agree that senior management was committed to cultural diversity (60 percent).<sup>60</sup> However, more visible minority executives (56 percent) thought their senior management was committed to diversity than visible minority managers (48 percent) and visible minority professionals (49 percent).<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

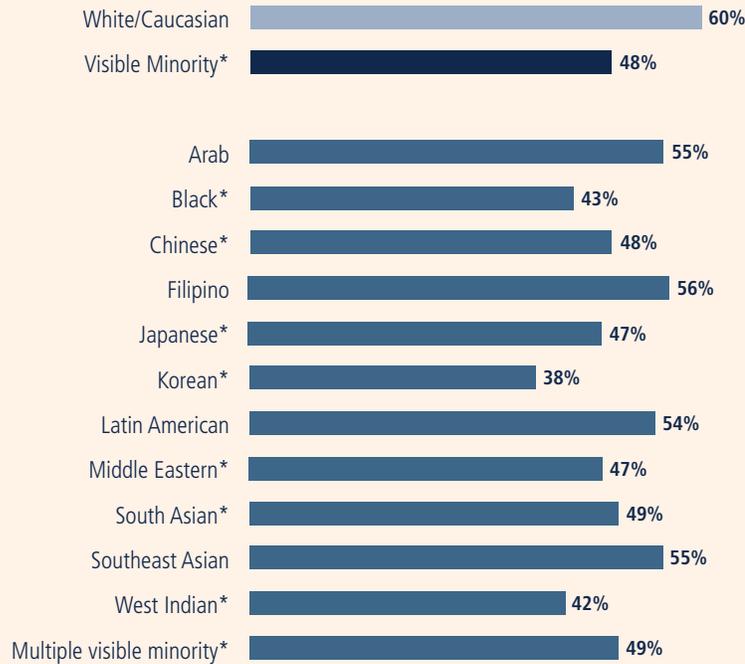
<sup>60</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>61</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

**Figure 13: Perceptions of Senior Management Commitment to Cultural Diversity** <sup>62</sup>

Visible Minority  
White/Caucasian  
Visible Minority Groups

Proportion of respondents who strongly/somewhat agreed with the statement  
"My senior management demonstrates a strong commitment to cultural diversity"



\*p<.05

Whereas visible minority respondents generally thought their senior management was less committed to cultural diversity than white/Caucasian respondents did, this was not true of respondents from all self-identified groups. Arab, Filipino, Latin American, and Southeast Asian respondents were not significantly different from white/Caucasian respondents in their perceptions of senior management's commitment to diversity in their organizations.

Career satisfaction scores were 23 percent higher among visible minority respondents who believed their senior management was committed to the advancement and development of all employees compared to visible minority respondents who did not. Career satisfaction scores were 19 percent higher among white/Caucasian respondents who similarly believed their senior management was committed compared to white/Caucasian respondents who did not.<sup>63</sup> We also found that visible minority respondents who agreed that their senior management was committed to cultural diversity had career satisfaction scores that were 15 percent higher than visible minority respondents who did not agree. For white/Caucasian respondents, career satisfaction scores were nine percent higher when respondents agreed that their senior management was committed to cultural diversity compared to white/Caucasian respondents who did not agree.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Chi-square test was employed to ascertain if white/Caucasians and visible minorities responded to this item differently. Chi-square tests were also employed to determine significant difference between white/Caucasian respondents and respondents in each of the visible minority groups. Significant differences were observed at p<.05 between most visible minority groups and white/Caucasians, with the exception of the Arab, Filipino, Latin American, and Southeast Asian groups.

<sup>63</sup> T-tests were employed to ascertain that differences based on perceived existence of practices were statistically significant at p< .05.

<sup>64</sup> T-tests were employed to ascertain that differences based on agreement with the statement were statistically significant at p< .05.

Many visible minority respondents said aspects of their work environments detracted from a feeling of inclusion. Several themes emerged in this area, based on open-ended survey questions.<sup>65</sup>

- **Extra efforts to “fit in.”** Visible minorities repeatedly noted that to be successful they had made adjustments in their style, language, and behaviour to better fit in with the dominant workplace culture. Several suggested they had encountered a “Canadian way of working” that was unfamiliar. This observation corresponded with a concern that this unfamiliarity exposed them to being perceived as incompetent. It also heightened their sense of being held to a higher standard of performance than their white/Caucasian peers.

*Visible minorities come from different cultural backgrounds and they are not always aware of the Canadian way of working. This does not mean they are incompetent. Sometimes they are not able to fit in because of cultural differences. If you hire somebody based on their experience, they should be given a buddy or a mentor that will help them initially to get comfortable with office politics/culture. If people fit in well, they will be able to perform a lot better.*

—Visible minority female manager

Visible minority respondents frequently recommended mentoring programs to support career advancement and development. We found that career satisfaction scores were ten to 20 percent higher among respondents who reported their organizations offered mentoring programs compared to respondents who did not. This was true for both visible minority and white/Caucasian individuals.<sup>66</sup>

- **Networks and glass ceilings.** Other visible minority women and men perceived the persistence of an “old boys’ network” that determined how opportunities and rewards were conferred in their organization. This also led some respondents to experience a “glass ceiling” for visible minorities in the workplace.<sup>67</sup>

*It’s still a white man’s world out here. Trust me.*

—Visible minority male manager

*I believe that opportunities should go to the best-qualified person irrespective of minority. This organization continues to be “an old boys’ network.”*

—Visible minority female manager

<sup>65</sup> Qualitative research involves organizing and interpreting non-numerical observations to discover important underlying dimensions and patterns. Such research usually includes interviews with and observation of small numbers of people and/or analysis of written material to elicit meanings, concepts, characteristics and symbols. In the survey, respondents were asked to provide text responses to a few survey questions. These responses were analyzed and themed by the research team.

<sup>66</sup> T-tests were employed to ascertain that differences based on perceived existence of practices were statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>67</sup> Previous Catalyst research notes that whereas white women frequently reference the “glass ceiling” as blocking their advancement up the career ladder, women of colour often characterize the barriers they encounter as comprising a “concrete ceiling”—one that is more dense and less easily shattered. The underpinnings of these barriers include stereotypes, visibility, and scrutiny; questioning of authority and credibility; lack of “fit” in the workplace; double-outsider status; and exclusion from informal networks—*Advancing African-American Women in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* (2004).



## The Power of Stereotypes

Stereotypes can have a powerful effect on how women's and visible minorities' leadership abilities and potential for advancement are judged. Stereotyping can support underlying societal power imbalances between groups, such as between visible minorities and white/Caucasians or between women and men, by providing the means to limit a group's power and potential in organizations. More specifically, stereotypes can reinforce other barriers encountered by minority groups in the workplace, such as the perception they have to work harder than those in insider groups to establish credibility.\*

\*Catalyst, *Making Change: Moving Women of Color up the Ladder* (2002); Catalyst, *Women "Take Care"; Men "Take Charge": Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders Exposed* (2005).

Some visible minority respondents reported that their organizations' career advancement processes were exclusionary and lacked transparency. How might this be related to career satisfaction? We found that career satisfaction scores were at least ten percent higher among respondents who indicated their organizations had formal performance evaluation management, succession planning, and talent identification processes in place compared to respondents who indicated that their organizations did not have these processes. This was true for both visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents.<sup>68</sup>

We also found that career satisfaction scores were 17 percent higher among visible minority respondents who indicated their organizations tracked diversity metrics such as representation, promotion, attrition, and hiring of different employee groups, compared to those who indicated that their organizations do not track diversity metrics. Career satisfaction scores were seven percent higher among white/Caucasian respondents who indicated their organizations track diversity metrics compared to those who indicated that their organizations do not.<sup>69</sup>

Respondents who reported that their organizations have networking programs were significantly more satisfied with their careers than those who did not. Visible minority respondents who reported that their organizations have these programs had satisfaction scores that were 19 percent higher than visible minority respondents who did not report such programs, and white/Caucasian respondents who reported that their organizations have these programs had satisfaction scores that were 14 percent higher than white/Caucasian respondents who did not report such programs.<sup>70</sup>

- **Fears about "speaking up."** The survey found that 68 percent of visible minority women and men felt comfortable expressing their views at work compared to 78 percent white/Caucasian women and men who felt the same way.<sup>71</sup> Some visible minority respondents also perceived that they have less latitude to speak up or disagree with a dominant viewpoint for fear this would detract from perceptions of them as competent individuals. However, a small group did express concern of a more serious nature, such as facing repercussions or losing their jobs as a result of voicing their opinion.

*Employees of ethnic origin or immigrants are sometimes scared of losing their jobs or facing repercussions when standing up for themselves.*

—Visible minority female manager

<sup>68</sup> T-tests were employed to ascertain that differences based on perceived existence of practices were statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>69</sup> T-tests were employed to ascertain that differences based on perceived existence of practices were statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>70</sup> T-tests were employed to ascertain that differences based on perceived existence of practices were statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>71</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .

- **Bias, stereotyping, and racism.** Finally, a small but significant group of visible minority respondents observed that personal bias, stereotyping, and even racist remarks directed towards visible minorities were not uncommon in their work environments.

*Companies do an excellent job of putting policies in place; however people who do not follow the policies or who choose to bring their personal bias into the workplace make an otherwise inclusive workplace seem uncaring and cold.*

—Visible minority female manager

*Unfortunately all the visible minorities I know in this organization (or in others in the city I work in) have had to put up with racist remarks or remarks that make you feel left out.*

—Visible minority female manager

Throughout this chapter, we have seen that employee perceptions of senior management commitment to diversity and inclusion, as well as certain employer practices, were associated with higher levels of career satisfaction for both visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents. In the next chapter, we present and test a model that shows how the workplace perceptions and experiences we have explored in this report—such as relationships with managers and colleagues, perceptions of career advancement processes, and senior management commitment to diversity—predict levels of organizational commitment and career satisfaction.



