



# Women, Leadership and the Priority Paradox

Why so few organizations are getting this right – but those that do are outperforming?

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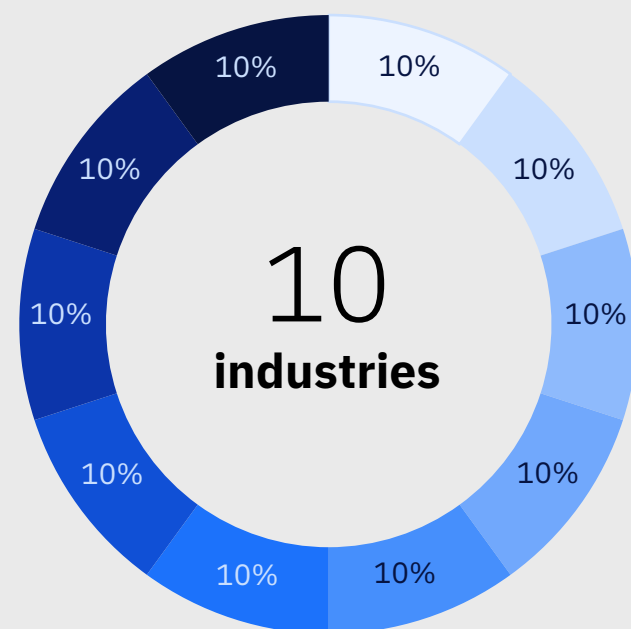
**Digital DNA**  
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Study methodology

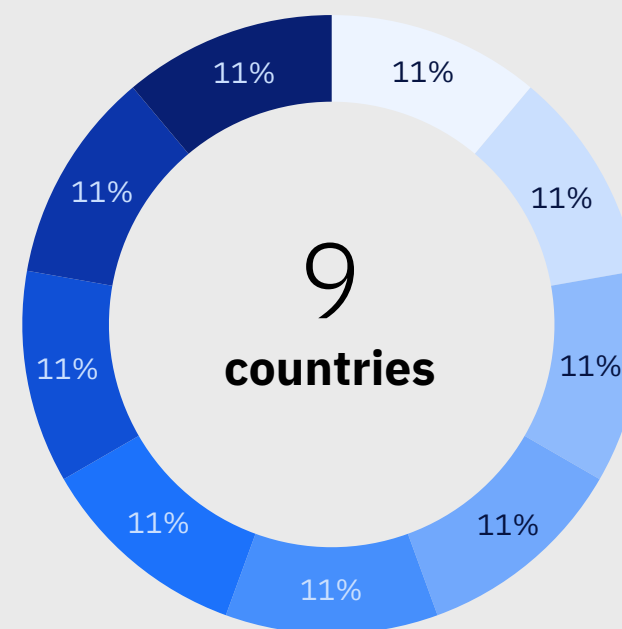
# Demographics of our global respondents

## Industry distribution



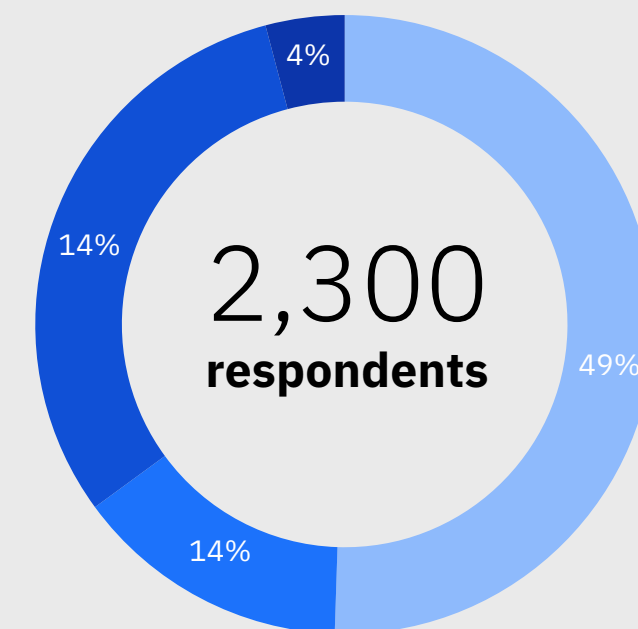
Banking	Insurance
Consumer Products	IT
Education	Manufacturing
Government	Mining
Healthcare	Retail

## Regional distribution



Small gender gap	Nordics
	UK
	Germany
Medium gender gap	US
	Kenya
	Brazil
Large gender gap	China
	Japan
	India

