



DE-GENDERING GENDER DIVERSITY IMPROVING FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Hays Gender Diversity Report 2017



INTRODUCTION

Hays is dedicated to placing people in roles where they can flourish and succeed. By valuing diversity, we're better informed to support our clients and candidates in finding the right job to change a person's life and the right person to transform an organisation.

Organisations that both recognise and harness the different experiences and opinions of their workforce outperform those that are less diverse and inclusive. These organisations are also better placed to attract and retain talented professionals. At a time when skills shortages are an increasingly critical issue across many industries, companies need to take action to increase access to the recruitment of diverse, talented individuals.

In our 2017 report, we shine a light on how women, who represent a very significant proportion of the existing and future workforce, often experience very different career experiences to men. While many of the findings of this report have stemmed from questions asked through a lens which focuses on greater gender equality, many of the insights and recommendations can be readily applied to support talented people from all backgrounds to advance in their careers and realise their full potential, as well as to assist businesses to develop their talent pipelines for the future.

This report aims to offer relevant insights based on a survey of 842 Australians and is supported by our views and observations.

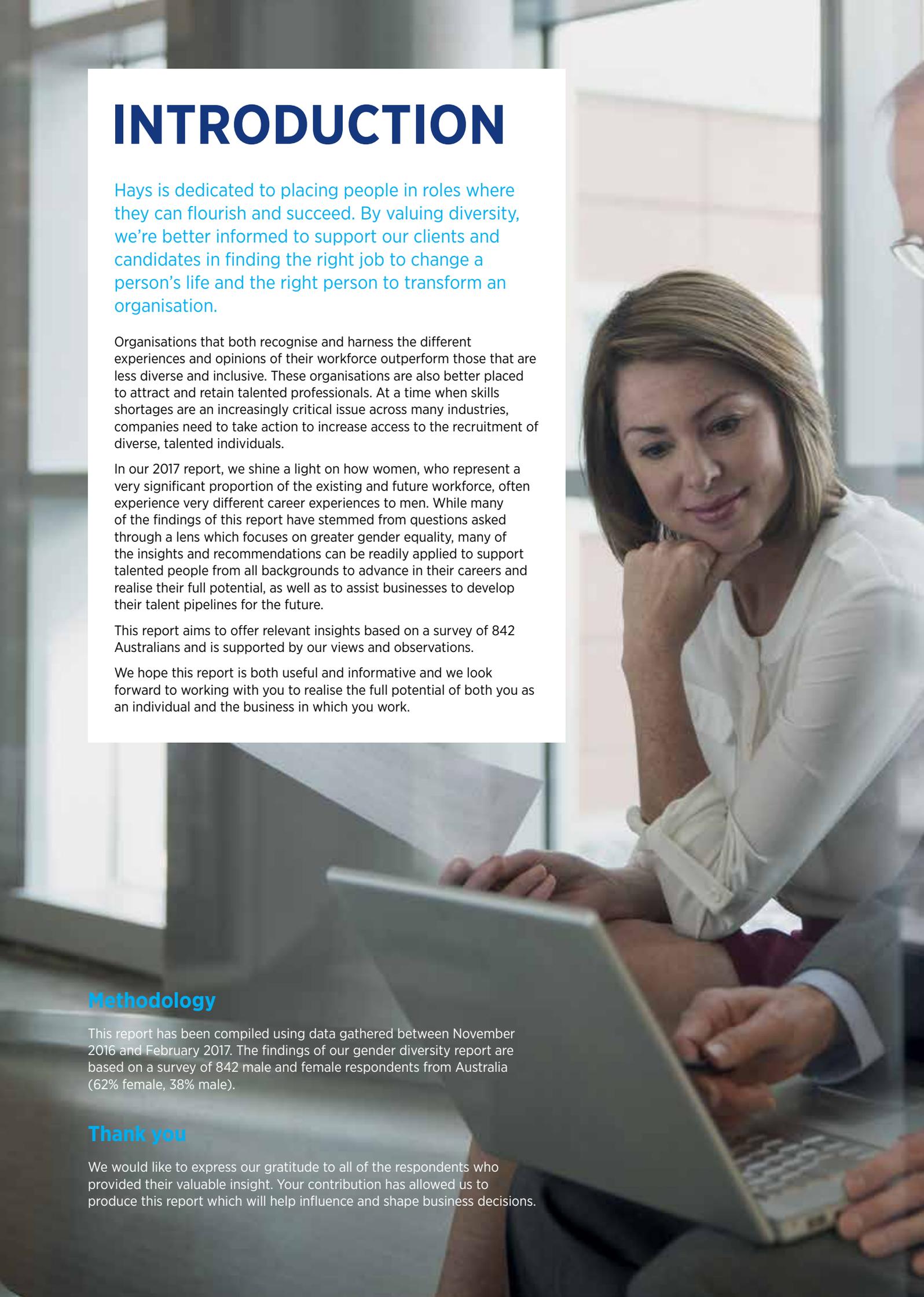
We hope this report is both useful and informative and we look forward to working with you to realise the full potential of both you as an individual and the business in which you work.