## CHAPTER 5: PREDICTING PERCEPTIONS OF CAREER ADVANCEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, AND CAREER SATISFACTION

### KEY FINDINGS

- How fair respondents perceived career advancement processes to be in their organizations predicted both their organizational commitment and career satisfaction. This was true for both visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents.
- For visible minority respondents, the perception of senior management's commitment to diversity was a much stronger predictor of perceptions of the fairness of career advancement processes than it was for white/Caucasian respondents. This is a critical finding, because respondents' perceptions of senior management commitment to diversity predicts career satisfaction and organizational commitment through perceptions of career advancement processes.

In our analysis, we found that certain perceptions predicted respondents' organizational commitment and career satisfaction. We combined responses to several questions in the Employee Survey and created and tested a model that helped us link various findings and produce meaningful conclusions.<sup>72</sup> According to our model, a number of factors can be seen to predict organizational commitment and career satisfaction among all employees, including visible minority respondents.<sup>73</sup>

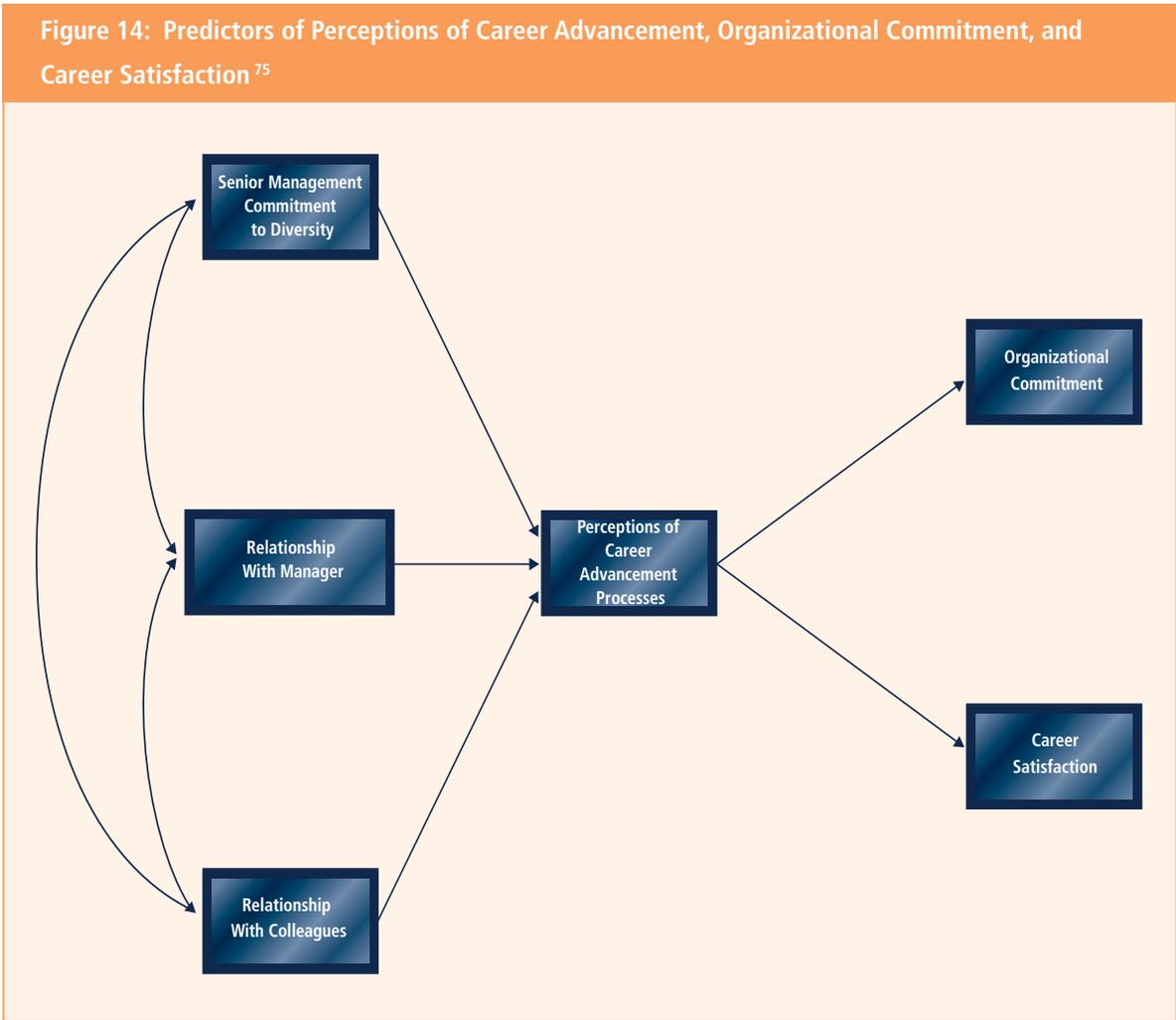
- **The quality of relationship with manager.** This factor involves the support and sponsorship offered by managers and the extent to which managers facilitate career and personal development. Sample survey items included: "He/she gives me helpful feedback about my performance" and "He/she evaluates my performance fairly."
- **The quality of relationships with colleagues.** This factor involves feelings of respect and inclusivity shown by colleagues. Sample survey items included: "My colleagues treat me with respect" and "My colleagues include me in informal networking."
- **Perceptions of career advancement processes.** This factor involves access to career advancement and development opportunities and also beliefs about the fairness of current talent identification and promotion practices. Sample survey items included: "I believe my organization's talent identification process is fair" and "I believe 'who you know' is more important than 'what you know' when deciding who gets career development opportunities in my organization."
- **Senior management commitment to diversity.** This factor captures the degree to which senior management is perceived to be involved in and held accountable for diversity efforts. Sample survey items included: "My senior management demonstrates a strong commitment to cultural diversity" and "My senior management is held accountable for the advancement of visible minority individuals."

<sup>72</sup> See Appendix 5 for a description of the Structural Equation Modeling technique used for these analyses.

<sup>73</sup> See Appendix 3 for a full list of items that make up these factors.

Our analyses show that when survey respondents perceived that their senior management was committed to diversity, and when they experienced high quality relationships with their managers and colleagues, they were more likely to view their organization’s career advancement processes as fair. This in turn predicted their commitment to their organizations and satisfaction with their careers—the more fair respondents thought career advancement processes were, the more committed they were to their organizations and the more satisfied they were with their careers.<sup>74</sup> This finding was true for both visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents. However, perceived senior management commitment to diversity was a much stronger predictor of perceptions of fairness among visible minority respondents than it was among white/Caucasian respondents.

Our analyses also suggest that quality of relationships with managers and colleagues and perceptions of senior management’s commitment to diversity are linked—especially among visible minority employees. In other words, less positive perceptions of senior management’s commitment to diversity can affect the quality of relationships with managers and colleagues. This, in turn, can potentially affect how fair respondents think that career advancement and development processes are within their organizations.



<sup>74</sup> Similar results were demonstrated in Catalyst’s *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Three Years Later* (2002). Based on longitudinal survey data from 368 respondents in the United States, the study showed that when women of colour perceived that their management was committed to diversity and they experienced high quality relationships with their direct managers, they were likely to view their work environments quite favourably and in turn were more likely to stay.

<sup>75</sup> We tested the fully saturated model (see Appendix 5). This figure depicts only the paths of interest for this discussion.



*Canadian employers tend to want employees with “standard” Canadian education and work experience. Canadian employers do not like to “think outside” the Canadian box.*

—Visible minority female professional

### What Do We Mean by “Foreign Educational Credentials”?

In our report, “foreign educational credentials” refers to any college/university degrees, diplomas, or certificates that were earned outside of Canada, the United States, and certain western European and Commonwealth countries.

### KEY FINDINGS

- Individuals with foreign educational credentials were generally less satisfied with their careers and more likely to say they were planning to explore career opportunities outside Canada than respondents without foreign educational credentials.
- Individuals with foreign educational credentials were more likely to feel that their education and training were being underutilized in their current jobs compared to those without foreign educational credentials. This suggests that organizations may not be fully utilizing the education, training, and skills of all of their employees.
- Visible minority respondents were more likely than white/Caucasian respondents to perceive that their foreign educational credentials were not being recognized as “on par” within their workplaces. Only 29 percent of participating organizations reported that they had processes in place aimed at recognizing employees’ foreign educational credentials. Visible minorities working in organizations with such processes were just as likely as visible minorities working in organizations without such processes to report that their employer recognizes their foreign educational credentials “below par”. The same is true for white/Caucasian respondents with foreign educational credentials. This suggests that existing practices for recognizing foreign educational credentials do not seem to be effective.

Most existing research in the area of foreign educational credentials has focused on access to employment for people who were largely educated in non-western societies, but relatively little is known about individuals with foreign educational credentials working in the managerial and professional ranks of corporate Canada.

As many countries experience a steady aging of their populations and an increase in the ethnic diversity of their labour forces due to immigration, organizations will find themselves competing to attract, develop, and retain skilled workers. A central issue will be how the qualifications and skills of talented immigrants are assessed. Currently, there is growing public consensus that the recognition of foreign educational credentials may be too restrictive and that this practice is harmful—both to the Canadian economy in general and to immigrant employees in particular, many of whom belong to visible minority groups.

## FINDINGS ABOUT FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS

In February 2007, Catalyst and the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University released early findings on the subject of foreign educational credentials—*Career Advancement in Corporate Canada: A Focus on Visible Minorities ~ An Early Preview*. These early findings were based on a subset of survey data that were then available to the research team. The results below confirm those findings with additional insights.

