Women of Color in Accounting

Women of Color in Professional Services Series

catalyst ®

ABOUT CATALYST

Catalyst is the leading research and advisory organization working with businesses and the professions to build inclusive environments and expand opportunities for women at work. As an independent, nonprofit membership organization, Catalyst conducts research on all aspects of women's career advancement and provides strategic and web-based consulting services globally. With the support and confidence of member corporations and firms, Catalyst remains connected to business and its changing needs. In addition, Catalyst honors exemplary business initiatives that promote women's leadership with the annual Catalyst Award. With offices in New York, Sunnyvale, Toronto, and Zug, Catalyst is consistently ranked No. 1 among U.S. nonprofits focused on women's issues by The American Institute of Philanthropy.

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COMPETITION FOR DIVERSE TALENT

According to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, employment of accountants and auditors is expected to grow faster than average for all occupations through the year 2014. This expectation of growth is based on the fact that the number of businesses is increasing, financial laws and regulations have changed, and there is now more oversight of business organizations' finances. In addition to these "growth" openings, other openings are expected to result from those who retire from accounting and auditing or switch to other occupations.[1]

An increased need for accountants and auditors will also arise from changes in legislation related to taxes, financial reporting standards, business investments, mergers, and other financial events. The growth of international business also has led to more demand for accounting expertise and services related to international trade and accounting rules, as well as international mergers and acquisitions.

With women and people of color receiving certification in accounting[2] and joining the accounting industry at an increasing rate,[3] firms are faced with the job of creating more inclusive environments in a traditionally white, male-dominated, "up-or-out" culture. Although a certain amount of attrition is built into the business model for professional services firms, to stay competitive, accounting firms can no longer afford high turnover among talented professionals whom they train only to become regretted losses.

This report is the second in our *Women of Color in Professional Services Series*. In the first report, Catalyst examined retention of people of color in accounting firms. In this report, we explore the context for women of color in accounting firms by looking at their experiences in comparison with white women, white men, and men of color.

For the first time, Catalyst research is able to benchmark the experiences of women of color against other demographic groups in the workforce. This examination lets us understand better the "intersectionality" that women of color experience: that is, how a person's different attributes and characteristics interact with one another and inform personal and professional identities, experiences, and expectations about privilege and disadvantage in the workplace.

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[1] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Accountants and Auditors," *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (December 20, 2005). http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos0001.htm
[2] According to The National Center for Education Statistics (*Integrated Postsecondary Datasystem*, 2007), in the 2005-2006 school year, people of color (African-Americans, Latinas/Latinos, Asian-Pacific Islanders, and American Indians) earned 26.2 percent of all accounting bachelor's degrees, 19.0 percent of all accounting master's degrees, and 19.0 percent of all accounting Ph.D.'s.
[3] Beatrice Sanders, *The Supply of Accounting Graduates and the Demand for Public Accounting Recruits: 2005* (New York: AICPA, 2005).

PRIOR WORK

Since 1997, Catalyst has released a series of reports on women of color (African-American, Asian, and Latina women) in the corporate sector. This research, including action-based recommendations for making corporate work environments more inclusive, has been extensively cited in U.S. media and widely disseminated to business audiences and women of color. The work successfully sparked a national dialogue on women of color in the corporate workplace. Catalyst made issues discussable and led business organizations to turn their attention to making their work environments inclusive of all women.

The *Women of Color in Professional Services Series* expands knowledge of women of color by examining their experiences in the following three sectors not covered in the first series.
- Accounting firms
- Law firms
- Financial services organizations

These areas are distinguished by a client-service focus and, according to Catalyst Advisory Services work, firmly entrenched "old boys'" networks, which make inclusion of outsider groups such as women of color extremely difficult. The "up-or-out" model of career advancement typical of professional services firms creates challenging barriers for anyone, and these barriers are more strongly felt by traditionally marginalized groups without ready access to insider relationships.

The first report in this series, *Retaining People of Color: What Accounting Firms Need to Know*, examined the issue of retention of women and men of color in the accounting industry. Findings from that report indicated that:
- Women and men of color underscore organizational fit and access to informal networks as prerequisites for advancement.
- Stereotyping, double standards regarding performance, and lack of professional development opportunities are barriers to advancement for women and men of color.
- "Imperfect execution" impedes full realization of a firm's commitment to support diversity and inclusion.[4]

This report provides a comprehensive examination of women of color's experiences around inclusion in the accounting firm work environment, perceptions of diversity and inclusion initiatives, access to networks, mentors, and other types of relationships, and assessments of work-life effectiveness. We use the data to compare women of color, men of color, white women, and white men, which allows us to determine how the intersection of race/ethnicity and gender affects women of color and differentiates their experiences from those of white women and men of color.

[4] Deepali Bagati, *Retaining People of Color: What Accounting Firms Need to Know* (Catalyst, 2007): p. 4.

METHODOLOGY[5]

The qualitative portion of this study consisted of six interviews with senior partners and nine focus groups of professional employees at participating firms.

For the quantitative portion of the study, a web survey was distributed to a sample (described below) of employees at some of the 20 largest (by revenue) accounting firms in the United States. One-half of the firms in the sample were from the top four accounting firms and the remainder came from the rest of the top 20. Participating organizations fielded the survey between December 2006 and May 2007, following a staggered schedule. The surveys were open an average of six weeks at each firm. The survey was sent to a total of 3,918 individuals, and 1,424 of them responded, for an overall response rate of 36.3 percent.

Catalyst worked with organizations to ensure that the titles and units of employees were comparable across firms. Titles included partner/principal, director, senior manager, manager, senior associate, associate, and "other." For the purposes of analyses, respondents were classified as being in either client-service roles or support roles. Client-service roles included those in Audit, Advisory, and Tax units. Support roles included those in human resources, core business support, or client-service support.

Because of the importance of client-service roles to the bottom line of accounting firms, the influence of those in senior client-service roles, and the historical under-representation of women and people of color in them, the data in this report comes from those in client-service roles only. Most data compares women of color, white women, men of color, and white men. In some cases only two or three of the groups will be compared, usually because differences between them are statistically significant while differences with unmentioned groups are not statistically significant.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the client-service sample by age, presence of children under 18, marital status, and tenure.

Table 1: Client-Service Sample Demographics								
	(N)	Age (Mean Years)	Percentage With Children Under 18	Percentage Who Are Married	Position Tenure (Mean Years)	Organization Tenure (Mean Years)	Percentage With B.A.	Percentage With Other Grad Degree
Women of Color	215	33.0	28.4%	43.0%	2.4	5.3	52.1%	25.6%
White Women	138	32.7	20.7%	50.1%	2.9	6.2	51.4%	29.5%
Men of Color	177	33.7	39.3%	54.5%	2.3	5.1	51.4%	27.7%
White Men	130	32.8	34.5%	59.3%	2.2	5.7	44.6%	40.8%

[5] See Technical Appendix for more detailed summary.

CONTEXT: THE CHALLENGES FOR ACCOUNTING FIRMS

A critical feature of accounting firm environments is work pressure that arises from the volume of work. Indeed, because of more aggressive revenue targets, globalization, changing client relationships, the increasingly competitive marketplace, and new regulatory agreements such as Sarbanes-Oxley, the workload is increasing.

Accounting firms face a growing unpopularity among potential employees, with a decline in the number of students pursuing degrees in the industry and a shortage of C.P.A.'s. According to David Dunkel, Chairman and CEO of staffing firm Kforce:

> *Recent accounting-related legislation is having a significant impact at a time when the pool of qualified prospects is declining due to the 150-hour rule instituted by most states. As a result, many hiring managers have more work than they can handle with current staffing levels and cannot find enough capable new hires.*

While overall there is a shortage of C.P.A.'s, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants has concluded that the percentage of accounting degree recipients of color has held steady, with a slight increase.[6] This means that the talent pool for the accounting industry is increasingly made up of more people of color. With women and people of color joining the accounting industry at an increasing rate, firms are challenged to create more inclusive environments in a traditionally white, male, "up-or-out" culture. To stay competitive, accounting firms must create more inclusive workplaces to attract and retain talented professionals from traditionally marginalized groups.

APPROACH: INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality is an analytical approach for understanding the ways in which different identities that people hold (such as gender, race, and class) overlap or combine with one another and how these multiple identities contribute to unique experiences of disadvantage and privilege. Intersectionality helps clarify experiences that cannot be explained by one identity alone.[7]

> *[Intersectionality] starts from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history, and the operation of structures of power. People are members of more than one community at the same time and can simultaneously experience oppression and privilege.[8]*

[6]Stuart Kahan, "Minorities Make Minor Gains," *Accounting Today* (February 27, 2006).
http://www.webcpa.com/article.cfm?articleid=18901&pg=acctoday&print=yes
[7]Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), "Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice," *Women's Rights and Economic Change*, vol. 9 (August, 2004): p. 1–8.
[8] AWID, p. 2.

In our use of intersectional analyses, we aim to better understand the experiences of women of color as a result of their combination of identities. By including white women, men of color, and white men in the sample, we are able to pinpoint how women of color differ from both white women (with whom they share gender) and men of color (with whom they share status as people of color).

NOTE ON ANALYSES FOR RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS

Because we are attempting to paint a general picture of the experiences of women of color in accounting firms, we do not go into detail about specific racial/ethnic groups, with the exception of a few findings. We plan to analyze in-depth each racial/ethnic group within women of color (African-American, Asian, and Latina) in subsequent reports that will compare findings from studies in financial services and law.

KEY FINDINGS

Women of color had more in common with men of color than with white women in their attitudes regarding exclusivity of the work environment and their perceptions that practices intended to support inclusion were not as effective as they could be.
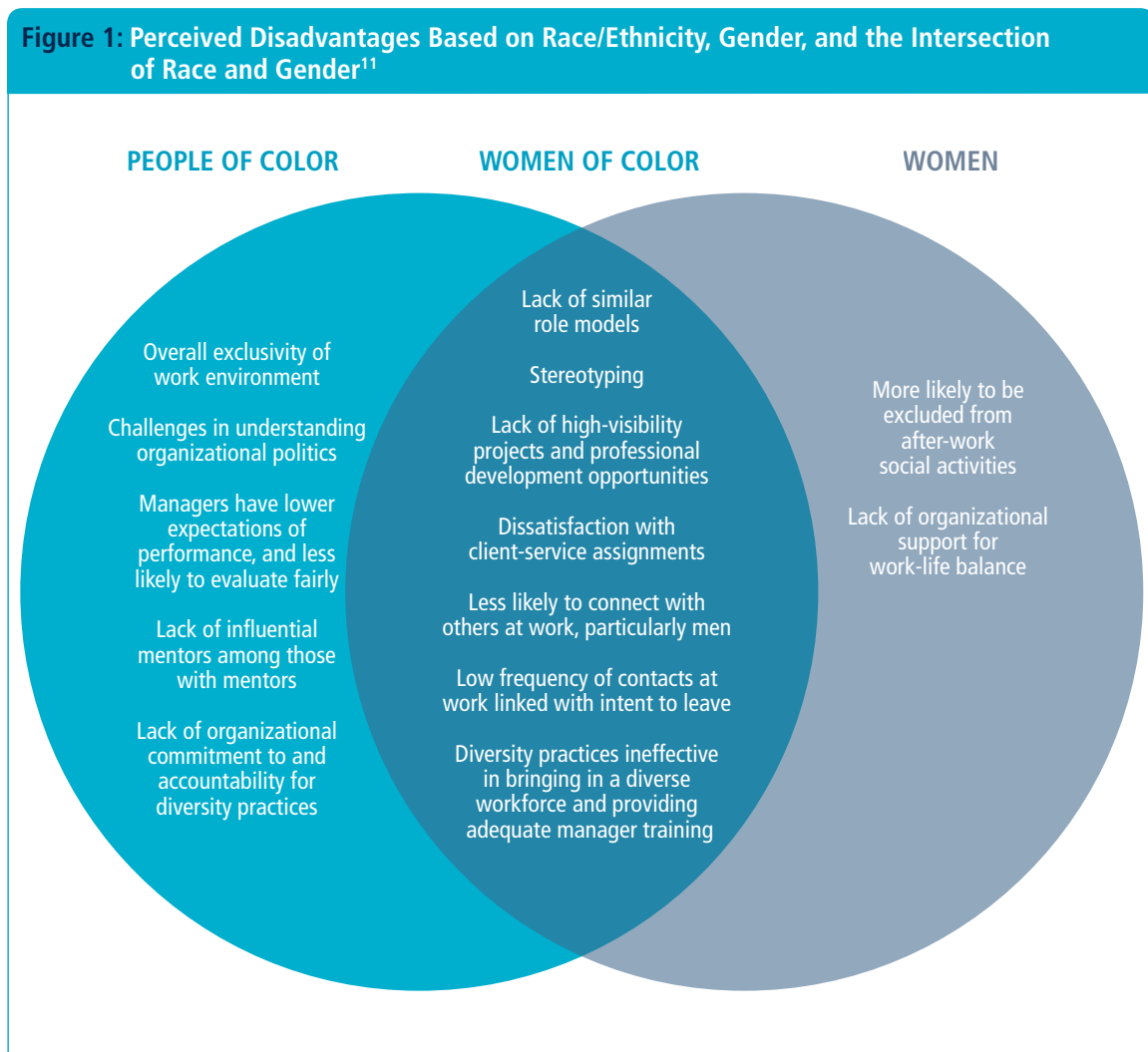
- People of color felt less included in the accounting firm work environment than did whites. For example, they were more likely to perceive low expectations from their managers and double standards regarding performance evaluation. They felt less connected with influential mentors who could help advance their careers; even those people of color with mentors were likely to feel that their mentors lacked influence as compared with those of their white colleagues. Perhaps because of this, people of color felt more challenged than whites in understanding organizational politics.
- In judging the firms' responses to diversity and inclusion challenges, people of color were less likely than whites to perceive accountability and commitment. This is consistent with earlier Catalyst research that found that people of color tended to perceive diversity practices at their firms as well-intentioned but suffering from "imperfect execution."[9]
- Some people of color believed that work-life practices at their firms lack racial sensitivity.

There were a few areas in which women of color and white women had similar experiences and perceptions. For example, they both perceived some level of social exclusion from the "old boys'" network and also perceived a lack of support from firms for their family responsibilities.

[9] Deepali Bagati, *Retaining People of Color: What Accounting Firms Need to Know,* (Catalyst, 2007): p. 4.

EXAMINING THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN OF COLOR THROUGH INTERSECTIONALITY

Figure 1 summarizes the factors that may work to the disadvantage of various groups: people of color, women, and women of color. (All attributes in the diagram reflect perceptions of study respondents.) Women of color experienced the barriers that people of color faced (at left of figure) and that women faced (at right of figure). In addition to those barriers, women of color experienced the ones in the middle of the diagram more frequently than did *both* men of color and white women.[10] Many of these barriers directly relate to difficulty in navigating a client-based environment.

