Women in energy
Survey results

How women in the Danish energy sector perceive the current state of gender diversity in the workplace

January 2024

PWN | COPENHAGEN
PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S NETWORK

Background

In December 2023, we conducted a survey in collaboration with PWN Copenhagen to gauge women's perception of the current state of gender diversity in the Danish energy sector. In a mixed survey design consisting of 20 closed and open-ended questions, 140 respondents shared their perspectives via an online survey platform. Respondents were invited through professional networks and social media.

The survey results serve as a temperature check on the current diversity challenges in the Danish energy sector as seen through the eyes of women in the industry. However, it is important to note that the survey is not representative of all organisations or women in the sector.

This report is a summary of the main findings relating to topics around the current state of diversity, career advancement opportunities and suggested actions and strategies for improving gender diversity in the Danish energy sector.

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The findings were presented at the Women in energy breakfast event hosted by Implement Consulting Group and PWN Copenhagen in Hellerup on 10 January 2024.

Key takeaways

1.

Here is the good news: most women agree that their organisations are diverse and committed to diversity.

6 in 10 believe that their workplace is diverse, and 7 in 10 say that their organisation is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion.

2.

Working in a diverse organisation appears to come with a lot of benefits.

Women who describe their organisations as diverse are also more likely to experience a higher sense of belonging and say that their organisations provide equal opportunity for everyone to advance their careers. They are also more likely to report that their organisations have initiatives that support diversity and that their leadership teams are equipped to manage a diverse workforce effectively.

3.

Organisations that want to improve their diversity efforts should strengthen their leadership teams' ability to manage diversity effectively.

Women from non-diverse organisations are less likely to believe that their organisations are committed to diversity. They are also significantly less likely to say that their leadership teams can manage a diverse workforce. And they are twice as likely to say that men and women are not perceived as equally capable of occupying leadership roles.

4.

Women call for solutions and actions that increase transparency in promotion decisions and improve the representation of female leaders.
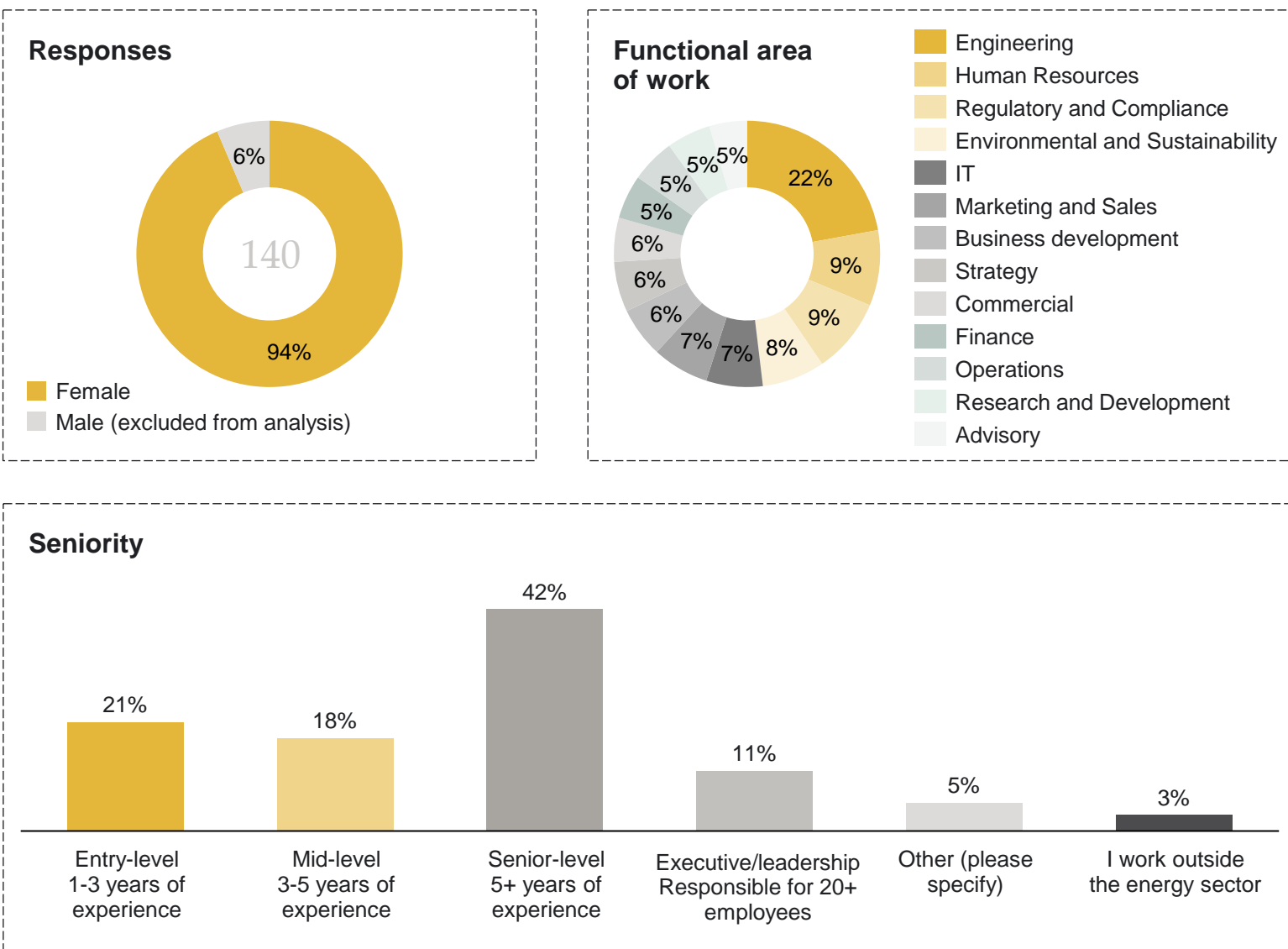
Many of the surveyed women highlight the tendency for senior leaders to recruit and promote employees who are similar to themselves. As such, women call for more transparency in promotion processes. They also suggest that organisations should establish clear career paths for career progression and encourage more women to pursue leadership roles.

Respondents

We received 140 responses to the survey. 94% of respondents were female and 6% (9) were male. The average responses of male and female respondents were quite different across almost all questions. The male sample was quite small and contained incomplete responses, so it was not possible to treat it as a separate comparison group, and it was therefore excluded. We encourage conducting a follow-up study to more robustly explore gender differences in perceptions of the state of diversity in the energy sector and within organisations in the sector.