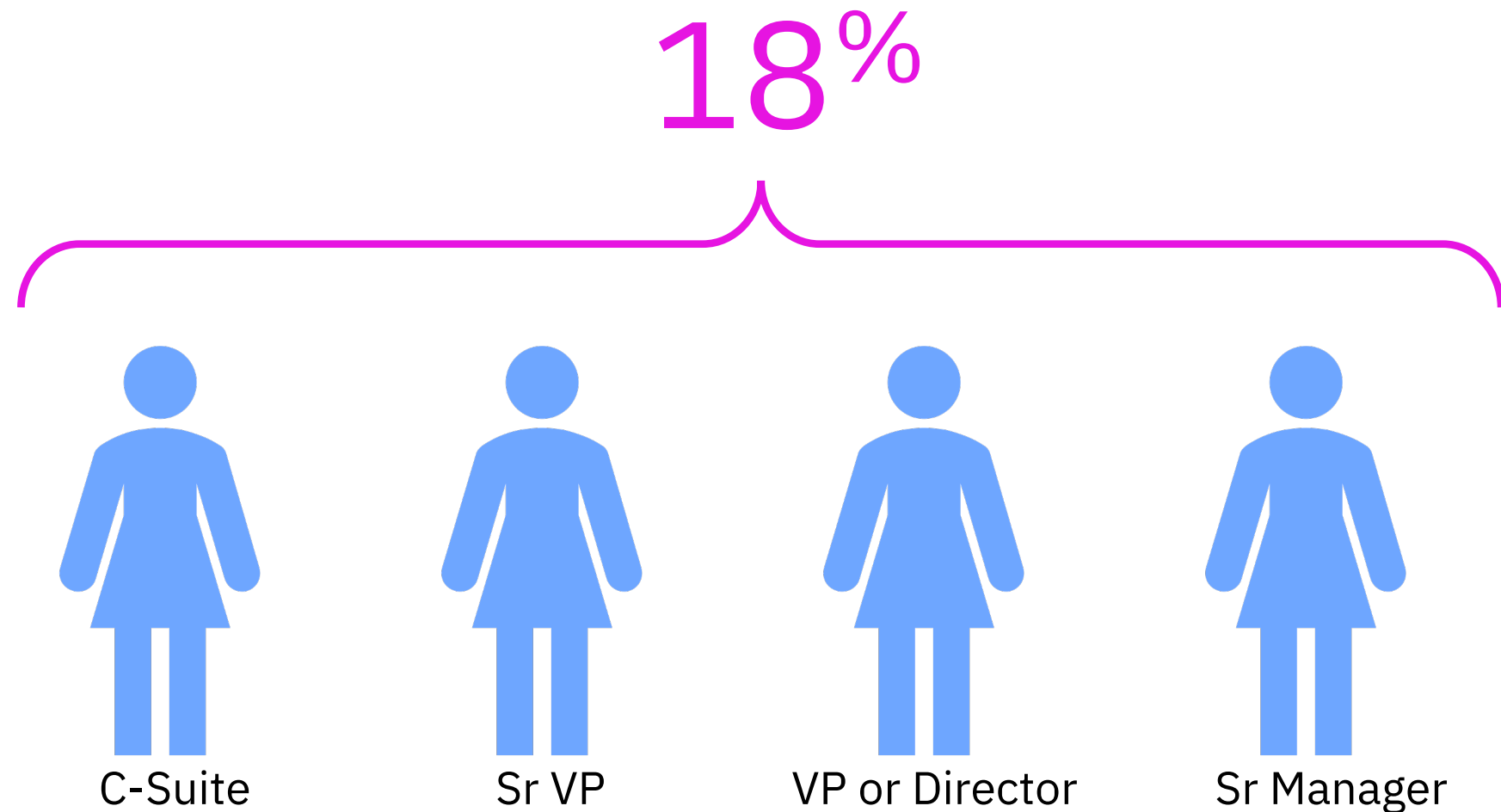
## Role distribution



C-suite
Executives
Managers
Non-managerial professionals

# Why do so few **women** move up the ranks in their companies?

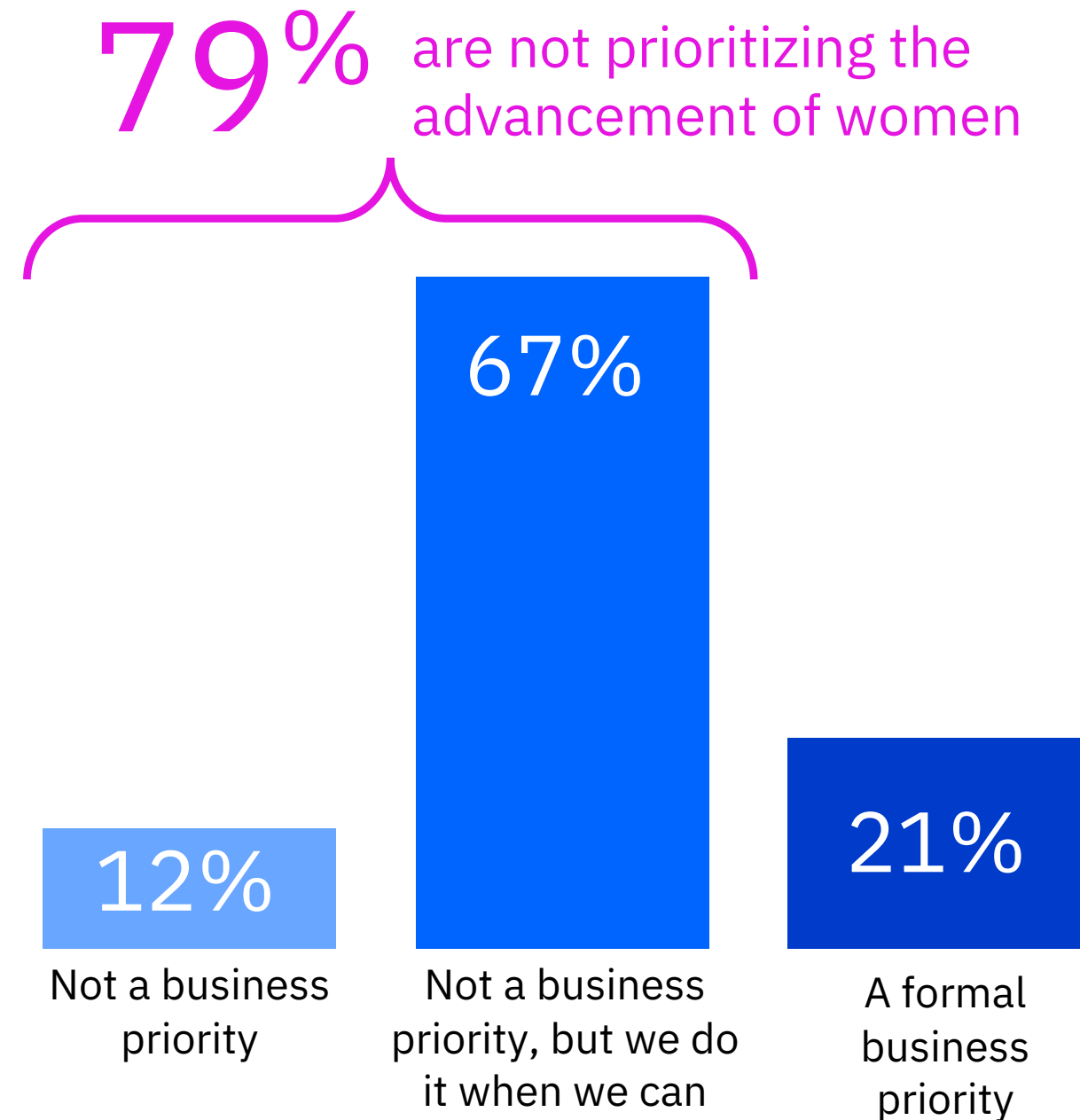
**Average  
percentage of  
**women**  
serving as  
top leaders  
in their  
organizations**





