

Closing the Gender Pay Gap: A WACL Toolkit

The logo consists of five black, downward-pointing triangles of varying sizes, arranged in a staggered pattern against a purple background.

WACL
• FOUNDED IN 1923 •

Closing the Gender Pay Gap: A WACL Toolkit

At the July 2020 AGM, Jackie and Jane announced a working group on the Gender Pay Gap, to reinforce the Club's mission to accelerate gender equality both in the sectors WACL members represent as well as in broader communications. Of course, the GPG is a measurement tool, it's not a programme to address the issue. But we thought we could raise awareness and make it more personal by looking at our own situation, and also learning from each other.

One of the early decisions we took was to base the group's work on data. Hence we decided to benchmark the WACL member's companies based on data taken from the government's [GPG website](#). We then compared the WACL company average with the overall average of all the companies who reported, and discovered that on two parameters WACLeer organisations were better than the average, but on the other two they were worse than the average. You can see the overall results of that benchmarking [here](#).

All this underscores that we do have room to improve our own advocacy in our companies as well as in the wider world. And indeed, we are likely to be more effective in becoming advocates for this issue if we work together, learn together and share stories and tips about our own experiences, so that we can act as more effective catalysts and campaigners in

our own organisations. The [coaching sessions](#) were designed to address this.

The response has been incredible. The honesty, openness, empathy, advice and experience that has been shared and exchanged is amazing. We are including it here in this Toolkit pulled together from the six coaching sessions we held. It summarizes all the learning, tips, and stories that have taken place in those sessions, the slides used, as well as other resources available.

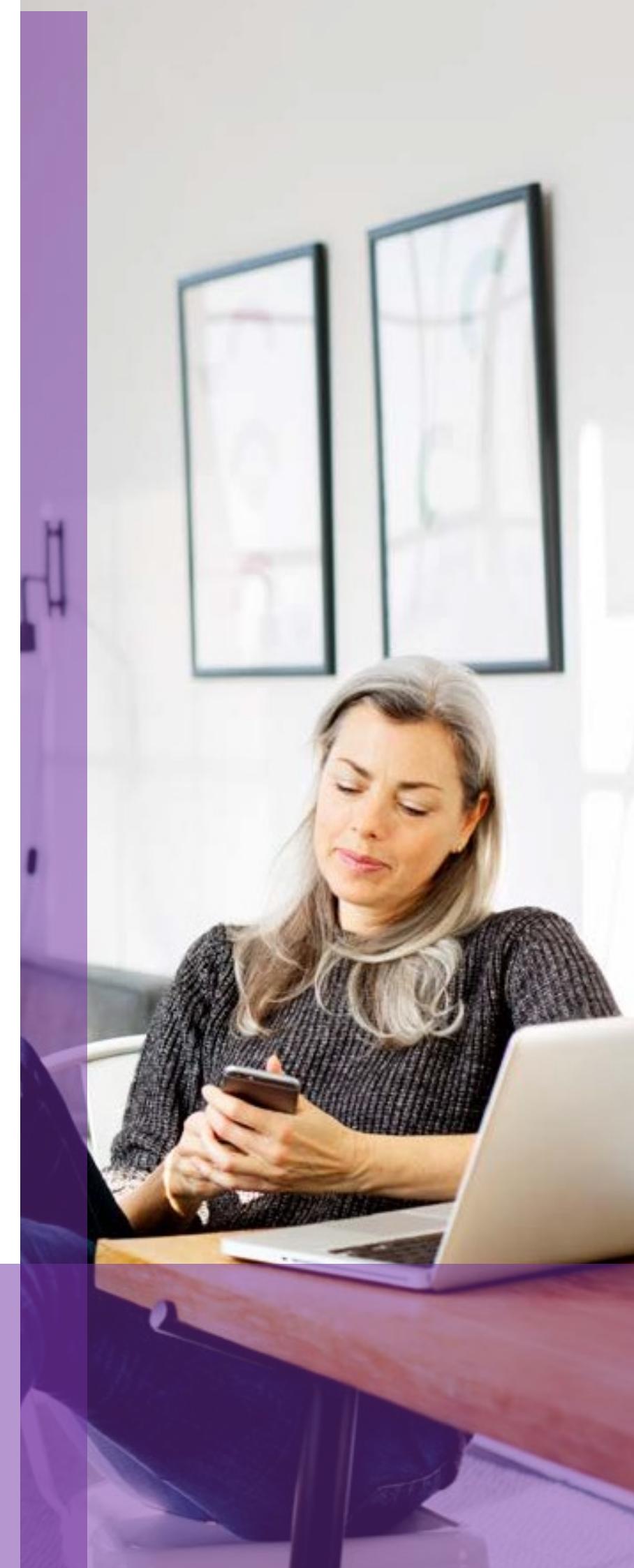
And we have already had many signs of progress! One of the best is that we sprung into action to support the reinstatement of Gender Pay Gap reporting, creating a petition, wearing t-shirts and campaigning in the press. And guess what? We succeeded! GPG reporting will be reinstated with a one-off grace period until October. The person who summoned the courage to start a discussion with her MD about the GPG and found an ally. The CEO who thought she couldn't possibly have a GPG but discovered she did - and put in a plan to fix it.

The founder who benchmarked her company vs. her parent company and lobbied the parent for greater action. And many others. As Jackie said, we are best when we 'Act as a Pack'.

We inspire each other, admit our frustrations and fears, and show each other empathy, support and courage, and celebrate our successes. Together we can - and are - making a difference. We hope that we will continue to measure our WACL GPG every year, and move ever closer to closing it, in line with the spirit and new purpose of the Club, and not have to wait another 98 years to do it!