After excluding the 9 male respondents, the survey is based on responses from 131 women with a majority having 5+ years of experience in the energy sector.

The most common functional areas in which respondents work comprise engineering, environmental and sustainability, regulatory and compliance and human resources.

Responses

6%
140
94%

■ Female
■ Male (excluded from analysis)

Functional area of work

22%
9%
9%
8%
7%
7%
6%
6%
6%
5%
5%
5%

■ Engineering
■ Human Resources
■ Regulatory and Compliance
■ Environmental and Sustainability
■ IT
■ Marketing and Sales
■ Business development
■ Strategy
■ Commercial
■ Finance
■ Operations
■ Research and Development
■ Advisory

Seniority

Entry-level 1-3 years of experience	Mid-level 3-5 years of experience	Senior-level 5+ years of experience	Executive/leadership Responsible for 20+ employees	Other (please specify)	I work outside the energy sector
21%	18%	42%	11%	5%	3%

N=131

Here's the good news:
most women agree that their organisations are diverse and committed to diversity.

1

62%

agree or strongly agree that their organisation is a diverse workplace.
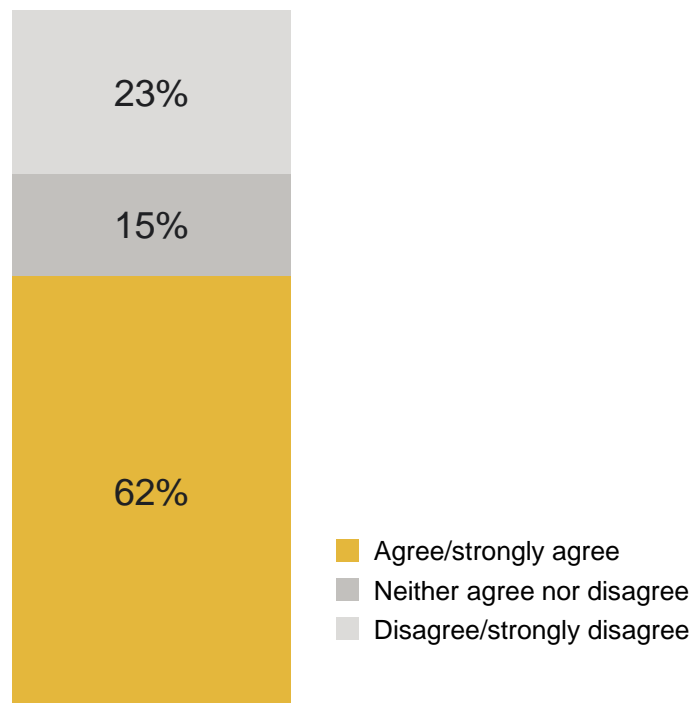
75%

believe that their organisation is committed to becoming more diverse.

While many agree that their organisations are committed to diversity, this commitment **does not always extend all the way across different areas of diversity** and to **top management**.

- Diversity of background and nationality is often present in organisations, but other aspects of diversity are not represented.

- There is a general tendency for diversity to be lacking in management teams.

- Some diversity topics receive a lot of attention – others do not.

- There is also a wide variation in how far an organisation has progressed within each diversity theme.
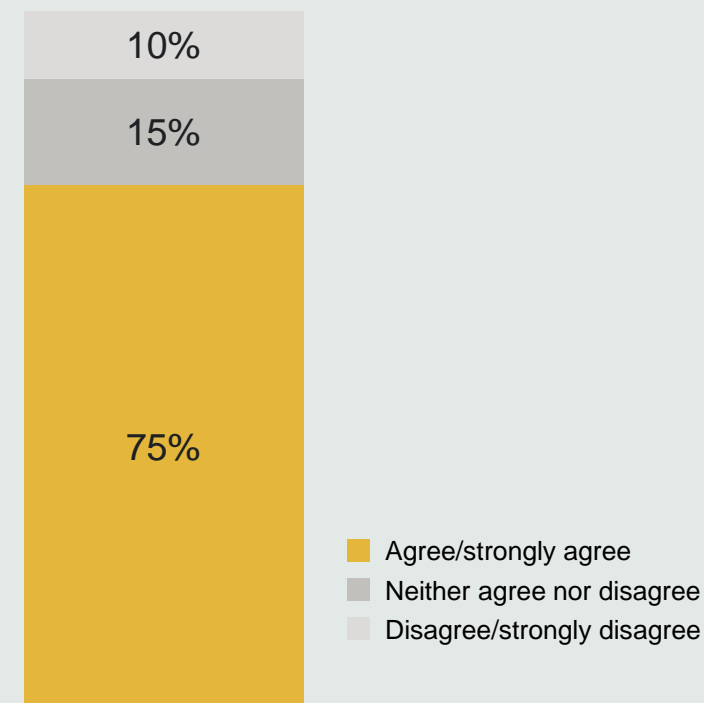
62% agree or strongly agree that their organisation is a diverse workplace.

My organisation is a diverse workplace

23%

15%

62%

- ■ Agree/strongly agree
- ■ Neither agree nor disagree
- ■ Disagree/strongly disagree

75% believe that their organisation is committed to becoming more diverse.

My organisation is committed to becoming a more diverse and inclusive workplace

10%

15%

75%

- ■ Agree/strongly agree
- ■ Neither agree nor disagree
- ■ Disagree/strongly disagree

Working in a diverse organisation appears to come with a lot of benefits.

