



**Women at the wheel**

Key findings from the 2020  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
in Automotive Study

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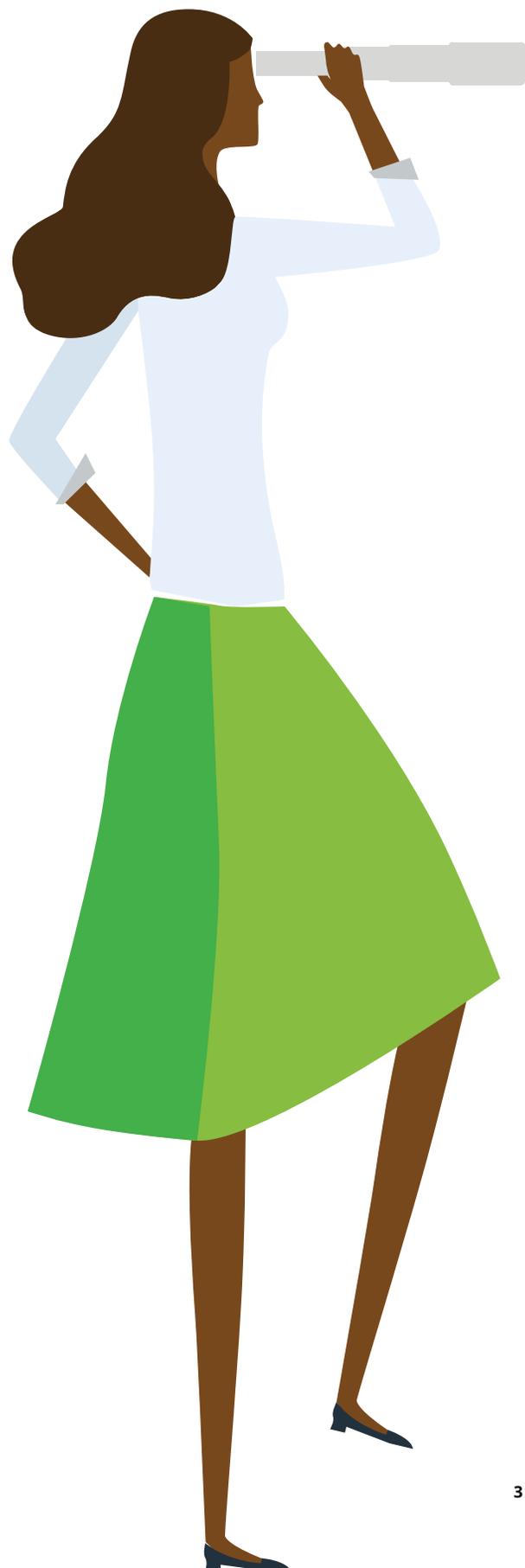
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# Introduction

Women make up about half of the labor force, but only a quarter of the automotive manufacturing workforce. They continue to represent an underutilized resource for automotive companies looking to gain a competitive advantage. For the past several years, Deloitte and *Automotive News* have been working together to shine a light on gender issues in the global automotive industry while celebrating the women that are forging a path for others to follow.

This year, we have broadened the scope of the program to include survey responses from hundreds of industry professionals (both women and men), with an aim to explore their views on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I). We hope the key insights presented on the following pages can help to inform a robust dialogue around the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion for automotive businesses going forward.

Learn more by visiting the [Deloitte Insights Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion collection](#).



# About the study

The study was conducted by Deloitte and *Automotive News* in an effort to explore views on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the automotive industry. The intent of the study is to better understand where opportunities for improvement may exist. The overall response rate has grown significantly since the last study completed in 2018, reflecting the importance of this topic across the sector.

A wide variety of automotive companies, including OEMs, suppliers, dealers, and captive finance companies, are represented in the data. The methodology was designed to generate a broad point of view on how companies can effectively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in their workplace.

The composition of survey respondents broadly aligns with industry demographics, as women represent 24% of the automotive manufacturing workforce.

