



# Gender equality in the UK

The next stage of the journey

By Darci Darnell and Orit Gadiesh

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## Gender equality in the UK: The next stage of the journey

Over the last 50 years, gender equality has transformed our society.

No longer are specific jobs reserved for men or for women. Our universities are close to having true gender parity in admissions, and the traditional family model is increasingly being redefined for modern attitudes and working styles—in fact, stay-at-home fathers whose spouse goes out to work now accounts for 10% of UK families. Nearly 20% of board members in the FTSE 350 are women. We've come a long way and a lot has been achieved.

However, despite all this progress, both men and women are starting to recognise and worry that we're still a long way off achieving true gender equality in this country. Within wider business leadership roles, the speed of change has been slower. Men still account for 85% of senior executives, and there is only one female CEO running a FTSE 100 company.

Bain & Company's survey of more than 800 UK professionals shows that whilst many organisations have gender parity programmes, the results of these initiatives are mixed. At the same time, as attracting and retaining the best talent is increasingly seen as key to business success, companies more than ever need to support women and prevent women from opting out.

So, what is it that is holding women back? What needs to be done?

We've identified three issues that are impeding progress:

- Many male leaders believe the playing field is now level and that gender parity no longer needs to be a corporate priority. The data doesn't agree with this view. And neither do women.
- Top executives, especially men with non-working spouses, need to better understand the challenges that women and dual-career couples face.
- Leadership behaviours and attitudes need to better reflect the importance of inclusion, and leaders need to have the confidence to promote individuals from a different mould.

Changing corporate culture and leadership behaviours is hard. However, there are a number of actions that men, women and companies can and must do if we truly want to promote equality and gender parity.

- CEOs and executives need to develop a genuine understanding of the challenges faced by women, identify the behaviours that encourage women to succeed—and then apply that knowledge to each action and decision they make.
- Women in turn, need to help executives understand the behaviours that encourage them to succeed, and proactively work with their sponsors to create and promote their shared success stories.
- Companies need to continue to strengthen their gender parity programmes.

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To many, creating gender equality is about being fair. But for business, it's about access to talent. Our research shows that effective gender parity efforts increasingly make the workplace better for women and men. Both benefit from programmes that support flexibility and ease the juggling act of professional and personal obligations, and programmes look less like special treatment and more like the norm when men also take advantage of them.

It may seem ironic, but that fact that both genders will benefit from 'gender parity programmes' may just make them more likely to be a success. Companies that nurture their talented women today will also support men with those same programmes and approaches as traditional family roles continue to evolve. In the end, creating the right environment and the right platform for talent to succeed, irrespective of gender, will be key to the future success of any business.



Darci Darnell  
Partner



Orit Gadiesh  
Chairman

## Few UK companies are led by women

Most women in the UK are dissatisfied with their jobs, according to a Bain & Company survey. Too many are stuck in middle management positions or opt out of career advancement because they lack corporate support to balance family obligations with professional aspirations. Many companies offer gender parity programmes aimed to keep talented women engaged with their careers, but these programmes haven't solved the problem.

Now family dynamics are changing. There are more dual-income households as more women pursue careers that are as demanding as their husbands'. And increasingly, the struggle to balance work and family—traditionally a challenge faced mostly by women—is affecting men as well. The gender parity programmes that sought to address these pressures for women are now necessary for all employees. And recognizing this cultural shift will give companies the competitive edge they need to attract and retain top talent.

But there's a lot of work to be done before companies can enjoy those benefits. The existing programmes don't advance women's careers, and until they do, they won't help men either. Bain's 2013 survey of 820 British men and women, at all career levels, suggests that although many companies provide gender parity programmes, those programmes aren't succeeding due to the lack of leaders supporting them and failure of both sexes to commit to changing their behaviours.

While UK companies have made a collective effort at the board level, women are still under-represented in executive management positions. Today, 97% of the CEOs at FTSE 350 companies are men; only 11 CEOs at those companies are women. Not every woman aspires to be a CEO, of course. But even among senior executives, only one in five are women. These numbers show that too many women's careers are stalling before they reach their full potential. The British government,

in an effort to promote gender parity, recently commissioned a report outlining a series of best practices to help women advance in their careers. It called on companies to set voluntary targets to double the number of women on FTSE 100 boards over five years, from 12.5% in 2010 to 25% by 2015. Yet despite the increasing focus on gender parity at British companies, the ratio of men to women in top positions remains deeply unbalanced (*see Figure 1*).

Notwithstanding the evidence that gender equality throughout the ranks produces real business benefits, fewer than half of the male respondents in Bain's survey felt it should be a strategic issue at their companies—perhaps because well over half of this group also believes that women already have the same opportunities as men for promotion to senior management positions. That's in sharp contrast with women's perceptions: More than half of women respondents said gender parity should be a strategic priority at their companies, but fewer than half believe they have equal opportunity for advancement (*see Figure 2*).