- Approximately 10 percent (N=1,708) of our respondent population reported possessing foreign educational credentials.
- Seventy-two percent of individuals with foreign educational credentials self-identified as belonging to a visible minority group; 22 percent self-identified as white/Caucasian.<sup>76</sup>
- Nine out of ten visible minority respondents who held foreign educational credentials indicated they were born outside Canada.
- Nearly one-half (47 percent) of visible minority respondents with foreign educational credentials felt their employers did not recognize these as being “on par” with equivalent Canadian degrees, diplomas, or certificates. Only 27 percent of white/Caucasian respondents with foreign educational credentials felt the same way.<sup>77</sup>
- Respondents with foreign educational credentials—and especially visible minority respondents—reported feeling less satisfied with their careers compared to those without such credentials.<sup>78</sup>
- Respondents with foreign educational credentials were more likely to feel their education and training had been underutilized in their current jobs compared to those without foreign educational credentials (see Figure 15).
- Both white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents with foreign educational credentials who felt that their skills, education, and training were being underutilized within their organization reported lower levels of career satisfaction.<sup>79</sup>
- Twenty-six percent of respondents with foreign educational credentials said they planned to explore career prospects outside the country, compared to 12 percent of respondents without foreign educational credentials.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> About five percent of the respondents with foreign educational credentials did not self-identify their visible minority status. Percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>77</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>78</sup> T-tests were employed to ascertain that the differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>79</sup> The average career satisfaction scores for white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents who felt that their education and training have been underutilized in their current jobs were 3.3 and 3.1, versus 3.9 and 3.7 for those who did not. The average career satisfaction scores for white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents who felt that they were able to utilize their skills in their current positions were 3.9 and 3.7, versus 3.0 and 2.7 for those who felt they were not able to utilize their skills in their current positions. T-tests were employed to ascertain that these differences were significant at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>80</sup> A chi-square test was employed to ascertain that the difference was significant at  $p < .05$ .





## PROCESSES FOR RECOGNIZING FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS

Almost one-third (29 percent) of the companies and firms in the Employer Survey reported they have processes in place for recognizing foreign educational credentials. These include: guidelines provided by local professional licensing bodies; equivalency checks conducted by not-for-profit organizations such as educational institutions or the World Education Services; or informal processes based on hiring managers' own knowledge or networks.

Is the existence of a formal practice to recognize foreign educational credentials associated with more positive perceptions? Our analysis demonstrated that there was no difference in how visible minority individuals, in companies and firms that had these formal practices compared to companies and firms that did not, reported on the question of whether or not they felt their foreign educational credentials were recognized "below par." The same was true for white/Caucasian respondents.<sup>83</sup>

*I work for a company in need of people with advanced degrees but since I have been working here I have not seen anyone recognize my qualifications as being valuable to the organization. I feel very underutilized and would like to contribute in a more significant way to the growth of the company but I have not been given the opportunity. I have pursued some openings but I feel the company should also actively seek to place people like me in positions where their skills and education can be better utilized.*

—Visible minority male professional

*I have a CA designation from outside Canada. When I came here I found that my firm accepted my foreign CA and work experience immediately, but the local institute did not. They wanted me to go through the entire educational experience and training required for new graduates. I think this is an issue with all professionals where their qualifications are not recognized in Canada. I am hoping this issue gets addressed as more and more international hires get assimilated into the workforce.*

—Visible minority male manager

<sup>83</sup> Chi-square tests were employed to ascertain that differences were not significant at  $p < .05$ .



### CONCLUSIONS

This report reflects some of the current realities of life among visible minority managers, professionals, and executives working in corporate Canada today. While there are some positive findings, many results suggest a cause for concern for companies and firms that want to maximize the potential of a diverse workforce.

This is the first study of its size, with over 17,000 managers, professionals, and executives employed in 43 Canadian companies and firms, to explore how visible minority women and men perceive the experience of working in corporate Canada. We found considerable evidence that perceptions of senior management commitment to diversity and career advancement processes, as well as relationships with managers and colleagues, differed among visible minority respondents and white/Caucasian respondents. There is also evidence that these perceptions and experiences were closely linked to levels of organizational commitment and career satisfaction, which are known to be important proxies for organizational performance.

In general, we can say that perceptions and experiences of visible minority individuals in our study were less positive than those of white/Caucasian individuals. This is cause for concern and discussion, but it also suggests that real opportunities exist for constructive change. Such change would be directed at finding ways for corporate Canada to further leverage the talents of its diverse workforce.

### WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

#### **Organizational commitment is strong.**

- A majority of respondents from all self-identified groups expressed commitment to their organization; respondents were willing to put in extra effort to help the organization succeed, proud to tell others about the organization, and intended to stay with their current employer.

#### **Visible minorities report lower levels of career satisfaction than their white/Caucasian colleagues.**

- While respondents from all self-identified groups expressed strong attachment to their organization, visible minority respondents were clearly less satisfied with their careers than white/Caucasian respondents were.
- Individuals with foreign educational credentials were more likely than respondents without foreign educational credentials to feel their education and training were being underutilized in their current job. Individuals who felt that their skills, education, and training were being underutilized reported lower levels of career satisfaction.

### Visible minorities experience the workplace differently than their white/Caucasian colleagues.

- Visible minorities tended to report similar experiences and perceptions of their workplace, regardless of gender or visible minority group.
- More white/Caucasian respondents than visible minority respondents agreed that their organization's talent identification processes are fair.
- Fewer visible minority respondents than white/Caucasian respondents reported that they received one or more developmental opportunities in the last three years. This finding held even after controlling for a range of job, demographic, and human capital characteristics.
- Fewer visible minority respondents than white/Caucasian respondents believed senior management in their organization was committed to cultural diversity. Visible senior management commitment to diversity is a pivotal factor in how fair visible minorities perceive their organization's career advancement processes to be.

### Visible minorities perceive barriers to their advancement.

- Visible minority respondents were more likely to perceive workplace barriers than their white/Caucasian colleagues. These barriers included perceived lack of fairness in career advancement processes, an absence of role models, inequality in performance standards, and fewer high-visibility assignments.
- Although many respondents agreed that their organization strives to create a climate supportive of all individuals, some visible minority respondents reported subtle forms of bias that detracted from their sense of being included.

### Great potential exists for making positive change.

- Leaders and managers have the ability to positively influence career satisfaction and maintain high levels of organizational commitment by improving perceptions of career advancement processes, building on positive relationships with managers and colleagues, and improving perceptions of senior management commitment to diversity.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Our data allowed us to look at certain sub-groups within the larger visible minority group, and we did find a few "between group" differences. Visible minority employees should never be seen as a homogeneous group; the processes and events experienced by individuals may be very different, even though their outcomes are largely the same. These more subtle differences in visible minorities' experiences within corporate Canada will be the subject of further research using this large data-set, as well as in Catalyst's next phase of the study, where interviews and focus groups will be used to add texture to these findings.



## What's the Bottom-Line Message for Corporate Canada?

We found that career satisfaction—a known predictor of productivity—was directly linked to certain organizational programs and practices. There is compelling evidence that career satisfaction levels were significantly higher among respondents who perceived strong senior management commitment to diversity. Satisfaction was also higher among those who reported the availability of mentoring programs, the tracking of diversity metrics, and the existence of fair talent management practices within their organizations. These findings were especially true for visible minority respondents compared to their white/Caucasian counterparts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To help organizations create a more inclusive environment for all employees and leverage the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a diverse workforce, we have developed a set of action steps for organizations. As part of the survey, respondents provided suggestions for what organizations could do to facilitate the advancement and development of visible minorities. This chapter highlights the intersection of recommendations made by visible minorities, the quantitative findings from this report, and past Catalyst research on diversity and inclusion.

Drawing from this varied and rich set of sources has allowed us to develop specific recommendations for organizations that want to proactively tap into the opportunities offered by Canada's changing labour force and a global economy. We offer a series of action steps for organizations to consider, clustered into six areas of focus and targeted toward the leadership and management of companies and firms. These action steps consider organizational performance and competitiveness while supporting the career advancement and development of visible minority managers, professionals, and executives.

These action steps are built on the premise that only an integrated initiative with a long-term focus that clearly leverages critical change management drivers—leadership commitment, communication, accountability, and measurement<sup>84</sup>—will produce the cultural change required to reduce the barriers to career advancement perceived by our visible minority respondents. Although implementing programs around mentoring, networking, or diversity education can be done quickly and can potentially improve the environment for visible minority women and men, substantive change requires a lasting commitment from leadership and management in a focused series of efforts. In short, while better programs and policies can go a long way, they alone cannot create inclusive cultures where all individuals can thrive.

The first three action steps focus on cultural assessment and change while the remaining action steps focus on programmatic elements that organizations can implement:

1. Assess your environment.
2. Make diversity a strategic priority.
3. Encourage top management commitment to diversity.
4. Implement formal and transparent career development systems.
5. Develop a robust accountability framework around diversity.
6. Provide support mechanisms.

<sup>84</sup> Catalyst, *Making Change: Becoming a Diversity Champion* (2002); Catalyst, *Making Change: Creating a Business-Aligned Diversity Scorecard* (2005); Catalyst, *Making Change: Tackling Resistance to Diversity Efforts* (2002); Catalyst, *Making Change: Using Metrics to Support Workplace Diversity* (2002).

## Assess Your Environment

Several visible minority respondents emphasized the need for senior leadership to better understand the challenges and aspirations of visible minority employees.