Please use this Toolkit and feel free to share it with other colleagues. It's organised as the sessions were presented (see the table of contents below), with more resources at the end. We would also welcome additional resources, stories and feedback. Huge thanks to our committee members Francesca Ecsery, Alison Lomax, Katrina Lowes, Helen Warren-Piper, Michaella Williams and Cindy Yendell and to Emily Hopcroft, for her work on the Toolkit, and to everyone else who contributed. We can do this!

Ann Francke Chair,
WACL Gender Pay Gap Committee





Gender Paygap Coaching Sessions:

- Page 4* **Introduction** to the WACL GPG Committee
- Page 7* **Foreword:** Covid-19: Why now and more than ever?
- Page 8* **How** to successfully influence boards with Francesca Ecsery
- Page 9* **How** to Convince that measuring the GPG still matters when your company employs less than 250 with Ann Francke
- Page 10* **Becoming** a GPG advocate: how to influence from the inside when it isn't your 'day job' with Katrina Lowes
- Page 12* **Thoughts** on how to drive gender diversity in global companies, to get material change with Helen Warren-Piper
- Page 13* **How** to make the business case for gender diversity and help clients integrate GPG into their business plans with Cindy Yendell
- Page 14* **Tackling** the gender pay gap reverse mentoring workshop: what senior women can learn from the next generation of senior women with Michaella Williams and the FUTURES Network
- Page 16* **How** WACLers can help each other
- Page 17* **Additional** reading resources

Introduction to the WACL GPG Committee

This working group is about current, concrete, evidence based, action-oriented steps, enabling you WACLers to be better champions of gender balance inside your companies by equipping you with toolkits and facts.

This working group is all about the ripple effect. We're trying to spread this out and the committee are all ambassadors for change and are creating this sort of movement within their business.

As a committee we understand the fact we can be diverse, but our thinking is not diverse and we formed to challenge and question how inclusive our behaviour is and that our culture is being supported.



Ann Francke OBE
CMI CMgr

Ann is Chief Executive of the Chartered Management Institute. She started her career at Procter and Gamble and has held senior executive positions at Mars, Boots, Yell and BSI. In 2019, Ann was awarded an OBE for services to workplace equality.

Ann is an expert on gender balance in the workplace and speaks frequently in the media and conferences on this and other management topics. Her book on gender balance - Create a Gender-balanced Workplace, was published in September 2019. Ann also authored the 'Financial Times Guide to Management' and has been named in the top 100 women to watch in the 2015 Female FTSE Cranfield report. She was awarded the MemCom award for outstanding leadership of a UK professional body in 2016. Ann holds several Board positions and five Honorary Doctorates for her work in management and leadership. Ann and her husband live in West London; she has one daughter.



Katrina Lowes

Katrina leads customer and partner co-creation for Vodafone Global Enterprise working together with some of the largest organisations in the world to find ways that new technology can improve our lives. With more than 25 years' experience in high tech, communications, and healthcare industries, she has a strong track record of inspiring change, driving transformation programmes and finding more effective ways to reach and engage customers. Having worked in client and consulting global roles, Katrina mentors women in several countries, is a passionate diversity champion and Stonewall LGBTQ+Ally.



Michaella Williams

Business Director at Generation Media, recognised with the Patricia Mann award in the class of 2019/2020 Future Leaders Award winner, run by WACL

Michaella Williams is a Business Director at Generation Media, an independent media planning and buying agency, which specialises in communications with children, young people, and families. In addition, she is Head of CPD and Training whereby, she strategically supports the wider team to be the best they can be via their learning and development. She also leads the Diversity & Inclusion Committee set up in 2020 to educate, celebrate, and empower the team, clients and partners on all things D&I. Prior to this, Michaella graduated seven years ago from Bournemouth University where she studied Communication and Media Studies. Most recently she won a Patricia Mann and WACL Future Leaders 2020 award whereby, she was recognised for "being a pioneer who lit up the room". She used the bursary to very recently complete a Certificate in Coaching accredited by the Association for Coaching. In her 'spare time' Michaella plays semi-professional football as a defender for Dulwich Hamlet FCW.



Francesca Ecsery

Francesca is a Portfolio Non-Executive Director with expertise in Marketing and 30+ years' experience in directing in both blue-chip companies and start-ups in the Digital / Retail / FMCG / Leisure Travel industries and works as a Mentor to several digital entrepreneurs and senior executives. Currently, Francesca is a Non-Executive Director on 4 boards, F&C Investment Trust plc., Air France, Marshall Motor Holdings plc. and The AIC. She Chairs the 'NED Talks' workshop program for Senior Women at WACL Ltd and she works as a Mentor where her clients are predominately senior leaders facing a career junction, women who want to be NEDs but also start-ups in the consumer tech arena. Previously, she has also served on the Boards of Share plc, Good Energy Group plc and We Are Vista Ltd. Francesca is passionate about all matters relating to women in the workplace and gender equality. She devotes considerable time to mentoring and facilitating career development opportunities for women as well as actively promoting the commercial benefits of gender equality at work to relevant audiences. A graduate of Geneva University in Political Science and International Relations, Francesca also holds an MBA from Harvard Business School. She speaks 6 languages: French, English, Portuguese, Spanish and Hungarian fluently and Italian conversational. She is a British and Hungarian citizen, lives in London and Provence with her husband Tim.



Helen Warren-Piper

General Manager at
Mars Pet Nutrition UK

Helen is currently the General Manager of Mars Pet Nutrition UK which makes some of the best loved pet food brands including Pedigree, Whiskas and Dreamies (insert any brands you want). Helen joined Mars in April 2018. Since joining Mars Pet Nutrition UK as Sales Director, Helen has made a significant contribution to the business by strengthening relationships with key customers. Helen started her professional career at P&G as a Sales Graduate Trainee and quickly progressed through a variety of increasingly senior roles that led her to Marketing & R&D Director Premier Foods Plc.