2

IM_

Those who describe their organisation as a diverse workplace are *more likely to experience a higher sense of belonging.*

I feel a sense of belonging to my organisation

86%

62%

21%

7%

17%

7%

Diverse workplace

Not a diverse workplace

■ Strongly agree/agree　■ Neither agree nor disagree　■ Strongly disagree/disagree

Those who describe their organisation as a diverse workplace are more likely to feel supported in their careers and state that their organisation is committed to and capable of managing a diverse workplace

Legend:
- Diverse workplace (yellow)
- Not a diverse workplace (grey)

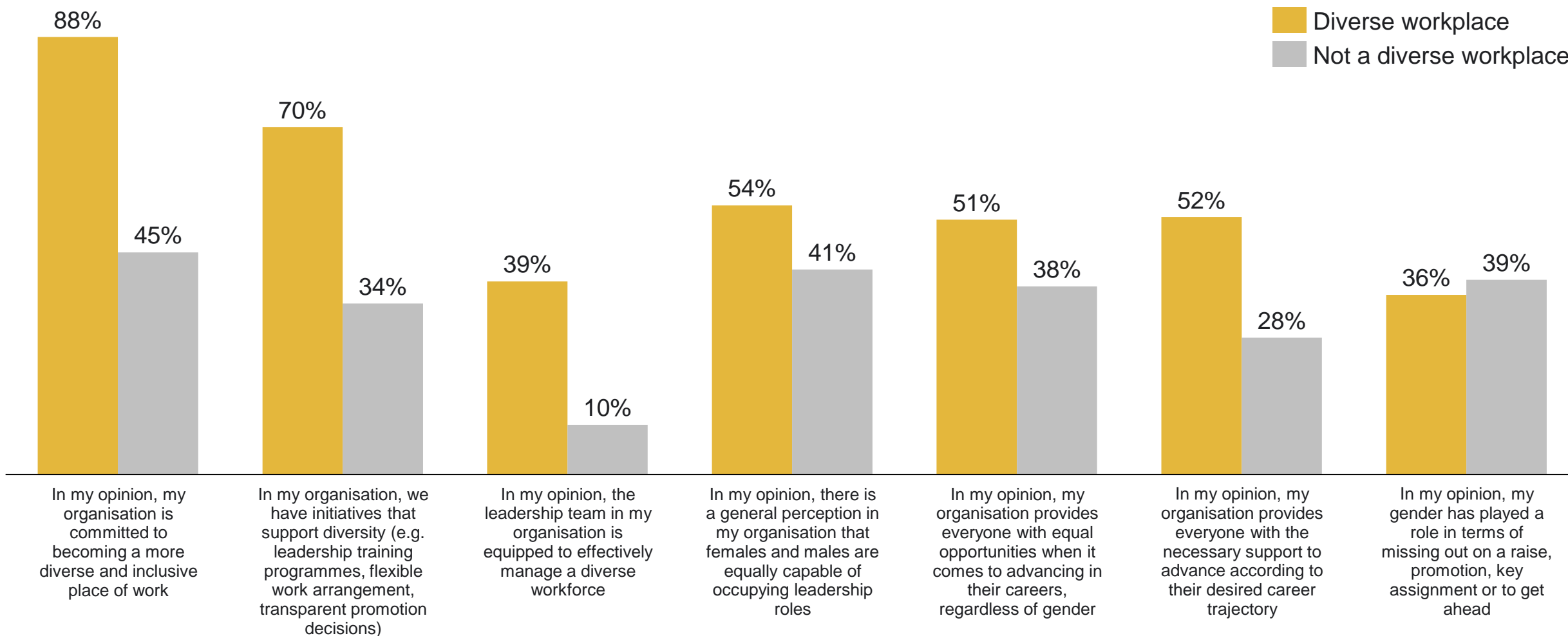| Statement	Diverse workplace	Not a diverse workplace
In my opinion, my organisation is committed to becoming a more diverse and inclusive place of work	88%	45%
In my organisation, we have initiatives that support diversity (e.g. leadership training programmes, flexible work arrangement, transparent promotion decisions)	70%	34%
In my opinion, the leadership team in my organisation is equipped to effectively manage a diverse workforce	39%	10%
In my opinion, there is a general perception in my organisation that females and males are equally capable of occupying leadership roles	54%	41%
In my opinion, my organisation provides everyone with equal opportunities when it comes to advancing in their careers, regardless of gender	51%	38%
In my opinion, my organisation provides everyone with the necessary support to advance according to their desired career trajectory	52%	28%
In my opinion, my gender has played a role in terms of missing out on a raise, promotion, key assignment or to get ahead	36%	39%

60%

agree that their organisation has *initiatives that support diversity.*

If you belong to a diverse organisation, this number increases to

70%.
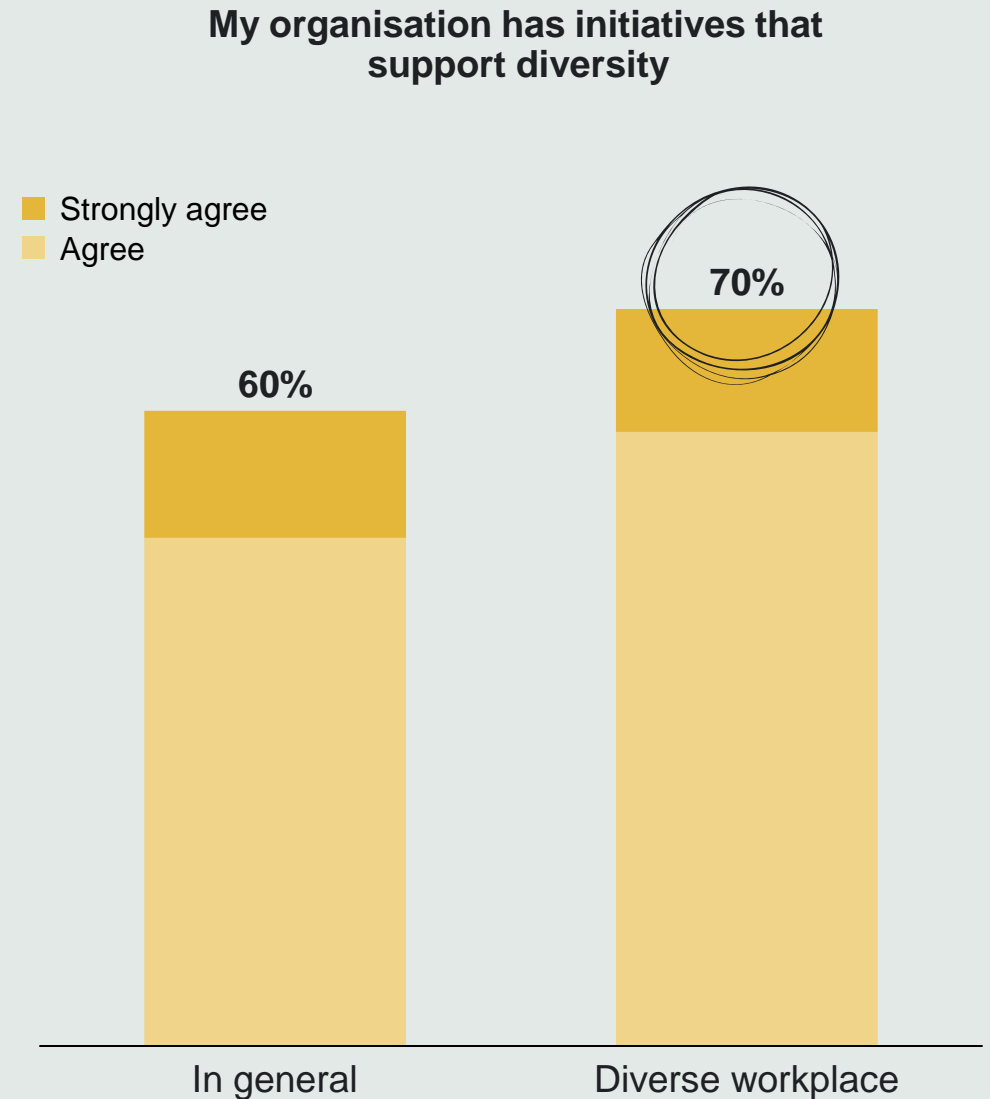
My organisation has initiatives that support diversity