Figure 1: Perceived Disadvantages Based on Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and the Intersection of Race and Gender[11]

PEOPLE OF COLOR

Overall exclusivity of work environment

Challenges in understanding organizational politics

Managers have lower expectations of performance, and less likely to evaluate fairly

Lack of influential mentors among those with mentors

Lack of organizational commitment to and accountability for diversity practices

WOMEN OF COLOR

Lack of similar role models

Stereotyping

Lack of high-visibility projects and professional development opportunities

Dissatisfaction with client-service assignments

Less likely to connect with others at work, particularly men

Low frequency of contacts at work linked with intent to leave

Diversity practices ineffective in bringing in a diverse workforce and providing adequate manager training

WOMEN

More likely to be excluded from after-work social activities

Lack of organizational support for work-life balance

[10] In the diagram, "stereotyping" indicates that women of color are more likely to cite "managing preconceptions of my race and gender" as a barrier to advancement than men of color and white women.

[11] Findings noted under "People of Color" are significant according to either chi-square tests of percentages or analyses of variance of mean scores, at the $p<.1$ level, and represent findings that are uniquely significant to people of color (i.e., these findings were not obtained for women as a group). Similarly, findings noted under "Women" are significant according to either chi-square tests of percentages or analyses of variance of mean scores, at the $p<.1$ level, and represent findings that are uniquely significant to women (i.e., these findings were not obtained for people of color as a group). "Women of Color" represents instances in which findings for women of color were significantly more negative, at the $p<.1$ level, than those for both men of color and white women, based on chi-square tests of percentages, analyses of variance of means, or regression.

- Women of color were more likely than either white women or men of color to cite lack of similar role models as a barrier to advancement. If present, such role models could demonstrate strategies for advancing to women of color.
- Women of color appeared to have the greatest challenge in dealing with stereotypes in the work environment, perhaps because of their low representation in the leadership of accounting firms. They were most likely of all groups in the study to believe that managing preconceptions of their race and gender is a challenge to their advancement.
- Women of color perceived a greater level of exclusion from, or lack of access to, networks in the workforce than did men of color or white women. Women of color reported interacting less frequently with a wide range of people within the firm, perhaps reflecting hesitancy on both sides.
  - In particular, women of color were least likely to report communicating with men.
  - The lower frequency of contact that women of color had with others in the workplace is also linked with intent to leave.
- Perhaps as a result of their lack of connection with others in the workplace, women of color also were more likely than either white women or men of color to cite as barriers lack of high-visibility assignments and lack of professional development opportunities. Women of color were least likely of all groups to be satisfied with business development opportunities.
- While people of color were less optimistic overall than whites were about the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion practices, women of color seemed particularly at risk of being overlooked by these practices.
  - Women of color were more likely than men of color and white women to experience these practices as less effective in bringing in a diverse workforce and providing adequate manager training.

Learnings at a Glance

- **The perceptions of women of color tended to be closer to those of their men of color colleagues than to those of white women. People of color were more likely to experience the work environment as exclusive.**
    - People of color were less likely than whites to believe that racial/ethnic differences are appreciated in the organization.

- **Women of color appeared to feel less empowered than their men of color counterparts.**
    - Women of color were less likely than men of color to believe that decision-making is shared across levels and that differences in interpersonal style are encouraged.

- **White women appeared to feel included in the work environment and are typically more comfortable than people of color of both genders. White men experience the best fit in firms.**
    - White women were more committed to their firms and had less intent to leave.
    - White men were least likely to feel that they have to adjust to fit in, and no white men in the survey agreed that others feel uncomfortable around members of their race.

- **For all races/ethnicities and gender groups, the higher the level of career satisfaction, the lower the intent to leave. However, women of color were unique in that their network of contacts at the workplace was linked to intent to stay.**
    - The lower the number and frequency of contacts made in the organization, the more likely a woman of color had intentions of leaving.

The accounting firm work environment sets the context for the experiences of women of color. It is important to know how they perceive the work environment so that senior leaders know what seems to be working well and which aspects may need to become more inclusive for women of color.

Employees entering organizations must adapt to existing organizational norms—which are traditionally framed by white male leadership—in order to stay employed.[12] Those from "outsider" groups, such as people of color and women, often must expend a great deal of effort to fit in—an additional job role that can be demanding and that those from "insider" groups do not have to perform.

[12] Taylor H. Cox, *Cultural Diversity in Organizations: Theory and Practice* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1994): p. 165-166.
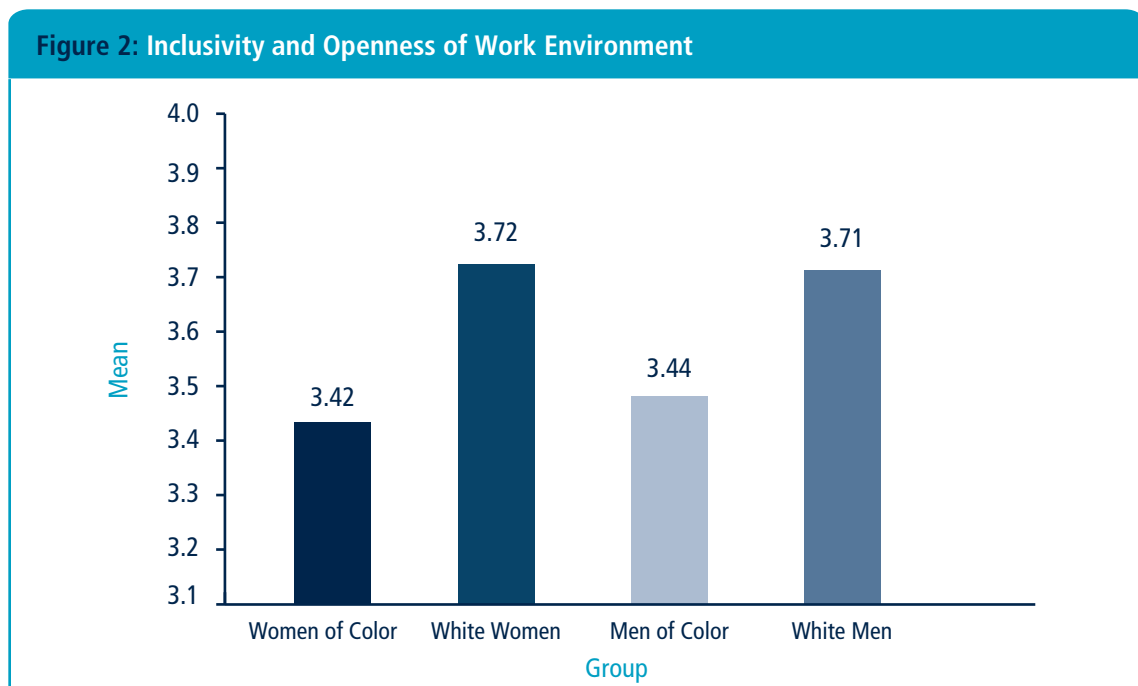
In this chapter, we explore how gender, race/ethnicity, and the combination of both may affect an employee's experiences in the work environment. We also examine the perceived openness and inclusiveness of the environment, perceived commitment to the organization, and intent to leave.

PEOPLE OF COLOR PERCEIVE THE WORK ENVIRONMENT AS LESS OPEN AND INCLUSIVE

We asked several questions about the work environment, focusing on openness in interactions (such as the appropriateness of challenging decisions) and inclusiveness around race/ethnicity and gender issues (such as the extent to which people of various race/ethnicity and gender groups have to make adjustments to fit in). Overall, both women of color and men of color rated the work environment as significantly less open and inclusive than did their white counterparts.

These findings set a broader context for the experiences of traditionally marginalized groups in organizations. Relationships at work, career dynamics, and the commitment or engagement of workers are affected by the norms of the work environment.

In this study, the finding about lack of inclusiveness in the work environment was driven by the African-Americans within women of color and men of color groups. For women of color, African-Americans were significantly less likely (mean 3.2) than Asian women (mean 3.6) or Latinas (mean 3.5) to agree that the work environment was inclusive and open. Results were similar for African-American, Asian, and Latino men.

Figure 2: Inclusivity and Openness of Work Environment

Bar chart showing Mean values by Group:
- Women of Color: 3.42
- White Women: 3.72
- Men of Color: 3.44
- White Men: 3.71

Y-axis: Mean (3.1 to 4.0)
X-axis: Group

One reason that African-Americans appear to be driving this finding is the uniqueness of the African-American experience in the United States, which includes the long history of slavery, legal racial segregation, and persistent lower-class status relative to whites and other immigrant groups.[13]

This quotation from an African-American woman illustrates the discomfort she believes others in her work environment feel about discussing race:

The younger the people are, I think maybe they were always in this cookie-cutter environment.... Maybe for a lot of them, coming to work here is the most contact they've ever had with a black person, and they're still trying to come to terms with it, and so they don't really know what's okay to say and what's not okay. ...I don't get the impression that they're okay with talking about [race]. They prefer to pretend that you look like them, and that everything about you is like them.

—African-American woman

MANY PEOPLE OF COLOR FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE AT WORK

While a majority agreed that race/ethnicity and gender differences are appreciated at their firms, both women of color (67.5 percent) and men of color (71.2 percent) were less likely to agree than white women (81.4 percent) and white men (76.0 percent). And though relatively few people of color agreed that employees feel uncomfortable around members of their racial/ethnic group, they were more likely to believe so than their white counterparts. In fact, no white men agreed with this statement.[14]

Figure 3: Many People Feel Uncomfortable Around Members of My Racial Group

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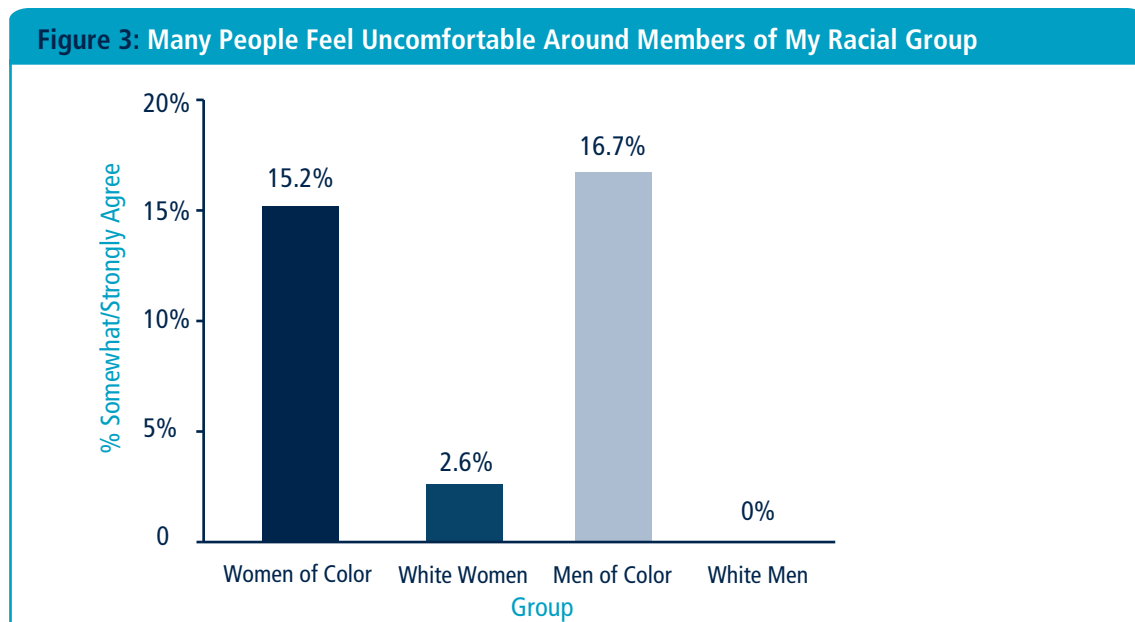
[13] James M. Jones, *Prejudice and Racism* (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 1997).

Following from these findings, it is not surprising that people of color were more likely than their white counterparts to believe that they must make adjustments to fit in. White women were also more likely than white men to feel that they must adjust to fit in.

One aspect that sets the tone for the work environment is the strikingly low number of women of color and men of color at senior levels. According to this Latina:

The one thing I do notice as I go to partner meetings...is when you look at the number of partners and you look at the percentage of non-Caucasian, it's way too low. Way too low.

—Latina

Figure 4: To Fit In, a Person of My Gender and Race Must Make Adjustments
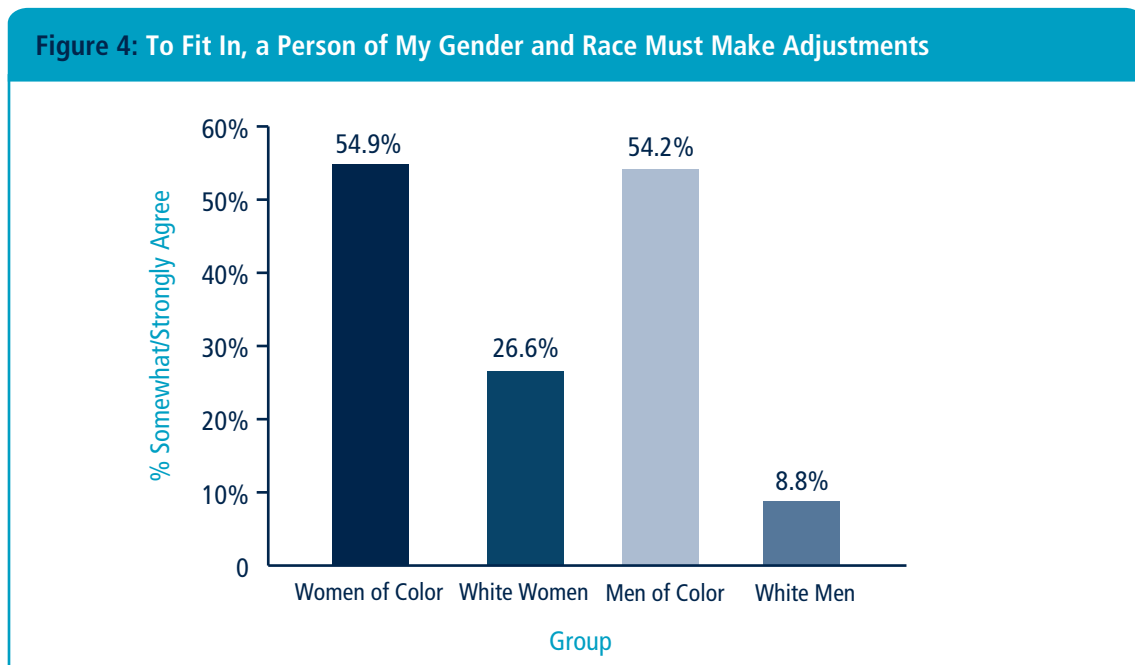
While both women and men of color perceived the work environment as less inclusive than their white counterparts, women of color are more likely than other groups to feel less empowered in the workplace. For example, women of color (48.3 percent) are least likely of all groups (white women, 61.5 percent; men of color, 58.3 percent; and white men, 66.4 percent) to believe that decision-making is shared across levels. Women of color (50.5 percent) are also less likely than men of color to believe that differences in interpersonal style are encouraged (59.1 percent).

[14] All percentages tested using chi-square analyses. Significance is noted at the p<.1 level. This significance level was used because of small cell sizes.