**Unless  
advancing  
women is a  
formal  
business  
priority, our  
findings  
indicate  
progress will  
be negligible**

**To what extent is your organization prioritizing the advancement of more women into leadership roles?**



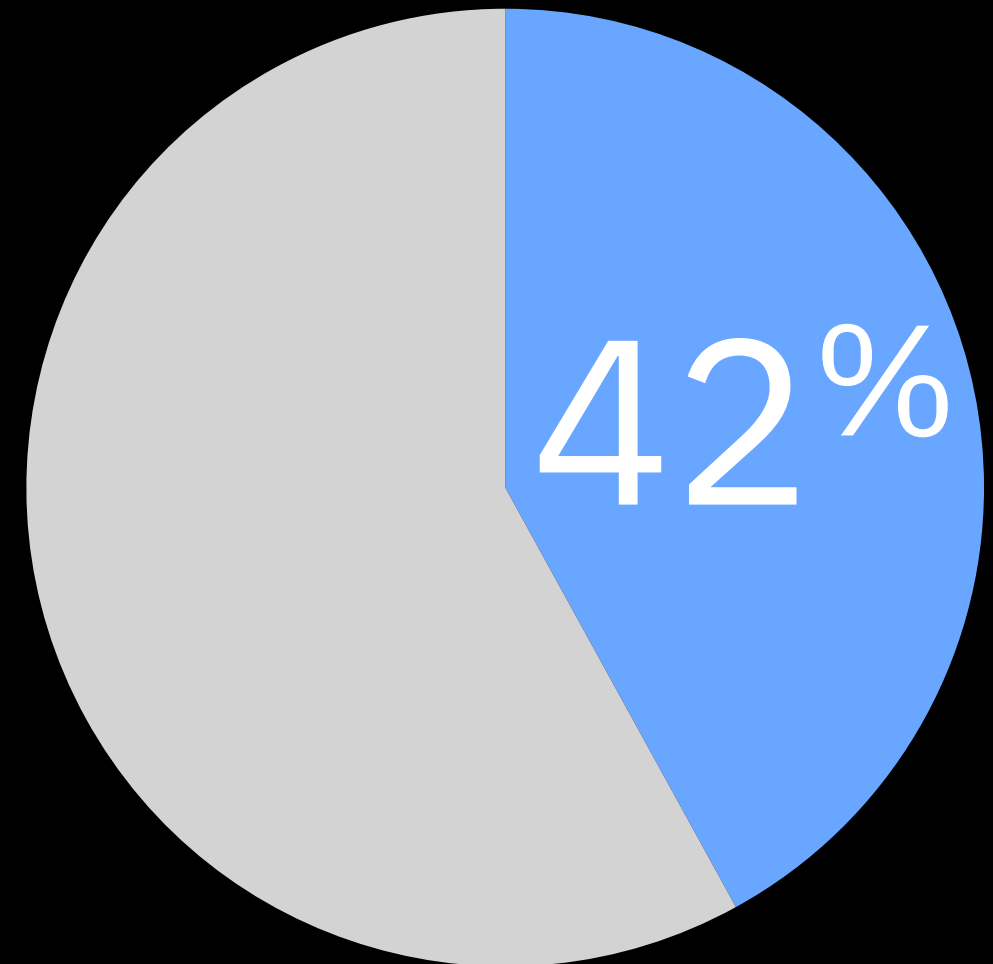
**Three key reasons:**

1

Lingering doubt that  
advancement of  
women will produce  
financial returns

**To what extent do you agree that gender-  
inclusive organizations are more successful?**

Percent selecting *neither* yes nor no



**Three key reasons:**

2

Kicking the can  
down the road