Methodology

This report has been compiled using data gathered between November 2016 and February 2017. The findings of our gender diversity report are based on a survey of 842 male and female respondents from Australia (62% female, 38% male).

Thank you

We would like to express our gratitude to all of the respondents who provided their valuable insight. Your contribution has allowed us to produce this report which will help influence and shape business decisions.



DE-GENDERING THE DEBATE

De-gendering gender diversity by offering and accepting equal parental leave and flexible working options without career consequences for women and men could improve female representation in the workplace.

In late 2016 two very high profile men resigned from demanding jobs for family reasons – James Brayshaw and John Key. What followed – and this might be a first in this part of the world – was that men started to talk openly about their inability to ‘have it all’.

Last year also saw Mark Zuckerberg, who made sure Facebook’s parental leave policy covered both women and men, take two months of parental leave following the birth of his daughter. Wouldn’t it be great to see more men leading by example like this so that other male – and female – employees feel they can do the same without it negatively impacting their career?

De-gendering gender diversity by adopting and accepting equal parental leave and flexible working options without career consequences for both men and women seems like it could be the next logical step to help to make real and lasting gender equality progress in the workplace.

This starts with talking in terms of ‘family-friendly’ rather than ‘women-friendly’ policies. We need to offer and then accept the decision of men to work flexibly and take paternity leave too. And as mentioned, it requires acceptance without making assumptions about career motivations or applying unconscious or otherwise career consequences.

If we can offer and accept men working flexibly and taking parental leave in equal numbers to women, we will also be supporting women who want to do the same. More working fathers with female partners will be able to provide the support required for them to return to work too, and by becoming the ‘norm’ and removing career consequences it will have a positive impact on female gender equality.

Shared caring responsibilities would improve gender diversity

Our survey found that 81% of respondents said shared parental leave and more shared responsibility associated with child rearing would help break down unconscious biases and improve gender diversity at work.

Yet just 19% said their organisation offers parental leave for male employees on equal terms to female employees. In addition, the majority say men in their organisation rarely take (27%) or only take some (46%) of the parental leave they’re entitled to.

Why? 61% of men said it’s due to the financial impact whereas 42% of women said it’s because they may be viewed as less committed to their career.

Flexible working is career-limiting for women

Meanwhile respondents said opting to work flexibly is a career-limiting move for women (65%) more so than for men (51%).

The majority said less than 5% of men work flexibly at their organisation compared to between 21-40% of women. 96% of female respondents said agile and flexible working options are important to them compared to 86% of men.

Other surveys support our findings. For instance, a 2016 CPA Australia report showed that many employees think working flexibly will have a negative impact on their career.

The 2017 Modern Families Index found that twice the number of fathers compared to mothers believe flexible workers are viewed as less committed while more than double the number of fathers believe working flexibly will have a negative impact on their career. In addition, 47% of fathers agree they would like a less stressful job to reconcile work and home responsibilities. Fathers are therefore, according to the Index, “having to consider the same compromises women have had to for decades.”

Meanwhile, a study by the Human Rights Commission found 27% of men experienced discrimination when requesting or taking parental leave or when they returned to work.

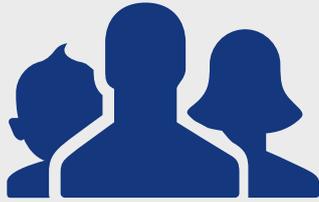
Gender equality “enhances men’s lives as well”

As well as offering and encouraging men to accept flexible working and equal parental leave, we need more men involved in gender equality. Last year US gender expert Michael Kimmel visited Australia and spoke about how gender equality and better distributing the load at home and in the office could be the best thing to happen to men.

In an interview with ABC’s Lateline he said, “We also know that gender equality actually enhances men’s lives as well: that it’s actually good for us in our relationships with our partners; good for us in our relationships with our children if we have them; good for us in our own health and wellbeing.”