Figure 5: Decision-Making Is Shared Across Levels
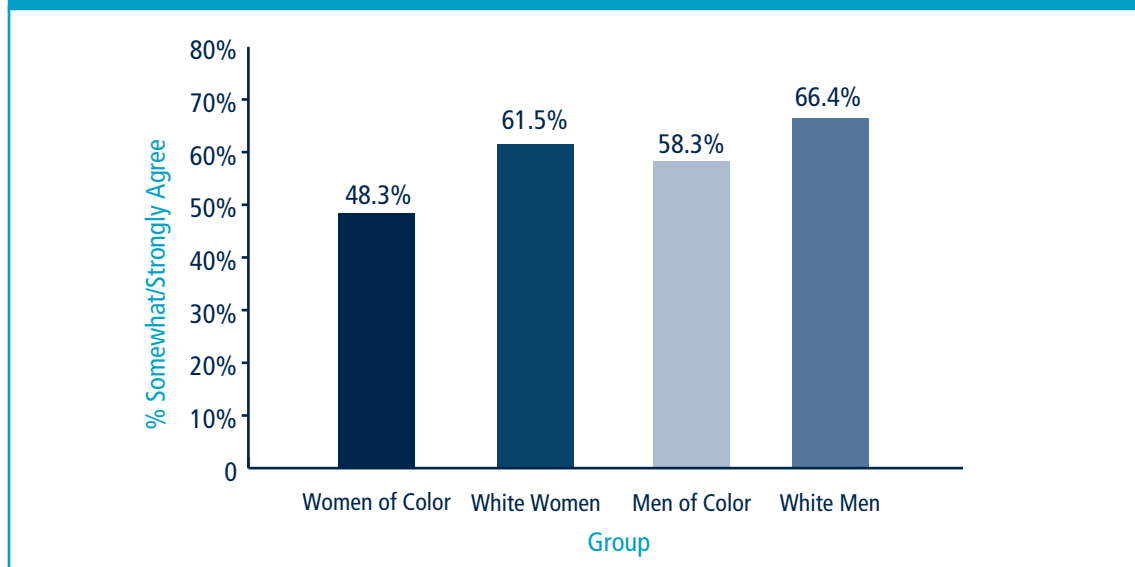
WHITE WOMEN FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE AT WORK

White women seemed markedly more optimistic than men of color and women of color—and sometimes white men—in feeling included in the work environment. White women were more likely than other groups to believe that:

- Other employees "make an effort to adapt to members of my racial/ethnic group" (57.7 percent of white women; 39.2 percent of white men).
- Racial/ethnic differences are appreciated in the organization (81.4 percent of white women; 67.5 percent of women of color).

White women also appeared to feel more comfortable talking about race in the organization than women of color. Significantly fewer white women (17.5 percent) than women of color (27.2 percent) felt it is taboo to discuss race in the organization.

WHITE WOMEN ARE MOST COMMITTED TO THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

Organizational commitment reflects the extent to which employees are attached to and identify with their organizations. The higher the level of organizational commitment, the more likely employees are to contribute fully to the organization. This measure can provide senior leadership with a sense of which employee groups are most comfortable in their organizations. Intent to leave, obviously, can let senior management know who is likely to leave prematurely—before the organization recoups its investment in recruiting and training the employee, or before he or she has made a valuable contribution.

Of all groups, white women had the highest organizational commitment, based on an index of four items,[15] and the lowest intent to leave, also based on an index of four items.[16] White women had significantly lower intent to leave than women of color, which probably reflects the greater sense of inclusion and "fit" that white women feel in the work environment.

Figure 6: Intent to Leave

Group	Mean
Women of Color	2.52
White Women	2.28
Men of Color	2.34
White Men	2.46
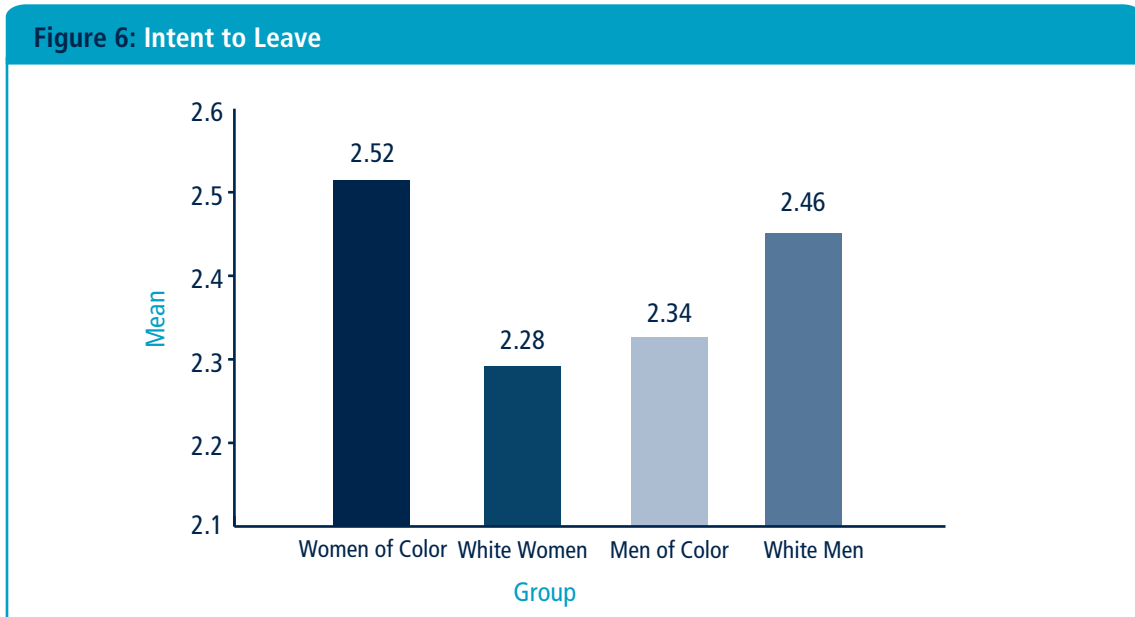
While white women were most committed to their organizations, white men were the least—significantly lower than both white women and men of color. This may reflect a flexibility and willingness to change organizations in order to advance their careers—a critical reason for changing organizations is to gain a greater salary.[17]

Figure 7: Organizational Commitment

Group	Mean
Women of Color	3.47
White Women	3.62
Men of Color	3.56
White Men	3.37
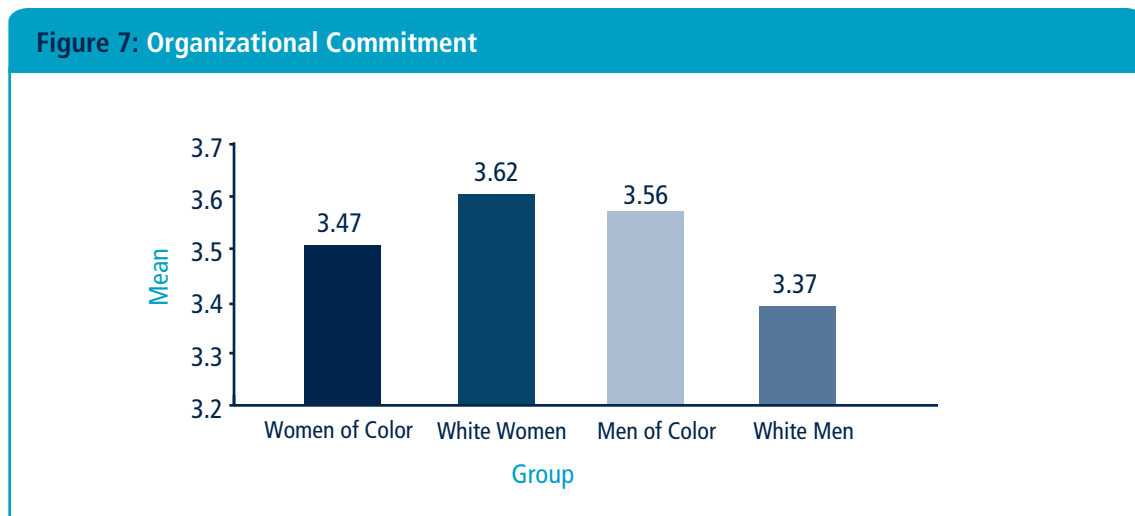
[15] See Technical Appendix for a description of measures making up this index and its reliability.
[16] See Technical Appendix for more detail on this index.
[17] Catalyst, *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Three Years Later* (2001).

CAREER SATISFACTION PREDICTS INTENT TO LEAVE

In order to better understand what may prompt turnover, a multiple regression was conducted with the "intent to leave" index as the outcome variable.[18] For all respondents in the study, career satisfaction emerged as the most significant predictor—the lower the satisfaction, the higher the intent to leave.

Other significant predictors were:
- Scope of network (the more frequently one speaks with a range of others in the organization, the lower the intent to leave).
- Presence of a mentor (those without a mentor were more likely to intend to leave).
- Hours worked (the longer the hours, the greater the likelihood of leaving).
- Hierarchical level (the higher the level, the greater the intent to leave).
- Personal commitments, such as eldercare and childcare (the greater the personal commitments, the higher the likelihood of leaving).

In analyses of each race/ethnicity and gender group, fewer predictors emerged as significant. For women of color, only two predictors emerged as significant:
- Career satisfaction, which remained the most significant predictor.
- Scope of network (the more frequently one speaks with a range of others in the organization, the lower the intent to leave).

Scope of network was a significant predictor of intent to leave only for women of color and will be discussed in Chapter 4.

These results show that firms should not assume that all women experience the workplace similarly. Clearly, there are significant differences between the experiences and perceptions of women of color and white women. These differences should be accounted for in diversity and inclusion initiatives that target women. If diversity and inclusion practices do not customize efforts towards different groups of women, they may suffer from "imperfect execution," which is discussed in the next chapter.

[18] See Technical Appendix for more information.

Learnings at a Glance

- **Consistent with findings from the first report in this series, diversity and inclusion practices tended to suffer from "imperfect execution."**
    - Most people surveyed—including whites—believed that diversity practices were designed to aid women and people of color; however, substantially fewer believed that these programs are effective.

- **Both women of color and men of color were especially likely to perceive imperfect execution of diversity and inclusion practices.**
    - People of color tended to believe that diversity and inclusion practices lack accountability, senior leadership commitment, and the potential to advance people of color.
    - There appeared to be a disconnect in beliefs such that white men were the most optimistic about the positive impact of diversity practices, in particular the positive impact on women of color.

- **Women of color were more likely than men of color to perceive diversity and inclusion practices as less effective.**
    - Women of color were less likely than men of color to perceive that diversity and inclusion practices are effective in ensuring adequate manager training, hiring practices, and a quality work environment.

Diversity and inclusion practices are often intended to create work environments inclusive of all groups, so that traditionally marginalized groups such as women and people of color can thrive. It is often challenging, however, to implement practices that are perceived as effective by target groups. Catalyst has found in prior studies that diversity policies and practices, in both corporate and firm environments, are perceived as relatively ineffective by women of color and people of color in general.[19]

PEOPLE OF COLOR AND WOMEN ARE LESS LIKELY TO BELIEVE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICES ARE EFFECTIVE

More than 85 percent of women of color, white women, men of color, and white men believed that their firm's diversity efforts are designed to be supportive of women and people of color. However, everyone's assessments of the effectiveness of particular aspects of diversity efforts tended to be lower.

[19] Catalyst, *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Opportunities and Barriers* (1999); Deepali Bagati, *Retaining People of Color: What Accounting Firms Need to Know* (Catalyst, 2007).

There were variations between groups in how effective diversity and inclusion efforts were perceived to be. People of color, as a group, were much less likely than whites to agree that diversity practices have been effective (as measured by accountability, inclusiveness of women of color, career development emphasis, and involvement of managers). Women, overall, were less likely than men to agree, and women of color were the least likely to agree.

This African-American woman questioned her organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

I know they're trying to promote a lot of things for women and for African-Americans and all, but I don't know if they really want it because it'll help the company grow or they just want it so outsiders can see that okay, we love our women, we love our African-Americans. That type of thing. I don't know what it's for. I don't know if it's just to make the Fortune *500 look good in those magazines or it really wants people to advance and this is what we're doing to help them advance so they can also be in leadership.*