**Only**

**27%**

**of survey respondents  
say achieving gender  
equality is a challenge  
for their organization**

**Respondents are essentially saying,**

***“This is not our problem to solve.”***

**How long will it take your industry to exhibit an equal balance of women and men across all leadership levels?**

Average estimated by respondents

**54**  
**years**

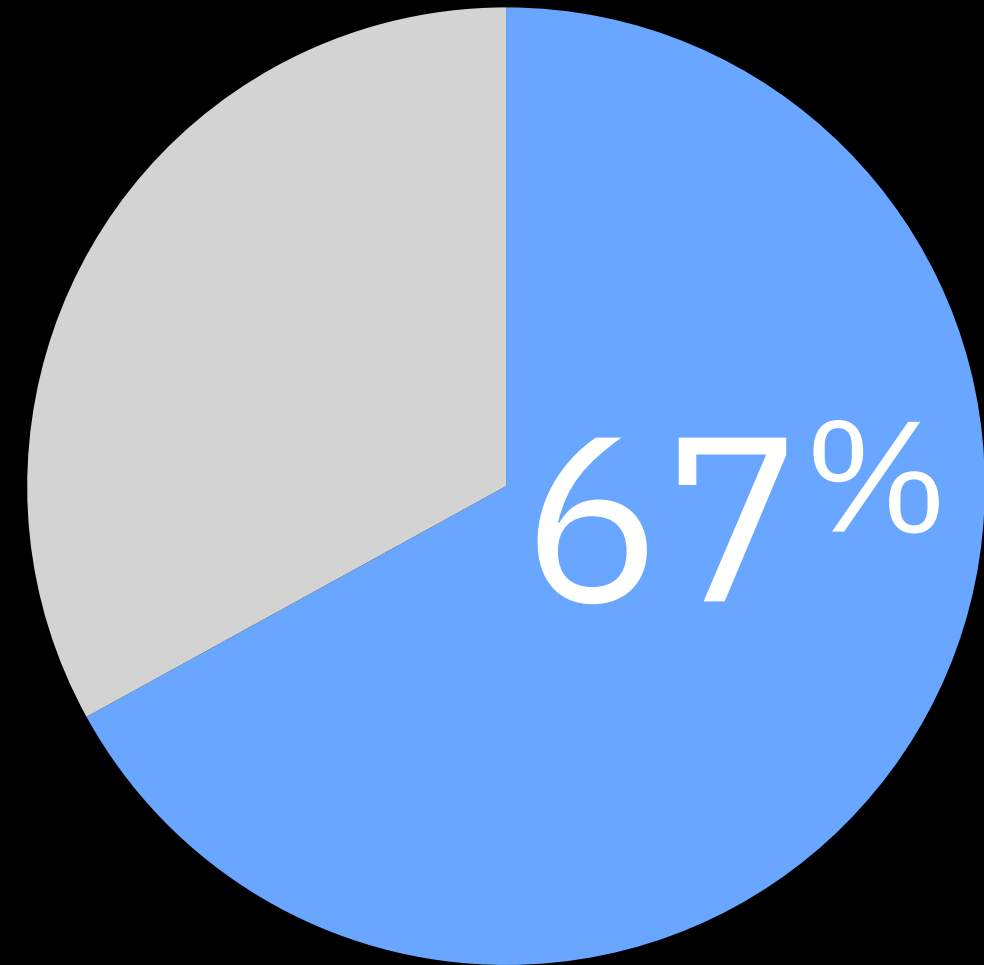
## Three key reasons:

3

The role men play

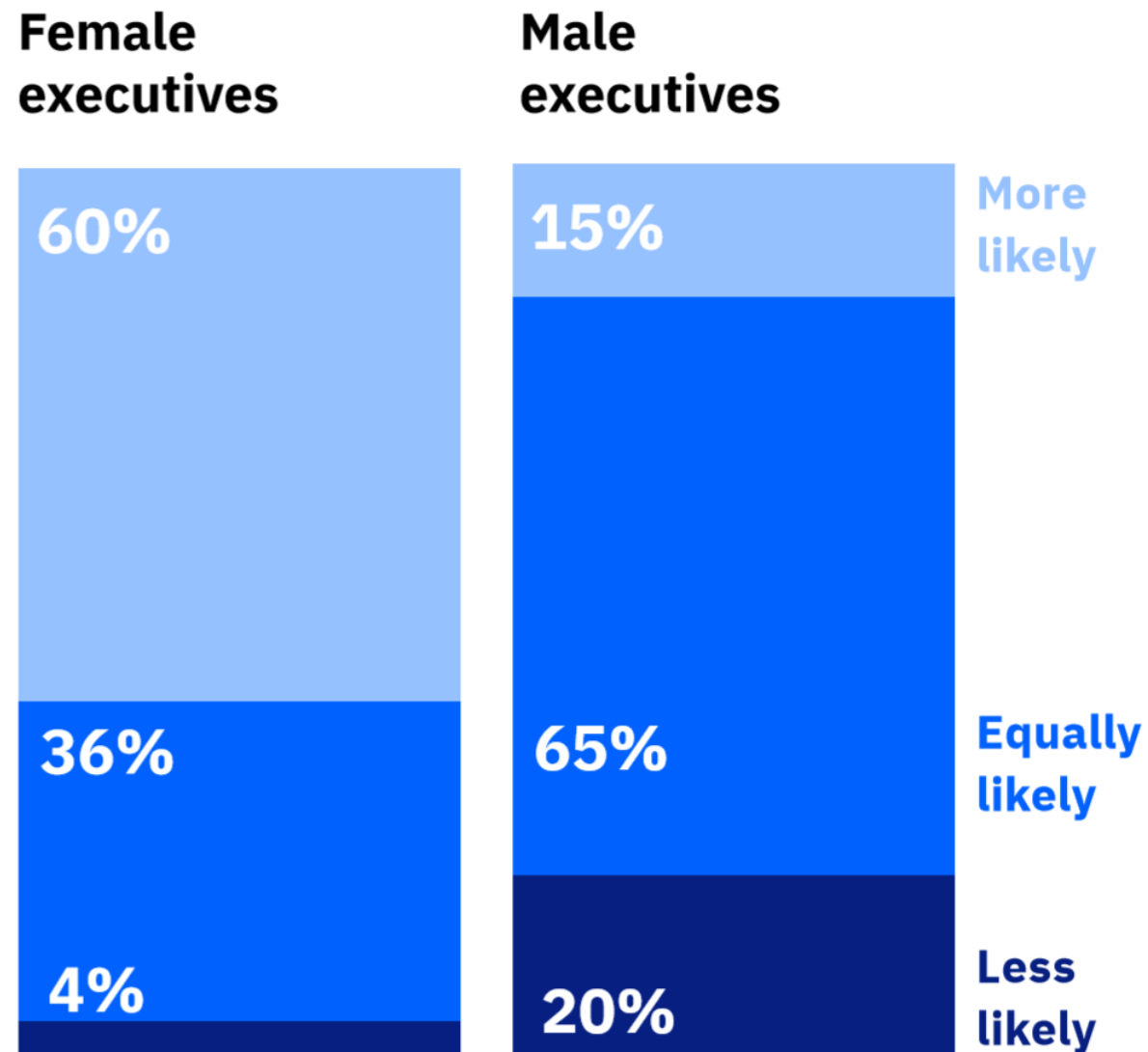
**Generally speaking, do you think your career would have been different if you had been born the opposite gender?**