## Women employed as % of total employed



Total workforce

**47%**



Motor vehicles and equipment manufacturing

**24%**

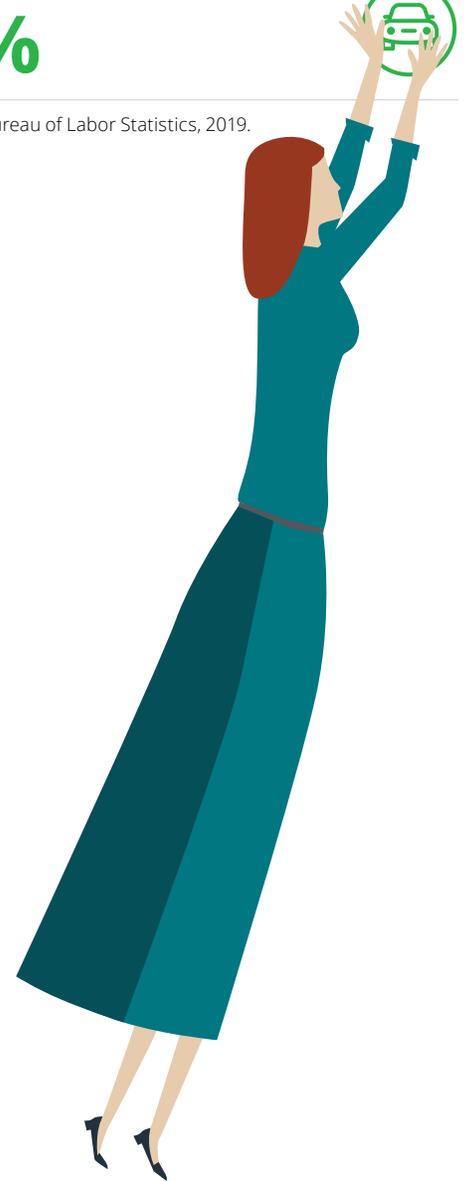


Automobile dealers

**18%**



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019.