*Contact [visible minority employees] individually or in groups and see whether there are any trends in their opinions on specific issues.*

—Visible minority male professional

*Form a focus and advisory group with representatives from all minority groups (and levels) to bring their perspectives and suggestions to the table.*

—Visible minority female manager

*[Arrange] focus group sessions to solicit ideas on how the organization can foster the development of visible minorities into senior management positions.*

—Visible minority male manager

Building a fact base around visible minority career advancement and development experiences will be helpful to individual organizations and would serve to create a suitable channel for visible minority managers, professionals, and executives to provide input to senior management.

This comprehensive report is intended to serve as an initial fact base for people across levels in corporate Canada to understand the perceptions and experiences of visible minority managers, professionals, and executives. To most effectively address the needs of visible minorities in a given organization, however, it is critical to first conduct an environmental assessment. Catalyst knowledge and experience, acquired through advising organizations of varying sizes across many industries, demonstrates that diversity and inclusion initiatives are most effective if tailored to the specific needs of an organization.<sup>85</sup>

Critical to the environmental assessment, is input from employees. Senior leadership needs to provide employees with opportunities to voice their needs and to make recommendations; as we see throughout this section, employees have specific and actionable feedback for their employers. Some of the key goals of an environmental assessment are presented below.<sup>86</sup>

- Determine employee perceptions of organizational culture, senior leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion, career aspirations, and work-life effectiveness.
- Uncover the strengths and weaknesses of current policies and practices.
- Solicit recommendations for practices that will address employees' needs.
- Set organizational priorities, including strategies that incorporate diversity, considering both employee and organizational needs.

<sup>85</sup> Catalyst, *Making Change: Assessing Your Work Environment* (2002).

<sup>86</sup> Catalyst, *Making Change: Assessing Your Work Environment* (2002).



## Make Diversity a Strategic Priority

Visible minority respondents articulated important aspects of the business case for diversity and inclusion, with a clear emphasis on helping their organizations succeed in meeting the demands of a diverse customer base and leveraging the talents of a diverse workforce.

*With globalization, organizations should view their minority employees as important assets. They should make active and deliberate efforts to train, nurture, and promote these valuable resources to positions of influence to help to propel their organization forward.*

—Visible minority female manager

*[Recognize the diversity] within our customer base...and look to have a similar diversity structure at the executive group or other decision-making bodies...also promote accordingly assuming the talent exists.*

—Visible minority male manager

*Frequently, members within the organization state that our products and services are not attractive to “immigrant” Canadians. This screams that our management cannot identify with this demographic nor service them effectively. To address this issue, [my organization] should benchmark the proportion of visible minorities they have in management positions and benchmark against more progressive organizations and develop a detailed action plan to eliminate this gap.*

—Visible minority male manager

By elevating diversity to a strategic priority, companies and firms can begin to shift the culture of their organizations so that exclusionary attitudes and barriers as well as more subtle, unconscious behaviours that may impede the advancement of visible minorities are recognized and addressed.

The first step in making diversity a strategic priority is building the business case for diversity.

- *Build a strong business case tailored to your organization.* Understand the implications of demographic shifts not just for your customer/client base, but for your talent pool as well. Weave elements of the business case together—market trends, labour data, competitive issues—to explain, in concrete and graphic terms, why the development, advancement, and retention of visible minority employees is important to your business.

Once the business case has been formally articulated, it is necessary to incorporate it into strategic planning exercises and effectively communicate the diversity strategy to all key stakeholders.

- *Integrate the diversity strategy into overall strategic planning.* Require all business leaders in your organization to develop plans to address diversity in their areas as part of the annual business planning cycle. Review diversity plans in the same manner as all business plans.
- *Create a comprehensive communication strategy for diversity efforts.* In our study, respondents who were aware of their organization’s diversity efforts had greater career satisfaction than those who were not aware of the practices. A common mistake organizations make is to underestimate the amount of communication that needs to be done—internally and externally, organizationally and individually—to communicate the activities, commitment, and impact of diversity efforts.

While not exhaustive, the steps below are integral to any effective communication of diversity efforts.

- Define diversity objectives and clarify key messages.
- Ensure messages are delivered through multiple venues and at multiple points throughout the year.
- Ensure that all external communications (e.g., advertisements, marketing brochures) visually represent the diversity of the workforce.
- Ensure that senior leaders have individualized communications strategies.
- Include success stories, debunk myths, model behaviour, and communicate the vision.

### Encourage Top Management Commitment to Diversity

Visible minority respondents thought it necessary for senior management to “walk the talk” regarding workplace diversity.

*Invest in programs that develop staff and follow through at all levels. Hold management accountable at all levels. We do a great job of writing up policies and nice glossy brochures, but in reality not much happens beyond a few “token” actions.*

—Visible minority female manager

*[What’s needed is a] strong commitment from senior management. Put the commitment into action instead of just talking.*

—Visible minority male manager

Commitment from the top is essential to any business initiative, including those related to diversity. In Chapter 5, we saw that when visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents perceived that their senior management was committed to diversity, they were more likely to view their organization’s career advancement processes as fair. This, in turn, predicted greater organizational commitment and career satisfaction, two factors that have been shown to be related to productivity and profitability. We also found that senior management commitment to diversity was a much stronger predictor of perceptions of fairness among visible minority respondents than it was among white/Caucasian respondents and so we expect top-level commitment to have a particularly meaningful impact on visible minorities’ perceptions of fairness.

Top-level commitment to diversity should extend beyond the CEO’s office. Organizations can ensure a breadth of leadership support by designating influential senior executives to champion diversity initiatives.<sup>87</sup> To ensure top management commitment during changes in leadership, organizations need to include commitment to diversity as a criterion in succession planning for top management staff.

<sup>87</sup> Catalyst, *Making Change: Becoming a Diversity Champion* (2002).



Senior leaders may find helpful the following examples of ways to demonstrate their commitment to creating diverse and inclusive workplaces.

- *Publicly commit.* Be a role model. Include a stated commitment to diversity in all public speaking engagements, both internal and external.
- *Communicate.* On a day-to-day basis, ensure visible minority individuals are included in the information loop.
- *Be accountable.* Invite your managers and staff to hold you accountable for creating an inclusive environment. Make sure project teams and task forces have diverse representation.
- *Monitor distribution of assignments.* Ensure high-profile and developmental opportunities are allocated equitably among all team members and/or staff.
- *Develop career plans for all staff.* Provide targeted training and/or development opportunities that advances the careers of all employees. Be sure to use objective, results-oriented performance criteria when making promotion decisions.
- *Be a mentor.* Support employees from diverse backgrounds and be open to what you can learn from them.

### Implement Formal and Transparent Career Development Systems

In Chapter 3, we saw that visible minorities, irrespective of visible minority group, were less likely than their white/Caucasian counterparts to perceive their organization's talent management practices as fair. They were also more likely to feel that informal mechanisms, such as "who you know," played a larger role in talent decisions within their organizations. In Chapter 4, we saw that respondents who indicated that their organizations had practices designed to enhance the transparency of career advancement practices had higher levels of career satisfaction than respondents who did not. Finally, in Chapter 5, our model demonstrated that respondents' assessments of career advancement practices predicted organizational commitment and career satisfaction—the more fair career advancement practices were perceived to be, the more committed respondents were to their organizations and the more satisfied they were with their careers.

Visible minority respondents provided specific recommendations for organizations to address their concerns regarding the role of informal mechanisms in talent decisions.

*Keep a talent database that will allow people's credentials and skills to be tracked. Assess their credentials with performance review results [and consider] their career aspirations. An agent... could alert the organization's HR/talent scouts [about these employees] and see if they are a good match for positions that open up and for promotions... If there is a skill/educational gap, these employees could be identified for training.*

—Visible minority male manager

...[Establish] clear guidelines in terms of what it takes to advance. There are a lot of grey areas when it comes to who gets promoted... [often] it appears to be those who scream/whine/complain the most are the ones who get more attention and thus get promoted. As long as there is no real structure... it's hard to justify why a visible minority doesn't get the same level of advancement.

—Visible minority female manager

Past Catalyst research points to the need for effective career development policies and practices that foster an equitable environment and support the role of managers in employee development helping marginalized groups advance.<sup>88</sup> The goal is to develop a clear, comprehensive talent management strategy that all employees subscribe to and that reduces the influence of informal mechanisms in managers' decision-making. The following are suggestions for creating a formal and transparent career development system.

- *Clearly define and communicate performance evaluation criteria.* When performance appraisal evaluation criteria are vague and unclear, the possibility that certain employees will be more vulnerable to biased judgments of their performance increases. The more objective organizations make their appraisal processes, the more likely they are to produce bias-free judgments and increase perceptions that talent management processes are fair.
- *Create explicit decision rules about how evaluation criteria are weighted.* Stereotypes and/or bias may cause us to attend to different kinds of information depending on whether we are evaluating someone who resembles us or someone who does not. When this occurs, different performance standards may unintentionally be applied to one group and not another—for example visible minority and white/Caucasian or women and men. Using specified criteria weightings can help ensure that all individuals are judged by the same criteria and standards.
- *Implement a system of checks and balances to safeguard against exclusionary practices.* The Catalyst-Ryerson survey found that many more visible minority respondents believed career opportunities were dependent on “who you know” compared to white/Caucasian respondents. To curtail exclusionary practices, decision-making processes need to include some way to check the soundness of individual judgments regarding another person's performance on the job. Standardized career development systems can help to accomplish this goal.
- *Review managers' performance evaluations of subordinates by ethnicity and gender.* Measure and compare time in level, functional group, and location for visible minority women and men compared to white/Caucasian women and men as well as women and men in general. In addition, examine language used in evaluation comments for evidence of bias.
- *Hold managers accountable for the retention and advancement of visible minority women and men.* Managers are accountable for business results and rewarded through compensation and bonuses. Diversity goals should be integrated into the overall business targets with associated rewards and consequences.
- *Monitor the representation of visible minorities on slate for promotion and high-visibility assignments.* Also monitor whether visible minority individuals continue to reappear on slates without being selected. Managers should be accountable for decisions.