Percentage of men who say, no, their careers would have been the same, regardless of gender





**How likely is it that you would have been promoted to a top leadership role had you been born the opposite gender?**

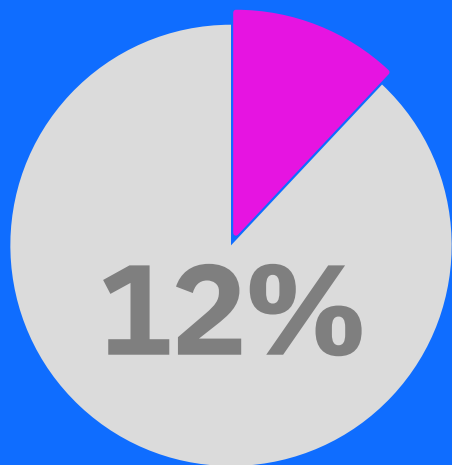


**Perhaps the most surprising evidence of men underappreciating the depth of gender bias is illustrated in the easily measurable area of compensation**

**68%** of men say their pay would be the same, even if they were women

Despite these hurdles, some organizations are far more dedicated to advancing women within their leadership ranks

## First movers



# 1

They are  
serious  
about  
gender  
inclusion

# 2

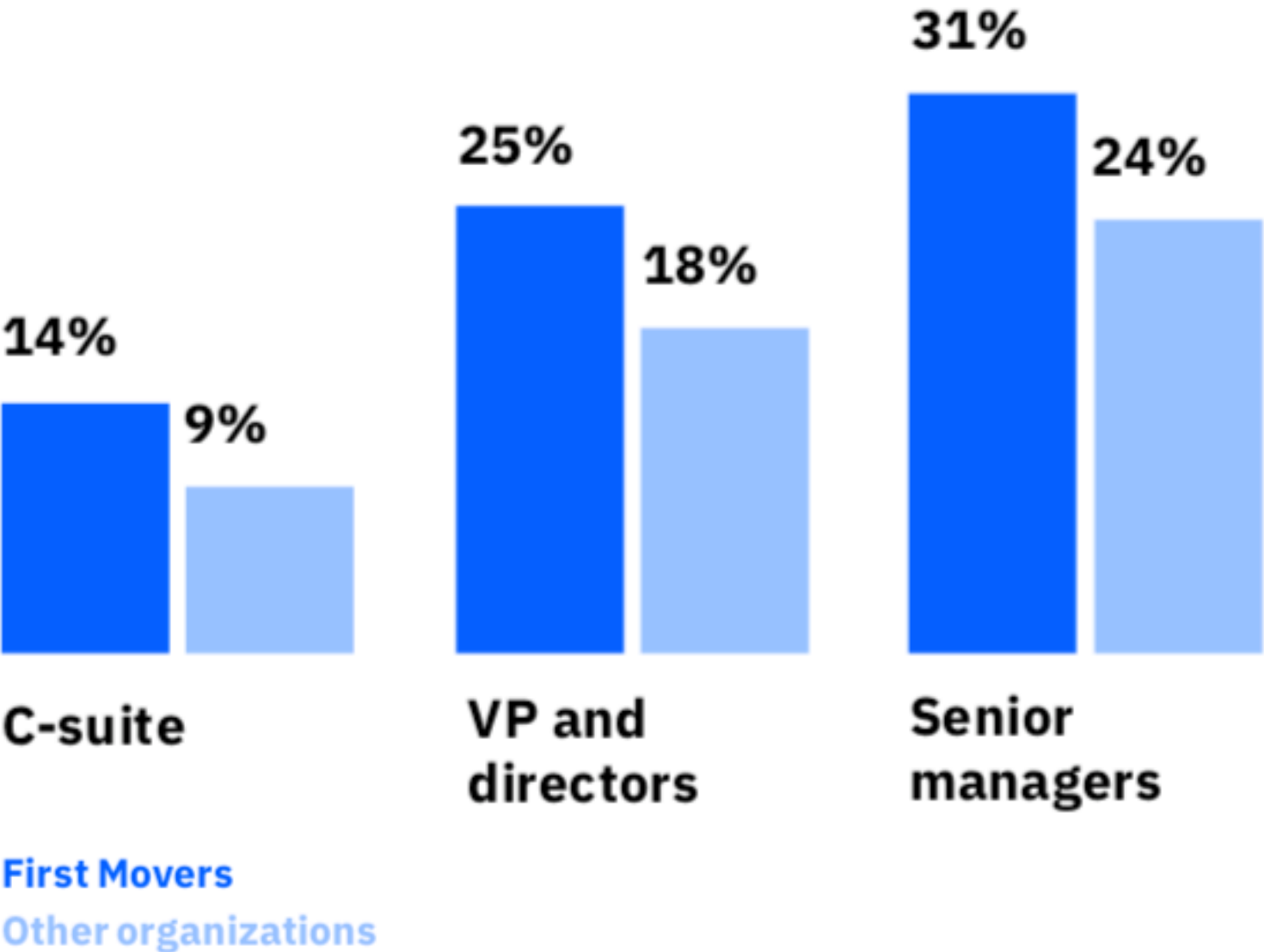
They are  
motivated by  
the promise  
of financial  
improvement