—African-American woman

Figure 8: Perceived Effectiveness of Organizational Diversity Practices
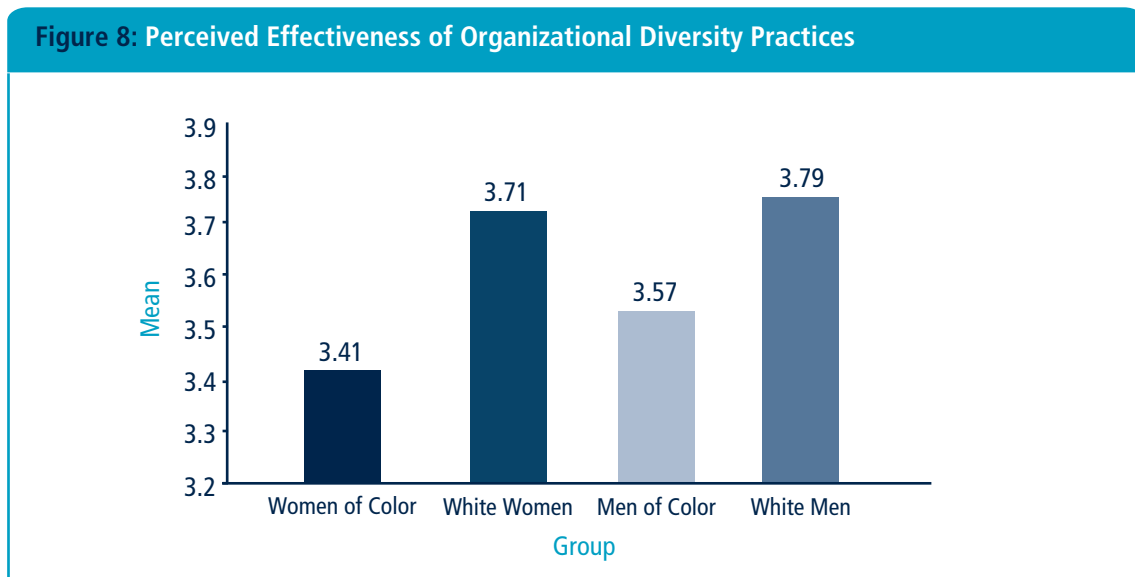
While they are less optimistic than whites about the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion practices, some people of color did feel that their firm's efforts are effective. For example, this Asian man credited his firm with working through difficult cultural difference issues.
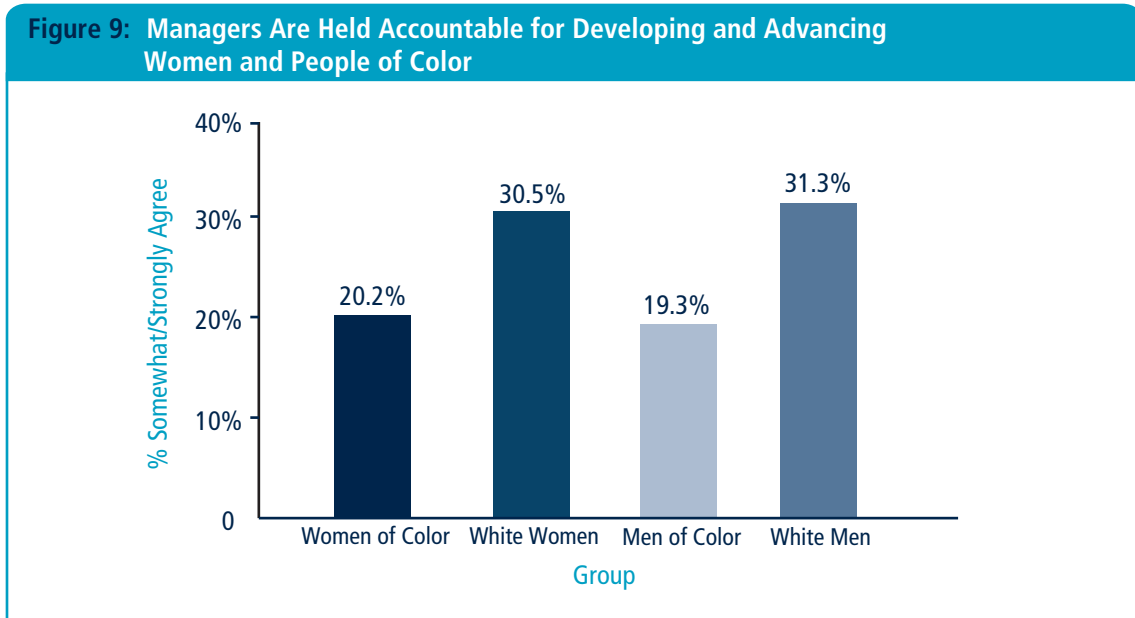
There are definitely challenges when you bring someone over from another culture, to understand the nuances right away. For example, two years ago I worked for a manager who was a Great Britain transfer. There were a lot of cultural differences. He and I clashed profusely, and I had a lot of difficulty working with him. The firm heard my struggles and worked with
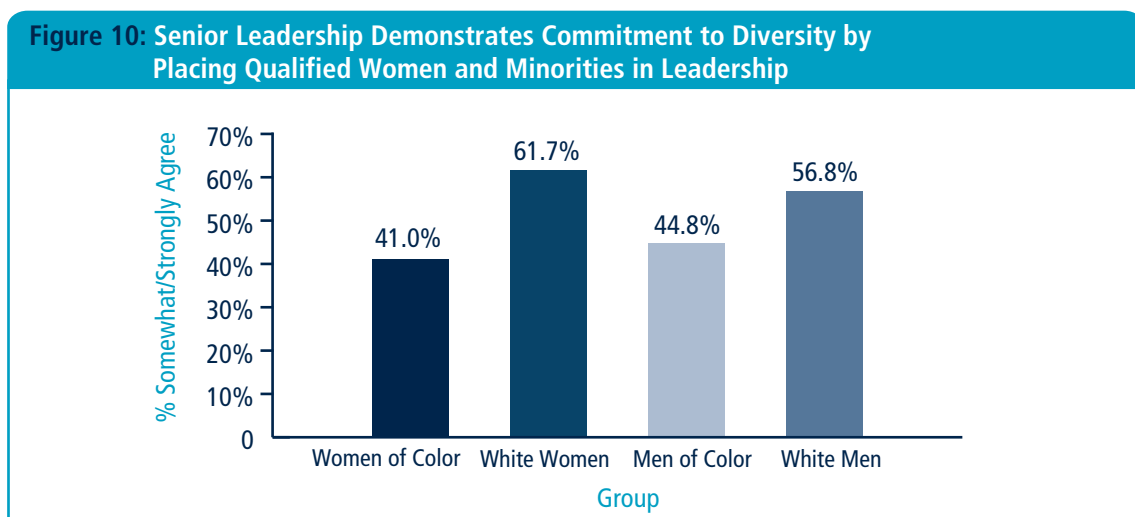
PEOPLE OF COLOR PERCEIVE IMPERFECT EXECUTION OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICES

Both women of color and men of color were less likely than their white counterparts to believe that managers are held accountable for developing and advancing women and people of color.

Figure 9: Managers Are Held Accountable for Developing and Advancing Women and People of Color

% Somewhat/Strongly Agree

- Women of Color: 20.2%
- White Women: 30.5%
- Men of Color: 19.3%
- White Men: 31.3%

Group

Both women of color and men of color were also less likely than their white counterparts to believe that senior leadership demonstrates commitment to diversity by placing qualified women and people of color in leadership positions.

Figure 10: Senior Leadership Demonstrates Commitment to Diversity by Placing Qualified Women and Minorities in Leadership

% Somewhat/Strongly Agree

- Women of Color: 41.0%
- White Women: 61.7%
- Men of Color: 44.8%
- White Men: 56.8%

Group

WOMEN OF COLOR ARE LEAST OPTIMISTIC ABOUT DIVERSITY PRACTICES

While women of color and men of color often perceived diversity and inclusion practices in similar ways, women of color were significantly more likely than men of color to believe that diversity efforts are ineffective in bringing in a diverse workforce and providing an environment in which diverse groups can flourish.

More specifically, women of color are more likely than men of color to believe that:

- Managers do not receive adequate training in managing a diverse workforce (82 percent and 69 percent respectively).[20]
- Senior leadership does not demonstrate strong commitment to diversity by hiring qualified and diverse candidates (42.8 percent and 29.5 percent, respectively).[21]
- Diversity efforts put too little emphasis on quality of the work environment (27.9 percent and 14.6 percent, respectively).

This African-American woman discussed how her firm does not recruit from educational institutions where people of color are.

The fact is that people of color have greater access to higher education than at any point, ever, in history. And so the populations coming out of these organizations are significantly more diverse. Our institutions need to be mirroring what's coming out of the schools. Why are we not? I know that they have accounting programs at [historically black colleges and universities]... Why are we not focusing on some of these schools?

—African-American woman

This African-American woman relates what she considers an ineffective course in diversity training.

They had a diversity training for [senior managers]. Candidly speaking? That was the biggest waste of my time ever....I think the firm meant well....I was only one of two or three black women in the whole huge big conference room...which is a comment on the progression through the firm, that you can only get two or three black women in a room full of managers..... The comments or the training (were) framed...Whenever a conversation would get going good, she'd be wanting to move onto another topic....Whenever you started hitting the issues harder or that sort of thing.

—African-American woman

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[20] Women of color were also significantly more likely than white women to agree with this (p<.1).
[21] Women of color were also significantly more likely than white women to agree with this (p<.1).

White men and white women perceived the effectiveness of diversity practices similarly. White men (79.5 percent) were most likely of all groups—significantly more so than women of color (67.6 percent)—to believe that the organizations' practices have created a climate supportive of women of color.

Women of color's less positive views about the success of diversity and inclusion initiatives highlight the work that needs to be done to reassess and modify existing practices. Moreover, practices need to involve all employees at firms, so that the culture as a whole encourages awareness of how to be inclusive. Then, women of color may have more opportunities to develop the relationships, knowledge, and assignments they need to succeed. The deficits they feel in these areas are described in the next chapter.

Learnings at a Glance

- **Many women of color believed that their opportunities to advance to senior leadership positions within their organizations have increased in the last five years, but their current satisfaction with their careers was low compared to other groups.**
  - Women of color were more likely than men of color to believe that they cannot compete successfully to advance in the organization.

- **Barriers that women of color face reflected a lack of connection with others, including lack of an influential mentor.**
  - Women of color were significantly more likely than white women or men of color to cite lack of similar role models as a barrier.
  - Perhaps following from a lack of connection with others in the workplace, women of color also were more likely than either white women or men of color to cite as barriers lack of high-visibility assignments and lack of professional development opportunities.

- **Women of color appeared more vulnerable to stereotyping than other groups in the study.**
  - They were more likely than any other group to cite "lack of managing preconceptions of my race/gender" as a barrier, indicating their perception of the prevalence of stereotypes directed against them as women of color.

- **Women of color were least likely to be satisfied with business development opportunities and client assignments.**

This chapter covers perspectives of women of color about their careers. Specifically, we look at career satisfaction, barriers to advancement, and business development opportunities.

Prior work on women of color in the corporate environment has discussed the exclusion from connections with others.[22] In this study, we compare the career experiences of women of color with other groups—particularly white women and men of color—to better understand whether and how race/ethnicity and gender combine to impact career experiences.

[22] Catalyst, *Connections That Count: The Informal Networks of Women of Color in the United States* (2006); Catalyst, *Women of Color in Corporate Management: Opportunities and Barriers (*1999).

CURRENT CAREER SATISFACTION FOR WOMEN OF COLOR IS RELATIVELY LOW

Women of color were statistically on par with white women and men of color in believing that their opportunities to advance to senior leadership positions within their organizations have increased in the last five years. White men, by contrast, were least likely of all groups to believe that their opportunities have increased, perhaps because of their greater expectations for advancement or because their expectations have always been high.

Another possible explanation is an increasing recognition by white men that the workforce is becoming more diverse and there is greater competition for upward mobility.

Figure 11: Advancement Opportunities Have Improved in the Last Five Years
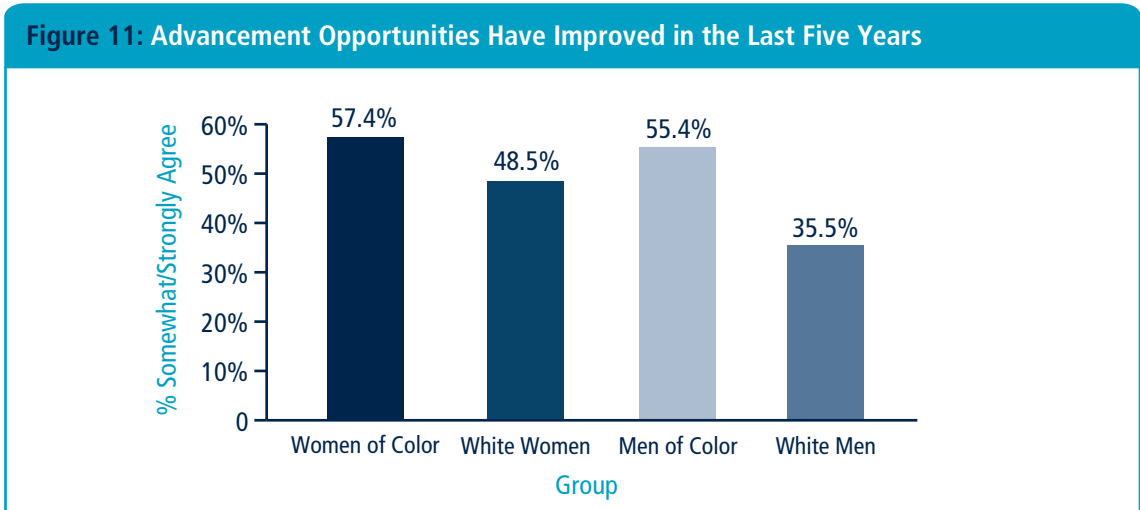
In looking at current satisfaction with their careers, which encompasses satisfaction with current career advancement opportunities, compensation, and consistency between one's experience and current level of work, women of color scored lowest of the groups in the study, while white women scored highest. Women of color and men of color were both significantly lower than white women on this measure.

Figure 12: Overall Career Satisfaction
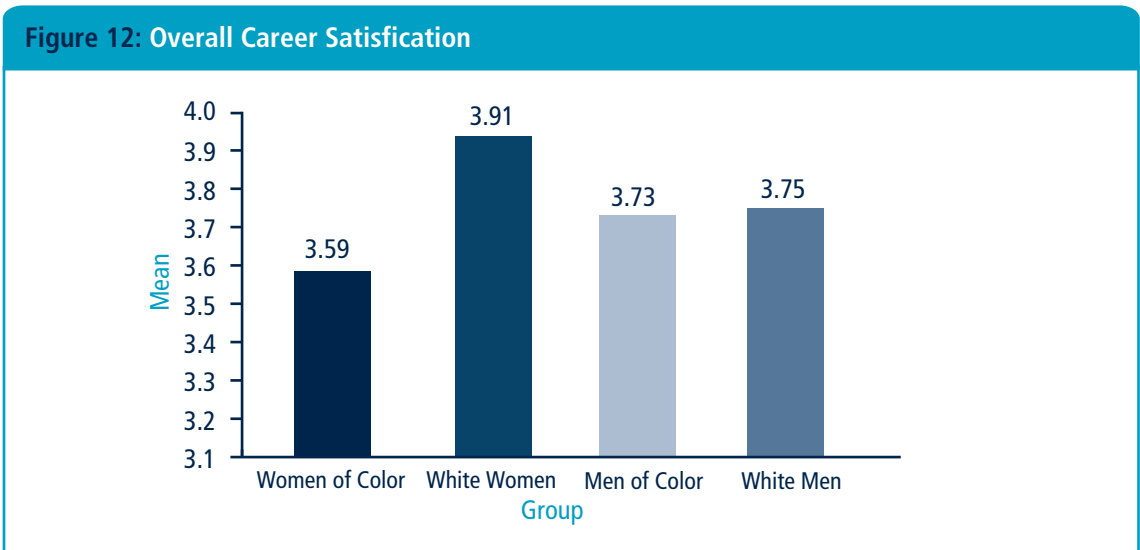
More specifically, while a majority were satisfied with career advancement opportunities at their firms, women of color (33.0 percent) were more likely than white women (20.9 percent) to be dissatisfied. In addition, one-third of women of color believe that they cannot compete successfully to advance in the organization (32.7 percent).

This Asian woman relates the number of promotions in her group and gives her perspective on why people of color generally have a harder time being promoted:

> *There are not so many white guys in our group. [Two] got promoted to partner, no questions asked. And one white female, she got promoted….So I think when they evaluate, they probably not only evaluate how much you do right now; they try to project how much you can make later. And being a minority, they sort of project that you have smaller market share.*
>
> —Asian woman

TOP BARRIERS PERCEIVED BY WOMEN OF COLOR

Barriers that women of color face reflect a lack of connection with others. Among the barriers cited to a "great" or "very great" extent were lack of an influential mentor or sponsor and lack of access to networks of influential others. Both men of color and white women perceived these barriers to similar degrees. Women of color and men of color were similar in citing lack of understanding of organizational politics as a barrier, perhaps reflecting a lack of inclusion in "insider" networks.

However, in contrast to both men of color and white women, women of color were significantly more likely to cite lack of similar role models as a barrier. Perhaps following from a lack of connection with others in the workplace, women of color also appeared less likely to enjoy opportunities that typically spring from such connections—they were significantly more likely than either white women or men of color to cite lack of high-visibility projects and lack of professional development opportunities as barriers.

