



Research Finds Gender “Enthusiasm Gaps” in the Workplace

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New Research Analysis by FTI Consulting and Mine The Gap Highlights Differences in Gender and Industry Viewpoints on Workplace Priorities and Initiatives Aimed at Improving Gender Balance

Data Demonstrates Need for Companies to Keep Current with Changing Needs of Workforce

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Global business advisory firm FTI Consulting (NYSE: FCN) and Washington, D.C.-based women’s leadership firm Mine The Gap today released the second installment of the firms’ research on gender dynamics in the workplace, which found significant differences, or “enthusiasm gaps,” in perspectives across genders and industries related to workplace priorities and initiatives aimed at improving gender balance across all career levels.

An “enthusiasm gap” refers to the difference between those who are active, vocal and passionate supporters of an effort and those who may be supporters but might not be motivated to take action. During election seasons, an “enthusiasm gap” measures those who are more likely to go out and vote for a candidate, compared to those who may be supportive but unlikely to make time to actually vote on Election Day. Tracking the intensity of sentiment is important to predict whether support will translate into actual results.

FTI Consulting and Mine The Gap surveyed nearly 6,000 professional women and men across the industries of technology, finance, legal, energy and healthcare. The research shows that there is an [Enthusiasm Gap at Work](#), particularly between genders, as women professionals show more intensity and enthusiasm in their support for gender pay equity initiatives, flexible work schedules, improved family leave policies, more transparent processes for career advancement and blinded talent recruitment. These enthusiasm gaps at work demonstrate the challenges in motivating senior leaders, who statistically are more likely to be men, beyond mere support for an idea to actual policy change.

Commenting on the research, Elizabeth Alexander, a Senior Managing Director in the Strategic Communications segment at FTI Consulting and a crisis communications and gender inclusion specialist, said, “Companies with a diverse workforce and management team boast better financial performance, more innovative products, more engaged employees and less litigation risk. Because corporate decision-makers still statistically tend to be men, a gender ‘enthusiasm gap’ for inclusive workplace policies means that ideas and initiatives to help keep a company viable and profitable in today’s world may be slow to start or stall altogether. That’s a dangerous vulnerability for companies looking to compete in the 21st century.”

“This ‘enthusiasm gap’ is an urgent call for companies to reevaluate policies that are critical to developing and maintaining a diverse workforce – key drivers for innovation and global competition,” **said Jessica Grounds, Co-Founder of Mine The Gap.** “Organizations seeking to improve the numbers of women in leadership, and who care to retain and recruit more women to their ranks, should take a hard look at this data to better understand the priorities of women in their workforce.”

Additionally, this research is particularly instructive as companies embark on the annual review season and begin to consider workplace changes to keep current with the needs of today’s professionals. The data demonstrates that both women and men place high value and importance on workplaces that offer competitive pay, control over one’s work schedule, engaged supervisors who provide constructive and timely feedback, work-from-home opportunities, freedom to disconnect during paid-time-off and the ability to care for sick relatives when needed.

“What is striking about the ‘enthusiasm gap’ is that substantial gaps exist between women and men related to the level of importance each place on policies like maternity/paternity leave, competitive pay and effective feedback from management. However, women are sharing that improved experiences and initiatives in these areas have an intractable impact on attracting and retaining them in the technology, energy, financial services, healthcare and legal fields, where they are currently underrepresented in leadership,” **added Kristin Haffert, Co-Founder of Mine The Gap.**

Highlighted findings from the [Enthusiasm Gap at Work](#) research are as follows:

- o **Top Workplace Priorities/Policies for Women Professionals:** The following initiatives secured the highest support level (“extremely important”) among the women professionals surveyed: competitive pay, flexible work schedules, paid maternity leave, mandatory annual reviews and stigma-free recruiting environments surrounding employment gaps due to family demands.
- o **21-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Compensation and Pay Equity Programs:** A majority of professional women and men support initiatives aimed at competitive pay, comprehensive healthcare benefits and eliminating gender pay gaps, but an average 21-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance.
- o **17-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Basic Gender Balance in the Workplace, With Technology Industry Gap the Widest at 26 Points:** A majority of professional women and men believe it is important their industry reaches gender balance (equal amounts of men and women) in positions across all career levels during their time in the workforce, but a 17-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate this issue on a scale of importance. The largest industry enthusiasm gap in this category (26 points) is between women and men in the technology industry. 47% of women in technology report that reaching gender balance in their industry is “absolutely important,” while only 21% of men in technology report the same. For other industries, the enthusiasm gaps between the genders are: 18 points in legal; 16

points in energy; 12 points in healthcare; and 12 points in finance, with women professionals across all industries more in support of this goal.

- o **17-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Improved Family Leave Policies:** A majority of professional women and men support paid maternity leave, a work environment conducive to caring for a sick family member or relative and offering leave policies above and beyond the industry standard, but an average 17-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance.
- o **14-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Basic Gender Balance in the Workplace Between Women Professionals in Technology and Energy Industries:** Professional women in all the industries surveyed support reaching gender balance across all career levels in the workplace, but a 14-point enthusiasm gap exists between women professionals in technology and energy when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance. 47% of women in technology said gender balance was “absolutely important” versus only 33% of women in energy reporting the same.
- o **13-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Flexible Work Schedules and Work-Life Balance Initiatives:** A majority of professional women and men support flexible work arrangements, mandated vacation days and policies allowing control over how/when required hours are worked, but an average 13-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance.
- o **12-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Improved Career Advancement Tools:** A majority of professional women and men support companies implementing policies related to mandatory review processes, requiring timely and constructive feedback and providing leadership coaching for senior-level women, but an average 12-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance.
- o **11-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Improved Recruiting and Job Application Processes:** A majority of professional women and men support companies facilitating a work environment that has no stigma around employment gaps related to family demands and blind job application reviews, but an average 11-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance.