Helen is extremely passionate about diversity and leadership development. She has strengthened the UK Pet Nutrition Women in Sales Leadership program and speaks publicly within and outside of Mars on the topic, being a member of both WACL and LEAD. She is a fellow of the Marketing Academy and a mentor to the MA scholarship programme. Helen is also a passionate advocate of the Mars Pet Nutrition UK purpose - making sure that A Better World for Pets is lived by all Associates and understood outside of the organization. Outside of work Helen lives in Farnham Royal, Bucks and has two children - Ruby and William. In her spare time, she enjoys keeping fit and spending time with her family.



Alison Lomax

Google, Managing Director of
Lifestyle Retail Sector

Alison is a digital veteran having started in the days of dial-up Internet, working for government departments, MI5 and Foreign Office, before moving to the advertising world. Whilst at Tribal DDB, she was Head of Media on Volkswagen's digital brand strategy as well as launching The National Lottery business on the Internet, mobile and interactive TV. She was then Head of Digital Client Services at Beattie McGuinness Bungay (independent creative agency) before joining Google 10 years ago. Alison has had a varied career at Google, having led the Creative agency team, the Brand specialist team and is now Managing Director of Lifestyle Retail sector. Alison is a DEI Champion, a proud feminist and member of WACL (Women in Advertising & Communications London) and Executive sponsor of the EMEA Trans community at Google. Outside of work, Alison is married to Jim, a film Producer with two highly spirited daughters, Livy (15) and Freya (11) and through watching their Saturday morning football matches has (late in life) become very passionate about football and taken on a role as a Trustee at Berkhamsted Raiders Football Club leading the girl's strategy.



Cindy Yendell

Founding Partner
at Leonardo Advisory

Cindy is a Founding Partner at Leonardo Advisory, a London based advisory firm that helps CEOs and their Executive teams connect their organisations' purpose, strategy and culture, turning culture into competitive advantage. It provides strategic counsel to public and private sector organisations including TfL, BBC, Crossrail & KPMG to name a few. Cindy is an energetic and passionate business leader, driven by her desire for organisations to "take culture as seriously as strategy". She has founded two successful advisory firms, one of which she sold to Omnicom in 2009. A senior advisor with 25 years' boardroom level experience. Cindy has advised global leaders and their organisations on some of the most high-profile culture changes of the last two decades, and currently works with UK and multinational organisations, particularly those needing to undergo cultural change to achieve the next level of business performance. Cindy believes that it is not diversity per se that produces competitive advantage, because an open and inclusive culture is required to activate the benefits of diversity, and this is more difficult than ticking diversity boxes.

Too many companies want their diversity numbers to change - but not their culture. NED of King's House School Enterprises Ltd (2018 - Present) Cindy is married to Rob and has two teenage children. They split their time between West London and North Cornwall, where she can be found most days running along the coast - albeit 1km behind her daughter!

FOR E W O R D



Covid 19: Why now more than Ever?

The economic and social impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has had a regressive impact on gender equality in the workplace with some of the key challenges detailed below:

1.

Increased unpaid labour at home;

A disproportionate share of the household chores and childcare burden has fallen on women, with working women currently spending an avg. of 15 hours a week more on unpaid domestic labour than men.

2.

More likely to be furloughed;

Over 133, 000 more women have been furloughed than men with women already making up 70% of all low paid workers in the UK.

3.

More likely to give up or lose their jobs

Women make up 39% of Global employment but account for 54% of overall job losses.

4.

Greater impact on female dominated jobs and industries

(Beauty for example)

5.

Female directors are more likely to see a withdrawal of support;

7% difference between men and women as to how well they feel supported in their roles during the crisis.

How to successfully influence boards with Francesca Ecsery

As a Non-Executive Director you may think that you can't really influence the company on GPG reporting or progress on D&I initiatives but that has not been my experience. You don't have the levers to do any of the heavy lifting but as a NED and role model you definitely can influence outcomes. I wanted to share some of my tips and stories in case it can help you do the same.

In one of the businesses, I company's GPG substantially. realised that the short list was served on the board of, we did Bias is everywhere even all male. We asked the head not need to report on GPG but I amongst the staunch feminists hunter to go back and find managed to convince the board so always be alert to the female candidates to balance that it was 'a good idea to do it unconscious bias in your the shortlist as we would not so that we make sure that we as decisions. On another board I take a decision from an a board are happy with what was on, we found that there unbalanced list. After a short the GPG will tell us (as opposed was no GPG (mainly because it protest saying 'there are no to putting our head in the was led by a female CEO, women anywhere with this sand). Plus if we are not happy female CFO and a 50/50 expertise' the head hunter did with the GPG report results we board). We congratulated find two women. We can always choose to do ourselves for the results and interviewed everyone and hired, something about it'. The simple when we decided we needed what we deemed to be, the act of reporting meant that this an additional NED on the board best amongst the five new awareness percolated with a rare expertise we were candidates. It happened to be through the organisation and not particularly mindful of one of the women. Moral of the impacted in small ways in all gender in our brief as whoever story: Keep your biases in check hiring and promotion decisions. we hired was going tilt the or you will miss out on We also promoted a female C balance anyway. We hiring/promoting the best suite I had been mentoring onto interviewed three candidates on people. the board (with the the short list and were about to accompanying pay and reward appoint one of them but PDF available [here](#). package) which reduced the stopped ourselves when we

How to successfully influence on boards about GPG

WACL members Coaching session

8 February 2021

Francesca Ecsery



Key Outtakes:

1. **The regular act of 'Just reporting' on GPG narrows the gap** (as it raises awareness and influences hiring and progression decisions)
– make sure you have the data.
2. **Find allies or develop them** (by understanding and addressing barriers to support – real or perceived).
3. **Promoting and hiring women into the top ranks (board)** is the quickest and most effective way to narrow the GPG.
4. **Make sure that there is an action plan and incentives attached to your D&I/GPG targets** and ensure that it starts at the very top and is cascaded throughout the organization