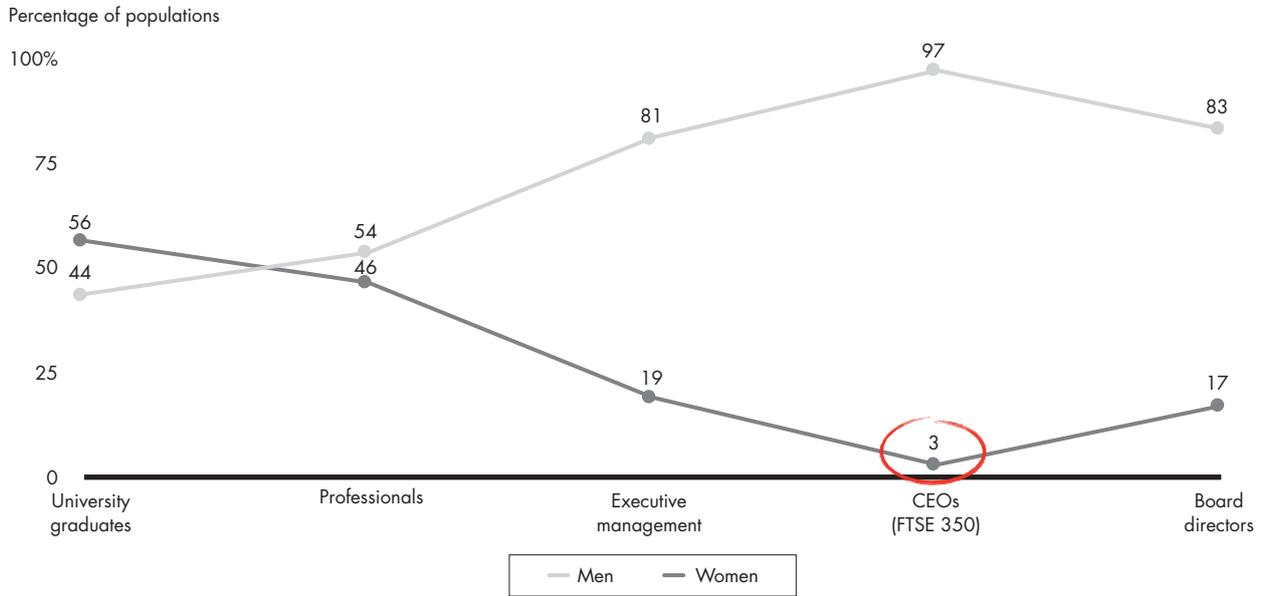
The perception among a majority of men that the playing field is already level often leads to a lack of support for gender parity programmes—and unsatisfactory results. In fact, Bain's survey shows that the most satisfied employees are senior-level men with supportive spouses who don't work. In other words, those with the most power to effect change are those least aware of the challenges faced by dual-income families or women balancing work and home.

## Barriers to success

The majority of university graduates in the UK are women. These talented individuals find jobs as easily as their male peers, but they soon encounter two barriers—structure and style—that make advancement difficult (*see Figure 3*).

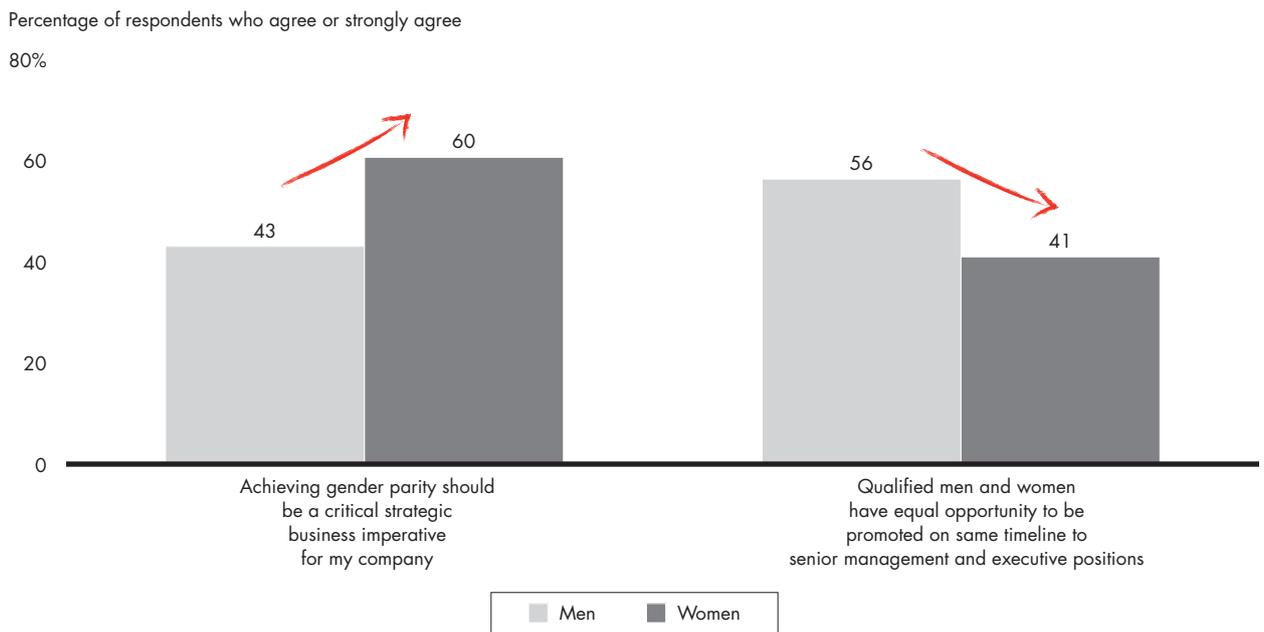
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Figure 1: There are too few women in top leadership positions in UK companies