Table 2: Top Barriers to Advancement Identified by Women of Color (To a Great/Very Great Extent)	Women of Color	White Women	Men of Color	White Men
Lack of influential mentor or sponsor	36.6%	30.1%	31.6%	18.3% * a b c
Lack of role models in the organization who are similar to me	35.6% *b c d	20.9%	25.8% * d	15%
Lack of informal networking with influential colleagues	34.4%	25.8%	28.0%	16.5% * a b c
Lack of understanding organizational politics	29.3% * b d	15.7%	24.0% * b d	14.2%
Lack of high-visibility projects	28.6% *b c d	18.0% * d	14.8%	9.1%
Lack of managing preconceptions about my race/gender	22.1%	6.2%	13.2%	3.3%
Lack of support from the organization in balancing work and family	22.7%	22.9%	17.3%	19.2%
Lack of professional development opportunities	28.4% *b c d	19.3%	13.5%	17.5%

*=significant difference at the .1 level; a=women of color, b=white women, c=men of color, d=white men

Though not one of the top barriers, both women of color and white women were more likely than their male counterparts to cite "lack of support from the organization in balancing work and family" commitments as a barrier. [23]

White men in the sample cited most of the above barriers less frequently than the other groups. Notably, women of color were twice as likely as white men to cite lack of influential mentor as a barrier.

WOMEN OF COLOR PERCEIVE STEREOTYPES AGAINST THEM

Though not cited as frequently as the top barriers, women of color were more likely (22.1 percent) than any other group to cite "lack of managing preconceptions of my race/gender" as a barrier (men of color, 13.2 percent; white women, 6.2 percent; white men, 3.3 percent), indicating their perception of the prevalence of stereotypes directed against them as women of color.

Here is one example of the preconceptions of race/ethnicity and gender experienced by this biracial woman.

I am a woman of color, but I am biracial, black and white. I tend to look Hispanic, especially in this region....People are very confused that [my last name is] not Lopez... I don't fit into

[23] Based on analysis of variance of means, p<.05.

that perception that they have of me. And, during my first six months here, they called me J-Lo behind my back because I looked Puerto Rican. Not because I looked like Jennifer Lopez. I mean, it's just silly things like that. And it's…a stereotype of—it was the Puerto Rican that they knew, so that's what they called me.

—Biracial woman

This Asian woman described the preconceptions that her colleagues have when she speaks Chinese on the phone.

I was on the phone with my mother speaking Chinese, and the partner came by and asked, "Are you calling China?" Other people think, when I'm speaking Chinese on the phone, that I'm talking about them, which is totally not the case. Sometimes it's just easier to say certain things in Chinese to my parents.

—Asian woman

WOMEN OF COLOR ARE DISSATISFIED WITH CLIENT ASSIGNMENTS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Business development opportunities are fundamental for advancing in client-service roles. We measured respondents' ratings on access to high-profile client engagements, training opportunities to enhance business development skills, and access to budgets for business development. We also asked participants how satisfied they are with how client-service assignments are distributed.

Women of color were least likely of all groups to be satisfied with client assignments and business development opportunities, which is consistent with the prior finding that women of color lacked high-visibility projects and professional development opportunities as barriers.

Figure 13: Satisfaction With Business Development Opportunities

Group	Mean
Women of Color	3.15
White Women	3.45
Men of Color	3.39
White Men	3.29
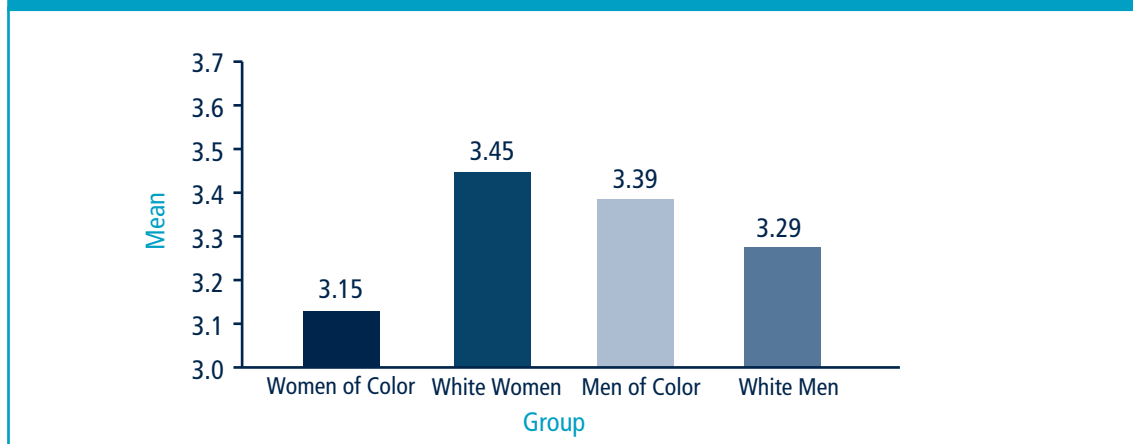
More specifically, women of color were least likely of all race/ethnicity and gender groups—to a significant degree—to agree that they are satisfied with the way client assignments are distributed.

Figure 14: Satisfaction With the Way Client-Service Assignments Are Distributed

A bar chart titled "Figure 14: Satisfaction With the Way Client-Service Assignments Are Distributed." The y-axis is labeled "% Somewhat/Strongly Agree" ranging from 0 to 60%. The x-axis is labeled "Group." Bars: Women of Color 37.3%, White Women 57.9%, Men of Color 53.7%, White Men 54.6%.
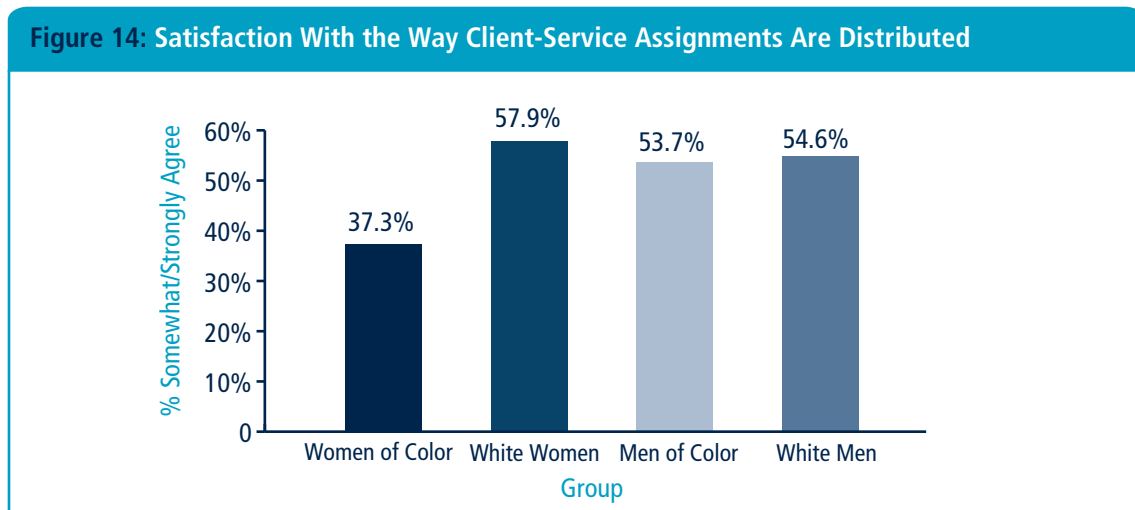
This Latina discussed not knowing how client assignments occur.

In my group, sometimes—not all the time, sometimes—you don't have the chance to find the opportunity. And we hear, in a weekly voicemail, that we have this opportunity in this company, and so-and-so is responsible for that opportunity. And you sit around and say, "How did that happen? How did he or she get that? How come nobody knew about this until this weekly phone call?" So it could be luck, it could be this unwritten network.

—Latina

Women of color (48.2 percent) are also more likely than white women (30.0 percent) to be dissatisfied with access to high-profile client engagements.

This quotation illustrates some dynamics around exclusion from business development opportunities.

They send out an availability listing—here are all these people that are available. You see the same person on there and you think, "How come they haven't been able to get work? How do you pull them on?" They are already so behind, they haven't gotten the right experience. What happens is that they get coached out, they are underutilized and they get slided out. I remember [talking] to head-of-diversity people; they did a utilization study and the people of color with not-so-American names, they are worried that... they have someone that has trouble with clients.

—Latina

This African-American woman discussed facing difficult dynamics at times with the client.

Even with the client, you know that if it was somebody else dealing with this person, they would not be acting like this. They would not question you every step of the way. They would not be giving you piecemeal stuff or trying to make the audit difficult, and you've got to be professional with them because they're paying the fees.

—African-American woman

With women of color perceiving barriers to a much greater extent than any of their colleagues, it comes as no surprise that they are least satisfied with their careers in accounting firms. This dissatisfaction is yet another reminder of the isolation women of color feel in the workplace, an issue we examine in the following chapter.

Learnings at a Glance

- **More than two-thirds of all study respondents were satisfied with their relationships with their managers, but the proportion was lower for people of color.**
  - Both women and men of color were more likely than whites to believe that their managers do not have high expectations of their performance and that managers do not evaluate their performance fairly.

- **While all groups in the study were equally likely to have mentors, the mentors of women and men of color were perceived to lack influence or sponsorship skills as compared with those of whites.**
  - About one-third of women and men of color with mentors perceived that lack of an *influential* mentor is a barrier to their career advancement.

- **Women, as a group, were significantly less likely to state that they are invited to participate in after-work activities, perhaps reflecting the gender bias of "old boys'" networks within firms. However, women of color were more disadvantaged than white women regarding access to networks.**
  - Women of color were less likely than white women to feel that they know what is "really" going on in the organization.

- **Women of color appeared to interact less frequently with a wide range of people within the firm, perhaps reflecting hesitancy on both ends.**
  - In particular, women of color were less likely than either white women or men of color to report speaking frequently with men.

In firm settings, relationships can determine who is assigned to engagements and projects and who is considered for developmental opportunities. People tend to develop higher comfort levels with others who look like them or remind them of themselves, which makes relationships that are inclusive of diverse groups a challenge in many business settings.[24]

This white male partner described the role of relationships in career advancement at his firm.

Demonstrating an ability to perform at a very, very high level and building relationships at all levels is important for advancement. In our advancement model, you are challenged; you need

[24] Stacy D. Blake-Beard, "Taking a Hard Look at Formal Mentoring Programs: A Consideration of Potential Challenges Facing Women," *Journal of Management Development*, vol. 20, no. 4 (2001): p. 335-337.

This chapter will cover managerial relationships, mentoring relationships, and informal relationships including access to others.

MANAGERIAL SUPPORT IS RELATIVELY HIGH, BUT LOWER FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR

Approximately two-thirds of all study respondents felt that their managers or team leaders have a good relationship with them—being comfortable interacting with them and caring about their well being, providing help to do their jobs, and providing opportunities for visibility. Fewer respondents (less than one-half in most groups) rated their managers highly on helping them navigate the politics of the work environment.

People of color appeared to have less favorable relationships with their managers than whites did. They were less likely than whites to perceive that:

- Managers were fair in performance evaluations.
- Their manager had high expectations of their performance.[25]

Women of color and men of color were also less likely than white women to believe that their managers were comfortable interacting with them.

Table 3: Relationships With Managers				
My Manager… (somewhat/strongly agree)	Women of Color	White Women	Men of Color	White Men
Has high expectations of my performance	82.1% * d	88.1%	86.5%	91.5%
Is comfortable interacting with me	72.1%	84.7% * a c	72.9%	78.0%
Evaluates my performance fairly	68.4%	79.9% * a c	65.8%	77.1% * a c
Is willing to extend self to help me perform job to best of ability	66.7%	68.5%	67.3%	70.3%
Really cares about my well being	66.5%	71.7%	72.9%	72.9%
Provides opportunities for visibility	61.1%	63.2%	65.8%	62.7%
Helps me understand the politics of the workplace	44.2% * b	56.0%	48.1%	46.6%
* = significant difference based on chi-square tests at the .1 level; a=women of color, b=white women, c=men of color, d=white men				

[25] Based on analyses of variance of mean scores, p<.05.

ALL GROUPS ARE EQUALLY LIKELY TO HAVE A MENTOR

This quotation from a white male partner illustrates the importance of mentorship to career advancement.

I would say working side-by-side with the partners was the biggest developmental opportunity for me—in being mentored by them and being included in client meetings and internal meetings from an account management perspective. So I'd say having the partners on my side, being an integral part of it, carrying their bags, being at their hip, and being able to learn how they served their clients, day in and day out. Probably the biggest opportunity was when [the partners] began to say, "Okay, now, you conduct the meeting and I will support you." This was the beginning to be the lead on the engagement without being a partner.

—White man

All groups were likely to have a mentor—women of color at 69.6 percent, white women at 73.3 percent, men of color at 67.5 percent, and white men at 70.1 percent. More than 90 percent of those with mentors had a mentor inside the organization.

Of those with mentors, all groups were more likely to have a formal mentor than an informal mentor. Specifically, 53.9 percent of women of color had a formal mentor, as did 60.1 percent of white women, 66.7 percent of men of color, and 61.0 percent of white men.

Most of those had male mentors, with the exception of white women. Both white women and women of color were less likely to have male mentors than men of color and white men.

Figure 15: Percentage of Respondents With Male Mentors
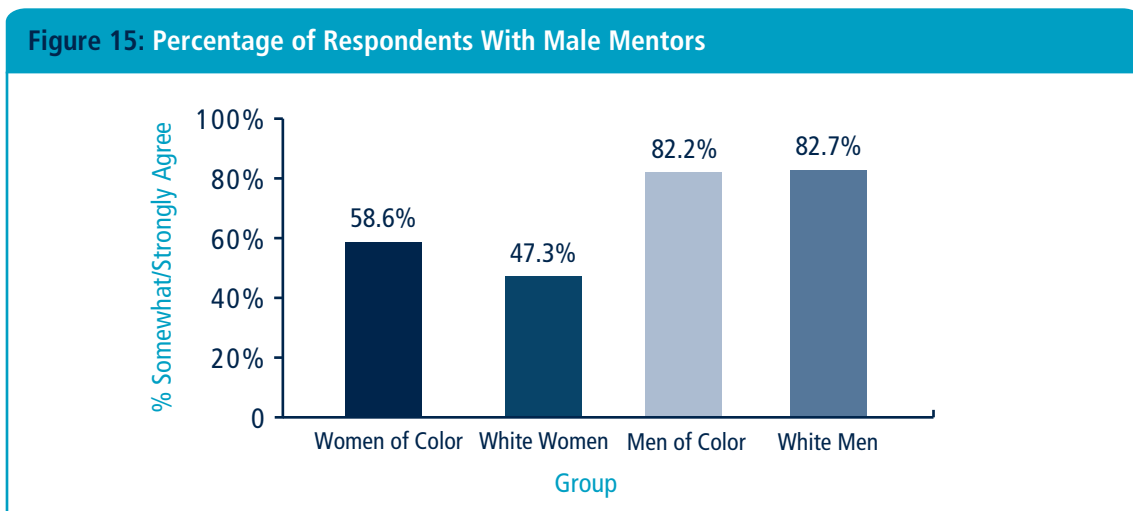
At least two-thirds of each group had a white mentor. Women of color and men of color were less likely to have white mentors than their white colleagues.