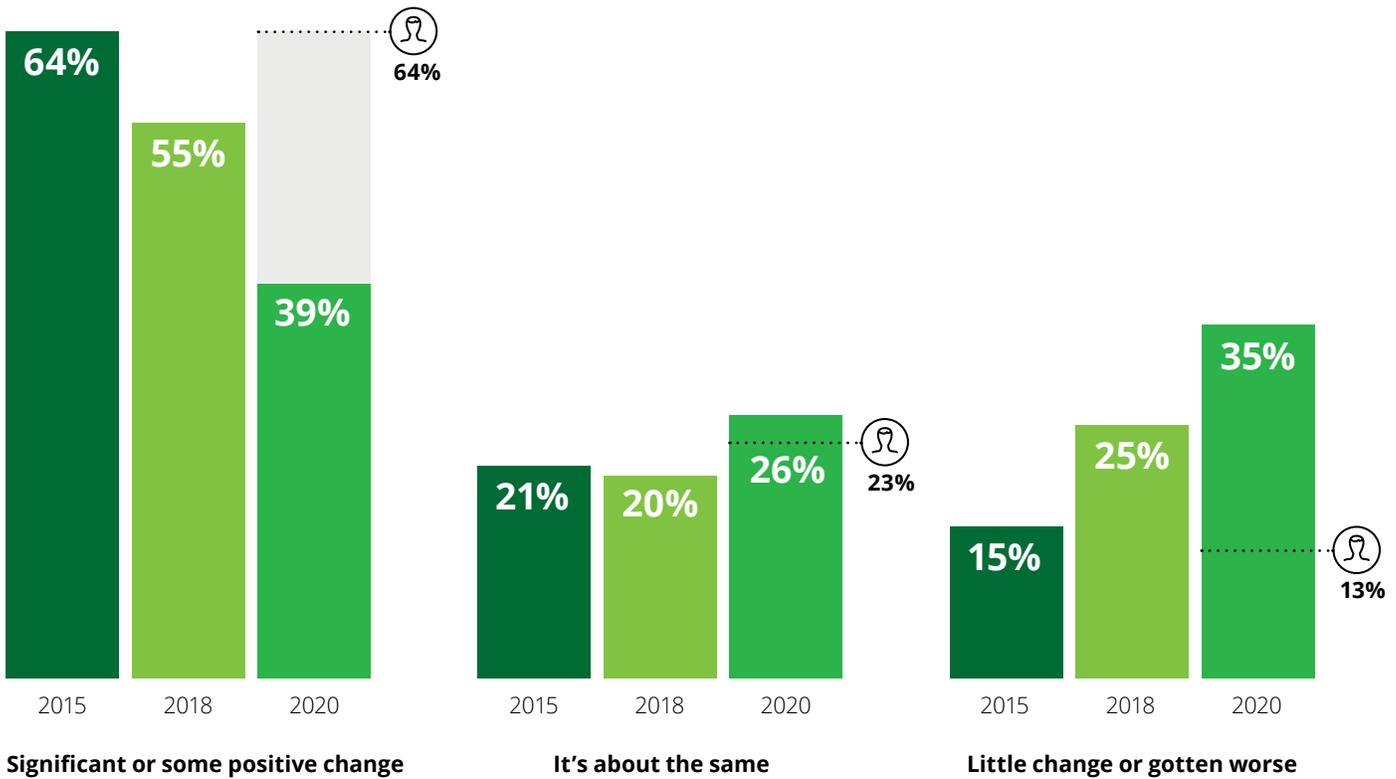


# The need for change

There is a discrepancy between genders on whether attitudes toward women have improved in the last five years—and an increasing number of women feel it's stagnating or getting worse over time.

**Figure 1. Have you seen positive changes in the automotive industry's attitude toward female professional employees in the last five years?**

Female respondents (%)



♂ Male respondents

Q35. To what extent have you seen positive changes in the automotive industry's attitude toward female professional employees in the last five years?  
 Sample size: n=2020 [159], 2018 [205], 2015 [190].

Nearly half of women surveyed said they would move to a different industry if they were to start their career today, with a lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion among the top three reasons to leave.

**Figure 2. Percentage of respondents who would remain in the automotive industry versus those who would leave if they started their career today**

## Women



### Top three reasons women would leave

**Lack of work/life balance**



**Lack of promotion opportunities**



**Lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion**



## Men



### Top three reasons men would leave

**Lack of work/life balance**



**Low income or pay**



**Poor working relationships**



Q11. If you were to start your career today, which of the following would you choose?