How to Convince that measuring the GPG still matters when your company employs less than 250 with Ann Francke

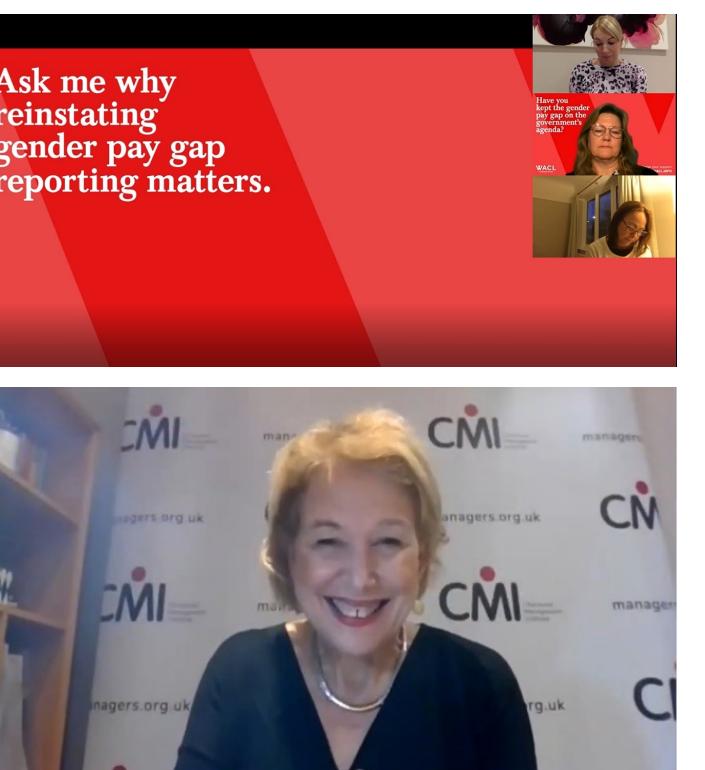
I wanted to run this session because the vast majority of UK businesses are smaller than 250 employees and not legally required to report their GPGs. So if we are going to make real progress in closing the UK's GPG we have got to get more businesses knowing about and measuring their gender pay gap. Also, there are a lot of agency businesses in WACL who are under 250 employees but part of larger parent companies and I want to encourage them to understand and report their own GPGs and not just rely on the parent's figures. Finally there is data that suggests that many SMEs don't think they have a gender pay gap, but in fact they do. So, raising awareness of this issue by getting them to examine their own patterns is really important.

CMI's story: As a big gender advocacy organisation with a female CEO and COO and a 50/50 balanced exec team I assumed we did not have a gender pay gap. I was wrong! Turns out we had a GPG median pay gap of 35%! And the reason was we are a 70% female business and when we looked at our data by quartile, we discovered that the bottom two quartiles were overwhelmingly female, and they were less well paid. So, we did three things: Firstly, we looked for 'unsung heroes' and promoted them. These were women who were doing a great job, but perhaps had been on maternity leave and worked part-time, been with the organisation for many years and/or had or not gone for internal promotions but had taken on more responsibilities over time in their current roles. I asked my exec team to look for examples in their areas and they found them readily, all were deserved. And the positive impact on morale was palpable, as not only they, but also their colleagues recognised it was the right thing to do. Secondly, we resolved to hire more men into our bottom two quartiles to even out the numbers in the future. And finally, we insisted

that every role we hired have a gender and ethnically diverse shortlist. The result: Our GPG was reduced to less than 10%. Michaella Williams: Although passionate about equality, and the appointed 'Diversity Champion' for her firm, a 40-employee sized company, Michaella felt uncomfortable raising the GPG issue at work. Her company had a culture of not being very transparent about pay and bonuses, so she was hesitant to approach her MD as she "was aware of going against the grain" of the business culture, especially as she is aiming to be promoted to a leadership position. She was also concerned and didn't want to be seen as the person "that's pushing everything equality because I'm a black, gay, female." But the good news is, the WACL campaign gave her the courage to raise the issue with her (female) MD and the MD was very supportive! Other WACLers reinforced Michaella's experience and applauded her courage. Jan Gooding commented, "I think all of us are finding this difficult." She then shared that she also struggled to raise the issue at her FTSE 100 role as Inclusion Director and understood Michaella's hesitancy. So, Jan

befriended the Payroll Director, so she knew what was doable before she went to the board to request the analysis on the pay gap - and she discovered they'd already done a dummy run the year before! So, she knew it was doable and she made an ally.

PDF available [here](#).



Key Outtakes:

- 1. Treat it like a business Issue - know the business case for gender balance.** (Better financials; better employee engagement and culture; easier to attract and retain talent; better reflection of customers; reduced risk). Remind people gender balance benefits everyone-including men. Always lead with this when discussing with stakeholders.
- 2. Know your own organisation's data, especially by quartile.** (You likely have a 'Glass pyramid': 50% or more women in the bottom quartile; 75% or more men in the top quartile- and if you do nothing it will stay that way). So, find out your 'story' and barriers, where are you failing to promote or hire in women? Which quartiles? / Which functions? / Which divisions? Why? Supplement the data with listening to employees' stories from those areas. Then propose a plan to fix your specific problem.
- 3. Use best practices.** Set targets, review promotion and hiring processes, monitor and reward progress. Sponsor talented women. (Women are over mentored and under sponsored). Embrace flexible working and measure results not presenteeism. Call out bad behaviour - if you don't, you are complicit in normalising it. And remember, if you are promoting/hiring more women in upper quartiles you're not 'gaming the system'; you are levelling up an unlevel playing field.
- 4. Find allies and benchmark.** Enrol the CEO, board member and /or other Senior Directors and colleagues who want to fix this and bond together. If you are part of a larger organisation, compare your results and plans with others who are also part of it. Share experiences and lobby together to propose solutions to the parent company. Create transparency of data for all subsidiaries in your parent group or do it informally. Talk with other WACL members, perhaps those in similar sectors, and compare notes and progress. Ask outside experts to come in and talk with your management team to get them onside and be critical friends and challengers.