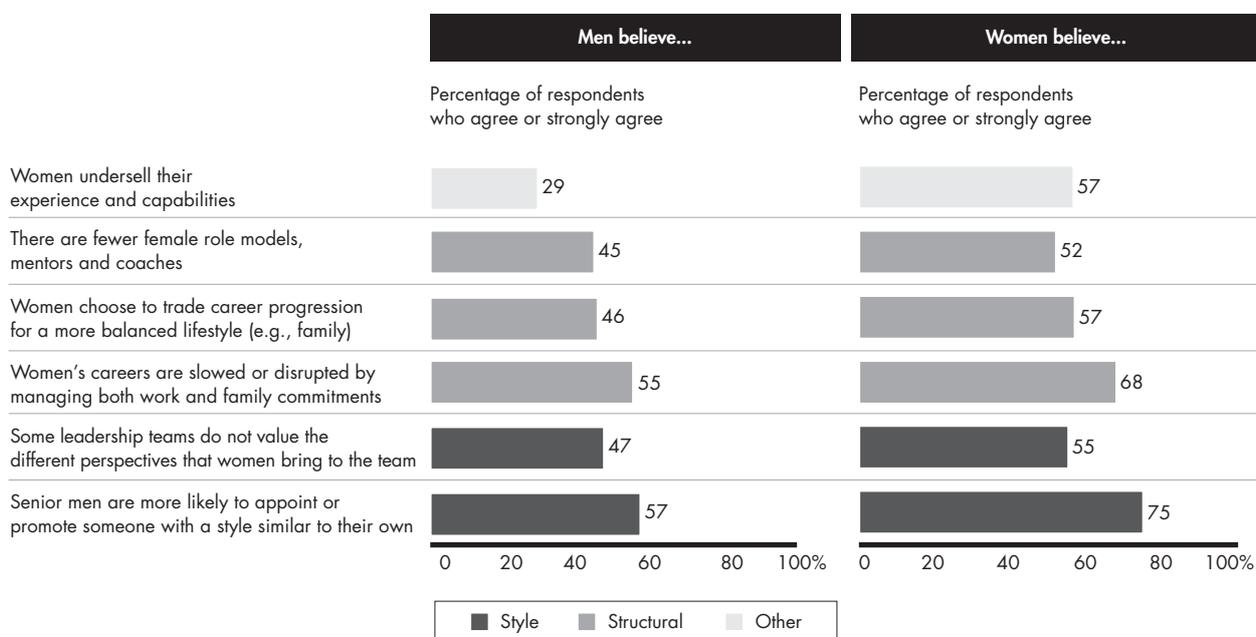
Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency, HESA student record for 2011/12; Office of National Statistics, 'EMP16: All in Employment by Status, Occupation & Sex: Quarter 2 (April - June 2011)'; High Pay Centre/Guardian, 'Boardroom Diversity: Quotas are not helping women into senior management,' December 2012; Thorburn McAlister and University of Southampton, 'FTSE 350 Board Review 2013'

Figure 2: Men and women disagree about the role of gender parity in the workplace



Source: 2013 UK Gender Parity survey (n=820)

Figure 3: Men and women agree that there are structural challenges and style barriers to overcome



Source: 2013 UK Gender Parity survey (n=820)

The structural barrier that women encounter is the need to balance work and family commitments, which slows the progression of their careers. And while this issue increasingly affects both sexes, it still has a highly disproportionate effect on women. Balancing domestic responsibilities with professional obligations often causes women to opt out of opportunities to take on broader or more challenging roles at work. One respondent told us, ‘Taking time out when having children takes women “off the ladder”. They tend to be the primary caregivers, balancing childcare with work. They look for less challenging roles with a better life-work balance.’

And women who opt for less challenging roles tend to do so because of they lack support or encouragement from their companies. ‘British workplaces do not have an institutionalised approach to balancing work and family life,’ said one respondent. ‘As a result, men lose

out on family life by choosing a career and women lose out in their careers by choosing family.’

Having a non-working, supportive spouse frees many executives from the dissatisfaction that affects employees who are attempting to strike this balance (see the sidebar, ‘Your partner’s job deeply influences your happiness with your employer’), but this is perhaps one more indication that current workplace structures are designed for a traditional family structure, which is no longer dominant. In fact, two-thirds of two-adult households in the UK are now dual income, according to a report from the Resolution Foundation’s Commission on Living Standards.

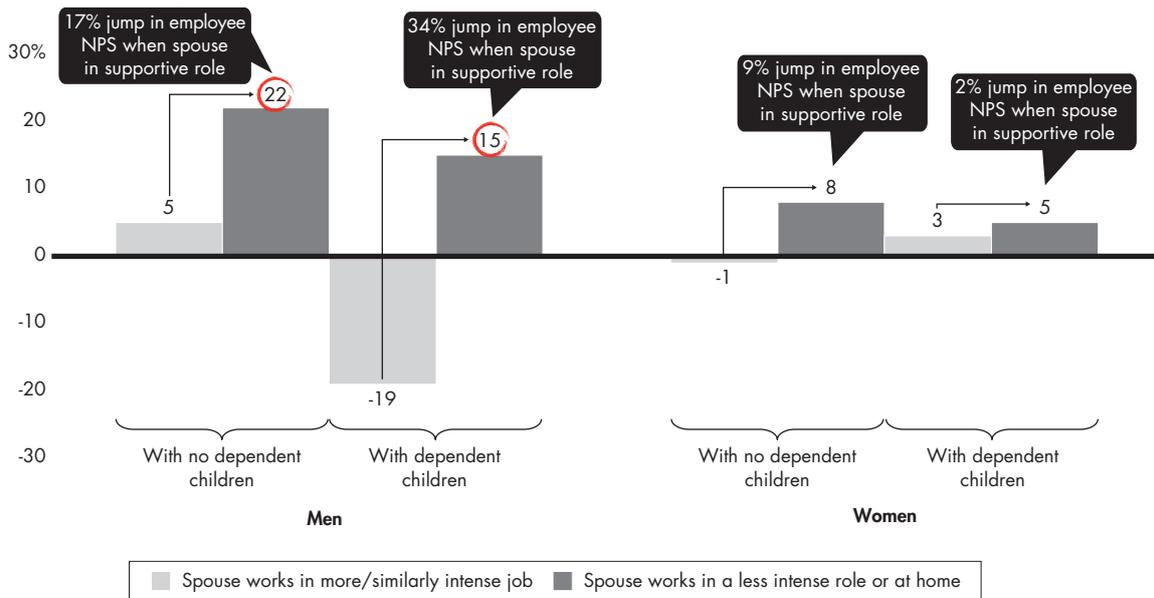
Other workplace traditions also create barriers for women. Gender stereotypes persist, of course. The fact that both men and women have biases—intentional and unintentional—is well established, and preconceived

## Your partner's job deeply influences your happiness with your employer

Men hold the top positions in the majority of companies. For these men, the home and children are frequently the primary responsibility of their spouses. And that has a huge effect on their job satisfaction: Our survey shows that married men with dependent children and a spouse who doesn't work outside of the home feel very satisfied with their jobs. They had an employee Net Promoter Score<sup>SM</sup> (NPS<sup>®</sup>) of 15. Compare that with married men whose wives work and who are therefore more likely to take on domestic and childcare responsibilities. Like women, those men have difficulties juggling the two roles—and their employee loyalty suffers as a result. Their employee NPS plummets to negative 19 (see figure).