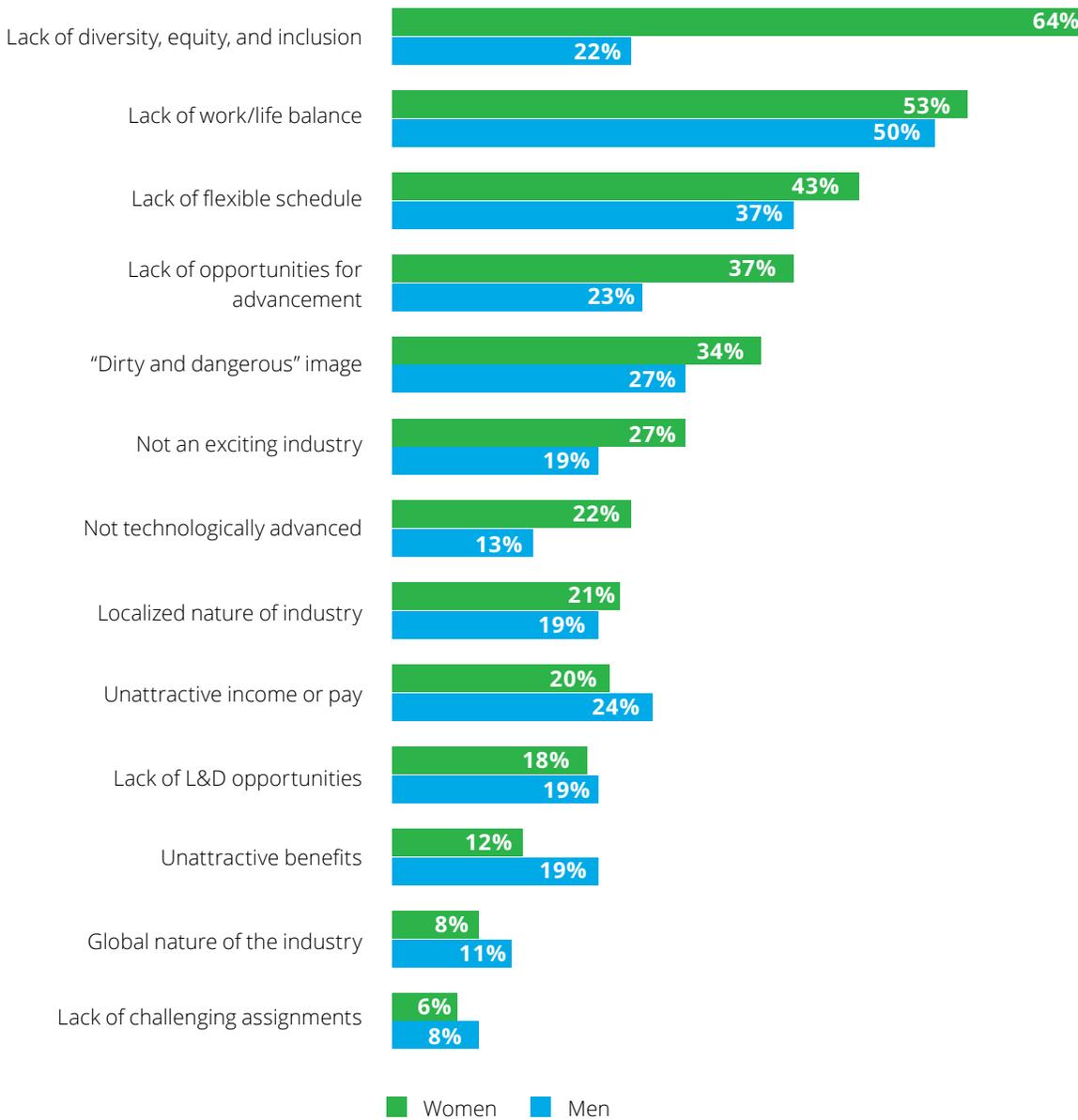
Q20. In your opinion, what are the top issues that would cause you to consider leaving the automotive industry? (Please select all that apply)

Sample size: n=Men [544], Women [159].

The top two destinations for women who said they would choose a different industry if they started their career today are high tech (30%) and health care (20%), as they are perceived as leading sectors for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

In fact, according to women, a lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion is the No. 1 issue that prevents people from considering a career in the automotive sector (it ranks sixth among men).