Becoming a GPG advocate: how to influence from the inside when it isn't your 'day job' with Katrina Lowes

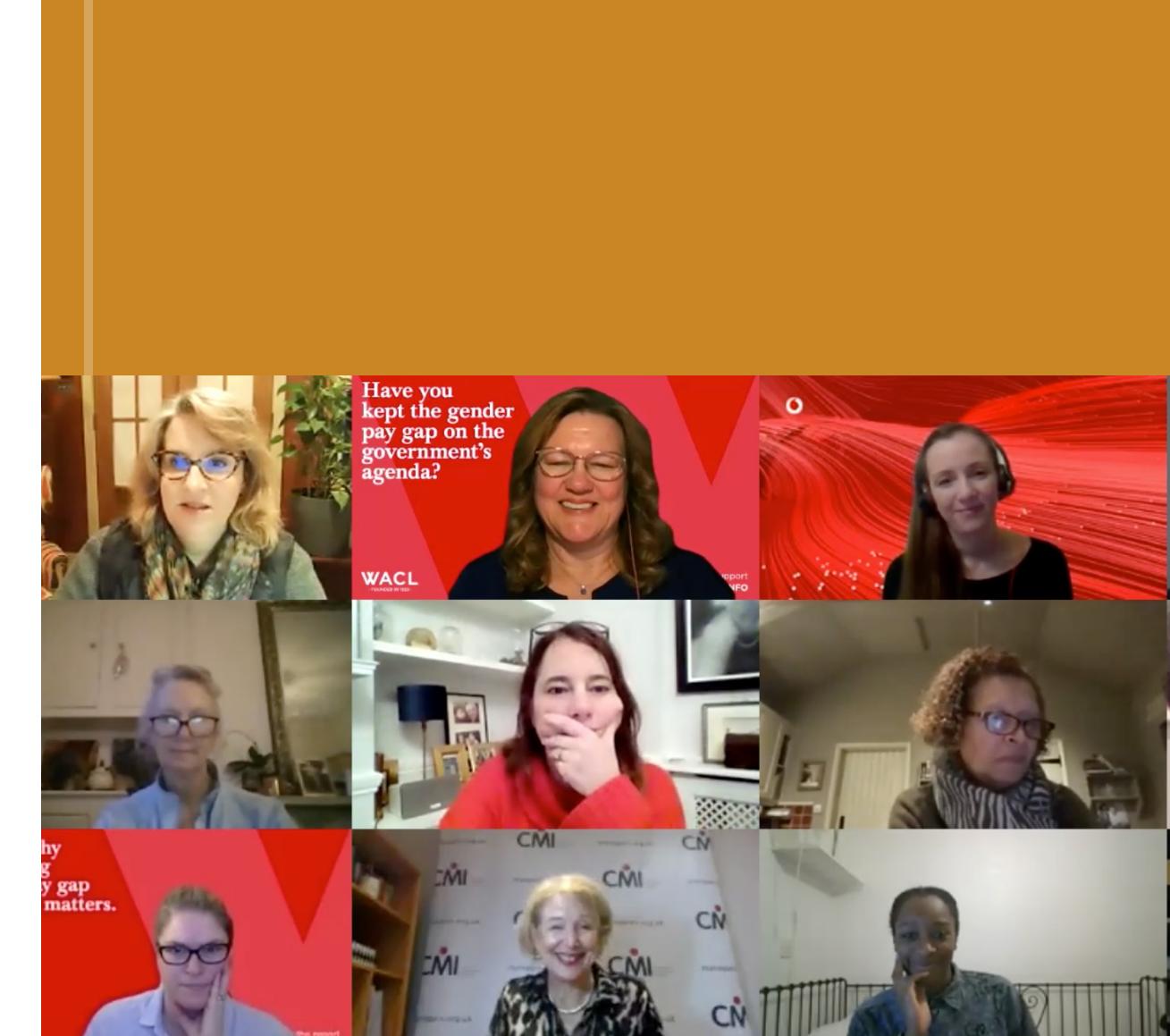
It's twenty-five years since the Beijing declaration of women's rights imagined a world where every woman and girl can exercise her freedoms and choices, and realize her rights, such as to live free from violence, to go to school, to participate in decisions and to earn equal pay for work of equal value. Well, here we are, twenty-five years later and we've made relatively slow progress.

I'm lucky to work in an organisation like Vodafone that not only believes that diversity is important to future success but is actively changing how we work. We have brilliant Diversity Champions, HR experts and support networks, but there's still so much to be done.

So, a group of us set up the Vodafone Women in Business Network. 2,200 women across the world sharing knowledge and supporting each other. Raising awareness of diversity issues and encouraging development. Advocating for change. Leading by example because we have strength in numbers. As advocates, we can encourage change from the inside. We can educate, raise awareness, and accelerate change. We can make sure we have balanced recruitment shortlists and address pay gaps in our own teams. And as WACL Advocates, we can support each other, because WACL definitely has strength in numbers.

PDF available [here](#).

Continued...



Becoming a Gender Pay Gap Advocate

Katrina Lowes
17th February 2021

WACL



The Pandemic's Impact on Working Women in Eight Studies, Becky Deo, Vodafone Business

"When your partners are men, how do you make the financial case to address equal pay? I feel like I'm a lone voice." You're not a lone voice – WACL Advocates are here to support you.

Katrina Lowes - At one of my end of year reviews, my boss pointed out to me that, compared to my male colleagues, I was always too tough on myself. I'd mark myself down if I hadn't fully achieved an objective, whereas my colleagues would mark themselves up, if they were close enough. He coached me about my language, the way I see my performance and to be aware of how my peer group presented themselves. I'm now conscious to look for similar behaviour in the women I lead.