### Men's employee NPS jumps significantly with a supportive spouse. By contrast, impact on women's employee NPS is very slight

Employee NPS of respondents by life stage



Source: 2013 UK Gender Parity survey (n=455 men, 365 women)

For women, the trend isn't as pronounced. Having a supportive spouse who takes on domestic responsibilities only increases women's employee NPS by two points (from just three points to five).

Because a majority of senior executives have supportive spouses—and report high levels of satisfaction with their jobs—they may not see the need for gender parity programmes, like flexible schedules. However, upcoming generations of male executives are much more likely to have spouses with equally demanding professional careers. They will pay more attention to what their companies do to support flexible work schedules as they face the same challenges that women with work and home obligations face. The availability of flex options will contribute enormously to how they feel about their employers. Companies must work to make a variety of programmes available for all employees so they are sure to retain the talent they put effort into recruiting and developing.

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notions often lead both sexes to choose a man over a woman in the corporate setting. Yet, a larger problem may simply be differences in leadership style. Both male and female respondents in our survey acknowledged that women are more likely to be overlooked for a role because of their style differences. Long dominated by men, the business world still retains a bias towards the leadership style more commonly possessed by men. In that traditional male culture, senior men are more likely to appoint or promote those with a style similar to their own.

Both men and women agree on the four style attributes that organisations most value and reward. Problem solving is the winner, followed by team building, influencing and inspiring (the last three attributes received roughly the same scores from both women and men).

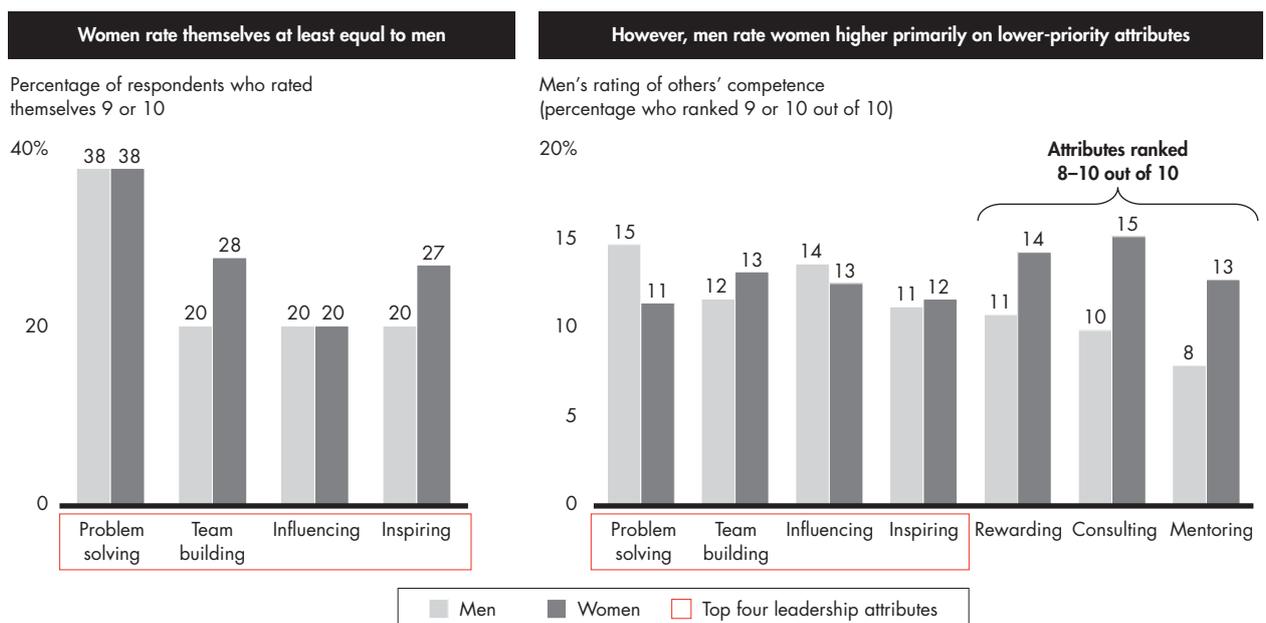
Women are confident that they have the skills their jobs require: They rated themselves equal to or better than

men in each of those four categories and generally felt that other women were also as capable as men (see Figure 4). Men, however, don't agree, reporting that they are significantly better than women at problem solving and influencing others.

While men gave themselves high marks for the most valued skills, they rated women higher on attributes that companies are less likely to emphasise and praise, such as rewarding, consulting and mentoring others. And men are more likely to recognise these skills in women, perhaps because of women's tendency to undersell themselves on the skills that are more valued.

To address that disconnect, women can actively seek to change their own behaviour so their talents aren't overlooked. Women are twice as likely as men to believe that women undersell their experience and capabilities, indicating they have a self-awareness that their behaviour

Figure 4: Women rate themselves highly on key leadership attributes, but men do not necessarily agree



Note: Attributes are in the order that organisations most emphasise and reward  
Source: 2013 UK Gender Parity survey (n=820)

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must change. Men can meet them halfway by looking outside their own style preferences and valuing the skills women innately possess. Incorporating women's skills in the boardroom makes a difference. In an interview, Kumsal Bayazit, Reed Elsevier's chief strategy officer, told us, 'The more diversity in a room, the better the quality of the thinking that comes out of the room. Whether it is gender, religion or ethnicity—it doesn't really matter—the important thing is to have different points of view challenging the thinking.' That approach can lead to faster decision making, better efficiency and more compliance with a business strategy.