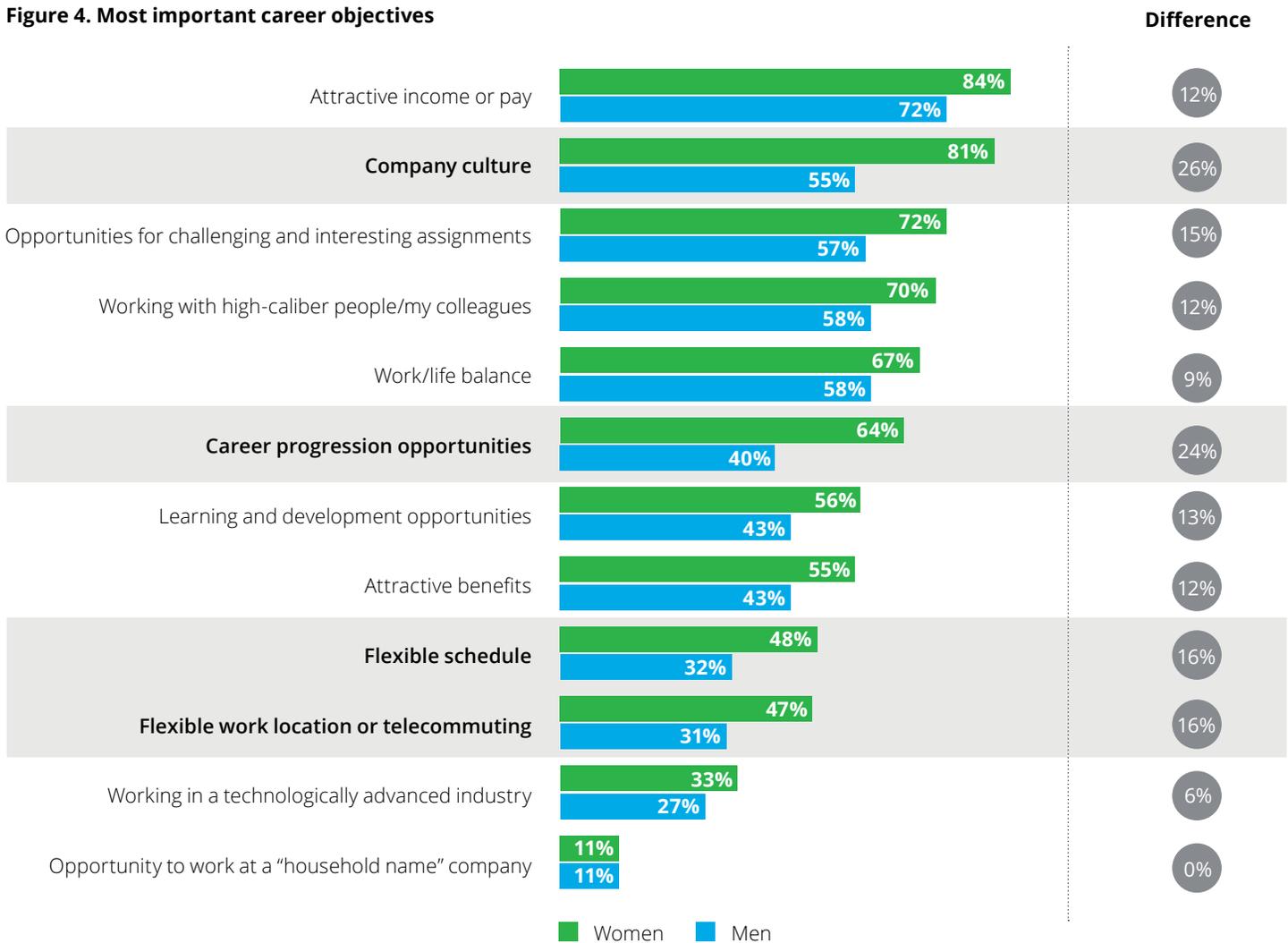
**Figure 3. Top issues that prevent people from considering a career in the automotive industry**



Q19. What do you think are the top issues are that prevent people from considering a career in the automotive industry? (Please select all that apply)  
 Sample size: n=Men [544], Women [159].

The biggest differences between men and women when it comes to what's most important in their career include a positive company culture and having career progression opportunities.

Figure 4. Most important career objectives



Q15. Thinking about your career in general, which of the following objectives are most important to you? (Please select all that apply)  
 Sample size: n=Men [544], Women [159].

# Setting the tone from the top

Significantly more women than men believe minorities are underrepresented among their company's senior executives.

Figure 5. Extent to which minorities are represented in your company's leadership team