# 3

They  
acknowledge  
and embrace  
their  
responsibility  
to take action

**First Movers’  
dedication to  
the  
advancement  
of women is  
already  
having a  
positive  
impact.**

# Average percentage of female leaders

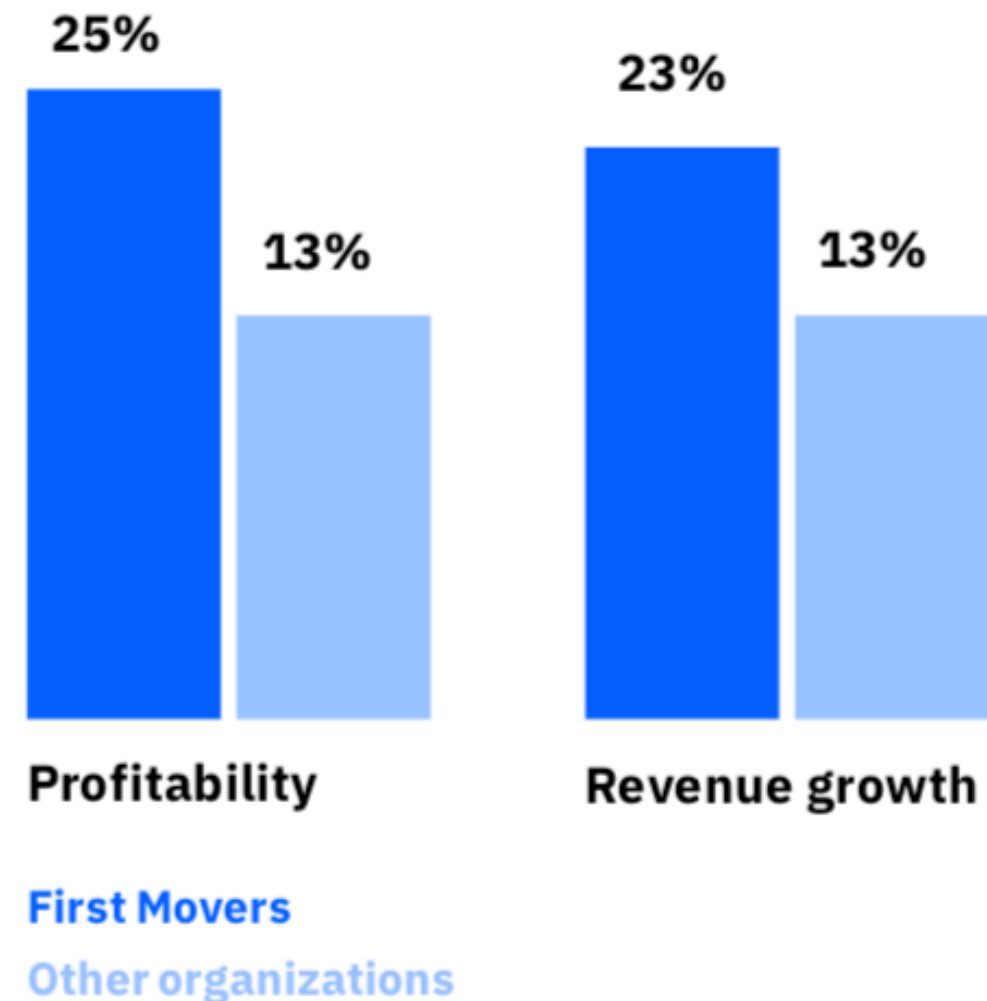


**A number of First Movers are outperforming their competition financially and in terms of:**

- **Gender equality**
- **Employee satisfaction**
- **Innovation**

## First Movers outperform their competition in two key financial metrics

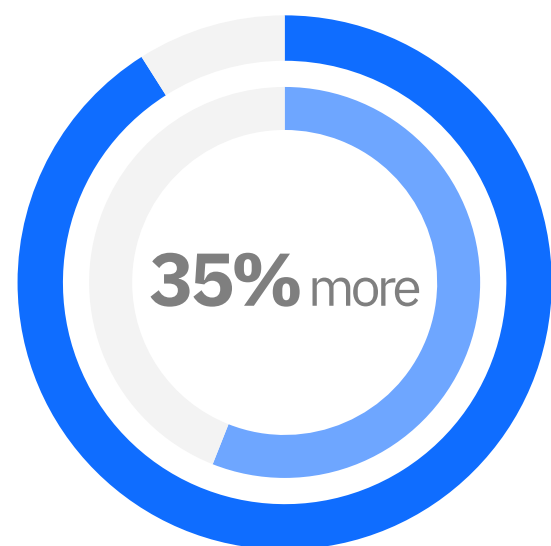
Percentage of respondents reporting their organizations significantly outperformed their competition for the last 3 years