Mike Walsh, CEO of Legal and Professional at Lexis-Nexis (part of Reed Elsevier), agrees: 'I believe that by having a critical mass of women on your executive team, you are more confident that you are hearing different points of view. The entire team feels more comfortable and empowered to identify problems and solve them.'

Multinational companies like Unilever are beginning to recognise the benefits of having a more diverse workforce. In January 2013, Catalyst, a nonprofit organisation devoted to furthering women in business, gave Unilever an award for its initiative to expand opportunities that advance women in its workforce. In his acceptance speech, CEO Paul Polman said, 'The benefits of having a gender-balanced organisation are plain to see; it helps power creativity and innovation, deepens the talent pool and allows us to better serve our diverse consumer base.'

### The path to gender parity: Hardware and software

A common school of thought among companies is that offering gender parity programmes is the best way to help women overcome the obstacles that stand between them and senior leadership roles. But to truly achieve their goals, companies need more than just the 'hardware'. For a change effort to be successful, companies

have to combine the hardware with the right software. Our research shows that no corporate gender parity programme can succeed without committed leaders who actively demonstrate desired behaviours and rally support from line managers. When these disparate hardware and software elements are used together—we refer to this process as 'the path to gender parity' (see Figure 5)—they become a way for companies to achieve true, lasting gender diversity.

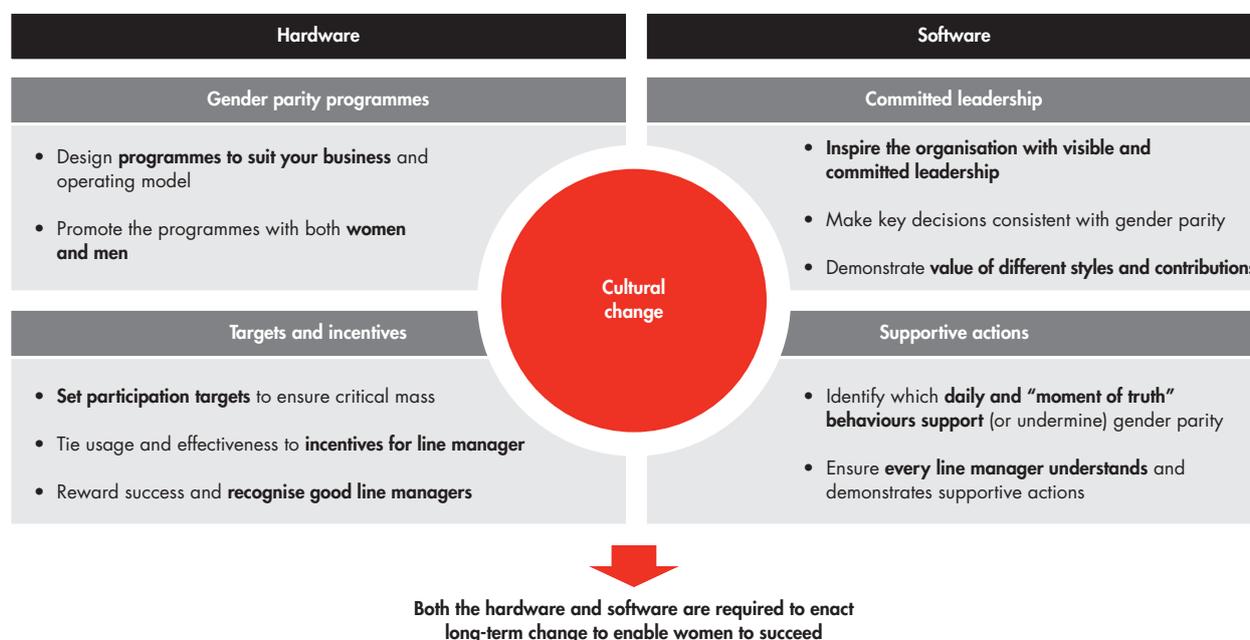
### Gender parity programmes

Let's look at the hardware of gender parity programmes and why the software is essential to make programmes work.

Throughout the UK, well-intentioned companies use a variety of gender parity programmes. The number and penetration of these initiatives vary widely, and the majority of companies offer three or fewer programmes. Here are the most frequently offered programmes:

- **Flexible work arrangements:** flexible working hours, part-time, leaves of absence, working from home (or remotely), job sharing
- **Flexible or non-traditional career paths:** job rotation (across functions, from client-facing roles to internal operations and so on)
- **Networking groups:** affinity-based groups that support building relationships through regular gatherings
- **Formal mentorship and coaching programmes:** mentor/mentee programmes for less experienced employees, aimed at accelerating their professional growth by helping them develop specific skills and knowledge; coaching programmes to develop specific skills for employees' current roles
- **Formal sponsorship programmes:** programmes that foster relationships with sponsors who advocate and fight for their protégés' career advancement

*Figure 5:* Cultural change to foster gender parity requires both the hardware of gender parity programmes and the software of a supportive culture



Source: Bain & Company

Flexible work arrangements have the longest historical precedent and are the most common: Almost 80% of organisations in our survey offer them. But perhaps it’s because most people expect their companies to offer work flexibility that these programmes don’t affect employees’ loyalty and satisfaction as much as others. If flexible work arrangements are not available, however, there is a considerable negative effect on employees’ happiness (see Figure 6).

Formal mentorship and coaching are the second most common programmes, followed by non-traditional career paths. Sponsorships are at the other end of the spectrum, generally because they are difficult to set up and challenging to define. The lack of clarity around sponsorships was obvious in our survey results: Some respondents said they were unsure if their companies have sponsorship programmes.