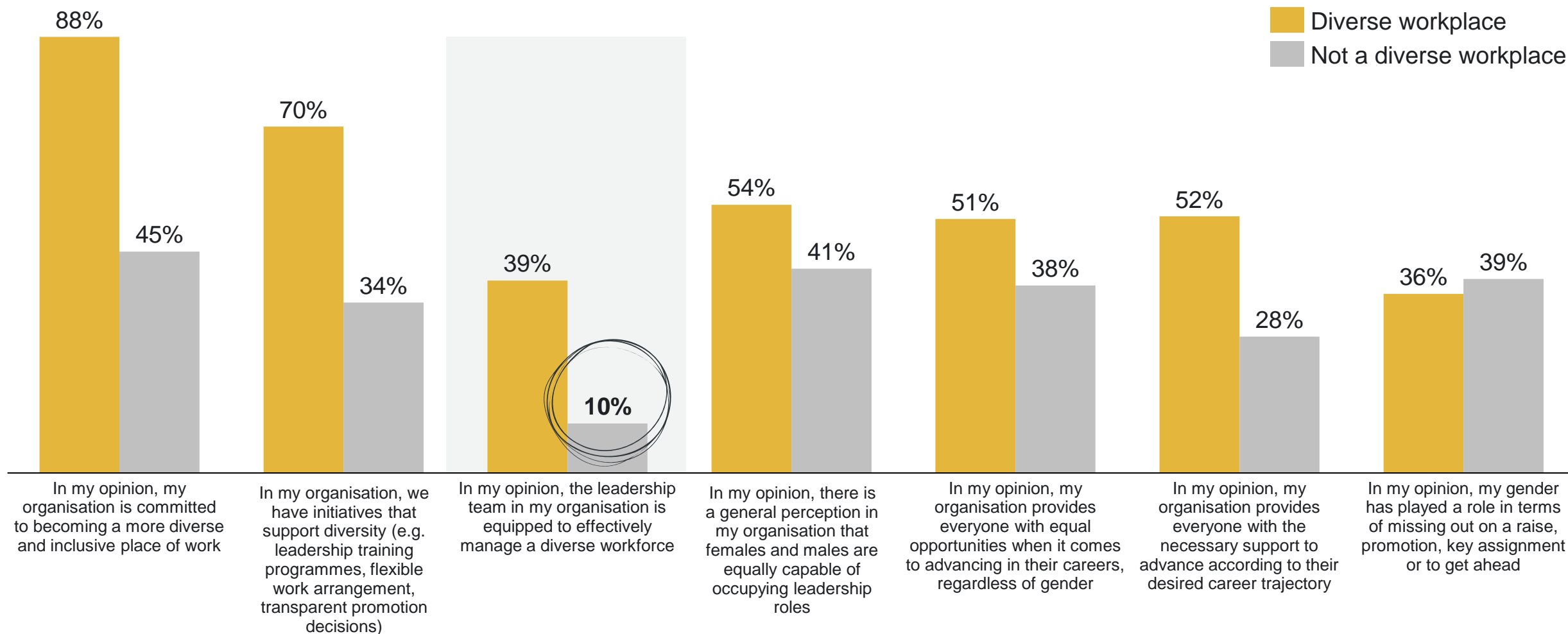■ Strongly agree
■ Agree

60%

70%

In general

Diverse workplace

Organisations that want to improve their diversity efforts should strengthen their leadership teams' ability to manage diversity effectively.
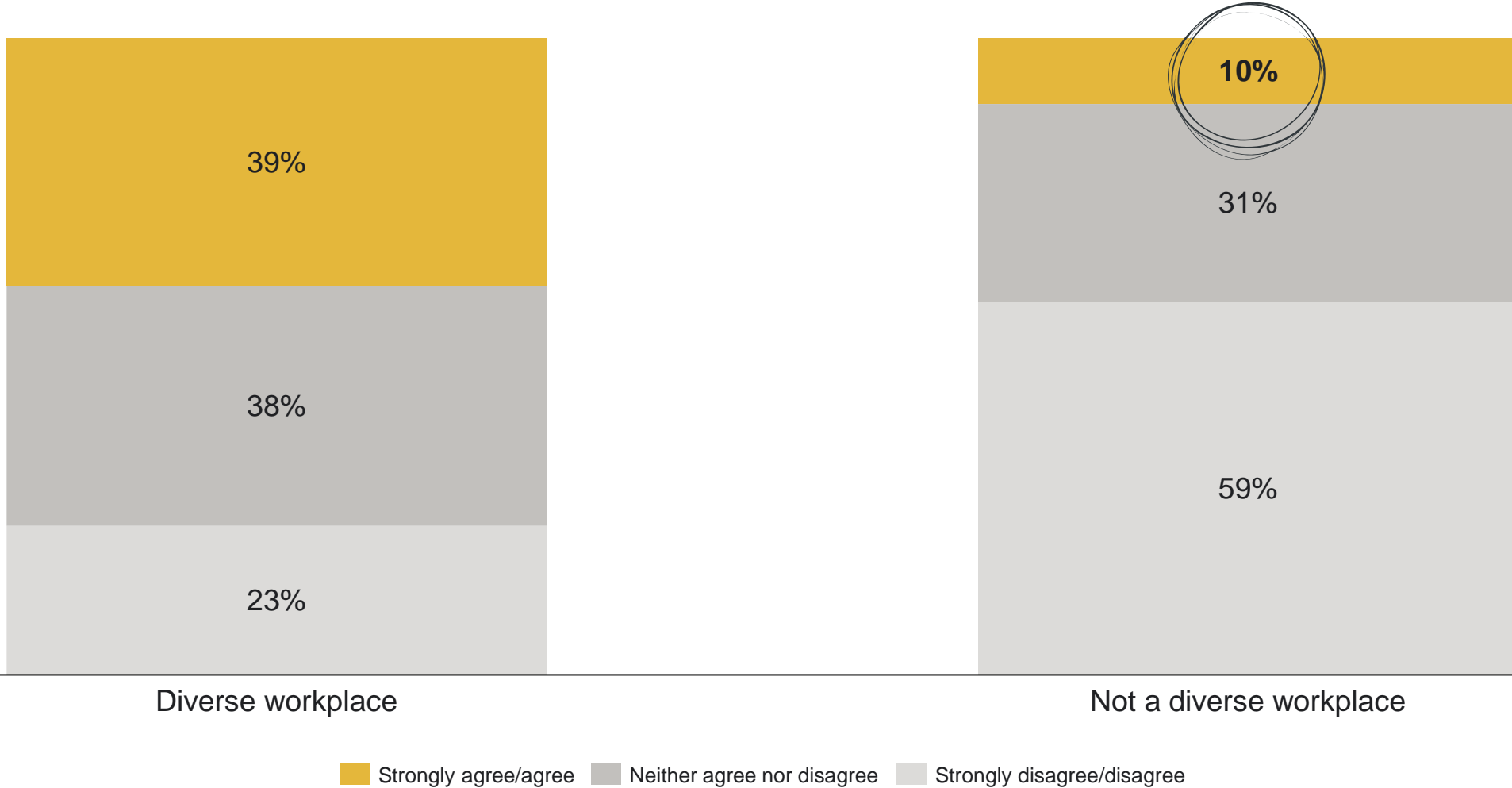
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Those who describe their organisation as a diverse workplace are more likely to feel supported in their careers and state that their organisations are committed to and capable of managing a diverse workplace
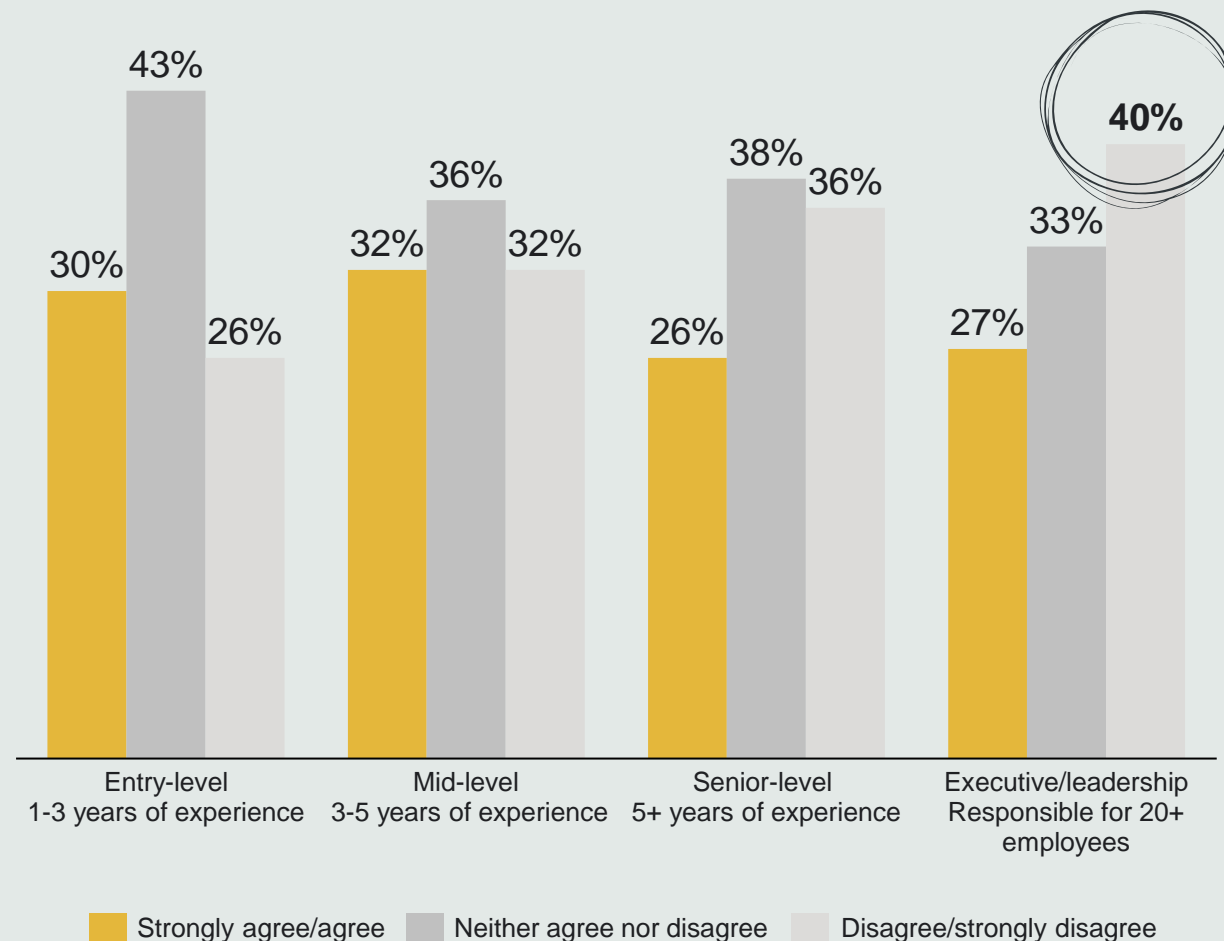
Legend:
- ■ Diverse workplace
- ■ Not a diverse workplace

Statement	Diverse workplace	Not a diverse workplace
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Respondents from non-diverse workplaces are significantly less likely to believe their leadership teams are capable of managing a diverse workplace

IML

My organisation's leadership team is equipped to manage a diverse workforce effectively

39%	**10%**
38%	31%
23%	59%

Diverse workplace   Not a diverse workplace

■ Strongly agree/agree   ■ Neither agree nor disagree   ■ Strongly disagree/disagree

The more senior respondents are, the less likely they are to say that their leadership teams are able to manage a diverse workforce effectively.