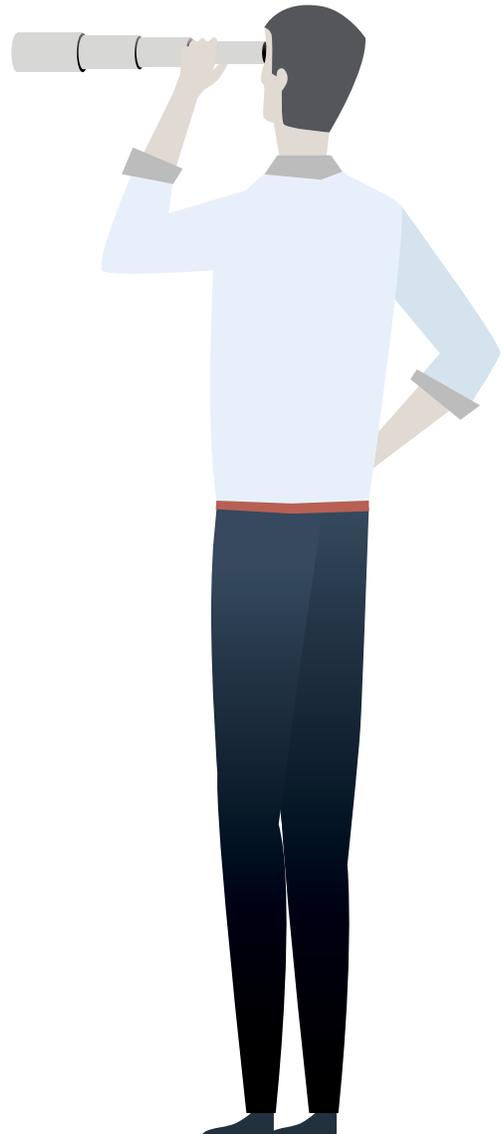
## Women



## Men

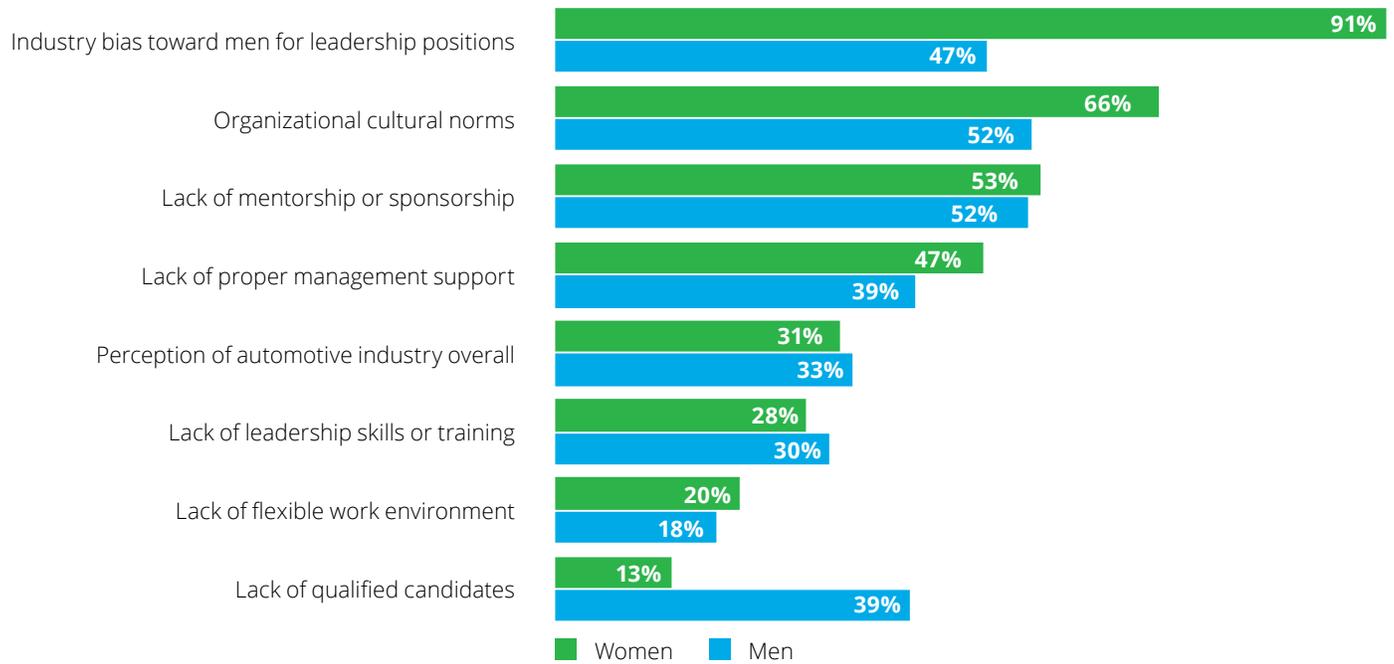


Note: "Don't know" responses were not considered.  
Q32. To what extent are minorities represented within your company's leadership team?  
Sample size: n=Men [502], Women [156].



There is a disconnect between women and men when it comes to factors that most contribute to a lack of diversity in leadership positions, particularly the perception of industry bias toward men.