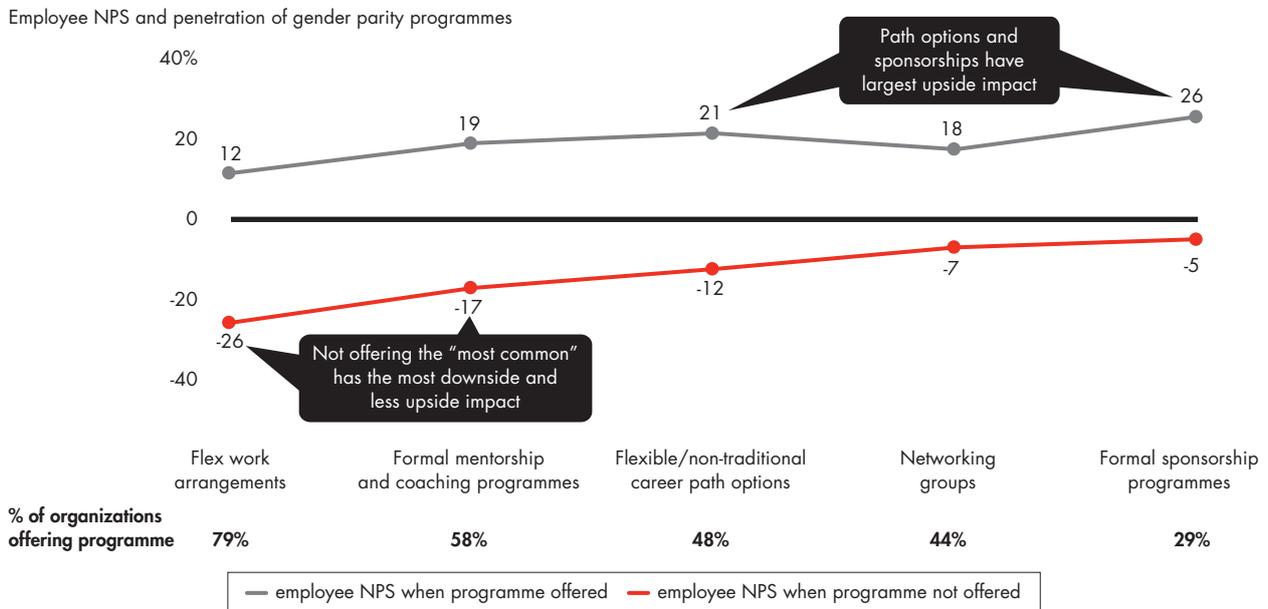
### Measuring employee satisfaction and loyalty

Do gender parity programmes really have an effect on women’s careers and loyalty to their employers? Do they actually help women meet their career goals or make women who are already in top roles happier? To find out, our survey used the employee Net Promoter Score<sup>SM</sup> (NPS<sup>®</sup>), a reliable indicator of employees’ loyalty. We asked employees to rate on a scale of zero to 10 the likelihood that they would recommend their companies or managers as organisations or people to work for. Depending on their scores, we categorised respondents as promoters, passives or detractors. (See the sidebar ‘Employee Net Promoter Score explained’ for more detail.) The higher the score, the more loyal employees are to their organisations.

While many aspects of their jobs can affect employees’ loyalty to their employers, gender parity programmes

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Figure 6: All gender parity programmes have a significant positive impact on employee NPS



Note: Employee Net Promoter Score is an indicator of employee loyalty. The higher the score, the more loyal employees are to their organisations  
 Source: 2013 UK Gender Parity survey (n=820)

have a striking impact. We found that all programmes have a positive effect on loyalty. Just the simple existence of a gender parity policy makes employees feel happier about their jobs, regardless of the number of programmes—or even if they work. This is true for men and women: Both reported feeling significantly more loyal to employers that had gender parity programmes, and the more programmes in place, the greater employees’ loyalty. Our survey found that the employee NPS difference in companies with no programmes compared with those that have five programmes was 93 points for women and 60 points for men.

Ironically, the two programmes that have the highest impact on employees’ loyalty—flexible career paths and sponsorships—are the ones least offered. One reason may be that these programmes take a long time to produce results, making them difficult to track and measure.

A sponsor can make a real difference in an individual’s career, yet men are far more likely than their female counterparts to have sponsors. Based on our research, the companies leading the way towards gender parity establish sponsorships for all women in middle management positions. But defining and then activating sponsor relationships is a harder task. Simply assigning sponsors to protégés isn’t enough. Instead, companies must seek ways to encourage successful sponsorships. The most effective sponsors are those who feel personally vested in the success of their protégés—those who believe their own success is measured in part by their protégés’ success and act as advocates for them.

For Reed Elsevier’s Bayazit, sponsorship was pivotal. ‘Sponsorship has made a big difference in my career,’ Bayazit told us. ‘It had not occurred to me that I should put my name in the hat for an operating role, but my sponsor encouraged me to apply.’ She got the job and

## Employee Net Promoter Score explained

The employee Net Promoter Score groups respondents into three categories: promoters, passives and detractors.

- **Promoters (score of 9 or 10):** People who feel that their lives have been enriched by their relationships with their organisations or leaders. They behave like loyal employees, typically staying longer and talking the organisation up to their friends and colleagues.
- **Passives (score of 7 or 8):** People who are fairly satisfied, but not loyal, employees. They rarely talk their companies up, and when they do, it's likely to be qualified and unenthusiastic. If a better offer comes along, they are likely to defect.
- **Detractors (score of 0 to 6):** People who feel their lives have been diminished by their associations with their organisations or leaders. They are dissatisfied and even dismayed by how they are treated. They frequently speak negatively about their organisations and are likely to leave as soon as they find something better.

also learned an important lesson: 'Women tend to feel that they should be 100% ready for a role before they take it on. They have to trust their skills and realise that a lot of learning happens on the job.'

And about his role as Bayazit's sponsor, Mike Walsh remarked: 'The most significant thing I did for Kumsal was to be available to listen. She would come to me with a challenge and want to talk it through. I listened mostly, but these discussions helped her forge her path within the organisation and shaped my thinking as well.'