In my opinion, the leadership team in my organisation is equipped to manage a diverse workforce effectively

Entry-level
1-3 years of experience
30% | 43% | 26%

Mid-level
3-5 years of experience
32% | 36% | 32%

Senior-level
5+ years of experience
26% | 38% | 36%

Executive/leadership
Responsible for 20+ employees
27% | 33% | 40%

■ Strongly agree/agree   ■ Neither agree nor disagree   ■ Disagree/strongly disagree

Respondents from non-diverse workplaces are more likely to say that men and women are not perceived equally capable of occupying leadership roles

IM_

54%

42%

31%

18%

Diverse workplace

Not a diverse workplace

■ Men and women are perceived equally capable of occupying leadership roles   ■ Men and women are not perceived equally capable of occupying leadership roles
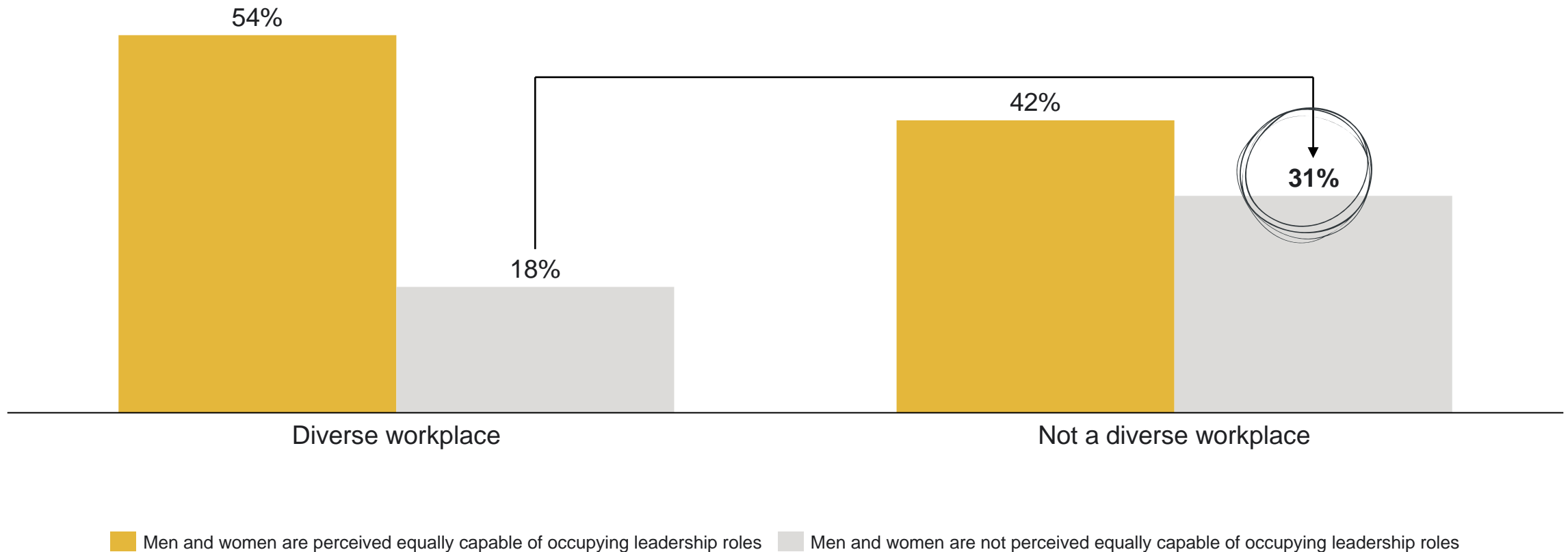
"There is a need for a *cultural shift* to increase positive attitudes of male management to be genuine allies and advocates for female leadership and diversity.

Less than half of all women agree that there is a perception that females and males are equally capable of occupying leadership roles

In my opinion, there is a general perception in my organisation that females and males are equally capable of occupying leadership roles