<sup>88</sup> Catalyst, *Bit by Bit: Catalyst's Guide to Advancing Women in High Tech Companies* (2003); Catalyst, *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Dynamics of Career Advancement* (1998).



- *Systematically identify high-potential talent.* Effective succession planning is a formal process that ultimately deepens an organization's bench strength and breadth. Succession criteria should be explicit and clearly communicated. In addition, every slate of candidates should be diverse in representation with respect to both visible minority status and gender.

**Career Advancement Processes That Foster Diversity Are Based on the Following Principles:**

They need to be:

- Objective and consistently applied
- Focused on results
- Transparent
- Flexible—no “one size fits all”
- Developmental

They seek to:

- Foster dialogue with employees
- Build connections among employees across commonalities and differences in background and experience
- Set people up to succeed in assignments

**Develop a Robust Accountability Framework Around Diversity**

Visible minority respondents repeatedly emphasized the need for more regular and detailed monitoring and measurement of visible minority representation within their organizations.

*Get more representation in the organization that reflects the different ethnicities in the marketplace (in leadership and strategic decision-making roles, not just technical staff jobs). I would like my organization to provide diversity facts first and diversity programs second. What is the percentage of women in leadership and management positions? What is the percentage of visible minorities in leadership and management positions? Are these percentages adequate representation for the number of employees in the organization and the target marketplace?*

—Visible minority male professional

*Set visible minority targets and [give them the same] emphasis... as advancement of women within the organization.*

—Visible minority male manager

Of all the diversity and inclusion practices that the organizations reported in the Employer Survey, metrics and accountability was the least often reported practice—fewer than one in five employers (18 percent) indicated that management was held accountable for tracking the progress of visible minority employees. However in Chapter 4 we saw that respondents who indicated that their organizations tracked diversity metrics, such as the representation, promotion, attrition, and hiring of different employee groups, had higher levels of career satisfaction than respondents who did not.

Catalyst research shows that implementing a clear accountability framework for diversity outcomes is a critical component of inclusive workplaces.<sup>89</sup> The key to strong accountability systems is having clear and relevant metrics on two fronts: 1) baseline data to inform action steps that drive change and 2) outcome-focused metrics that show change has occurred. Performance on these metrics must be clearly communicated to business unit managers and monitored regularly by senior management. The following steps will help organizations develop and implement an accountability framework.

- *Collection of human resources data and ongoing analysis.* Often one of the most difficult tasks for organizations is tracking and understanding human resources (HR) data. It is important to analyze relevant HR data over time to identify trends and patterns in addition to establishing a baseline for monitoring future progress. Consider regularly tracking the following metrics by gender and visible minority status and across functional units, divisions, and locations:
  - Recruitment
  - Representation
  - Promotion
  - Succession planning
  - Turnover, both voluntary and involuntary
  - Organizational change resulting from mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and downsizing

Other more advanced metrics include monitoring visible minority representation levels in client-facing and support roles; line versus staff leadership roles; major client assignments; key developmental or “stretch” positions; and important task forces or committees.

- *Linking results to performance appraisals.* For an accountability framework to be effective, regularly reporting the results of those metrics monitored by your organization as a component of leadership performance is essential. It is also critical that there be rewards and consequences associated with how individual managers perform with respect to creating inclusive work environments.
- *Monitoring outcomes.* To communicate the importance of greater diversity, senior management/leadership needs to actively monitor outcomes of diversity initiatives. Furthermore, senior management should communicate organization-wide results on key metrics to the general employee population when they are reporting on business results.

<sup>89</sup> Catalyst, *Making Change: Creating a Business-Aligned Diversity Scorecard* (2005); Catalyst, *Making Change: Using Metrics to Support Workplace Diversity* (2002).



Senior management may encounter concerns that metrics are being collected to satisfy quotas. The following strategies will help organizations clarify the distinction between setting targets and imposing quotas:<sup>90</sup>

- Emphasize that numbers are tracked to assess the effectiveness of programs.
- Focus on general trends and rates of change rather than end goals.
- Reinforce the link between cultural change and the business case for diversity.

### Provide Support Mechanisms

Many visible minority respondents had specific and creative suggestions for programs that would address some of their needs, including providing mentors and role models, networking opportunities, high-profile assignments, and actions that balance sensitivity to other cultures with assistance in navigating the culture of corporate Canada.

*Assign a mentor to help [visible minority employees] navigate through the corporate culture, unspoken protocols, taboos, and [help] guide them through advancement.*

—Visible minority male manager

*Create mandatory “reverse mentoring” for senior executives from visible minority employees/clients.*

—Visible minority male executive

*[Encourage] greater sensitivity to cultural preferences when holding informal networking events or firm functions... for example, many firm functions focus on drinking, which is not necessarily a social activity for different cultures.*

—Visible minority female professional

*Provide training for visible minority [immigrants] about the Canadian way of life [and about] office “etiquette” that is acceptable in this country. This helps visible minority employees to understand and to behave the same way as the majority employees.*

—Visible minority female manager

Exclusionary behaviours can be either intentional or unintentional, but regardless of the intent these behaviours can negatively impact the workplace environment, relationships, and, ultimately, organizational performance. In addition, exclusionary behaviours can influence the well-being of members of the excluded groups and manifest themselves in lower levels of organizational commitment and career satisfaction. Support mechanisms such as mentoring and networking programs offer potentially excluded people, such as visible minorities and women, the opportunity to share experiences, make important organizational connections, and receive guidance regarding personal and career strategies.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Catalyst, *Using Metrics to Support Workplace Diversity* (2002).

<sup>91</sup> Catalyst, *Connections that Count: The Informal Networks of Women of Color in the United States* (2006); Catalyst, *Creating Women's Networks: A How-To Guide for Women and Companies* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999); Catalyst, *Mentoring: A Guide to Corporate Programs and Practice* (1993).

**Create mentoring opportunities.** Visible minority respondents to our survey repeatedly emphasized how important they felt having a mentor would be to their career advancement. Catalyst research has demonstrated that, when integrated into a system of transparent processes to which managers are held accountable, mentoring programs can help employees be successful in their careers.<sup>92</sup> Mentoring matches employees with senior management who provide career counseling and informal advice. Here are some suggestions for organizations.

- Develop, encourage, facilitate, and publicize formal and informal mentoring programs so that visible minority women and men can participate in such programs and benefit from them.
- Create a peer mentor “buddy” program to help visible minority employees, especially those who may be new to Canada, feel included and adapt to local customs and organizational culture.
- Create forums where visible minority women and men can gain exposure to senior-level people who may be available as mentors.

**Create networking opportunities.** Recall that in Chapter 3, 76 percent of white/Caucasian respondents compared to 67 percent of visible minority respondents said their colleagues included them in informal networking. In Chapter 4, we saw that respondents who reported that their organizations had networking programs were significantly more satisfied with their careers than those who reported that their organizations did not have networking programs. From past Catalyst research and experience, including large-scale surveys, focus groups, and advisory services with a broad range of organizations, it is clear that formal and informal networking opportunities play an integral role in the advancement and development of employees, particularly those from marginalized groups.<sup>93</sup>

When creating networking opportunities, organizations should keep in mind the following.

- Networking opportunities can take different forms, including biweekly lunch-time discussions (“brown-bags”) and invited speakers on topics of interest to various visible minority groups, to more elaborate annual conferences attended by senior management.
- Organizations can also use these networking opportunities to showcase successful senior executive women and men from various ethnic backgrounds in order to share with their workforce examples of different strategies of success.

## FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS

In Chapter 6, we addressed the specific issue of foreign educational credential recognition. From our analyses, it is evident that individuals who possess foreign educational credentials, particularly visible minorities with such credentials, are less satisfied with their careers and more likely to consider pursuing career opportunities outside Canada. Furthermore, visible minorities with foreign educational credentials are more likely to feel that their organization recognizes their credentials as “below par” in comparison with white/Caucasian individuals with such credentials.

<sup>92</sup> Catalyst, *Creating Successful Mentoring Programs: A Catalyst Guide* (2002).

<sup>93</sup> Catalyst, *Bit by Bit: Catalyst's Guide to Advancing Women in High Tech Companies* (2003); Catalyst, *Connections that Count: The Informal Networks of Women of Color in the United States* (2006); Catalyst, *Creating Women's Networks: A How-To Guide for Women and Companies* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999).



### Next Steps

To share these findings, insights, and recommendations with the Canadian corporate community and other interested stakeholders, Catalyst ([www.catalyst.org](http://www.catalyst.org)) and the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University ([www.ryerson.ca/diversity](http://www.ryerson.ca/diversity)) are posting an electronic version of this report.

The study findings will be disseminated and discussed at upcoming conferences and other events over the next year.

Catalyst will be conducting the next phase of this study, which will involve focus groups and interviews with visible minority and white/Caucasian managers, professionals, and executives. This is intended to provide texture to quantitative survey findings and to help us identify and better understand subtle differences among visible minority groups.

When we compared employees from the 29 percent of participating organizations that reported existing practices for recognizing employees' foreign educational credentials with those from organizations that do not have such practices, we found that there was no difference in whether or not respondents felt their credentials were recognized as "below par." This was true for visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents, and suggests that these practices may not be effective, that employees may not be aware of these practices, and that organizations are not currently utilizing the knowledge, skills, and abilities already available in their workforce. To help leverage this existing talent, we recommend that organizations take immediate action, both internally and in the public domain.