Like sponsorships, flexible career paths also have a high impact on loyalty, but are offered far less frequently than other programmes. Also, as with sponsorship and many other gender parity programmes, flexible career paths benefit both sexes. Both male and female survey respondents expressed interest in them. While this option has been traditionally viewed as a way to meet family needs,

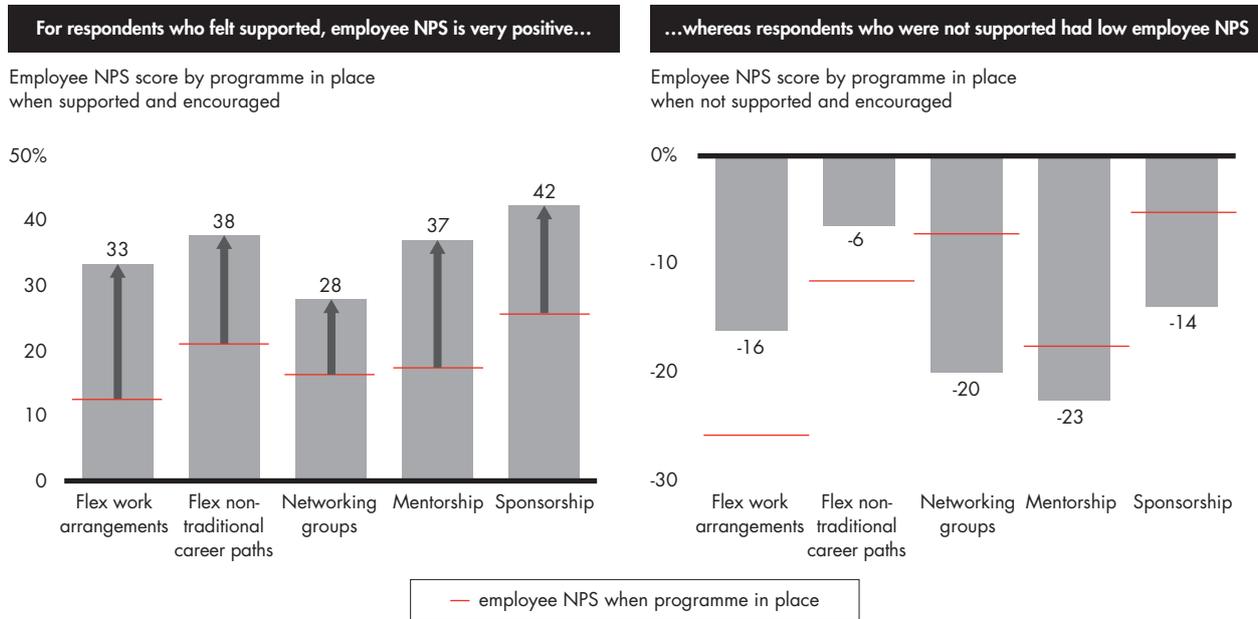
the next generation of executives is increasingly interested in receiving mid-career support to pursue other passions, such as entrepreneurship or social impact opportunities. As such options grow in popularity, companies that offer only a rigid career progression may find themselves at a disadvantage in attracting and retaining talented employees.

### Committed leadership

Regardless of which programmes companies offer, our survey shows that failing to encourage and support the women who use them can produce poor results, indifference or even turn employees into detractors. But employee NPS soars at companies that not only offer gender parity programmes, but also demonstrate leaderships' clear commitment to them (*see Figure 7*). For example, flexible career paths earned an employee NPS of 38 at companies that actively support that programme,

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Figure 7: Employee NPS goes up significantly when a gender parity programme is supported



Note: Includes only respondents who said their companies had the programme in place. Respondents who were unsure were excluded (~7%)  
 Source: 2013 UK Gender Parity survey (n=820)

compared with a score of 21 for companies that offer but don't visibly encourage participation in the programme. And flexible work arrangements, the bellwether of any gender parity initiative, went from an employee NPS of just 12 to 33 when offered in a culture where the programme is strongly supported.

In companies where support for programmes is inadequate, many respondents feel that taking advantage of flexible career paths and other options will limit their long-term career potential. They also believe they will be punished for deviating from a traditional career trajectory. One respondent told us, 'Flexible working is not really accepted across all departments.'

At Reed Elsevier, Bayazit applauds her company's culture. She believes her company understands the importance of helping employees balance their priorities. For example, if a child has a ballet recital or doctor's appoint-

ment, it is completely acceptable to reschedule a meeting so the parent can be available. Bayazit says, 'The meeting can't always be rescheduled, but there's no penalty for asking. That gave me real comfort because I never felt like I missed an important moment in my children's lives because of something that could have been moved.'

For managers, it is important to recognise that employees who take advantage of flexitime are no less dedicated to their jobs. One respondent who uses the flexible model to work a shorter-than-average week told us, 'I am no less invested in my career than anyone else. I am 100% committed to my job 80% of the time.' Leaders who demonstrate that they value different styles and work models can help move their companies beyond the widespread perception that employees must be 'always on' in order to move up in their organisations.

## Targets and incentives

Dialogue alone isn't enough to produce that high level of commitment. Once a suite of gender parity programmes is in place, companies must have targets and incentives to manage and contribute to the effort. While macro targets—such as Lord Davies's goal of increasing the number of women on FTSE 100 boards to 25% by 2015—help call attention to the issue, the most effective targets are internal company targets that measure success not by quotas but by employee satisfaction and loyalty levels.

The Net Promoter System can provide leadership teams with the tracking and response mechanisms they need to measure the success of their organisations' gender parity programmes, department by department—and respond when they are falling short. This system is particularly valuable because it provides not only a scoring mechanism, but also asks why employees responded the way they did. Verbatim feedback and employee NPS can help executives and managers continuously improve the effectiveness of programmes.