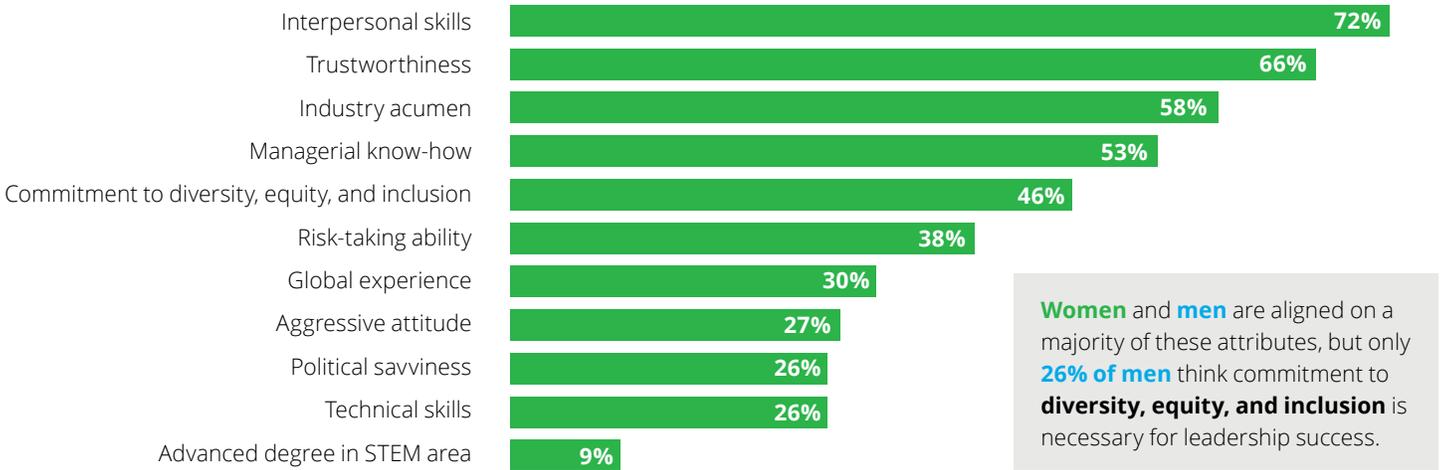
**Figure 6. Factors that generally contribute most to a lack of diversity in leadership positions**



Note: Data reflects survey respondents who feel that minorities are underrepresented within their company's leadership team (Q32). Q31. In your opinion, what factors generally contribute most to a lack of diversity in leadership positions? (Please select all that apply) Sample size: n=Men [203], Women [109].

Along with industry acumen and managerial skills, many women surveyed believe soft skills like interpersonal communication and trustworthiness are required for leadership success.

**Figure 7. What makes a leader successful in the automotive industry? (Female respondents)**



Q21. Which of the following do you believe makes a leader most successful in the automotive industry? (Please select all that apply)  
Sample size: n=159.

More women than men believe there are benefits associated with a diverse leadership team, including better decision-making and improved financial performance, while a quarter of men don't see any benefit.

**Figure 8. Business benefits of a diverse leadership team**



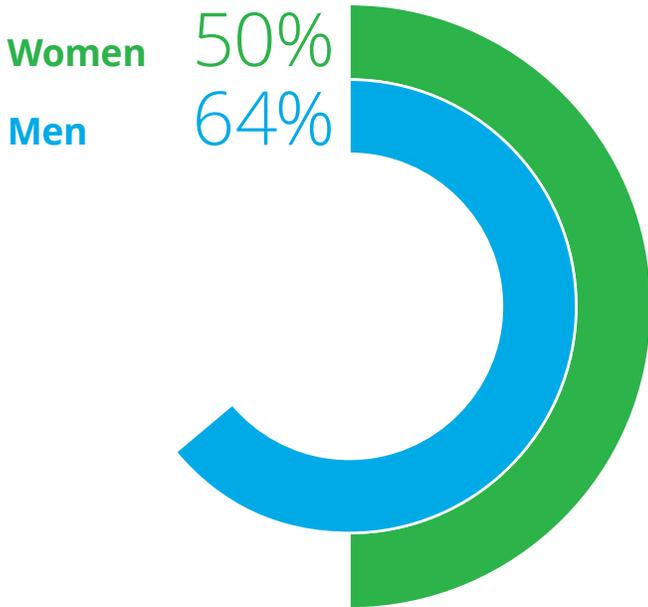
Q33. In your opinion, what are the most important business benefits associated with creating a diverse leadership team? (Please select all that apply)  
Sample size: n=Men [544], Women [159].