# First Movers take these actions to help advance women so all employees have an equal chance to further their careers

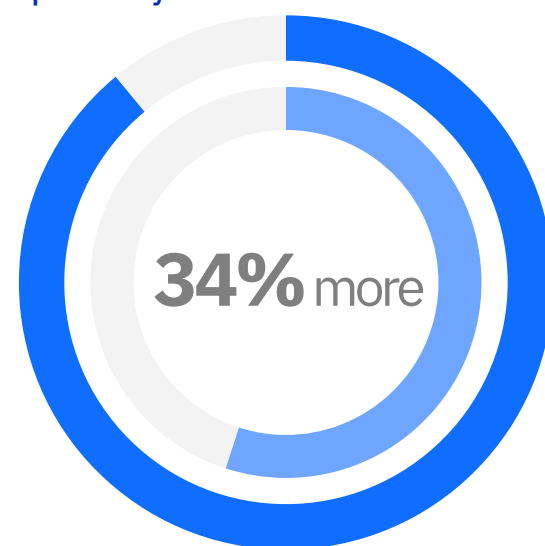
Our analysis uncovered the four actions that far more First Movers embrace than other organizations in our survey

1. Provides career development planning specific to women's needs



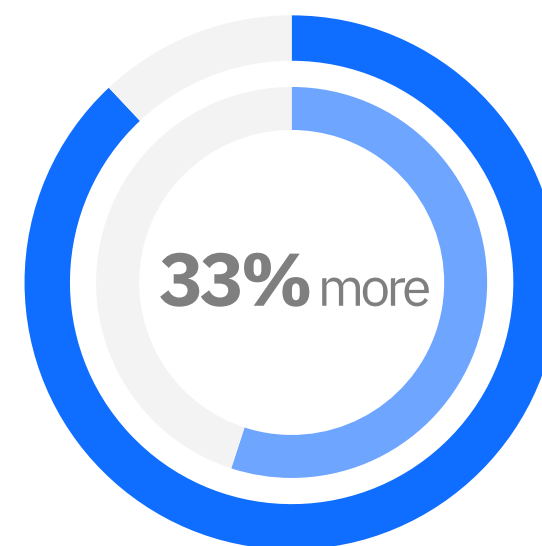
91% | 56%  
First Movers | Other Organizations

2. Uses the same metrics for men's and women's job performance evaluations and applies them equitably



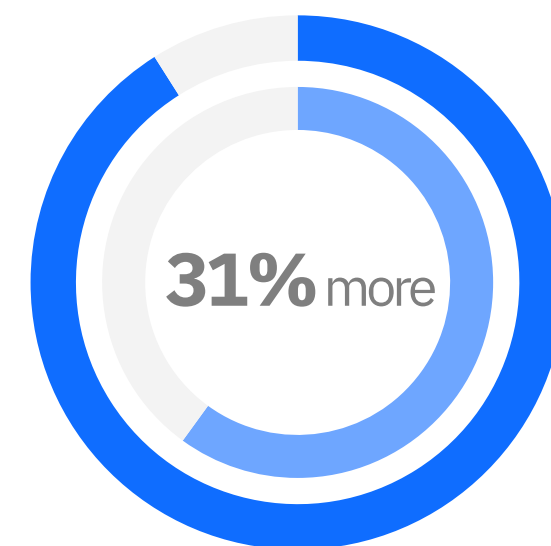
89% | 55%  
First Movers | Other Organizations

3. Provides men and women with equal career opportunities



88% | 55%  
First Movers | Other Organizations

4. Works hard to create a culture that embraces women's leadership styles



91% | 60%  
First Movers | Other Organizations

**The qualities  
its leaders  
display say a  
lot about an  
organization's  
corporate  
culture.**

For First Movers, the traditional leadership style of “command and control” has given way to the power of collective creativity to solve problems.

As a result, First Movers look for leaders who are team players invested in helping less experienced employees perform well and grow.