Incentives are also essential to ensure commitment throughout the organisation to gender parity goals. And like most gender parity programmes, these incentives are most effective when they are gender neutral. Managers' performance evaluations should include the overall employee NPS of their teams. It is up to company leaders to examine programme results and determine whether gender parity concerns are the root cause of dissatisfaction among women employees or, equally important, whether satisfaction among women is in part the result of the success of gender parity programmes.

## Supportive behaviours

Even after programmes are in place and someone is managing them properly and measuring progress, the journey is only halfway complete. Everyone—

from the CEO to line managers—must recognise opportunities to make decisions that support gender parity goals rather than undermine them.

We recommend that every line manager and executive reading this report do the following:

- Get to know the talented women on your team. What are their goals and ambitions both at work and at home? What are their life circumstances?
- Ask those women for feedback on what you can do to advance their career goals. Push for specifics, or get an intermediary to ask so you get actionable feedback.
- Be a sponsor. Encourage women to pursue the right opportunities that will further their careers.
- Actively recognise different styles of behaviour. Talk about them in meetings or when planning projects. Praise a variety of styles whenever possible.
- Make sure all voices are heard in meetings. Solicit feedback from those who don't typically contribute. Give the gift of unqualified praise when appropriate, and tip the balance in favour of encouraging coaching over constructive feedback.
- Be transparent about your own lifestyle boundaries. Make it clear when you have to leave early for a child's school event or other family commitment.

Companies can also host open forums, giving employees the opportunity to discuss what they consider supportive. That can improve leaders' understanding of how software can supplement gender parity programmes. Imagine what your organisation would be capable of if all your employees—or even just the 46% who are women—were able to meet their potential.

### Cultural change through gender parity

Before an organisation can take action, its leaders must assess its current position by looking at the programmes it offers. Leaders must determine if these programmes are effective, measuring the demand for them from both male and female employees and identifying which ones will work best for their organisation. Consider flexible work arrangements. Such programmes may not be well-suited to jobs requiring fixed schedules, like those in the military or oil and gas companies, but leaders could still offer variants of those options, offering blocks of time off during school holidays, for instance. Once a company has assessed its needs, it should design and quickly implement programmes to fit with its business and operating model, making it clear to employees that the programmes aren't just short-term initiatives, but here to stay.

Another way to ensure widespread acceptance and appreciation of gender parity programmes is to avoid presenting them as gender specific. Actively promoting them to women can help achieve gender parity goals, but these efforts are more likely to receive companywide support if men recognise that they, too, are being offered help in balancing the demands of home and career.

Managing change includes offering training programmes and sharing best practices between departments and job levels—especially around behaviours. To that end, company leaders must take these steps:

- Define the business outcome that they wish to achieve and identify the population that can influence that outcome
- Communicate with their people and train them, reinforcing the right behaviours

- Identify and reward the employees who best exhibit the desired behaviours
- Put metrics in place to measure employees' satisfaction with the programmes

Finally, programmes have to be adapted over time, evolving as the business develops and changes. It may be necessary to revisit one or more of the five steps on the gender parity framework, tweaking the hardware by changing the type of programmes offered or finding ways to reinforce and reenergise the software, or the supportive behaviours. When both elements work together, an organisation can truly experience cultural change—the keystone of any business initiative.

### Conclusion

Achieving gender parity requires changing deeply ingrained behaviours and long-held beliefs. And the time for that change is now. Thus far, gender parity targets have been set by companies at their discretion, but that may change as more governments begin to impose mandates. The European Commission is considering imposing quotas that EU member states must meet. Individual countries like Spain, Norway and Iceland already have legislations in place, and Germany made a commitment to board quotas in April of this year.

Far more important than any regulatory threat, however, are the responses of talented employees to companies whose policies and cultures don't keep pace with the times. Traditional gender roles and workplace structures are changing. The average household is dual income. Men are more interested in being actively involved fathers. And more women are entering the workforce with ambitions that don't fade when they become mothers. The programmes that once targeted women exclusively will now benefit all employees. Companies

that set targets for increasing the number of women on their executive committees and improving the satisfaction of all of their employees will be ahead of the game if government regulations are put in place. And, more important, they will be stronger organisations for the diversity of their leadership and the ability to retain a happy workforce.

If you are in a position to put your company on this path, the outcome is clear. If you are a line manager or an executive, the steps outlined in our report can improve your business—and your own career. Gender parity in the workplace won't be achieved overnight; change takes time, focus, determination and planning. Success requires changes in behaviour for both men and women, and for leaders and line managers, it takes courage and discipline.

## Methodology

The 820 people who responded to our February 2013 survey come from a variety of positions and circumstances. Slightly more men than women responded: a ratio of 55% to 45%, respectively. Almost half of the respondents are from private companies, 30% are from public firms and the rest are from government, non-profits or other organisations. Most of the respondents are experienced junior or senior managers; only 14% are new employees. Of the 12% who told us they are executives or CEOs, 80% are men. About 42% of respondents are married and have children, and 30% are married but have no children. Almost 20% are single with no children. Almost half have spouses who work outside the home in jobs with similar demands. Approximately 23% have spouses who are the primary caretakers of the home and children. 

### **Five daily actions for every executive or line manager**

Know your top women. Do you know them as well as your top men? What are their career ambitions? What are their personal constraints, challenges and hopes? What is your plan to help them succeed?

Tell your top women that they have what it takes. Women need to hear this more often than men. Encourage them to take risks in tough assignments and stretch roles.

Don't let your own leadership style dominate. First, know your own style and then actively seek out complementary styles in your team, particularly those that are supportive. Make sure you hear from your entire team by proactively asking for input from women.

Talk about your life outside of work and share your trade-offs. Be specific: Mention the football match or spring service that you wouldn't miss. This is important for women and men. Don't encourage a martyr culture. Instead, nurture an environment where commitment to work and family can coexist.

Create an action plan and hold yourself accountable. What does your team think of you and your impact on them? Ask both men and women. What do you do that is supportive and inclusive? What do you do that undermines others? Be specific about what you will do differently and tell your team. Have your team do the same.

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