Read more in [this PDF](#).

We asked four WACL members and gender pay gap advocates for their advice:

1. Have the courage to identify and talk to the person (or couple of people) who will be most influential on whether the company reports gender pay gap (verses working it up the chain). Be clear with your proposition - the benefits to company reputation and growth and listen carefully to their views. It may take more than one conversation, but truly understanding the barriers (e.g., resources) and the decision makers will give you a much better chance of success. Syl Saller CBE, NED

2. Don't confuse pay gap with role gap - it's easy to push back and say we pay the same, regardless of gender for the same job. Some jobs are rated more highly than others - e.g., the ability to

lift heavy boxes in a warehouse versus customer service frontline. Predominantly male versus predominantly female. Teachers versus Book Keepers, Builders versus Nurses etc. The problem starts at the mass lower scale and not just the lack of women in senior roles. But getting more women into senior positions is also important, of course, and requires a complex amalgam of all the things we know about: bias training; flexible working; female networks; male sponsors, as well as all the confidence building we need to do to support female talent to ask for **promotion on promise not proof**.

Stevie Spring CBE, Chairman British Council; Mind; Coop Remco; KinoMo

3. Find a male champion/mentor to support you in the business - ideally at a senior level - it really helps to promote the message that it is about equality for all from everyone. Usually best to try men with daughters first, makes the issue much more personal! If you are in the position to do this - **ensure that no one is ever financially penalised for maternity leave** and lead by example by promoting women or giving pay rises to women whilst on maternity leave and absent from the office that would have happened if they had been at work.

And finally, a simple one, **bring the outside in to help** - to help support why this is so important. Academics, clients, journalists. Show the value to the business and reputation so it is

seen as a critical business imperative, not just a personal mission.

Karen Buchanan, CEO, McCann Manchester

4. You can't manage what you don't measure so it's important to know where you are and then work on making it better. However ghastly the start point data is. It's the first step to making a plan to reduce and eliminate it. **It is always worth measuring it**.

In most companies it boils down to needing to **have more women at the top** and looking at the data in granular detail, by department, to address that. Bonus gap is just as important - and revealing!

There is **tons of confusion between equal pay and gender pay gap** which is

SO important to clarify when sharing the data with your staff. Equal pay has been law since 1970. The GPG is a snapshot of the average pay of men and women in an organisation. Most people (even managers) don't understand the difference.

And we must remind people this takes time. When the legislation came in, the idea was to eliminate the GPG 'in a generation'. That last bit has been forgotten and people are looking for a quick fix. This is not easy in a large company. This is about year-on-year improvement. This government needs to **show it is committed to women**.

Dame Cilla Snowball, Portfolio Director

Thoughts on how to drive gender diversity in global companies, to get material change with Helen Warren-Piper

Hi everyone, what I wanted to do in this section was bring some data and facts to the impact that Diversity can have on business results: i.e., share the proven case. The fact is that it's a business imperative! Gender diversity on boards drives better EBITDA results. There have been 3 studies by McKinsey: Why Diversity Matters (2015), Delivering Through Diversity (2018), Diversity Wins: how Inclusion Matters (2020). Latest data set included: 15 countries, more than 1000 large companies and includes 'social listening'. The analysis that I share, confirms the strong business case for both gender diversity and ethnic/cultural diversity in corporate leadership. Companies in the top quartile for Gender diversity on executive teams were 25% more likely to have above-average profitability, than those in the bottom quartile. And those companies who have more than 30% women executives, were more likely to outperform companies where the range was lower (10-30%). I share this data and some of my own personal experiences. And finally - in this section, my 'Hot Seat' guest is Jane Wakeley Mars CMO. Jane shares some of her amazing stories from her journey.

When I joined one of the major 'they're not interested', 'she's happy at that level', 'they don't the UK business, I inherited a Senior Sales team, all white males, with a lot of bravado, all be-moaning 'lack of female talent'. When I looked at the organization, I noticed many strong females, three in particular. Successful women don't look or operate like men, these three seemed to have less confidence, were quieter, but always delivered. When I asked the guys, they said things like... 'Ah her, she's not up to it',

Promoted one to Account Marketing Director, running Director on a major grocery business (£60M business). She transformed the business from - 4% to +10%, through tenacity and phenomenal skills of persuasion, she pulled up trees. Promoted another to Account Director, to run the £100M discount sector: she grew our business +12.5% that year and step-changed the relationships there and landed white space business.

PDF available [here](#).

The other, I put in as Customer

Thoughts on how to drive gender diversity in global companies, to get material change

WACL members Coaching session
24 February 2021
Helen Warren-Piper

zoom_Helen

Key Outtakes from the McKinsey study:

The McKinsey Study tells us that there are five key areas which we should focus on and are consistent with approaches from companies successful in this area:

1. Advancing diverse talent into leadership teams is a critical first step.
2. Senior leaders need to be at the centre of the I&D effort.
3. We need to provide transparency and fairness and debias our processes: get to the right data set.
4. We have to promote openness: tackling bias and discrimination.
5. We need to foster belonging through support.

How to make the business case for gender diversity and help clients integrate GPG into their business plans with Cindy Yendell

As a consultant, I have the privilege of having a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities my clients are grappling with, as well as the trust and influence that comes with being a trusted advisor. This combination gives me the credibility to raise the gender diversity question with experience and objectivity and link it to their business goals, so they consider it a business priority. I wanted to share my experience of tackling this critical topic and hear from others doing the same, so I can be more effective.

There was a question raised in our session around what do you do if the organisation is undertaking lots of 'well meaning' activity (targets, unconscious bias training, mentoring, support groups etc) but not making any meaningful sustainable progress. We discussed first looking at the leadership. Are the leaders 'walking the talk', are their actions consistent with what they say is important, are there any inconsistencies amongst the leadership team? We also discussed the role of culture; many companies want the diversity numbers to change, but don't fully understand that it's really if men don't take it up, we won't

about cultural change. To activate gender diversity, you need an open and inclusive culture, this is more difficult than ticking diversity boxes. The more progressive companies consider gender diversity as part of a broader process of culture change, and actively work to identify the blockages that suppress the potential of gender diversity: i.e., new ways of working.