Figure 16: Percentage of Respondents With White Mentors
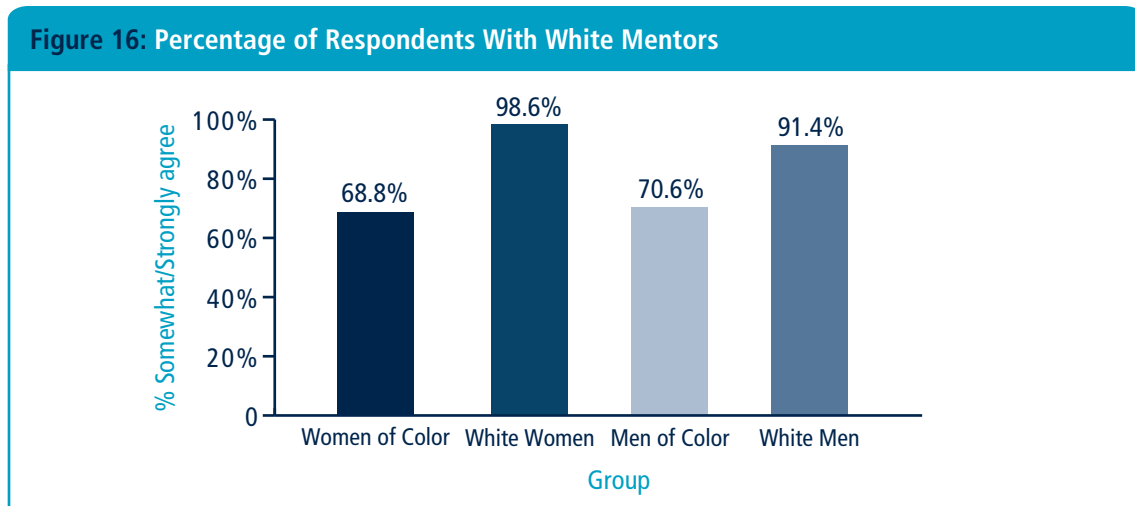
Some focus group participants provided an assessment of formal mentoring programs as sometimes ineffective, such as this Asian man.

In [this location], mentoring is not a strong process. They meet twice a year, but they don't really invest the time to really develop the track. I don't think that time is invested, yet on paper everything works.

—Asian man

Others, such as this African-American woman, felt that formal mentoring was effective.

The mentor program...has been good....I think it's always been in place, but it's been more rigorously promoted and enforced this year—not enforced, but recommended. And just having that other person, who may be in a completely different area, to bounce off your ideas, your goals of what you want to do—that's been helpful.

—African-American woman

PEOPLE OF COLOR PERCEIVE THEIR MENTORS TO LACK INFLUENCE OR SPONSORSHIP SKILLS

Some study respondents who have a mentor still cited as a barrier to advancement "lack of an *influential* mentor or sponsor," indicating that they perceive their mentors as not powerful or not providing the career-advancing benefit of sponsorship. About one-third of women of color and men of color who have mentors felt this way, while only 15.8 percent of white women and 9.8 percent of white men did.

Figure 17: Lack of Influential Mentor a Barrier Among Those With Mentor
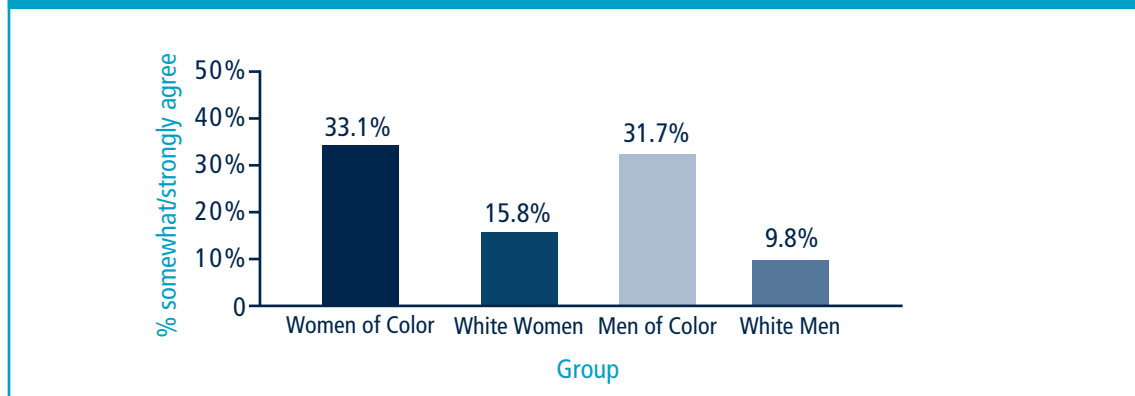
The quotations below both mention "trust" as a factor in building relationships. The white woman partner's quotation illustrates the relative ease with which she forms mentoring relationships, with trust as a facilitator.

I think the mentoring that most of us receive is just a natural progression of the…relationships we build. And you're doing things without really realizing…There's just natural gravitation to certain people that you trust…

—White woman

In contrast, this quotation from a man of color senior partner—who provides a "view from the top"—illustrates the difficulties he perceives women of color to have in forming relationships, particularly as they struggle to develop trust among influential others.

We don't see many more women of color at the senior manager and partner levels because they are not male and they are not white. They have to fight against unspoken biases, and they are not getting the key on-the-job learning moments.…Women of color need to not only get the key assignments, but also become the trusted person for the partner, someone [the partner] can leave the client with.

—Man of color

WOMEN OF COLOR FEEL LEFT OUT OF INFORMAL NETWORKS

We asked respondents about their participation in informal networks and social activities at work, including their level of access to and participation in work-related social events, and to what extent they have access to those who can help with job issues and politically navigating the work environment. Women of color felt that informal networks are less accessible than white men felt they are.

Figure 18: Access to Informal Networks
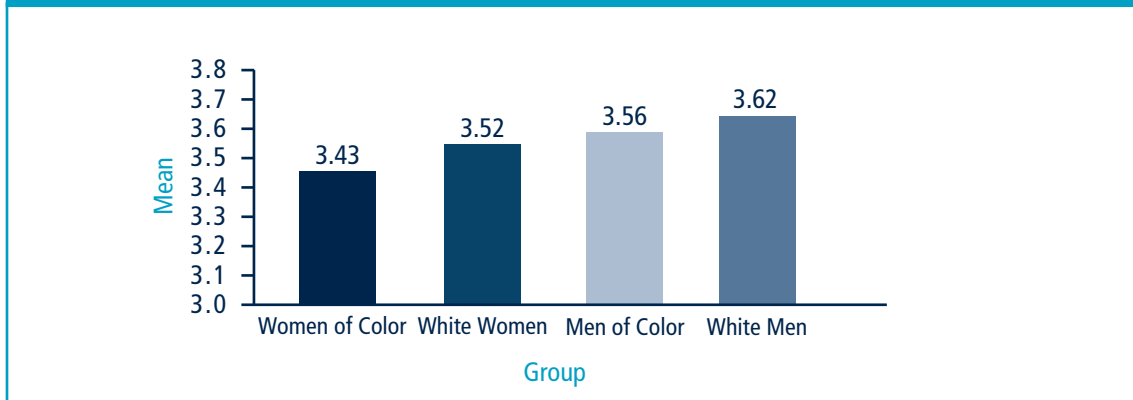
Overall, more than two-thirds of participants reported that they are invited to participate in after-work activities with their colleagues. However, women as a group were significantly less likely to state that they are invited to participate in such after-work activities.[26] This finding is driven more by men of color than by white men; men of color (79.3 percent) are more likely to say that they are invited to after-work activities than are women of color (70.0 percent) or white women (71.8 percent). This quotation from an African-American woman provides one example of how women are often left out of after-work activities.

Recently, I was speaking with one of my colleagues and [he was] talking to me about some big football party that they had. It was like, yeah, how come I didn't see you? Of course, this guy is the new staff. He doesn't know how things work…See, I know that I'm left out all the time, and I'm okay with that….That's the unspoken rule in our department….Does it make it right? No, but I don't lose any sleep over it. Really. So yes, I'm not kept abreast of much of the social information.

—African-American woman

Women of color were least likely to feel that they know what is "really" going on in the organization (32.2 percent), as compared with white women (40.2 percent) and white men (46.6 percent).

WOMEN OF COLOR SPEAK TO THE SMALLEST RANGE OF PEOPLE
Women of color scored the lowest on their "scope of network," which was ascertained by a series of questions that asked how often one spoke with a range of different groups across the organization in order to gain knowledge about the organization. The groups included colleagues senior to the respondent, peers, those inside and outside of the business unit, whites, men, women, and different people of color groups. Women of color were least likely to speak frequently with a range of people across the organization.

[26] Based on analysis of variance of mean scores at p<.05.

Figure 19: Scope of Network

Mean values by Group:
- Women of Color: 3.36
- White Women: 3.56
- Men of Color: 3.59
- White Men: 3.63
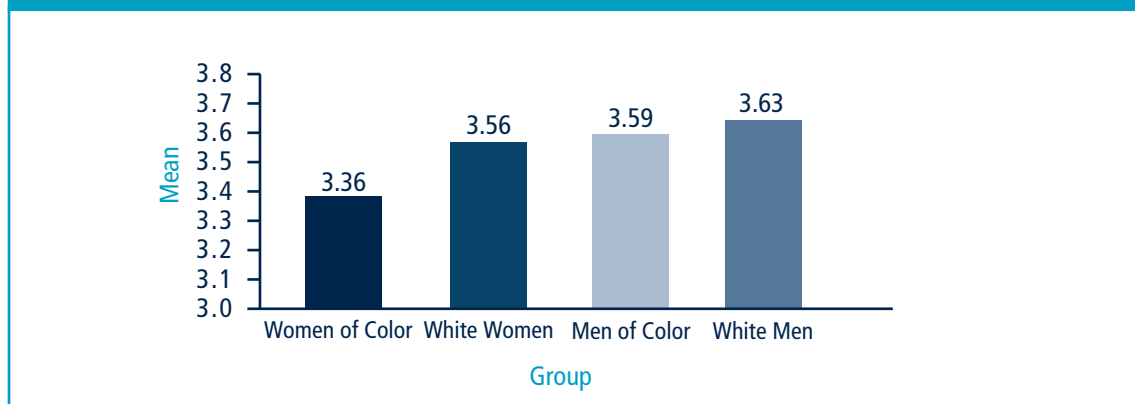
Women of color and men of color were similar in being more likely to speak with other people of color than whites were. However, they reported speaking less frequently than white women and white men with:

- Those senior to them (women of color, 53.3 percent; men of color, 57.9 percent; white women, 71.8 percent; white men, 69.3 percent).
- Whites (women of color, 74.4 percent; men of color, 75.0 percent; white women, 87.4 percent; white men, 90.7 percent).

Women of color (37.2 percent) were also more likely than either men of color (21.9 percent) or white women (23.2 percent) to report infrequently speaking to men.

This quotation from an African-American woman describes her small network.

I have two or three people outside the group whom I talk to… I do have issues talking with people above me candidly. So most of the people that I would consider my little network are at my level or below.

—African-American woman

Sometimes a lack of trust is a motivator for not reaching out to others in the organization, as this quotation from an African-American woman illustrates.

She was a senior associate then, she's a manager now, and she happens to be my manager. [I later found out she] was standing behind a pillar listening to my entire conversation. She went back and told one of the other people, who she probably wouldn't have thought would have came back and told me. At that point, I don't trust her. I do not trust her. She sat there and listened to the whole conversation and went back and talked to this white guy.

—African-American woman

This quotation from a Latina illustrates the interplay between a lack of "reaching out" and a perception that others are not as willing to reach out to women of color.

> *What's different is that a lot of peers could build trust by building relationships and going to lunch, and I can't. I had an assigned coach, but nobody really in the early stages in my career asked me to lunch. It was only…later in my career that I was known, people knew that I did a good job. All of a sudden they asked me to work on job[s] and asked me to go out. Whereas I saw my peers, geez, they just go and ask them without benefit of the doubt, they get on the job because they think that person is like [them].*
>
> —Latina

It is hard to overestimate the benefits that may arise from simply reaching out to women of color—for the women themselves, their colleagues, and the firm. Incorporating them fully into the social networks will strengthen the workplace and improve the value proposition for clients. Taking complete advantage of women of color's talents—even when they have personal commitments—is discussed in the next chapter.

Learnings at a Glance

- **Long hours and informal norms concerning face time made work-life quality difficult to achieve despite employees' perception of high support from managers.**
  - Fewer than one-half of participants were satisfied with their firms' efforts to support work-life quality. This was equally true for women of color, white women, men of color, and white men.

- **Women of color were more likely than any other group to use extended family for childcare.**
  - In contrast, white women were more likely than other groups to use outside help such as babysitters, nannies, and childcare provided by the organization.
  - White men tended to receive more support from spouses who are either full- or part-time homemakers.

- **Some people of color believed that work-life practices at their firms lack racial sensitivity.**
  - Interestingly, women of color were also less likely to use employer-provided childcare centers than white women. White women may be more comfortable than women of color with accessing such a service. While there could be a variety of reasons for their less frequent use (such as preference for using other means, such as extended family), another possibility is that the employer-provided childcare centers were perceived to not be a good fit for children of color.

This chapter examines work-life quality, which is affected by organizational demands on time, personal challenges facing employees, organizational resources and practices for achieving work-life quality, and how easily employees can interface with organizational resources.

This white male partner described the limitations of work-life quality in a client-service work environment.

It is an extremely challenging environment from a flexibility perspective. We are, to a great degree, attached at the hip with our clients. At times our ability to control a schedule is very limited, which means it becomes very challenging to plan a day, or a week, or a month, or a year, when it comes to balancing with family. The environment in itself is not conducive to it. What we have tried to do as a firm—and I would say with limited success—is to deal with that environment and try to provide opportunities for flexibility in non-busier times.

—White man

THE CONTEXT FOR ACHIEVING WORK-LIFE QUALITY IN ACCOUNTING FIRMS

Obviously, work load is a major issue at accounting firms, particularly for those in client-service roles. Most respondents in client roles agreed that long hours at the job made it difficult to balance work and personal lives (cited by women of color, white women, men of color, and white men, at 60.5 percent, 61.8 percent, 49.7 percent, and 60.7 percent, respectively).

This white woman partner described the long hours and the intrusiveness of work into personal life.

It's gotten ridiculous. It's gotten to be seven days a week, literally, probably like 15-hour days. They'll call up my house 'til 10:00, apparently. And then putting the cell phones on, the Internet, and anybody can find anybody. And the caller ID is a killer. So if you ever work from home, forever everybody has your home number.

—White woman

This African-American woman discussed the phenomenon of "face time" as part of the culture around working long hours.

The days that I do stay late, I don't have anything to do. They just want you there late, to see you there late. That's the impression I get. I could put in my best for an hour after work hours and do nothing. But the fact that I'm there, they're like oooh, she's here…. So the day that I do stay late, it's not like I'm staying because there's this big deadline and I have work to do. I really could have left at 5:00, but I'm just going to stay late because you just need to see me here.

—African-American woman

PERSONAL CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVING WORK-LIFE EFFECTIVENESS

Women of color were similar to white women and men of color in citing childcare as the top challenge to achieving work-life quality. All but white men also noted the pursuit of an education as another factor that makes work-life quality difficult to achieve. This is probably because a higher percentage of white men already hold advanced degrees than women of color, white women, and men of color.