21%

28%

50%

■ Strongly agree/agree   ■ Neither agree nor disagree/don't know   ■ Strongly disagree/disagree
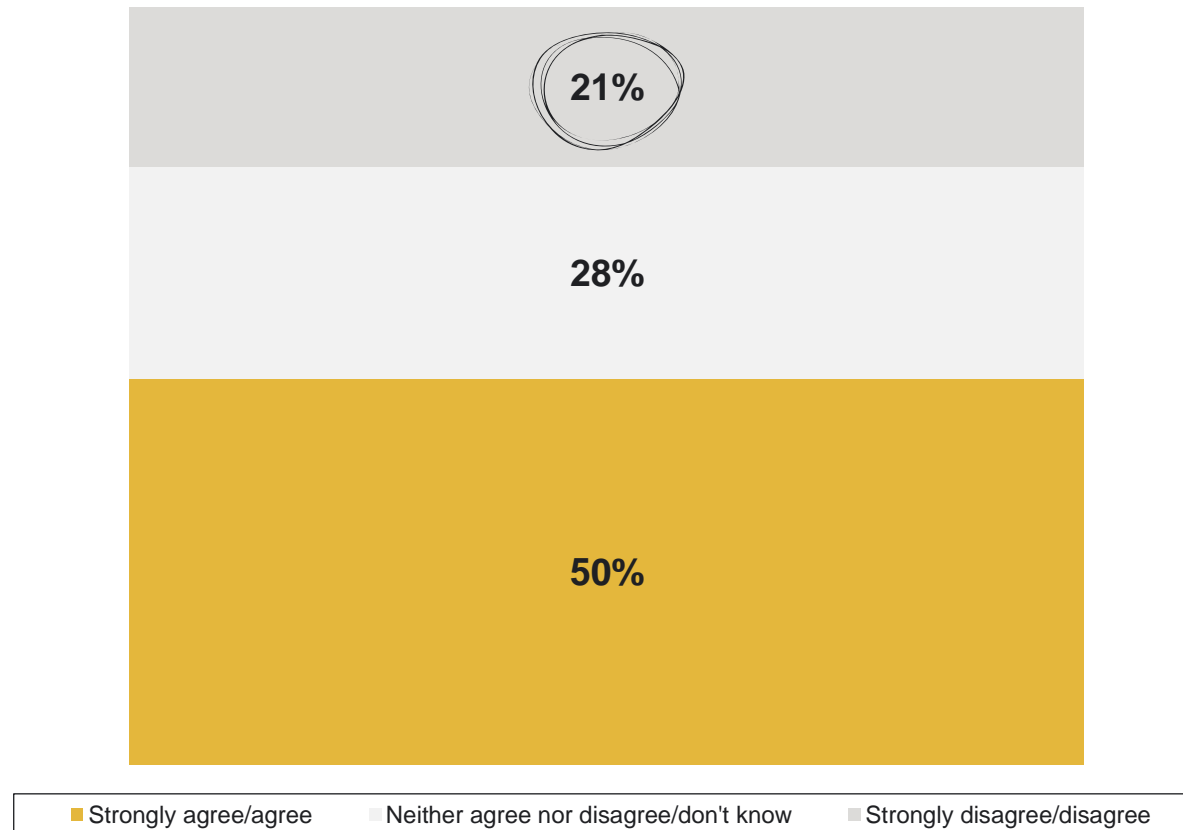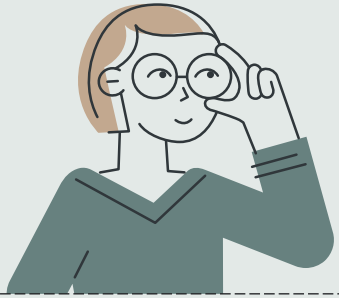
Women's descriptions of bias in their organisation's leadership teams

"The main challenge of advancing is that **it is men who sit in the position where they are to hire/advance a woman, and they are much more likely to hire/advance someone who looks like themselves,** because that is the "safest" choice for them. They do not dare to take any risk, or they are so unfamiliar with having women as leader peers that they simply do not see the opportunities."

1

"There is a lack of tools to effectively learn how to appreciate and handle diversity within the organisation. This issue is **most prevalent at the top level**, where similar profiles lead to group thinking."

2

"Male managers often hire other men that resemble themselves – the "**Huey, Dewey, Louie effect**". This is evident in the entire hiring process, beginning with writing job posts targeted at male candidates and bias in reviewing applications and qualifications."

3

"When most senior leadership is male and there is a "male-dominated" culture, **there are no truly equal opportunities**."

4

"While organisations perform well at the operational and lower management levels, **the senior management and executive team still predominantly consist of older, white men**."
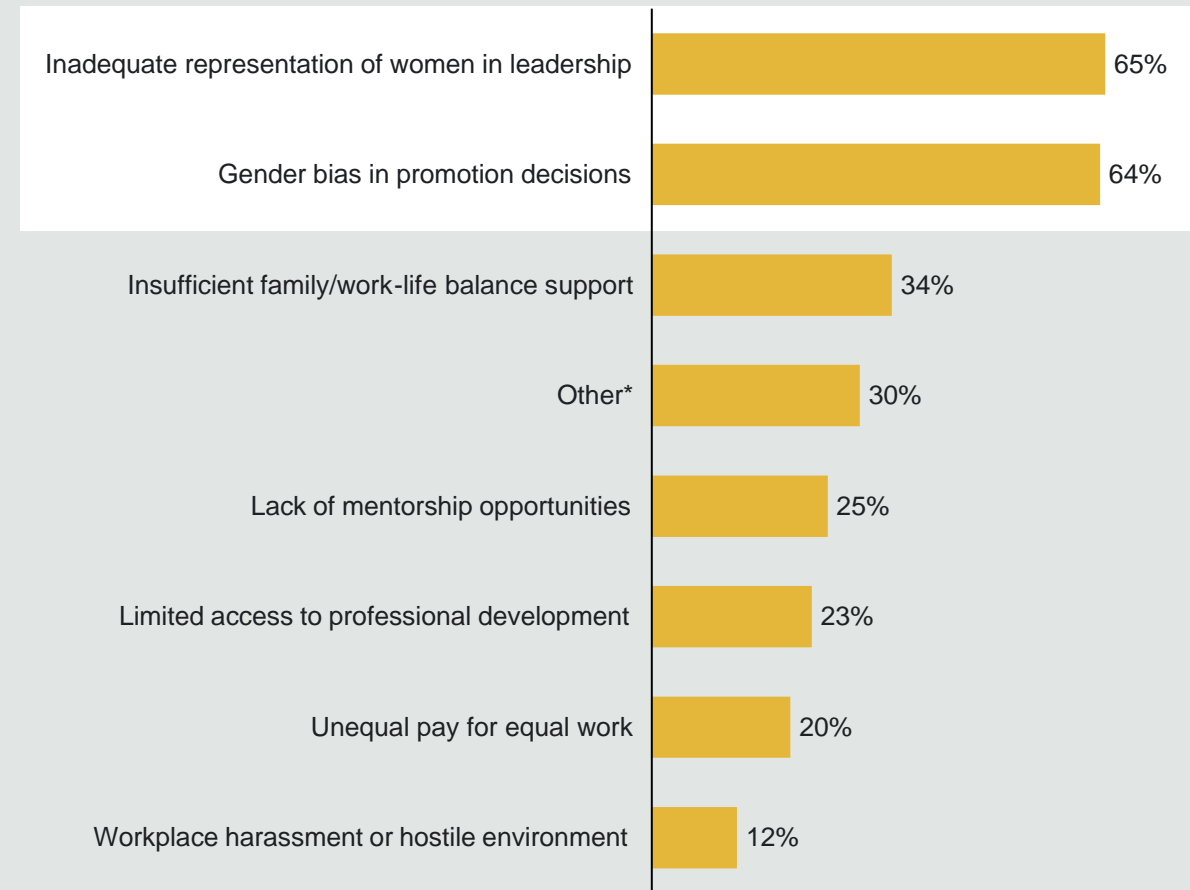
5

"Many feel that the higher up in management they go, **the more difficult it becomes to speak up freely**."