SURVEY FINDINGS: PARENTAL LEAVE

Do you believe shared parental leave and more shared responsibility associated with child rearing would help break down unconscious biases and improve gender diversity?



53% Very much

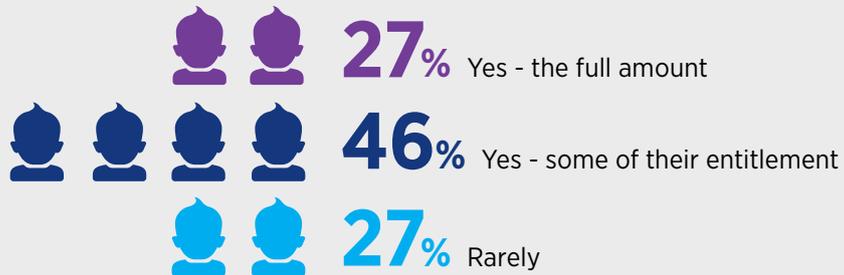


28% Somewhat

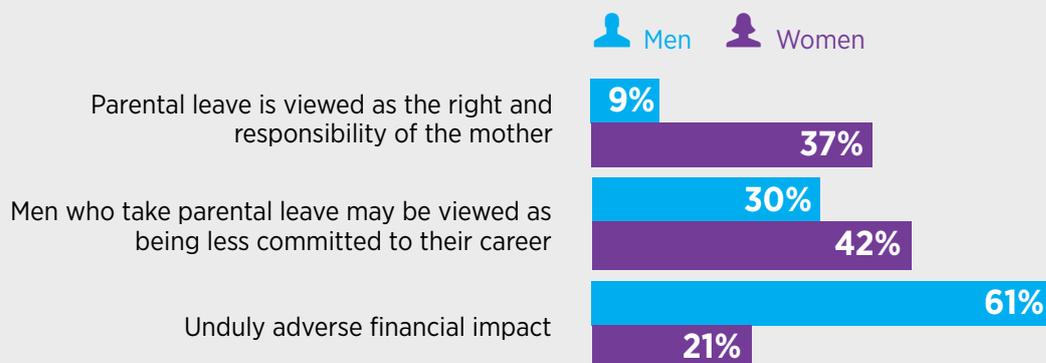
Does your organisation offer parental leave for fathers?



Do you think the men in your organisation take the parental leave they are entitled to?

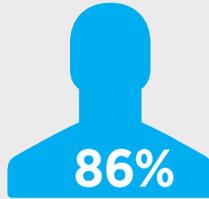


Why do you think men don't take the full parental leave?



SURVEY FINDINGS: FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES

How important is it to you that agile/flexible working options be available to you in your organisation?

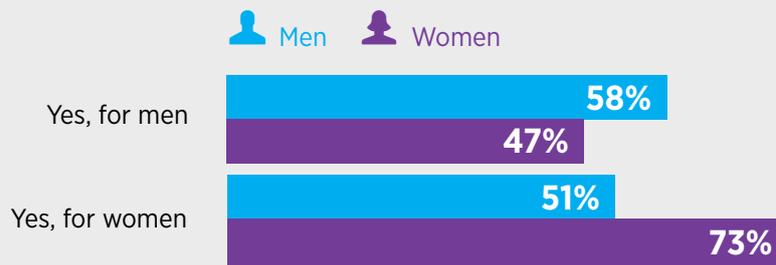


of men said it was important



of women said it was important

Do you think opting to work flexibly is a career-limiting move?



Approximately how many men vs women do you think work flexibly at your organisation?



<5%

of men work flexibly



21-40%

of women work flexibly



WHERE ARE ALL THE FEMALE LEADERS?

Is it right that for 80% of us the most senior person in the organisation we work for is male? Or that 61% of us have a male line manager, despite 38% of working teams comprising mostly of women and a further 28% balanced evenly between men and women?

Wouldn't it be great if those leadership figures were nearer to 50%? We believe more organisations need to proactively remove barriers for women.

There are many great examples of organisations that are doing this and are achieving strong gender diversity results. For instance, at our organisation women hold 56% of people manager positions and 50% of the most senior roles in the business have a female successor. In the last 12 months 95% of our employees returned from maternity leave on a flexible work arrangement. While there's always more to be done, these are results we're proud of at Hays.

But many organisations are yet to improve gender diversity. Perhaps this is why 96% of women think that female employees encounter barriers in their career progression. Incidentally, this figure is much greater than the 63% of men who say their female colleagues face progression barriers.