Table 4: Personal Factors That Make Achieving Work-Life Quality Challenging (Percentage Agreeing to a Great/Very Great Extent)				
	Women of Color	White Women	Men of Color	White Men
Childcare	27.8%	24.8%	25.0%	12.6% *a b c
Pursuing an Education	20.7% * d	15.3%	19.1%	11.7%
Personal Health	18.6%	20.9%	14.8%	15.3%
Active Social Life	16.4%	23.9%	16.1%	21.4%
Personal Interest Unrelated to Family	15.9%	19.8%	15.5%	13.5%
Participation in Community Activities	15.8%	18.5 % *c	11.2%	12.6%
Spousal Care Responsibilities	12.7%	14.3%	11.3%	10.0%
Eldercare	11.3%	6.2%	7.7%	1.8% * a b c
*=significant difference at the .1 level; a=women of color, b=white women, c=men of color, d=white men				

While relatively few survey respondents cited community service as a factor making work-life quality difficult, this African-American woman mentioned additional dynamics around "acceptability" of community interests to others at her firm.

> *A lot of times there are things I'll leave to do—things that I don't necessarily feel comfortable talking with other people about or things that I don't feel they'll value. I'm leaving to go do some community service stuff at school in the 'hood.*
>
> —African-American woman

White men were least likely to cite childcare as a challenge and also least likely to cite eldercare as a challenge (though eldercare was relatively low on the challenge list for all respondents). This is probably because of white men's relatively high incidence of stay-at-home spouses (20.4 percent of all white men in client roles have a spouse who is a full-time homemaker, in contrast to 13.8 percent of men of color, 1.7 percent of white women, and 0.6 percent of women of color) and spouses who work part-time (white men, 11.5 percent; men of color, 5.5 percent; white women, 3.3 percent; women of color, 1.1 percent).

WOMEN OF COLOR USE EXTENDED FAMILY FOR CHILDCARE MORE OFTEN THAN OTHERS DO

Among those with children under 18, almost two-thirds of both white women and women of color cited childcare as a personal factor that makes achieving work-life quality challenging—significantly more than for men of color, or, especially, white men.

Figure 20: Percentage of Parents for Whom Childcare Makes Achieving Work-Life Quality Difficult
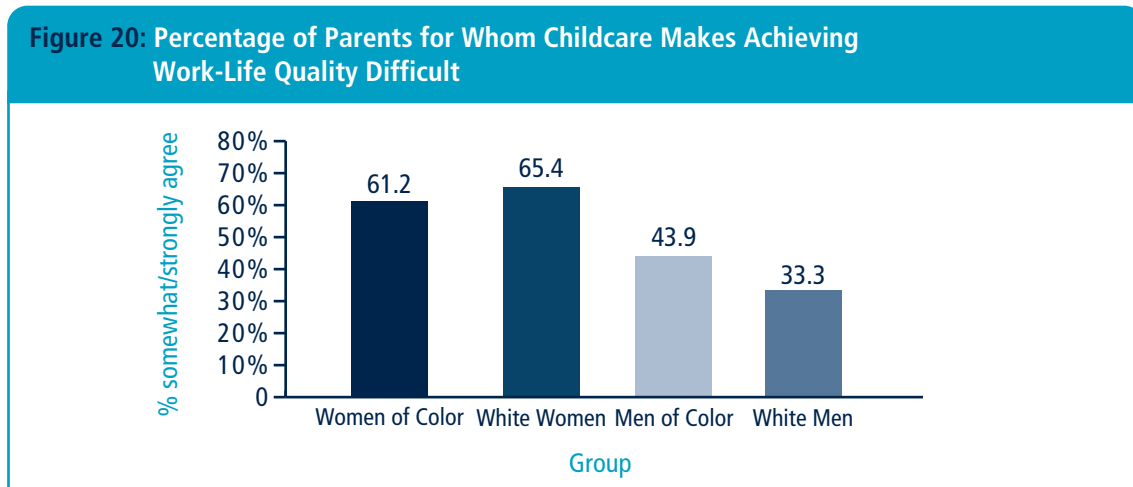
Because of the high numbers of all groups who cited childcare as a challenge to achieving work-life quality, we examine here the personal strategies that respondents use to get help with childcare.

The top resource used varied quite a bit across demographic groups.
- Three-quarters of women of color use extended family, making this their top strategy. However, one-half to almost two-thirds of other groups also use extended family.
- "Spouse/partner" was the primary resource used by white men, white women, and men of color.
    - More than 90 percent of white men with children cited their spouse as the main childcare resource, which is not surprising given white men's relatively high incidence of spouses employed less than full-time.

White women were more likely than other groups to employ outside help for childcare.
- White women were more likely to use nannies, babysitters, and private childcare offered by employers, though one-half of white men also cited babysitters.
- Though not one of their top strategies, white women were more likely than other groups to use childcare provided by their employers.

More than one-half of white women and women of color reported using private childcare centers—significantly higher than men of color and white men reported.

Table 5: Services for Childcare, Among Those With Children 18 or Younger at Home				
Resources for Childcare (% have used)	Women of Color	White Women	Men of Color	White Men
Extended Family	74.0% *c d	62.0%	49.1%	51.3%
Spouse/Partner	66.0%	65.9%	76.8%	92.3% * a b c
Private Childcare Center	55.1% * d	61.6% *c d	39.3%	36.8%
Outside Services for Domestic Help	46.0%	51.8 %	51.8%	39.5%
Nanny	30.0%	45.2% * c d	20.0%	20.5%
Babysitter	26.5%	60.3% *a c	39.3%	51.3% *a
Childcare Provided by the Organization	12.0%	35.2% *a c d	9.1%	2.7%
*=significant difference at the .1 level; a=women of color, b=white women, c=men of color, d=white men				

This Latina partner described the importance of extended family for childcare and the complex interplay between personal strategies and limitations.

[The way] I have balanced it is that I have elected not to move out of [this location]… It is tough, especially now with partner rotation work. The firm wants partners to be more mobile, but… the only way I can balance my work and personal life is by being close to my parents for childcare. I have limited my mobility because I have chosen to stay close to my support system.

—Latina

FEWER THAN ONE-HALF OF ALL EMPLOYEES ARE SATISFIED WITH WORK-LIFE EFFECTIVENESS

Overall, fewer than one-half of those in client-service roles believe that their firms are effective in supporting work-life quality. There is no significant difference among women of color, white women, men of color, or white men. Men of color (53.7 percent) were less likely than white women (64.2 percent) to believe that they have control over their work schedules.

Figure 21: Effectiveness of Organization in Providing Flexibility for Balancing Work and Personal Life
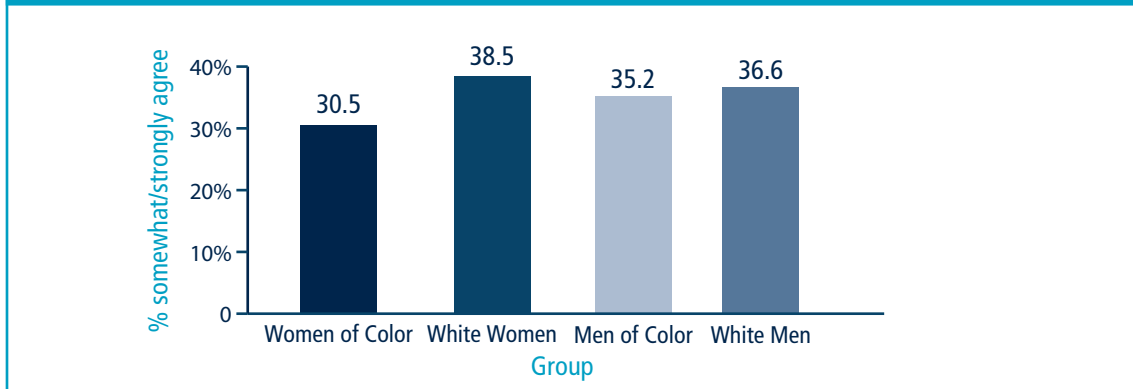
RESPONDENTS PERCEIVE SUPPORT FROM MANAGERS AND FIRMS ON WORK-LIFE QUALITY

We examined factors that may affect satisfaction with work-life practices at the firm, including awareness of practices, perceived effectiveness of the practices, and the comfort that people felt in using them.

Upwards of three-quarters of survey respondents were aware of the resources for work-life quality offered by their organizations, though both men of color and white men were somewhat less likely to be aware of resources than were women.

All demographic groups were equally likely to believe that their manager/project manager supports their work-life effectiveness (between 64 percent and 68 percent). About three-quarters of all groups also said that they are comfortable using resources for work-life effectiveness offered by their organizations (between 72 percent and 80 percent).

However, men of color and women of color—though at low percentages—were more likely than white men and white women to feel that work-life resources at their organization lack racial sensitivity (12.0 percent of both women of color and men of color and 5.0 percent of white women and white men).

INFORMAL NORMS HINDER ACHIEVEMENT OF WORK-LIFE QUALITY

While the survey data indicated that most demographic groups were on par in being able to access formal resources for achieving work-life quality, respondents in focus groups and interviews also discussed informal norms within their firms as barriers to achieving work-life quality.

This pair of quotations illustrates tensions between those who have children and those who do not.

It's all about whether or not you have kids. If you don't have that, you have to have an excuse (to leave early).

—African-American woman

It's hard to relate at my level because there aren't a lot of working moms…Other associates think "If you get to leave early, maybe I should have a kid to so I can leave early!"

—Asian woman

This African-American woman discussed the impact of not having a nanny.

I need to leave [rather than spending long hours in the office] because I do have a child. I think that poses a problem. That's probably one of the reasons why you don't see a lot of African-American women in my opinion. Because a lot of African-American women either are married with kids….who don't have a nanny, or a single mom in my case.

—African-American woman

Achieving work-life effectiveness has always been a challenge for employees of accounting firms, especially for women. Women of color, however, often have different family dynamics than those who have traditionally found success at accounting firms. Firms that recognize these differences and provide new ways of managing work and life will see more women of color advance. Other steps firms can take are detailed in the next chapter.

While men of color and white women have not achieved parity with white men in professional services firms, women of color, in comparison, appear to be uniquely disadvantaged. Women of color perceive, in particular, race-based disadvantages such as exclusion, double standards, and lack of influential mentors. They also perceive gender-based disadvantages such as lack of support from firms for work-life balance. In addition, the barriers they face appear to lead to lack of opportunities with clients to a greater extent than those facing either men of color or white women.

Figure 22: Summary of Barriers Experienced by Women of Color (to Greater Extent Than Men of Color or White Women)

Barriers for women of color that are greater than those for men of color or white women

Within the organizational context for people of color, women of color also face…

Lack of similar role models

At the individual and interpersonal levels, women of color experience…

Stereotyping

Less likelihood of connecting with others at work

Possibly because of a lack of connections at the individual-organizational level, women of color face…

Lack of development opportunities, specifically with client service assignments

At the organizational level, women of color perceive...

Diversity practices ineffective in creating a truly inclusive workplace for women of color

TO SUCCESSFULLY MAKE CHANGE, FIRMS MUST RECOGNIZE INTERSECTIONALITY FOR WOMEN OF COLOR

Our findings indicate that women of color have difficulty gaining the experience and exposure they need to succeed in accounting firms. The organizational context of few women of color overall, and fewer still in senior positions, combined with the strength of the "old boys'" network, results in women of color having the least comfortable fit in the accounting firm work environment. They suffer from a lack of similar role models, are more at risk of feeling negatively stereotyped, and appear to be the least connected group in firms. While both women of color and men of color reported lacking influential mentors, our study found that women of color were most likely to perceive a lack of developmental opportunities and a lack of access to client opportunities.

In relationship-based environments, in which access to client assignments is facilitated by ease of interactions between associates and those more senior, exclusion from networks, support, and knowledge can have serious career ramifications. Women of color, as minorities in both race/ethnicity and gender, struggle with these facts every day, with few successful models for them to emulate.

To create greater opportunities for traditionally marginalized groups, many firms have created diversity and inclusion practices. *Retaining People of Color: What Accounting Firms Need to Know,* Catalyst's first report in the *Women of Color in Professional Services Series*, identified "imperfect execution" of diversity practices—that the practices were well-intentioned, but not well-executed—as a barrier for both men of color and women of color.

With this study, we gain more insight into the shortcomings of these practices. Both women of color and men of color were likely to believe that diversity and inclusion practices suffer from a lack of commitment and accountability, but women of color appeared to gain fewer benefits from them than did men of color. Women of color were also more likely than both men of color and white women to believe that diversity practices are ineffective in promoting a truly inclusive workplace, demonstrating that many practices may not address the combined effects of race/ethnicity and gender that women of color experience.

It should be mentioned that some accounting firms have taken great strides to create more inclusive workplaces. The fact that two-thirds of the respondents in this sample have mentors speaks to the efforts that accounting firms have made. Notably, some accounting firms have also won the Catalyst Award for groundbreaking initiatives that facilitate the advancement of women. In 2003, Ernst & Young's initiative, *Promoting Change: Developing & Advancing Women,* a broad-based effort that combined an active career development process of targeted supports for women with a structured, technologically supported approach to creating a flexible work culture, won the Catalyst Award. In 2007, the Catalyst Award was presented to PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP for *Unique People Experience,* which was created to reduce turnover, maximize the staff productivity, and increase the value for clients. Among its major components were each staff being assigned a partner/leader

who was charged with getting to know him or her professionally and personally, including those aspects such as race, gender, and work-life issues; a redesigned, more team-based work model; and accountability through rigorous evaluation.

We have seen that white women are more satisfied with their work experiences than women of color, indicating that many diversity and inclusion initiatives have been partially successful. Men of color are also more satisfied than women of color in several aspects of work culture. Clearly, the intersectionality that women of color experience impedes their progress as women and as people of color. If leaders in firms do not take account of this intersectionality, then chances are great that diversity and inclusion practices they implement will be characterized by imperfect execution.

ASSESS HOW YOUR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICES AFFECT WOMEN OF COLOR

To help firms address the issues we have raised in this report, we make the following recommendations. These recommendations are targeted to human resources executives and senior leaders in firms, who are in the position to make change in their organizations.

As a first step, those in senior leadership and human resources need to be more aware of the intersectionality of the identities of women of color. As this study illustrates, women of color do not face the same issues at the same magnitude as men of color or white women. The combination of race/ethnicity and gender appears to magnify the effects of race/ethnicity and gender alone.

Without an awareness of the complexities of issues facing subgroups in their firms, some diversity and inclusion efforts may be too all-embracing. The efforts may take on a "one-size-fits-all" model in attempting to create an inclusive environment for all employees without focusing specifically on any particular group.

Organizations need to periodically assess the effectiveness of their diversity and inclusion practices to understand whether these practices are successful. A good first step is to analyze promotion and retention rates of subgroups at critical career development stages. Employee surveys can also provide a sense of how inclusive or exclusive the work environment is perceived by subgroups.

An important goal of a diversity and inclusion practice should be the elimination of cultural norms that give one group an advantage over others. This can be done by identifying critical norms in the dominant culture with a diverse team, having leaders committed to making change, communicating frequently, modeling by influential champions at every level, establishing formal guidelines where appropriate, and using rewards and penalties.