Further analysis from the research shows that some industry and demographic groups demonstrate wide enthusiasm gaps on specific initiatives and priorities to recruit and retain women professionals:

- o **23-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Reducing or Eliminating the Gender Pay Gap Across and Within Career Levels:** A majority of professional women and men across the industries surveyed support reducing or eliminating the gender pay gap, but a 23-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance. For specific industries, the enthusiasm gaps between the genders are: 28 points in finance; 26 points in technology; 22 points in energy; 20 points in healthcare; and 18 points in legal, with women professionals across all industries more in support of this goal.
- o **22-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Providing Comprehensive Healthcare Benefits, Including Quality of Coverage for Women’s Health Needs:** A majority of professional women and men across the industries surveyed support providing comprehensive healthcare benefits, but a 22-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance. For specific industries, the enthusiasm gaps between the genders are: 26 points in finance; 23 points in technology; 21 points in energy; 19 points in healthcare; and 19 points in legal, with women professionals across all industries more in support of this goal.
- o **21-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Providing a Minimum of Six-Weeks Paid Maternity Leave:** A majority of professional women and men across the industries surveyed support providing a minimum of six-weeks paid maternity leave, but a 21-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance. For specific industries, the enthusiasm gaps between the genders are: 26 points in healthcare; 23 points in finance; 20 points in technology; 18 points in energy; and 17 points in legal, with women professionals across all industries more in support of this goal.
- o **18-Point Enthusiasm Gap in Support for Offering a Competitive Salary for Each Career Level:** A majority of professional women and men across the industries surveyed support offering a competitive salary for each career level, but an average 18-point enthusiasm gap exists between the genders when asked to rate these programs on a scale of importance. For specific industries, the enthusiasm gaps between the genders are: 23 points in technology; 19 points in finance; 19 points in healthcare; 16 points in energy; and 13 points in legal, with women professionals across all industries more in support of this goal.

In addition, the research also shows that gaps exist between companies and their own employees as it relates to policies and programs to

recruit and retain women professionals:

o Large Knowledge and Awareness Gaps Exist Between Companies and Their Employees, Regardless of Gender:

Nearly half of all professionals surveyed report lacking basic awareness and comprehension of company policies related to compensation bands, bonus and incentive structures, requirements for advancement, internal performance review processes, flexible work schedules and work-life balance.

"It's clear from the data that there is a substantial knowledge and awareness gap between companies and their employees surrounding basic policies and workplace initiatives. Frequent, engaging and authentic communications with employees at all levels is vital to maximizing talent, retaining valuable personnel and minimizing potential for legal action," **added Ms. Alexander of FTI Consulting.**

To download the full *Enthusiasm Gap at Work* report and an accompanying infographic, please visit: <https://gender.fticonsulting.com/>.

This report, *Enthusiasm Gap at Work*, is the second installment of research and data-driven insights developed by FTI Consulting and Mine The Gap on gender dynamics in the workplace. The final installment, *Culture at Work*, will be released in 2019 and detail the differences between professional women and men across five key industries on their views of workplace culture.

Survey Methodology

In a comprehensive online survey conducted over the summer of 2018, FTI Consulting and Mine The Gap polled 4,764 professional women and 1,030 professional men in the industries of technology, finance, legal, energy and healthcare to test a number of key gender issues impacting workplaces today. The enthusiasm gaps for this report were measured according to those professionals who ranked initiatives as "absolutely important," "extremely important," or noted a rank of 10 on a 0-10 scale of importance.

About FTI Consulting Strategic Communications

The Strategic Communications segment of FTI Consulting designs and executes communications strategies for clients managing reputational, financial, regulatory and legal challenges. We combine global reach with local and specialized knowledge to help clients seize opportunities, manage crises, mitigate risk, navigate market disruptions, articulate their brand, stake a competitive position, and preserve their permission to operate. Drawing upon our unrivaled depth of industry expertise and interdisciplinary experience, we help organizations clarify, persuade and ensure that the right message reaches the right audience at the right time.

About FTI Consulting

FTI Consulting, Inc. is a global business advisory firm dedicated to helping organizations manage change, mitigate risk and resolve disputes: financial, legal, operational, political & regulatory, reputational and transactional. With more than 4,600 employees located in 28 countries, FTI Consulting professionals work closely with clients to anticipate, illuminate and overcome complex business challenges and make the most of opportunities. The Company generated \$1.81 billion in revenues during fiscal year 2017. For more information, visit www.fticonsulting.com and connect with us on Twitter (@FTIConsulting), Facebook and LinkedIn.

About Mine The Gap

Mine The Gap equips leaders and industries with the strategy and tools to create and sustain gender-inclusive work environments. We architect a strategic plan to build a gender-inclusive culture resulting in accelerated company growth, increased revenues and unlock hidden talent through awareness, training and education. Our work is underpinned by two core elements: growing an inclusive corporate culture and showing the bottom-line impact of gender inclusion. We have unparalleled expertise working on gender and women's leadership in every region of the world in more than 120 countries, in multicultural and multiethnic environments. More information can be found at www.minethegap.co.

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