In the session we discussed 'flexible working' and the need to stop talking about it as a 'female benefit' but to promote it as 'all employee benefit' for both men and women -

break down this two-tier system. (The recent sea change in attitudes to working from home bears this out). Most clients get the business case for improving diversity but are overwhelmed with the task and don't know where to start. Sharing client case studies covering both success criteria and pitfalls as well as best practice can be one of the most effective ways of helping make the task tangible and practical.

PDF available [here](#).

Key Outtakes:

1. Avoid positioning gender diversity as an HR problem or in isolation of the business goals. As consultants we are aware of our client's business imperatives and priorities, whether that is a pursuit for growth, innovation, becoming a more purpose-led organisation or recruiting and retaining talent. Our job is to make the link between the benefits of gender diversity and the client's business imperatives, so gender diversity is seen as an enabler of their business goals. There is plenty of data available to back up these connections (see McKinsey slides)

2. Highlight the views of the people that matter most to clients and therefore the reputational risks of not taking action.

A. For many client's shareholders, gender diversity falls into the category of environmental, social, and governance (ESG). Although many focus on the environmental and governance elements, there is a social groundswell reflected by investors asking questions specifically on gender diversity, which are influencing their investment decisions.

B. Most businesses want to be a destination employer to recruit and retain the best talent. Clients need to be aware that gender balance data is being scrutinised by existing and potential employees and being compared with their competitors. 86% of female Gen-Yers say an employer's record on gender diversity is a make-or-break factor.

c. On the other side there is pressure from consumers who are increasingly supporting brands and companies who are positively diverse across the board and rejecting those who are not.

3. Adapt existing forms of measurement to benchmark, reinforce and measure progress. To make things simple at the outset for clients, suggest they incorporate gender diversity measures and questions into existing tracking and leadership indicators to establish a benchmark. Once this has been accomplished, more specific tracking and reinforcement can be adopted.

- Benchmark and tracking
- Employee surveys
- Recruitment and Promotion data
- Bonuses
- Succession planning
- Exit interviews
- Reinforcement
- Leadership objectives
- Leadership reward and recognition
- Training and development
- Flexible working
- Awards



Tackling the gender pay gap reverse mentoring workshop: what senior women can learn from the next generation of senior women with Michaella Williams and the FUTURES Network



What Senior Women can Learn from the Next Generation of Senior Women

Michaella Williams Zara Bryson Nana Opoku Claire Jerrold Laura Merchan Crystal Eisinger

Since winning the WACL Talent award and Patricia Mann I have been given access to amazing resources, events and networking opportunities across WACL. When I was approached to join the GPG working group committee it was a simple choice. I'm very passionate about continuing to raise awareness for all areas of diversity but in particular gender! I am aware, as I'm sure you are that there is so much more work that is needed to be done throughout our industry in this area.

In preparation for my coaching session, I teamed up with a group of volunteered individuals from the FUTURES network. (Zara Bryson, Nana Opoku, Claire Jerrold, Laura Merchan and Crystal Eisinger.) We bonded over discussing the personal challenges we had experienced in our own careers to date. From toxic working environments, a gap between our ambition and the career support available to uncovering personal gender pay gaps and challenges with parenting, work flexibility and redundancy - we have all seen and experienced challenges of inequality. It was both refreshing and saddening when we connected to discuss our own stories on this subject matter and realized there was so many similarities amongst us. We decided we wanted to use our opportunity to hold a mirror up to the senior women open to hearing and learning from us as the next generation of senior women. We wanted to inspire and challenge senior women to take even further action and remind everyone that sexism is still alive and well in organisations. The same barriers, unconscious biases and negative experiences senior women went through years ago, we are still going through today (despite movements forward) and these are holding us back. We need each other's help to challenge and change this in the future. Our coaching session used documented and personal experiences to break down the barriers to gender pay parity and share actionable solutions at a personal and institutional level.

Continued...



Continued...

We often hear that if you can't see it, you can't be it but as demonstrated by a candid piece of writing by Becky Hewitt, sometimes 'making it work' is doing the exact opposite in role modelling. Especially in the context of Covid when women in leadership are 'making it work' by running themselves ragged between late night emails, back-to-back video calls and home schooling, this sends out a dangerous signal. The reality is that senior women and men must sometimes not 'make it work' in order to role model the behaviours associated with true flexible working.

"As a result of working flexibly, younger women in the sector often talk to me about their deep concerns about balancing a senior move with their role as parents... I have rolled my eyes and said, 'of course I work full-time hours really' signalling to others they must do the same". "I can't imagine anyone contemplating the juggle as I model it and thinking it's a good idea. It doesn't feel good to me anymore, either."

Becky Hewitt

<https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/becky-hewitt-urgently-need-change-attitudes-towards-flexible-working/management/article/1708229>

Being at the top isn't enough to close the gender pay gap and specifically keep women in the industry. The way in which people, men and women, assume senior leadership positions is crucial to the success of those beneath them. Zara shared how her manager had confided in her in a pub saying "Apologies if I have ever been overly harsh to you at work, I feel like I have to have a persona of being tough to be respected. I really respect you and think you're one of the smartest women in

the company and I hope you know that." If we live by the maxim what got you here won't get you there, identifying some of those traits that you thought you had to exhibit because that's what leadership looked like around you is vital.

Supporting women and enabling them to thrive requires proactivity, activism and ongoing allyship to nurture talent. Laura shared, "We were being treated like threats when we were just trying to develop our careers."