Establishing a strategic framework, as Ernst & Young does, is fundamental.

Ernst & Young: *Gender Equity Strategy*

This strategy offers an approach that organizations can use to refine their diversity and inclusion practices to create more inclusive environments. It captures key objectives (areas of focus) for leveraging gender diversity and inclusion, the actions that will drive the efforts, and the short- and long-term visions of the desired end state. This approach organizes actions around a strategic framework—rather than a laundry list of nice-to-have activities; provides greater clarity for communicating efforts; and establishes an end state by which to measure the success of the efforts.

BUILD STRONG ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

Firms appear to have well-intentioned diversity and inclusion practices. As discussed in Chapter 3, more than 80 percent of all study respondents, including women of color, believed that their firm's diversity and inclusion efforts were designed to support women and people of color. However, people of color—and in particular women of color—believed that their firm's efforts were not effective. As with any business strategy, initiatives need accountability mechanisms and senior leadership commitment to guarantee follow-through and acceptance throughout the organization.

To strengthen accountability of diversity and inclusion practices and the visibility of senior leadership in supporting accountability, firms can:

- Add, clarify, or improve the quality of available metrics data that are part of any accountability metrics. For accounting firms, this can include using the billable hours systems in place to track high-visibility assignments for individuals or groups.
- Decide on a "scorecard" system for the entire firm and for individual practices or regions. Scorecard goals should be based on results of analysis of human resources and employee survey data.
- Ensure that senior management monitors results on a semi-annual basis, if not quarterly.
- Ensure that senior management communicates results throughout the organization.
- Disseminate diversity and inclusion scorecards on a semi-annual basis.
- Link relevant partners' performance on diversity and inclusion metrics to compensation and leadership assignments.
- Use metrics data to identify any problem areas, such as regretted losses or lack of promotion of target groups, on a periodic basis.

This program from Ernst & Young emphasizes tracking of client assignments.

Ernst & Young: *Career Watch*

This program focuses on the development of the partner/principal pipeline at all levels by engaging local leaders in monitoring the professional development and career progression of high-potential and high-performing women and minorities. This is done with a focus on mapping a path to the partner/principal role. A leadership committee in each business unit helps ensure that these individuals are assigned to top clients/projects and are receiving the development opportunities they need to grow and excel.

The first goal of the program is to ensure talented professionals ("watchees") have access to the experiences and opportunities that fully develop their potential and enable them to maximize their contribution to Ernst & Young. The second goal is to enhance the ability of a broad group of influential leaders and line partners/principals to develop diverse talent.

All of Ernst & Young's business units in the United States and Canada have a *Career Watch* program in place, led by local *Career Watch* Committees made up of the business unit's leadership. *Career Watch* has proven to be a very effective program in supporting the development and advancement of women and minorities. For example, *Career Watch* committee discussions and efforts have led to the development of meaningful career paths by examining the client and mentoring assignments, as well as identifying business development and internal leadership opportunities. Certain sub-areas have enhanced their *Career Watch* program to place additional focus on those women and minorities who have potential for promotion to partner/principal within three years. These program enhancements include additional emphasis on a person's development opportunities, business case, schedule/client base, and sponsoring partners.

The program also functions as a learning platform for Ernst & Young's business leaders. They gain insights into and an understanding of the professional experiences of Ernst & Young's women and minorities and how to positively impact their careers.

FACILITATE INTERACTIONS AMONG WOMEN OF COLOR AND OTHERS IN THE WORKFORCE
In the relationship-based environments of accounting firms, women of color need to have access to those who can help develop their careers. A first step is ensuring that there is relative ease in interacting across all levels. This can be done by:
- Raising awareness levels around exclusionary behaviors such as the habit of gender-based social activities (e.g., sports or drinking) that may exclude all women, and be more keenly felt by women of color.
- Increasing understanding of differences and similarities among different employee groups through education and informal dialogues, one-on-one and in group settings.
- Increasing the capability to bridge differences and manage the tensions inherent in a diverse workforce.

Inhibitions to interacting may occur on both sides. For example, past Catalyst research has indicated that African-American women can be particularly guarded in the work environment and less likely to share personal

information that is critical to forming relationships with others.[27] "Tip sheets" from human resources or managers with strategies for developing relationships with different types of people could benefit everybody, and especially women of color.

Human resources policies and practices can also serve to leverage existing formal women's networks and other networks by:[28]

- Strengthening the link between members of women's networks (which have traditionally been dominated by white women) and women of color by placing women of color in executive sponsorship positions of women's networks, and also by providing opportunities for cross-network gatherings.
- Measuring network success by rigorously collecting measures of their effectiveness among sub-groups (e.g., how does the satisfaction level of women of color members of women's networks compare with that of white women?).

Firms can also use technology to create a larger context for networking. Associates may have a better chance of connecting with associates in other offices through online networking as part of the firm's intranet. Firms can facilitate this process by providing photos and profiles of associates so that women of color can connect around commonalities (e.g., university alumni; hobbies).

PricewaterhouseCoopers onboards people of color to ensure that they have connections with others from the start of their careers with the firm.

> **PricewaterhouseCoopers:** *Minority Transition Plan (MTP)*
>
> MTP "onboards" people of color campus hires, with a focus on key areas of early success including leveraging resources, developing technical proficiency, and establishing sponsors and networks. Because more than one-half of these hires are women of color, this program also works to advance women at the firm. The program is also integrated into efforts to ensure new minority hires are provided at least one premier client assignment as well as mentors/coaches who see that the new hire is well connected to those in their business unit and helps guide staff through the critical first year.

AGGRESSIVELY OPEN UP CLIENT ACCESS AND HIGH-VISIBILITY OPPORTUNITIES TO WOMEN OF COLOR

Firms can increase access women of color have to the people with influence in the firm by creating formal mentorship programs or other points of contact and by facilitating the assignment of women of color to important client engagements.

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[27] Catalyst, *Advancing African-American Women in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* (2004).
[28] Catalyst, *Connections that Count: Networks of Women of Color* (2006).

PricewaterhouseCoopers has a program in which all partners are assigned to new associates.

> **PricewaterhouseCoopers: *Partner Connectivity***
>
> Part of building more inclusion is connecting client service staff personally to an owner of the business. All 2,000 partners are assigned staff coachees whom they meet with regularly to discuss work-life demands, client-related concerns, and other issues. This formal relationship is particularly important for women and people of color because a majority of PwC partners are white men. All partners participate, including the senior partner.

Firms can help get women of color ready for high-visibility assignments by:

- Giving women of color access to executive coaching workshops.
- Reaching down lower than is typical in the pipeline to develop promising talent. To the extent that resources allow, develop "potential high-potentials." Women of color often "fly below the radar" because they are mainly at junior positions in organizations.
- Creating training programs about building a "book of business" for women of color in client-service positions. Discuss challenges faced by women of color, such as those highlighted in this report. Highlight opportunities for women of color, such as access to networks outside the firm—community boards, local government, or religious institutions.

To provide equal opportunities for working on high-visibility engagements, partners and engagement leaders can:

- Ensure that initial client engagements are strong and can lead to subsequent client assignments. For example, as a "first" assignment, consider providing a growing client instead of a one-time-only client.
- Periodically review assignments to ensure that all associates have the opportunity to represent the firm in high-visibility assignments.
- Monitor what engagements people of color are on.
- Regularly review the progress of women of color against established measures.
- When a development opportunity arises (e.g., speaking opportunity, internal taskforce, executive education course), ensure that diverse associates are considered.

DATA COLLECTION

For the quantitative portion of the study, an electronic survey was distributed to a sample of employees at accounting firms. The survey was distributed by a third-party data vendor, and respondents were ensured of its confidentiality. The survey collected the following information.

- Organizational and position tenure
- Level
- Demographics (i.e., race/ethnicity, class background, marital status, educational level)
- Perceptions of work environment/organizational culture
- Satisfaction with career advancement
- Perceived barriers to advancement
- Managerial relationships
- Mentoring relationships
- Informal networks
- Work-life quality
- Perceived diversity climate

Participating organizations fielded the survey between December 2006 and May 2007, following a staggered schedule. The surveys were open an average of six weeks.

The qualitative portion of the study consisted of interviews with senior partners at participating firms. The protocol covered the following topic areas:

- Organizational culture (including work culture, attributes for fitting in, and social networking).
- Organizational structure (including reporting relationships, allocation of assignments).
- Career advancement at the firm (including career advancement model, difficult career points, and barriers faced by women of color).
- Diversity climate (including the context for discussing race/ethnicity, gender, and work-life effectiveness at the organization).

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The survey sample consisted of employees from a number of top 20 revenue-generating U.S. accounting firms. Catalyst worked with a data vendor to construct a sample that included a substantial number of women of color. Because women of color are underrepresented in firms, particularly at higher levels, the sampling frame matched the number of other respondents to the number of women of color respondents in each title/business unit.

The survey was sent to a total of 3,918 individuals, and 1,424 of them responded, for an overall response rate of 36.3 percent.

Catalyst worked with organizations to ensure that the titles and units of employees were comparable across firms. Titles included partner/principal, director, senior manager, manager, senior associate, associate, and "other." For the purpose of analyses, respondents were classified as being in either client-service roles or support roles. Client-service roles included positions in Audit, Advisory, and Tax units. Support roles included positions in human resources, core business support, and client-service support.

Tables 6 and 7 describe the sample demographics.

Table 6: Sample Demographics: Compensation by Title, Race/Ethnicity and Gender Group, and Business Unit						
	Partner/ Principal	Director	Senior Manager	Manager	Senior Associate	Associate
Women of Color Client	$406,042	$218,333	$157,667	$104,240	$72,606	$54,960
White Women Client	$515,955	$245,000	$132,000	$94,138	$69,958	$55,762
Men of Color Client	$507,143	$223,600	$125,333	$101,500	$71,194	$54,942
White Men Client	$571,385	$268,571	$185,000	$104,067	$74,678	$55,278
Women of Color Support	$400,000	$187,167	$116,694	$92,201	$58,917	$47,107
White Women Support	-missing-	$210,300	$144,750	$89,930	$65,070	$55,733
Men of Color Support	-missing-	$170,667	$135,900	$90,326	$105,595	$54,370
White Men Support	-missing-	$205,000	$138,930	$102,200	$68,823	$60,363

Table 7: Sample Demographics: Age, Presence of Children, Marital Status, and Tenure							
	Client-Service (N)	Support (N)	Age (Mean)	Percentage With Children Under 18	Percentage Who Are Married	Position Tenure (Mean Years)	Organization Tenure (Mean Years)
Women of Color	215	190	35.9	38.6%	51.1%	3.0	6.2
White Women	138	126	36.4	29.1%	57.7%	3.4	7.5
Men of Color	177	133	36.2	45.0%	61.0%	2.7	6.0
White Men	130	106	36.7	40.9%	64.1%	2.7	6.2

There was a response bias in that white women in client roles tended to respond to the survey at more senior levels, which resulted in an overrepresentation of white women partners. The following weights were applied to bring the representation of white women in the sample in line with levels of women of color.

Table 8: Weights Applied to White Women in Sample	
Level, White Women in Client-Serivce Roles	Weights
Partner/Principal	0.539
Director	1.166
Senior Manager	0.241
Manager	1.11
Senior Associate	1.313
Associate	1.359

MEASURES AND INDICES

The indices used in the survey tool, along with their reliability ratings, are provided below. Some items in the indices were reverse-coded, which means that the scale 1-5 was reversed in the coding process; these items are marked with an asterick.

Organizational Commitment Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.652

Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- I enjoy discussing the organization with people outside of it.
- I really feel as if the organization's problems are my own.
- I think I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this organization.*
- I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to the organization.*

Intent to Leave Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.876

Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- In the next few months I intend to leave this organization.
- Within the next year I intend to leave this organization.
- In the next two to four years I intend to leave this organization.
- I am not seriously considering leaving at all.*

Work Environment Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.783

Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- Differences in interpersonal style are encouraged.
- Decision-making is shared across levels.
- It is appropriate for employees to challenge the way things are done.
- Racial/ethnic differences are appreciated at my organization.
- Partners/senior management keeps employees informed about what's going on.
- Many employees feel uncomfortable around members of my racial/ethnic group.*
- Other employees make an effort to adapt to members of my racial/ethnic group.
- To fit in, a person of my gender and race/ethnicity must make adjustments.*
- Talking about race is considered taboo at my organization.*

Diversity Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.843

Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- My organization has diversity efforts designed to be supportive of racial minorities and women.
- Diversity efforts at my organization have created a climate supportive of women of color.
- Career development is an important part of diversity programs at my organization.
- Diversity efforts at my organization place too little emphasis on quality of work environment.*
- My organization's senior leadership demonstrates strong commitment to diversity by hiring qualified, diverse candidates.
- Managers are held accountable for development and advancement of women and racial/ethnic minorities.
- My organization's senior leadership demonstrates strong commitment to diversity by placing qualified women and racial minorities in key leadership positions.
- Managers receive adequate training about how to manage a diverse workforce.

Career Satisfaction Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.801

Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- I am satisfied with the career advancement opportunities in the organization.
- I believe I can compete successfully to advance in the organization.
- The level of work I am asked to perform relative to my years of experience is appropriate.
- I am satisfied with the compensation I receive for my job.

Business Development Opportunities Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.716

Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- I am satisfied with the way in which client-service assignments are distributed.
- I am satisfied with the extent to which I have access to working on high-profile client engagements.
- I have access to organizational budgets reserved for business development.
- The organization provides training opportunities for me to enhance my business development skills.

Informal Networks Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.799

Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- I have access to networking opportunities in the organization.
- I have access to social networks of influential colleagues.
- I am invited to participate in after-work social activities with my colleagues.
- I have access to people who are willing to advise me on job-related issues.
- I know what is "really" going on at the organization.
- I have access to networks of contacts from my alma mater.

Scope of Network Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.898

Respondents were asked how often they spoke with individuals of the following backgrounds on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "never speak" and 5 being "always speak."

- Men
- Women
- White
- Black/African-American
- Asian
- Latino/Hispanic
- Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
- In your business unit/practice area
- Outside business unit/practice area
- Those senior to you
- Peers

Managerial Support Index

Cronbach's Alpha=.921

Respondents were asked to assess their manager on each of the following items on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- Really cares about my well-being.
- Is willing to extend himself/herself to help me perform my job to the best of my ability.
- Provides opportunities for visibility.
- Has high expectations of my performance.
- Helps me understand the politics of the work place.
- Is comfortable interacting with me.
- Evaluates my performance fairly.

LINEAR REGRESSION MODEL

The following variables were used as controls in the linear regression models predicting intent to leave.

- Age (scale variable: years)
- Salary (scale variable: dollars)
- Tenure in the organization (scale variable: years)
- Education (dummy variables)
- Level (dummy variables)
- Promotions (scale variable: number)

The following variables were used as predictors.

- Managerial support
- Work environment
- Organizational diversity
- Career satisfaction
- Satisfaction with business development opportunities
- Mentoring support
- Inclusion in informal networks

The client-service model had an overall adjusted R-square of 0.351.

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