The gap between male and female perspectives on women's career progression can also be seen in the 35% of men and 14% of women who think that equal career opportunities are open to them regardless of gender.

Career progression slower for women

Meanwhile 23% of women said their last promotion was more than 5 years ago compared to 17% of men. More men (21%) were promoted in the last 6 months than women (19%).

A large part of career progression is being able to sufficiently promote yourself and communicate your ambitions. But more men (65%) than women (47%) believe they have this opportunity.

In addition, 38% of women compared to 22% of men are not confident that their line manager knows what their career ambitions are.

Men and women's perspectives differ

In other findings, the survey also showed a disparity in women and men's perspectives on equal pay, the existence of gender diversity issues within their workplace and the benefit of flexible working options on an organisation's success.

Not helping the situation is the fact that many traditionally male-dominated industries still suffer from out-of-date workplace cultures that impact the ability of men to become more involved in care-giving.

Australia holds onto the male breadwinner model

In the Sydney Morning Herald, Louise Chappell, professor of politics at UNSW and Natalie Galea, a research associate at UNSW Built Environment, wrote in reference to the construction industry that its workplace culture is "stuck in the 1950s" with "a male single breadwinner model that assumes men have little responsibility beyond bringing home the bacon... Scratch the bravado and humour on the surface, however, and we soon discovered that many men in construction are also struggling. It's 2016 and many men have partners with their own careers, and both want and are expected to participate in family life. For men, not just for women, the 1950s model does not fit."

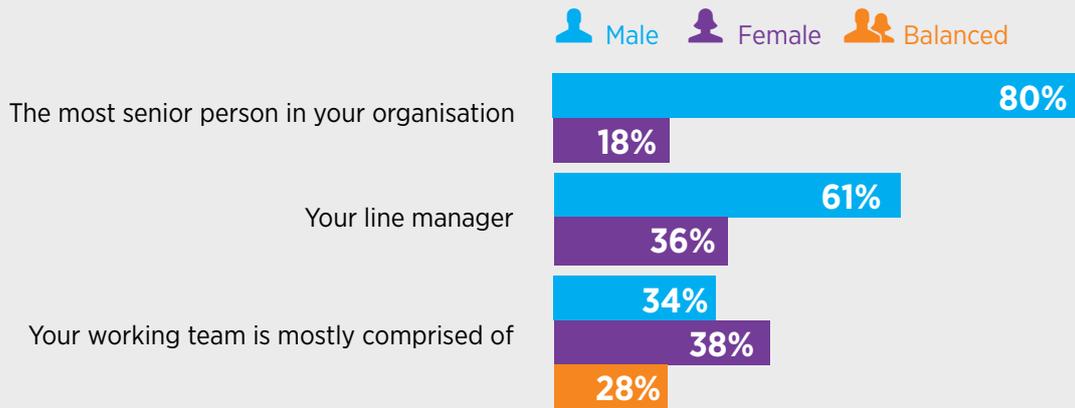
Of course it's not only the construction industry that holds onto the male breadwinner model. In fact, as also reported in the Sydney Morning Herald, a University of Queensland study shows Australia has a "much stronger" male breadwinner culture than many other comparable nations, including the US.

The article goes on to note that 60 per cent of university courses are now completed by women, yet "the enduring strength of our male breadwinner model means many of those well educated, highly productive workers are relegated to secondary earners when they have children. Some quit the workforce altogether."

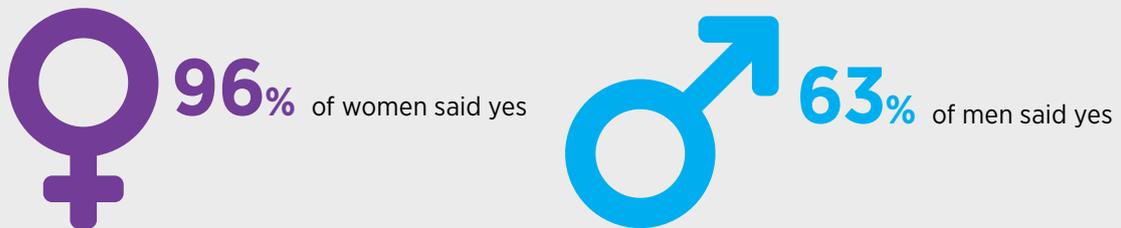
Ultimately it's up to men to smash the status quo by identifying and breaking career progression barriers for women in their organisation, being aware of and supporting the career ambitions of direct and indirect reports and leading from the front by taking the paternity leave they're entitled to and encouraging a workplace culture where men and women can work flexibly without negative career consequences.