Claire shared an early experience she had where she was told "no one will ever employ you, all you will do is have kids and that costs a business too much money. I'm not sure why you are even bothering going to university." This was what she was told at 16 by her first boss, Trevor. "Trevor" has been a barometer for sexism in my career. He was there when I interviewed at a large FMCG, I had just got married so I removed my wedding ring in case there were any Trevor's lurking. When it came to handing in my ID documents, my new boss said 'oh, I didn't know you were married. I didn't notice a wedding ring'. Trevor was quiet after that, I thought I had beaten him as I had got a promotion just before I went on maternity leave. How wrong was I. Trevor declined my flexible working request for one day a week from home. Trevor promoted my maternity cover above me within weeks of me returning. Trevor found increasingly creative ways to leave me out of meetings and decision points. Trevor's are everywhere, they hide behind 'with your managers permission' and use their own anxieties to stop your progression. Don't leave anywhere for Trevor's to hide and when you find one, call it out."

Key outtakes on how to act:

- 1. Go beyond role modelling and behaviour modelling.** This can be achieved by not reaffirming broken systems built on women's burnout and setting a different personal example. Also, through recognising when to let go of any toxic alpha leadership traits that may have been adopted or witnessed. There is a need to buck the trend of losing good women from our industry in their early 30s and shift the development conversations from "where do you see yourself in five years?" to "do you want to be on a board or run a management committee?"
- 2. Sponsorship needs to go beyond mentorship.** For example, you can amplify women's work by writing a recommendation in LinkedIn and proactively sharing their great work. Why not bring women into the room with you to give them a platform, if they've prepared the work, bring them in to present it. If it would be helpful for them to hear the conversation first hand, bring them in. Why not pass on any templates, books and toolkits that have helped you in your career.
- 3. Champion change consistently** there is lots of work being done across WACL with various initiatives which we know you are supporting but the change needs to be consistent within everyday personal behaviour and example setting through enforcements on organisations to change the inequality culture which is impacting GPG. Allyship is a verb, not a noun, the journey begins with education and continues with action. If leaders and business don't champion change consistently, top talent will leave. There is a need to examine (and re-examine) and uncover Trevor's hiding places by overthinking all policies to change the system from within. Gender biased language needs to be corrected across the company (in person and any documentation) and check for representation across all business operations from boardrooms to supply chains.

PDF available [here](#).



How WACLers can help each other

Support, experience and expertise are a few things that WACLers have in bucket load. Below are some of the ways you can think about engaging the WACL community on to strengthen your business case:

Allyship: It is easy for us all to feel the burden of fixing the workplace but think strategically about how you can use allies within your organisation.

Learn from companies who are leading in this area; There is power in numbers and external partners offer validation and an extra voice in your business case, particularly if their company is a leader in this space. Connecting Women's networks across industries and businesses.

Business case review: Have external eyes over your business case before sharing internally with senior leadership.

Mentoring and Coaching: Offer support to others as well as feel free to reach out to other members for coaching 1) Salary negotiation 2) Performance management.

Re-watch our GPG Coaching series; As referenced throughout the toolkit watch the recordings of the fantastic variety of sessions including 'How to drive gender diversity in large Global companies' and 'How to influence when it isn't your day job'

How WACLers can help each other

- [Closing the gender pay gap WACL members session presentation](#)
- [Addressing the gender gap by Emily Hopcroft](#)
- Request for a free copy of Ann's book [Create a Gender-balanced Workplace](#) by emailing your home address to Lynette.paddy@managers.org.uk. Read more [here](#).
- Request for free access to [CMI's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Qualifications Level 7](#) (Senior Manager) bite-sized qualification
- [Diversity wins: How inclusion matters](#) (McKinsey)
- [Realising gender equality's \\$12 trillion economic opportunity](#) (McKinsey)
- [Covid and Gender Equality: Countering the regressive effects](#) (McKinsey)
- Gender Pay Gap Reporting 101 (Chartered Management Institute)
- [Women's Business Council - Balancing the System](#) (Government Equalities Office)
- [Why women are better leaders in a crisis](#) (HBR)
- Difference between equal pay and GPG (Independent)
- [Allyship - Men using their power to fight gender inequality in the annual Agents of Change Awards](#) (in partnership with Management Today & Women's Business Council) (Management Today)
- [Improving gender balance - 5-year summary](#) (Hampton Alexander Review)
- [Easing the Covid19 burden on working parents](#) (BCG)
- [It is women, especially low paid, BAME & migrant women putting their lives on the line to deliver vital care](#) (Women's Budget Group)
- [Women feel less supported by bosses amid pandemic](#) (Consultancy.co.uk)
- [Has Covid-19 made the public more aware of inequality?](#) (Bond)
- [Covid-19: The impacts of the pandemic on inequality](#) (IFS)
- [Equal pay for equal work: the business case for gender equality](#) (Working Mums)
- [Stronger together - Engaging male allies in pursuit of gender equality](#) (ACI Insights)
- [Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations](#) (Government Equalities Office)
- [Evidence based actions for employers](#) (Government Equalities Office)
- [Gender pay gap negotiation tips](#) (Hult International Business School)
- [Economic Inequality - Mother's face home school disadvantage](#) (Financial Times)
- [Bloomberg Diversity Index](#) (Bloomberg)
- [Impact of Covid-19 -](#) (United Nations)
- [Good Guys: How Men Can Be Better Allies for Women in the Workplace](#) (D Smith & B Johnson)
- [Men: Here's how to help the women in your life get ahead at work](#) (Marketwatch)
- https://hbr.org/2021/04/research-adding-women-to-the-c-suite-changes-how-companies-think?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter_weekly&utm_campaign=weeklyhotlist_activesubs&utm_content=signinnudge&deliveryName=DM127493 (Harvard Business Review)
- [Global Gender Balance Scorecard report](#) (20-First)
- [Why Do So Many Incompetent Men Become Leaders?](#) (Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic HBR)