**The leadership qualities that First Movers value include a mix of analytical and interpersonal skills and enablement**



**1.** Results-oriented



**2.** Collaborative



**2.** Strategic thinker



**2.** Analytical, logical, objective

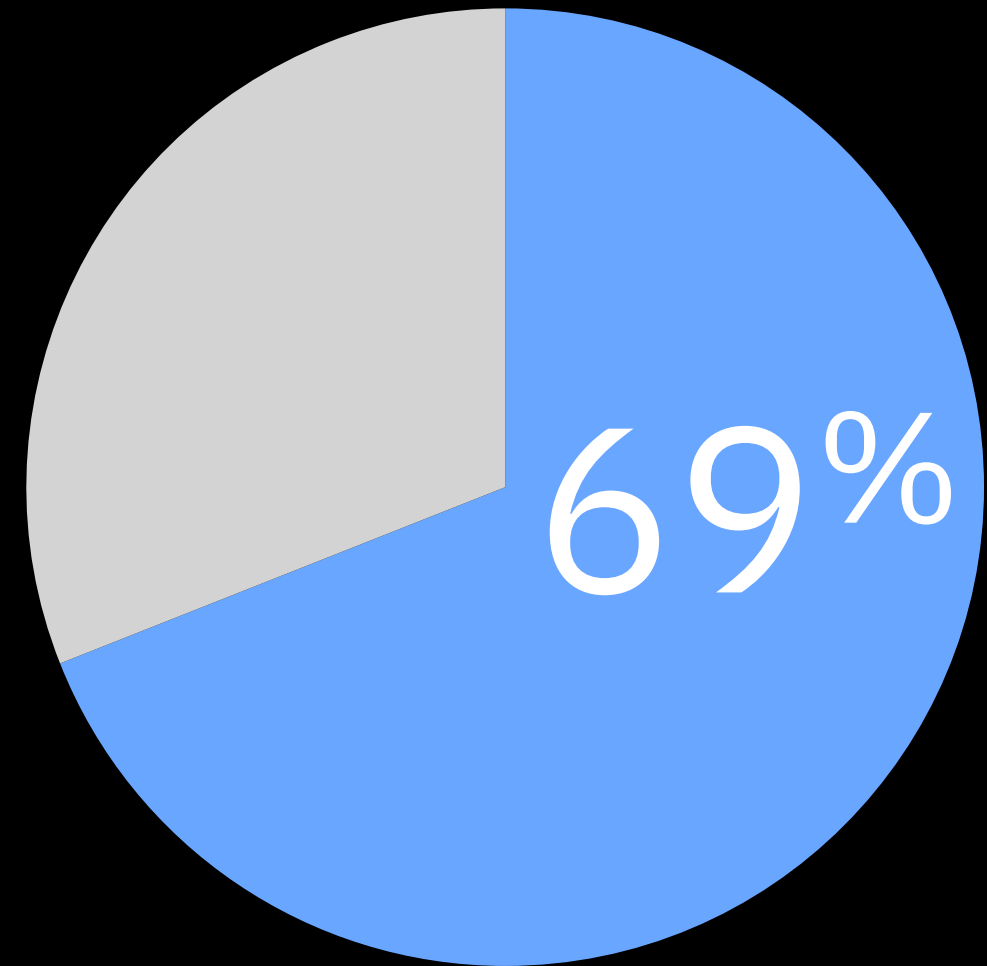


**3.** Committed mentor



**We are optimistic  
more organizations  
will make the  
advancement of  
women a priority  
because it is good for  
business**

**My organization will significantly improve  
gender equality over the next five years**



# Talent is your competitive advantage

In 2018, more women than men graduated with doctoral and master's degrees for the tenth straight year in the US.

Highly skilled women will seek out companies with inclusive corporate cultures where they can grow their careers.





Gaining momentum for change

# Customers buy from businesses that share their values

64% of consumers select or avoid a brand based on where it stands on political or social issues

Women drive 70% to 80% of consumer purchasing

40% of employees with B2B purchasing authority are women





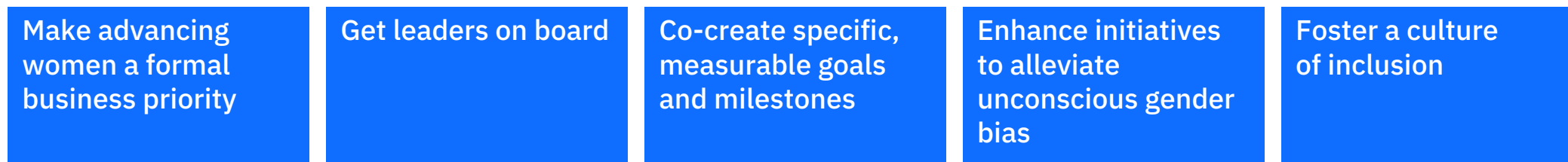
# Gender diversity leads to innovation

More women in leadership introduces a diversity of creative thought, innovation, and insight



# To unlock the rewards of gender equity, you need to implement concrete initiatives with performance goals and incentives

## First Movers roadmap



**Yes!**  
*The sooner the better!*

**Yes!**  
*Leaders own all our business priorities, this one included*

**Yes!**  
*You get what you measure*

**Yes!**  
*We are continually working to make improvements*

**Yes!**  
*Create a workplace where all talent can thrive*

**Decisions to Make**

**1** Is advancing women into leadership roles a business priority?

**2** Are leaders accountable?

**3** Are there specific goals?

**4** Are processes designed for parity?

**5** Are your best people retained as future leaders?

**No.**  
*But it's nice to do when we can*

**No.**  
*Not necessary*

**No.**  
*Keep goals general, vague*

**No.**  
*It's OK, we are doing enough*

**Sure.**  
*But what's important is finding a leader who's the "right fit"*

Create programs without teeth

Trust leaders will do what they can

Avoid making changes that expose challenges or disrupt the status quo

Make an effort to have at least a few female candidates for key openings

Hire/promote leaders who look, think and act like current leaders

**More women leaders throughout your organization**

## Path others take

Little to no change, despite the best intentions



“The single most important thing organizations get wrong about achieving gender parity is that it will happen naturally. It won’t.”

*Ginni Rometty, IBM Chairman, President and CEO*