SURVEY FINDINGS: EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & PAY

Please select the gender of the following in your organisation:



Do you think women encounter barriers in their career progression?



Do you think you and your equally capable colleagues have the same career opportunities open to you regardless of gender?



Do you believe you have the opportunity in your current role to sufficiently promote yourself & communicate your ambitions?



Do you think you and your equally capable colleagues are paid/rewarded in an equal manner regardless of gender?



WHY OUR MD IS A MALE CHAMPION OF CHANGE

As the leading recruiting expert, Hays has a duty to be at the forefront of trends and issues regarding the world of work.

While there is no single silver bullet which will deliver gender parity, a better understanding of the perceptions and experiences of both men and women in the workplace will help to inform policies and actions to help narrow the gap. There is a keen interest on the part of both employers and individuals, men and women, to better understand these perceptions and to take steps to encourage the greater recruitment, retention and progression of women in the workplace.



Nick Deligiannis
Managing Director,
Hays Australia &
New Zealand

Tell us about your progression into your leadership role?

I joined Hays in 1993 as an Associate Consultant in Victoria. Like most other senior people at Hays, I'm a product of the development program we have in place and our meritocratic culture that sees people promoted based on merit.

Over time I worked my way through the ranks holding consulting and management roles across the entire business, including the role of Director responsible for our Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory regions.

I was appointed to the Hays Board of Directors in 2004 and became Managing Director of the ANZ business in 2012.

Were you surprised by the survey results showing that so many women feel they do not have the same career opportunities as men?

No I'm not surprised because historically there are a number of parental factors that have and continue to impact a woman's career progression. I believe an organisation can help overcome this though. For instance, at Hays we're in a unique situation where many women in senior roles have taken maternity leave then returned to their role and subsequently been promoted off the back of their successes.

We also have a high proportion of women with children who are the successor to many of our senior and executive roles.

One example is our Director of HR, Training and Internal Recruitment, Irene Saivanidis. Irene was promoted to our board at 33 weeks pregnant and after having two children she returned to her board position.

As a business we have so many talented women who have progressed their career with us, gone on maternity leave, returned into the same role and then continued to progress.

80% of respondents said the most senior person in their organisation is male. As a male MD, what do you do to ensure female employees have strong female leaders to look up to?

For me it starts at the top. Of our seven Australian board members, 43% are women. This ensures our people have strong and influential leadership role models to look up to.

Unfortunately that's rare in Australia. For instance, the latest figures from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency show that in Australia women hold 14.2% of chair positions, 23.6% of directorships and 27.4% of key management positions (in Agency reporting organisations)[1]. We are proud to be a leader in this area.

Our survey revealed that in Australia 23% of female respondents said their last promotion was more than 5 years ago compared to 17% of male respondents, while more men (21%) were promoted in the last year than women (19%). What's your response to people managers?

Firstly, let me say that I find those figures a surprise because it's not an issue we face here. In the last 12 months, 21% of our female employees were promoted, which equals the 21% of men who also received a promotion. So I'd tell people managers that we've done a lot of work around unconscious gender bias and have strong training and development programs in place for our managers. I'd also point out that if they aren't looking at all of the talent available to them, regardless of the reason, they're potentially missing out on the right person. Why would you omit the right person simply because they are female? That doesn't even enter our thinking.

Why do you think de-gendering gender diversity is important?

For me it shouldn't be labelled a 'gender' issue. As well as offering equal parental leave and flexible working options, and ensuring both men and women feel they can take them without career consequences, there needs to be a broader discussion within a family unit about how caring responsibilities will be shared. Getting the career and caring balance right for parents, both fathers and mothers, is a big societal shift when we consider how long our country has held firm to our male breadwinner culture. But today many women want to continue their own career and many men want to be more active in child rearing, which should put an expiration date on such out-dated cultural attitudes.

Were you surprised that respondents said opting to work flexibly is a career-limiting move for women?

No I'm not surprised, but when we talk about flexibility

[1] https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Stats_at_a_Glance.pdf

it's important to consider the role you hold. If you're in a client-facing role or manage a team, working from home or working certain hours outside the standard business day may not be possible, while if you choose to work part-time you may not be able to fill a role that requires a fulltime employee.

But if you have the capacity and do not have to be onsite to do your job, flexible working is certainly possible. There needs to be a commercial balance; there are some roles that suit flexible working and some that don't.