# The path forward

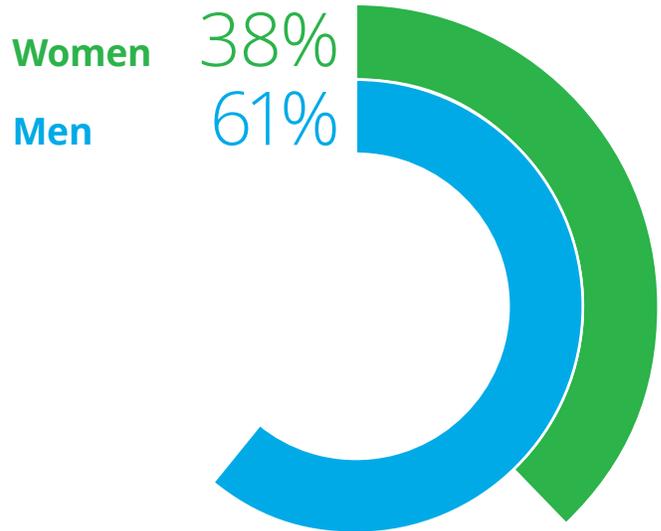
Even though fewer women than men give their companies a better than average grade for promoting and creating a diverse workforce, both women and men see significant room for improvement.

**Figure 9. Percentage of respondents who rated their company's efforts on diversity, equity, and inclusion as good or excellent**

Promoting the idea of diversity, equity, and inclusion



Creating a diverse workforce



Note: Scale=(1) very poor, (2) poor, (3) average, (4) good, (5) excellent.

Q23. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate your company's efforts on promoting the idea of diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Q24. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate your company's efforts on creating a diverse workforce?

Sample size: n=Men [544], Women [159].

Study results suggest the automotive industry has room for improvement in terms of its attitude toward female professional employees.

Here are a few things to consider:



### Acknowledge the issue:

Fewer women are seeing positive changes in the industry's attitude toward them over time, causing many to say they would choose another sector if they could restart their career.



### Drive change from the top:

An organization's ability to drive change around DE&I starts with leadership, which can be challenging when 70% of women believe minorities are underrepresented in their company's senior management team.



### Recognize the benefits of diversity, equity, and inclusion:

A stronger commitment to creating a diverse leadership team may also lead to tangible benefits, including more holistic decision-making and improved financial performance.



### Provide a clear path to advancement:

Mentorship is critical as 60% of women are targeting a senior management position in their career, but only two-thirds of them see a clear path to get there (compared with 75% of men).



### Learn from other industries:

The top two destinations for women who said they would choose a different industry if they started their career today are high tech (30%) and health care (20%), as they are perceived as leading sectors for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

## Contacts

**Karen Bowman**

US Automotive leader  
Deloitte Consulting LLP  
[karbowman@deloitte.com](mailto:karbowman@deloitte.com)

**Michelle Lytle**

Managing director  
Deloitte LLP  
[milytle@deloitte.com](mailto:milytle@deloitte.com)

**Ryan Robinson**

Automotive research leader  
Deloitte LLP  
[ryanrobinson@deloitte.ca](mailto:ryanrobinson@deloitte.ca)

**Jason Stein**

Publisher  
Automotive News  
[jstein@crain.com](mailto:jstein@crain.com)

## Acknowledgements

Deloitte and *Automotive News* would like to thank Steve Schmith, Ellen Dennehy, and the entire *Automotive News* team for their leadership on this important topic in the automotive industry. We would also like to thank **Michelle Collins, Amber Stack, Jody Stidham, Julie Wahrman, Bradd Craver, Danielle Hawkins, Marin Heiskell, Yvette Ellis, Brian Wheeler, Kelly Warner, Anisha Sharma, Courtney Smith, and Srinivasa Reddy Tummalapalli** for their contributions to the research.



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