- First, we recommend that organizations communicate foreign educational credential recognition practices to all employees, ensure that employees understand the practices, and then provide employees an opportunity to voice concerns as they may provide specific feedback as to how current practices can be improved.
- Second, while we recognize that organizations are constrained by legislation, public policy, and accreditation and professional associations, it is necessary for organizations to participate in the public discourse on the issue of foreign educational credential recognition in order for corporate Canada to compete in the global market for talent. Employee feedback will be critical in helping senior management articulate the organization's needs and present their position in the public forum.
- For organizations that do not have a formal policy for recognizing foreign educational credentials, a delay in establishing an effective formal practice may prove costly. It is clear that talented employees with foreign educational credentials feel their skills are being underutilized and may look to other options that provide the opportunity to make use of their skills.

### FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

As Canada's labour force growth will increasingly rely on visible minorities, many of whom are immigrants, the consideration of how people's visible minority status and place of birth impacts on their workplace perceptions and experiences will be increasingly important. Organizations should strive to make the workplace inclusive for all employees, regardless of visible minority status, place of birth, gender, and other characteristics. This report focuses particularly on the experiences of visible minorities and provides action steps for organizations that plan to leverage the talents of a diverse workforce. The need for change is urgent—in today's globally competitive marketplace, organizations cannot afford to underutilize any segment of the talent pool.

## APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research project was designed to understand the career advancement and development experiences of managers, professionals, and executives in corporate Canada. This phase of the Career Advancement in Corporate Canada research project used a survey methodology that included both an Employer Survey and an Employee Survey.

Beginning in July 2006, the research team invited FP800 companies and firms to participate in the study, along with the top 20 Canadian law firms and Catalyst Canada member organizations.

The 43 organizations that agreed to participate in the Employee Survey were asked to provide a list of email addresses of their managers, professionals, executives. Participating organizations either invited all or a random sample of their managers, professionals, and executives to complete the online survey. The participating organizations did not provide any type of identifying demographic information (such as visible minority status) about the potential respondents, and all survey responses were guaranteed to be both confidential and anonymous.

More than 60,000 managers, professionals, and executives were invited to participate in the Employee Survey with an email invitation introducing the research and requesting their time to complete an online survey. The Employee Survey was comprised of 39 questions and included three open-ended questions. The survey had four themes: Work Environment; Career Advancement and Development; Organizational Practices; and Demographics. Data collection took place between October 11, 2006, and February 23, 2007. A total of 17,908 individuals responded to the survey, a response rate of 29 percent. Of these 17,908 individuals, 17,468 were full-time employees.

A total of 16,464 respondents (94 percent) self-identified either as a member of a visible minority group or as white/Caucasian.

The Employer Survey was designed to complement the information provided in the Employee Survey around organizational practices. Employers who took part included organizations in the following fields: financial services, technology, manufacturing, retail, accounting professional services, utilities, and law firms. The Employer Survey consisted of two sections: workforce statistics and organizational practices and was completed by senior-level officials of 38 companies and firms.

## APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The term “visible minority” refers to a person who is not an Aboriginal person, who is non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. The following groups, slightly modified from Statistics Canada Census categories, make up the total visible minority groups in this study: Arab, Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Latin American, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Southeast Asian, West Indian, and multiple visible minority (i.e., those who identified with more than one visible minority group). The following tables provide a description of our sample by self-identified group.<sup>94</sup>

	WHITE / CAUCASIAN			VISIBLE MINORITY		
	OVERALL (N=12003)	WOMEN (N=5521)	MEN (N=6354)	OVERALL (N=4461)	WOMEN (N=1923)	MEN (N=2500)
AVERAGE AGE (YEARS)	42.3	41.7	42.8	39.7	39.2	40.2
% WITH UNIVERSITY/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	58.3	55.0	61.2	78.4	74.7	81.3
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE	21.7	21.7	21.8	15.7	16.1	15.4
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION	13.6	13.8	13.5	9.4	9.9	9.0
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE	4.3	4.0	4.6	3.5	3.4	3.6
% MANAGERS	57.7	60.9	55.0	43.6	44.2	43.1
% PROFESSIONALS	27.6	24.9	30.0	38.1	37.0	39.0
% EXECUTIVES	8.1	6.5	9.4	6.0	5.1	6.7
% PRE-MANAGERS	6.6	7.7	5.6	12.3	13.7	11.2
% COMPANY	83.0	83.4	82.6	82.4	80.2	84.1
% PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM	17.0	16.6	17.4	17.6	19.8	15.9

<sup>94</sup> The survey response rate was 29 percent (N=17,908, which includes 16,464 who identified as a member of a visible minority group or as white/Caucasian). With respect to level, respondents were given the opportunity to self-identify as pre-managers. As this report focuses on the experiences of managers, professionals, and executives, analyses relating to level specifically do not include pre-managers. The number of women and men in each of the self-identified groups does not add up to the overall number because 166 respondents did not identify their gender.

	ARAB			BLACK		
	OVERALL (N=114)	WOMEN (N=39)	MEN (N=75)	OVERALL (N=554)	WOMEN (N=238)	MEN (N=312)
AVERAGE AGE (YEARS)	36.3	36.0	36.5	40.8	40.7	41.0
% WITH UNIVERSITY/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	85.1	79.5	88.0	65.1	59.1	69.8
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE	12.5	13.8	11.8	18.1	19.1	17.3
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION	7.2	8.5	6.5	10.2	10.8	9.8
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.5
% MANAGERS	51.0	54.5	49.3	48.4	49.1	47.8
% PROFESSIONALS	33.7	27.3	36.6	32.9	33.9	32.2
% EXECUTIVES	3.8	3.0	4.2	7.5	5.4	9.2
% PRE-MANAGERS	11.5	15.2	9.9	11.2	11.6	10.8
% COMPANY	83.8	73.7	89.0	87.2	86.3	87.9
% PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM	16.2	26.3	11.0	12.8	13.7	12.1

	CHINESE			FILIPINO		
	OVERALL (N=1,408)	WOMEN (N=711)	MEN (N=680)	OVERALL (N=216)	WOMEN (N=90)	MEN (N=123)
AVERAGE AGE (YEARS)	39.1	38.3	39.9	42.6	43.0	42.3
% WITH UNIVERSITY/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	85.7	83.2	88.3	72.8	74.4	71.5
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE	14.9	14.5	15.4	18.6	19.3	18.1
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION	9.0	8.8	9.3	11.9	12.8	11.2
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE	3.6	3.4	3.8	4.4	4.7	4.2
% MANAGERS	35.6	35.1	36.1	45.4	46.3	44.7
% PROFESSIONALS	46.1	44.6	47.7	37.6	37.5	37.7
% EXECUTIVES	4.9	5.3	4.5	4.1	3.8	4.4
% PRE-MANAGERS	13.4	15.0	11.7	12.9	12.5	13.2
% COMPANY	79.3	75.7	83.0	87.5	82.0	91.6
% PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM	20.7	24.3	17.0	12.5	18.0	8.4



	JAPANESE			KOREAN		
	OVERALL (N=81)	WOMEN (N=34)	MEN (N=47)	OVERALL (N=57)	WOMEN (N=24)	MEN (N=33)
AVERAGE AGE (YEARS)	43.8	43.5	43.9	37.8	38.7	37.2
% WITH UNIVERSITY/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	76.5	73.5	78.7	89.3	82.6	93.9
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE	21.5	21.8	21.3	12.2	14.8	10.2
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION	11.9	14.6	9.8	5.4	5.5	5.4
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE	3.9	3.9	4.0	2.3	2.4	2.3
% MANAGERS	50.7	53.3	48.8	32.7	37.5	28.6
% PROFESSIONALS	29.6	26.7	31.7	44.2	37.5	50.0
% EXECUTIVES	12.7	13.3	12.2	3.8	4.2	3.6
% PRE-MANAGERS	7.0	6.7	7.3	19.2	20.8	17.9
% COMPANY	81.1	75.8	85.4	80.0	87.5	74.2
% PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM	18.9	24.2	14.6	20.0	12.5	25.8

	LATIN AMERICAN			MIDDLE EASTERN		
	OVERALL (N=192)	WOMEN (N=75)	MEN (N=116)	OVERALL (N=175)	WOMEN (N=58)	MEN (N=116)
AVERAGE AGE (YEARS)	40.0	39.6	40.2	39.0	38.3	39.3
% WITH UNIVERSITY/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	72.3	64.0	77.6	80.5	67.2	87.1
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE	13.7	14.7	13.0	15.2	15.0	15.4
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION	8.7	9.8	8.0	9.4	9.8	9.1
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE	3.7	4.1	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.7
% MANAGERS	42.5	49.2	38.5	46.7	50.0	45.0
% PROFESSIONALS	39.7	33.8	43.1	32.1	28.6	33.9
% EXECUTIVES	4.0	4.6	3.7	8.5	1.8	11.9
% PRE-MANAGERS	13.8	12.3	14.7	12.7	19.6	9.2
% COMPANY	85.9	85.9	86.0	85.3	87.7	84.1
% PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM	14.1	14.1	14.0	14.7	12.3	15.9

	SOUTH ASIAN			SOUTHEAST ASIAN		
	OVERALL (N=852)	WOMEN (N=281)	MEN (N=564)	OVERALL (N=311)	WOMEN (N=117)	MEN (N=191)
AVERAGE AGE (YEARS)	39.6	38.8	40.0	38.0	37.1	38.5
% WITH UNIVERSITY/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	84.5	82.1	85.7	86.6	87.2	86.2
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE	14.5	15.7	13.8	13.2	13.3	13.1
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION	8.8	9.8	8.3	7.8	8.0	7.8
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE	3.3	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.4	2.9
% MANAGERS	46.9	51.4	44.5	41.5	36.4	44.4
% PROFESSIONALS	36.4	31.5	38.9	39.0	49.5	32.8
% EXECUTIVES	6.5	5.4	7.1	6.3	3.7	7.8
% PRE-MANAGERS	10.2	11.6	9.5	13.2	10.3	15.0
% COMPANY	80.7	80.1	81.0	78.0	69.8	83.0
% PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM	19.3	19.9	19.0	22.0	30.2	17.0