How can an employer encourage men to work flexibly and take paternity leave?

Employers are responsible for creating a culture where people accept that men as well as women can take parental leave or work flexibly without any career consequences. They're also responsible for offering equal paternity leave in the first place. But there's no one-size fits-all approach here. Employers need to talk to individual staff on a case-by-case basis to determine what will work for them, their family situation and the role they hold. There also needs to be a synergy between work and family, with employees discussing with their partner what will work and then talking to their employer.

How can employers ensure that any employee – female or male – who chooses to work flexibly isn't limited in their future career growth and development?

It comes back to an organisation's culture and being innovative about how the duties of a role can be completed. If a particular role doesn't require someone to be in the office fulltime, then put very clear objectives in place and trial flexible working.

Are you surprised that in Australia 65% of female respondents said their organisation has equal opportunity or gender diversity issues that need to be addressed, compared to 43% of male respondents?

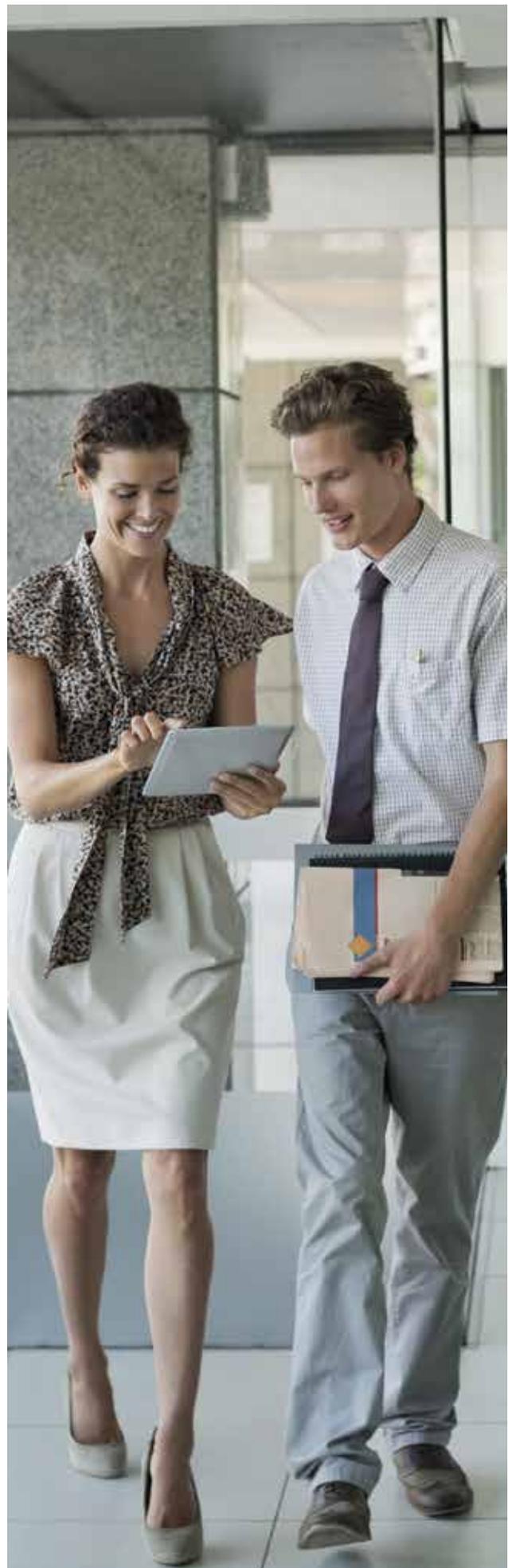
No I'm not surprised, and to those who say their career is suffering as a result it may be time to consider moving to an organisation that promotes based on merit.

Do you agree with the 80% of Australian respondents who said greater gender diversity in the workplace would improve an organisation's success, with more women (89%) than men (64%) believing this.

Absolutely. A balance of both male and female employees brings different perspectives to decision making. This balance improves results, innovation and gives you a greater cross-section of skills to draw on. Here at Hays, our workforce is comprised of 66% women and we're the most successful recruitment company in Australia & New Zealand. I think that's testament to us having such a cross-section of female representation in our business at all levels.

What advice do you have for female professionals who are in, or are looking to work in, a management or leadership role?

If your organisation doesn't have the culture to support the advancement of women, then move to one that nurtures talent regardless of what that talent looks like. Be truthful, open and honest about your career ambitions. Know what skills you need in order to progress then make sure you develop them.



KEEP IN TOUCH

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