	WEST INDIAN			MULTIPLE VISIBLE MINORITY		
	OVERALL (N=274)	WOMEN (N=150)	MEN (N=122)	OVERALL (N=227)	WOMEN (N=106)	MEN (N=121)
AVERAGE AGE (YEARS)	41.1	40.8	41.6	40.2	38.9	41.2
% WITH UNIVERSITY/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	57.2	53.7	61.5	61.5	58.1	64.5
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.9	19.0	18.9
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ORGANIZATION	11.8	12.1	11.5	10.6	11.3	9.9
AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.8	3.2	4.2
% MANAGERS	50.8	52.5	48.7	56.3	57.0	55.7
% PROFESSIONALS	26.0	22.0	30.8	29.3	29.0	29.6
% EXECUTIVES	7.8	6.4	9.4	5.6	4.0	7.0
% PRE-MANAGERS	15.5	19.1	11.1	8.8	10.0	7.8
% COMPANY	88.1	87.2	89.1	86.0	91.3	81.5
% PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM	11.9	12.8	10.9	14.0	8.7	18.5



## APPENDIX 3: PERCEPTUAL MEASURES USED IN THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY

### Organizational Commitment\*

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.89

Included items:

- I identify with my organization's core values.
- I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.
- I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help my organization be successful.
- I intend to stay with my organization.
- I "talk up" my organization to my friends as a great place to work at.
- For me, this is the best of all possible organizations to work.
- I am glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.
- Deciding to work for this organization was a mistake on my part.
- Often, I find it difficult to agree with my organization's policies on important matters.
- I really care about the future success of my organization.

Source: Modified from Richard T. Mowday, Richard M. Steers, and Lyman W. Porter, "The Measurement of Organizational Commitment," *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, vol. 14, no. 2 (April 1979): p. 224-227.

### Career Satisfaction\*

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.85

Included items:

- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.
- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.
- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.
- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

Source: Modified from Jeffrey H. Greenhaus, Saroj Parasuraman, and Wayne M. Wormley, "Effects of Race on Organizational Experiences, Job Performance Evaluations, and Career Outcomes," *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 33, no. 1 (March 1990): 64-86.

### Perceptions of Career Advancement Processes\*

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.83

Included items:

- I believe my organization does a good job of promoting/admitting into partnership the most competent people.
- I believe I have the opportunity for personal development and growth in my organization.
- I believe I have as equal a chance of finding out about career advancement opportunities as my colleagues do.
- I believe "who you know" (or "who knows you") is more important than "what you know" when deciding who gets career development opportunities in my organization.
- I am aware of how talent is identified in my organization.
- I believe my organization's talent identification process is fair.

Source: Created by Catalyst/Ryerson research team.

\*All perceptual measures used a one-to-five scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

### Senior Management Commitment to Diversity\*

**Cronbach's Alpha = 0.85**

Included items:

- My senior management demonstrates a strong commitment to cultural diversity.
- My senior management demonstrates a strong commitment to promoting/advancing to partnership visible minority individuals.
- My senior management is held accountable for the advancement of visible minority individuals.

Source: Catalyst, *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Three Years Later* (2002).

### Relationship with Manager\*

**Cronbach's Alpha = 0.95**

Included items:

- He/she makes an effort to learn about my career goals and aspirations.
- He/she keeps me informed about different career opportunities for me in my organization.
- He/she provides appropriate recognition when I accomplish something substantial in the job.
- He/she gives me helpful feedback about my performance.
- He/she supports my attempts to acquire any additional training/education that I need to further my career.
- He/she provides assignments to develop new strengths and skills.
- He/she assigns special projects to me that increase my visibility in the organization.
- He/she encourages me to speak up when I disagree with a decision.
- He/she treats me fairly.
- He/she helps me understand the unwritten rules of my organization.

- He/she is comfortable interacting with me.
- He/she evaluates my performance fairly.

Sources: Items 1 to 7, modified from Jeffrey H. Greenhaus, Saroj Parasuraman, and Wayne M. Wormley, "Effects of Race on Organizational Experiences, Job Performance Evaluations, and Career Outcomes," *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 33, no. 1 (March 1990): p. 64-86. Items 8 to 12, modified from Catalyst, *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Three Years Later* (2002).

### Relationship with Colleagues\*

**Cronbach's Alpha = 0.86**

Included items:

- My colleagues treat me with respect.
- My colleagues treat each other with respect.
- I receive the support that I need from other co-workers to meet my work objectives.
- My colleagues keep me informed on matters that may impact my work.
- My colleagues include me in informal networking.

Sources: Items 1 and 2, modified from Michelle A. Donovan, Fritz Drasgow, and Liberty J. Munson, "The Perceptions of Fair Interpersonal Treatment Scale: Development and Validation of a Measure of Interpersonal Treatment in the Workplace," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 83, no. 5 (October 1998): p. 683-692. Items 3 to 5, created by Catalyst/Ryerson research team.

\*All perceptual measures used a one-to-five scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.



## APPENDIX 4: REGRESSION ANALYSES

Through a review of existing literature, a number of other factors or characteristics were identified that may predict employees' career advancement and development experiences, in addition to the composite measures described in Appendix 3.

### Human Capital Characteristics

- Educational attainment
- Possession of foreign educational credentials
- Tenure with the organization

### Job Characteristics

- Whether the individual is in a managerial/professional/executive role
- Whether the individual has a staff/line role or both
- Annual income
- Region of work in Canada
- Industry

### Demographic Characteristics

- Gender
- Visible minority status or visible minority group
- Age
- Marital status
- Whether the individual identified as a person with disabilities
- Whether the individual identified as a member of LGBT community
- Whether the individual was born in Canada or not

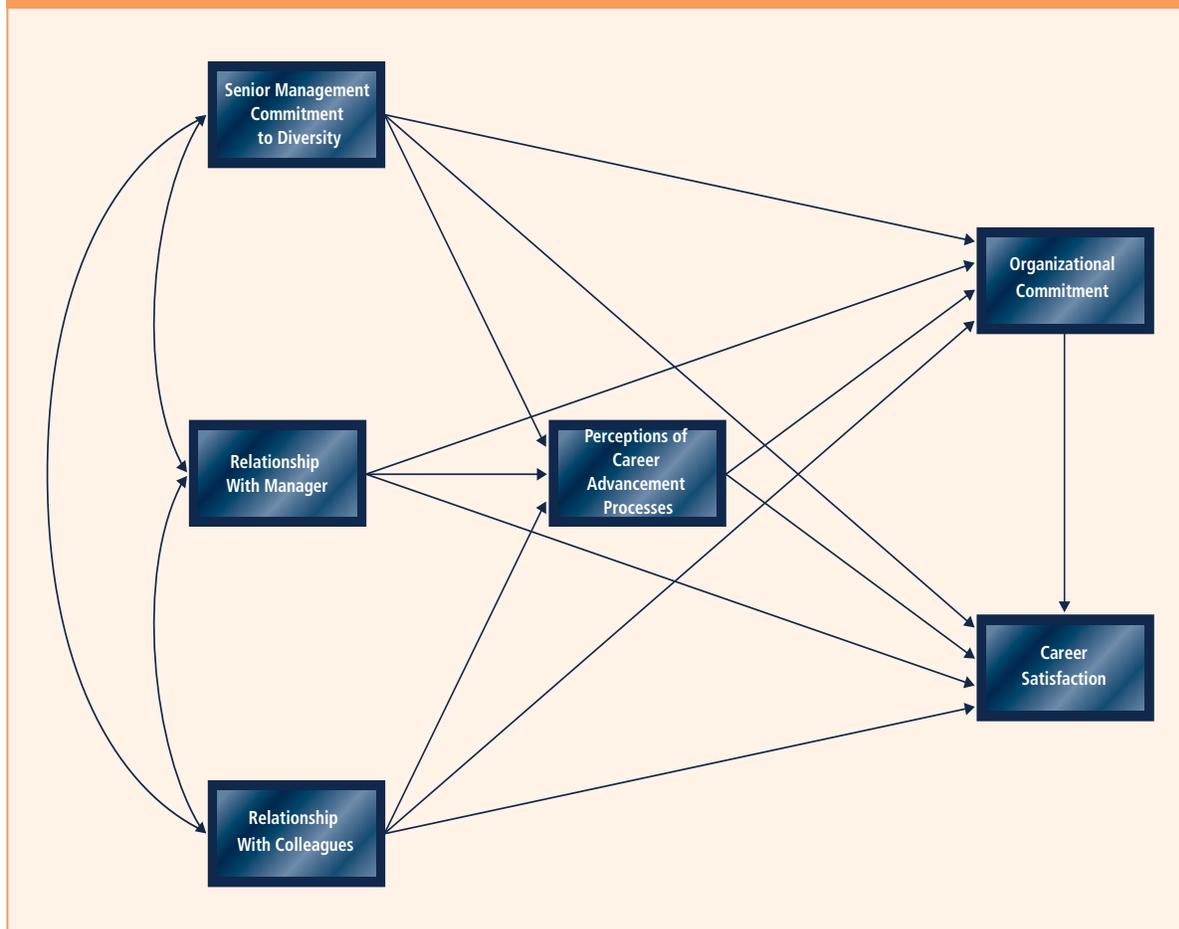
Throughout the report, logistic regressions were conducted to explore the relationships between these potential predictors and the likelihood of a respondent agreeing to a particular survey item. Ordinary least squares regressions were also employed when analyzing average scores on composite variables. Regressions allow us to observe the net effects of gender or self-identified group with all of these predictors at the same time. For example, this technique allows us to establish if and how one's self-identified group is associated with agreeing with a certain survey item, controlling for all other characteristics.

## APPENDIX 5: STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING (SEM) ANALYSES

Structural equation modeling can be used to examine many relationships simultaneously. Specifically, it allows for the examination of the relationships between latent (i.e. inferred) variables, as well as the direction of these relationships (i.e., to indicate that variable A is an antecedent of variable B). The process of model testing can be thought of as both confirmatory and exploratory. For the purposes of this report, SEM was used as a confirmatory tool.

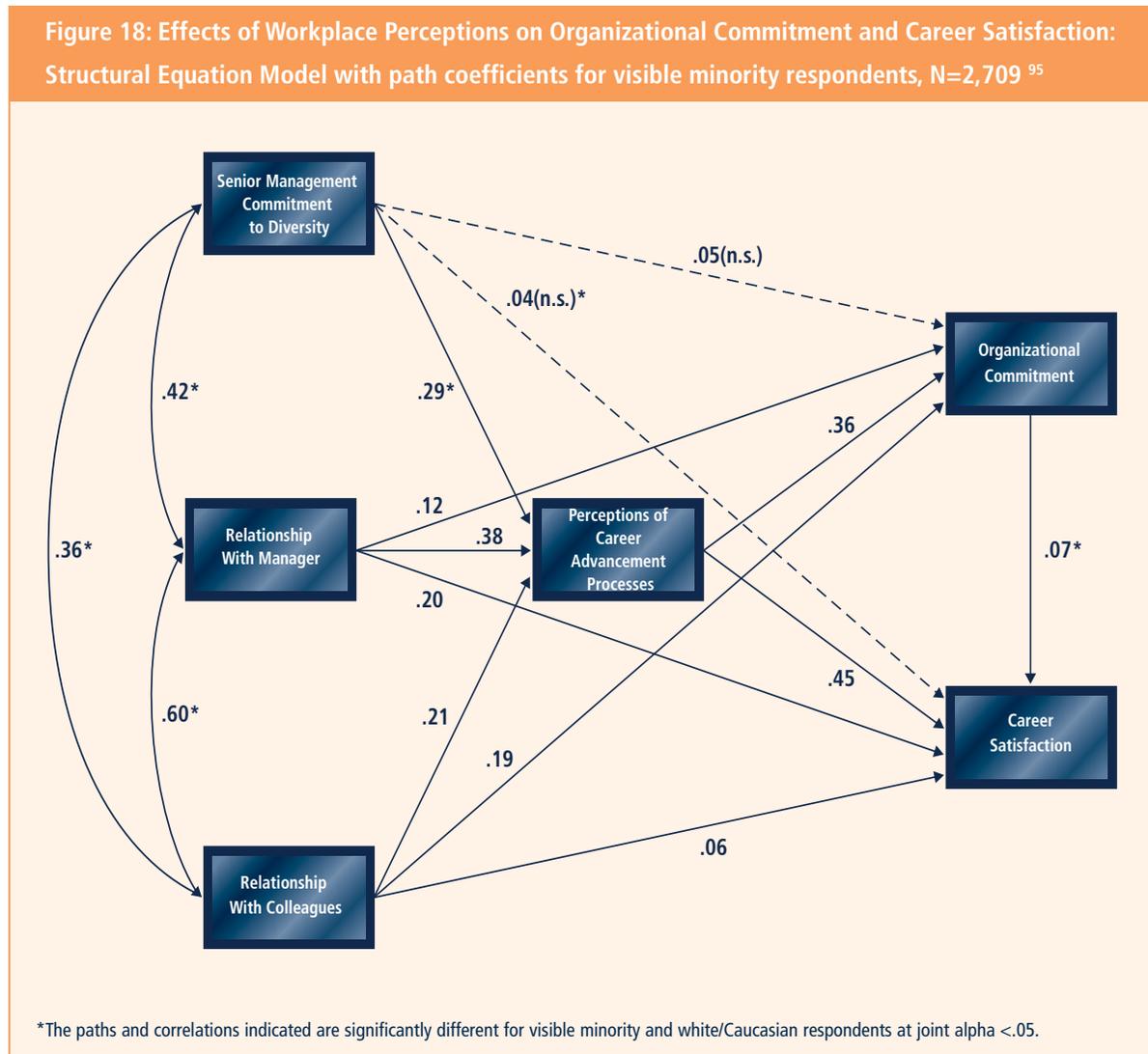
SEM is guided by “a priori” hypotheses and is used to capture the relationships of various perceptual measures on respondents’ outcomes such as organizational commitment and career satisfaction. The model we developed and tested is displayed below in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Fully-Saturated Model—Predictors of Perceptions of Career Advancement, Organizational Commitment, and Career Satisfaction



The three variables on the left-hand side (relationship with manager, relationship with colleagues, and senior management commitment to diversity) are considered “exogenous” or external variables. These variables are allowed to be correlated with each other as they are likely to collectively affect workplace environment and culture.

Due to the high number of survey respondents, the model was set up in a manner that allowed the data to “tell us the story” (i.e., this is a saturated model with no assumption of normal distribution). Results from the SEM analyses allowed us to test whether there were any differences in the relationships between the three exogenous variables and the outcome variables for both white/Caucasian and visible minority respondents.

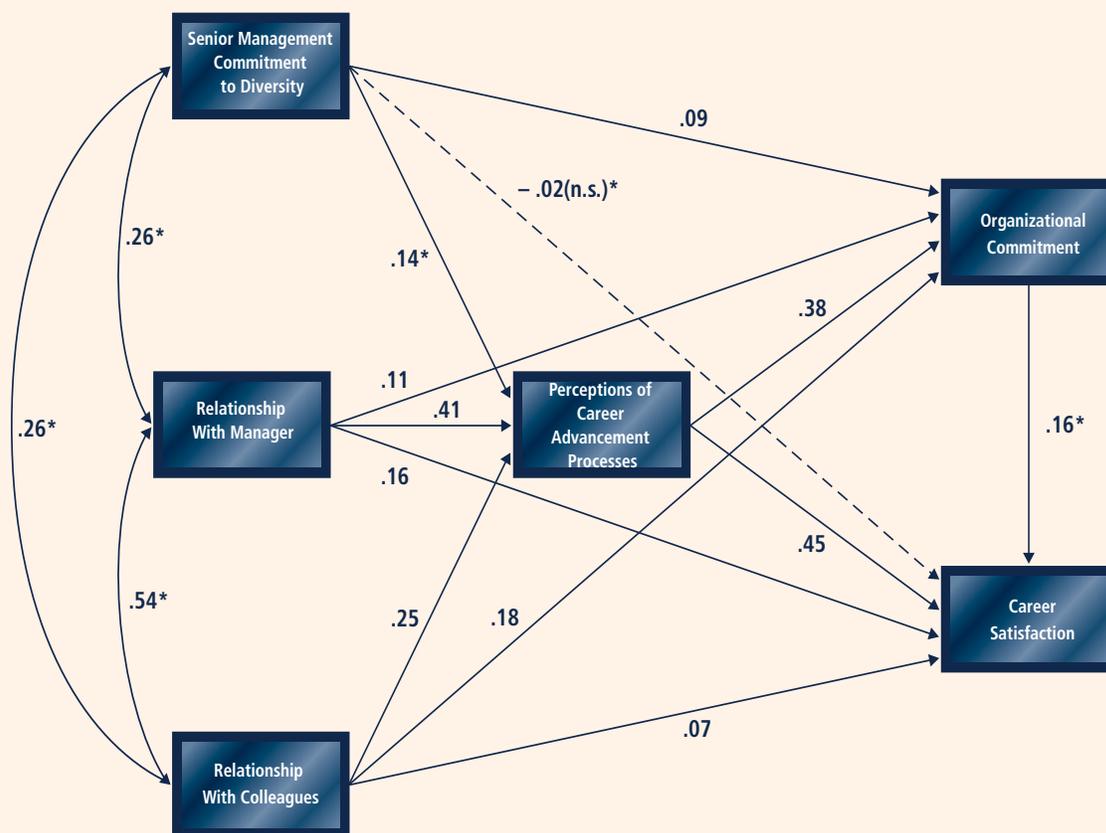


<sup>95</sup> All path coefficients and correlations are significantly different from zero at joint alpha <.05, unless otherwise stated using the indicator (n.s.).

The two SEM path diagrams display the path coefficients for 1) visible minority respondents, and 2) for white/Caucasian respondents. Only respondents who have responded to all the items in each of the included composites were included in these analyses.

Z-scores were calculated to determine the statistical significance of correlations in the model, represented by double-headed curved arrows (for all, joint  $\alpha < .05$ ). Z-scores were then calculated to test differences between white/Caucasians and visible minorities. All correlations between senior management commitment to diversity, relationship with manager, and relationship with colleagues were significantly stronger for visible minorities than for white/Caucasian respondents.

**Figure 19: Effects of Workplace Perceptions on Organizational Commitment and Career Satisfaction: Structural Equation Model with path coefficients for White/Caucasian respondents, N=6,454<sup>96</sup>**



\*The paths and correlations indicated are significantly different for visible minority and white/Caucasian respondents at joint  $\alpha < .05$ .

<sup>96</sup> All path coefficients and correlations are significantly different from zero at joint  $\alpha < .05$ , unless otherwise stated using the indicator (n.s.).



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