6

Gender bias in promotion decisions *and* inadequate representation of women in leadership are the main reasons that have led to an underrepresentation of women in senior management positions in the Danish energy sector.

Reasons behind underrepresentation of females in senior management roles in the Danish energy sector

Reason	Percentage
Inadequate representation of women in leadership	65%
Gender bias in promotion decisions	64%
Insufficient family/work-life balance support	34%
Other*	30%
Lack of mentorship opportunities	25%
Limited access to professional development	23%
Unequal pay for equal work	20%
Workplace harassment or hostile environment	12%

* The other category includes women missing opportunities due to maternity leave and expectations in family life, lack of access to professional networks, gender bias in hiring decisions and lack of desire from women to take on leadership roles.

36%
agree that their *gender has played a role* in terms of missing out on a raise, promotion, key assignments or to get ahead.

My gender has played a role in terms of missing out on a raise, promotion, key assignments or to get ahead

36%

28%

35%

Strongly agree/agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Strongly disagree/ disagree
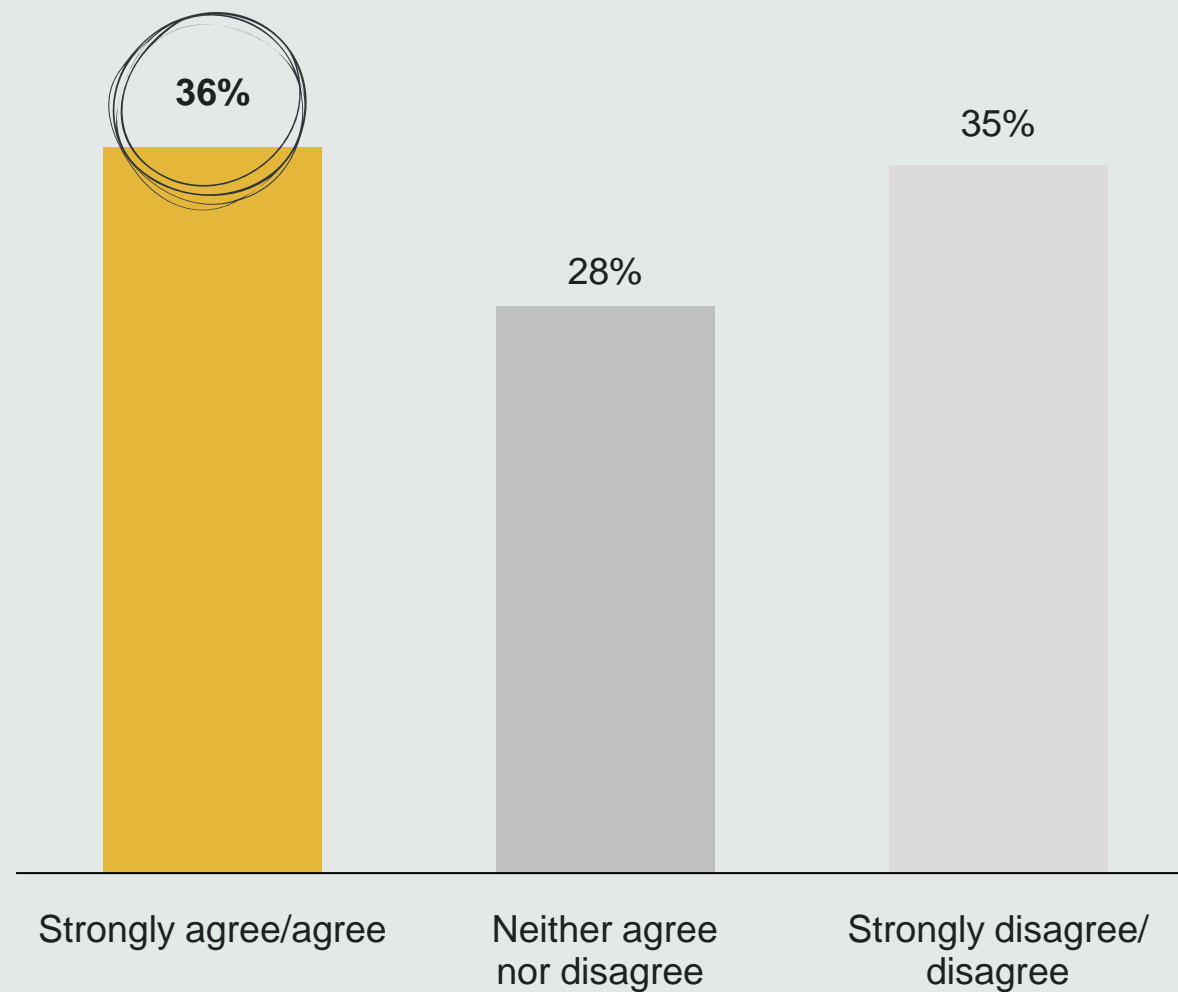
Women share that they have had to work harder to get promotions

"The emphasis on "high potential" can often be influenced by the personal biases of individual managers."

"I have had to work harder than my (male) peers to get promotions and key assignments."

"In theory, my organisation has diversity goals, thinks "it is the right thing to do", but when it comes to decisions on promoting, it is (almost) always men who get promoted."

Four **dominant stories** about gender in organisations

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#1
Fix the women

Women are met with certain societal expectations of how to be in the workplace and outside of work, and they are more inclined to prioritise family over work.
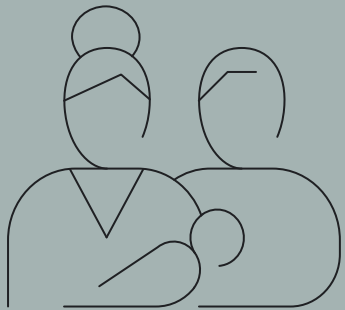
#2
Fix the system

Our company's masculine culture, where men at the top promote and recruit other men, makes it difficult for women to progress and perform.
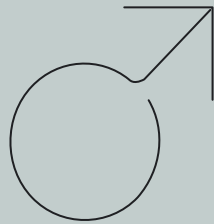
#3
Pipeline theorists

We are doing fairly well at the entry level – so we just need to wait it out and the problem will fix itself. Also, the available talent pool of experienced female hires is very small.
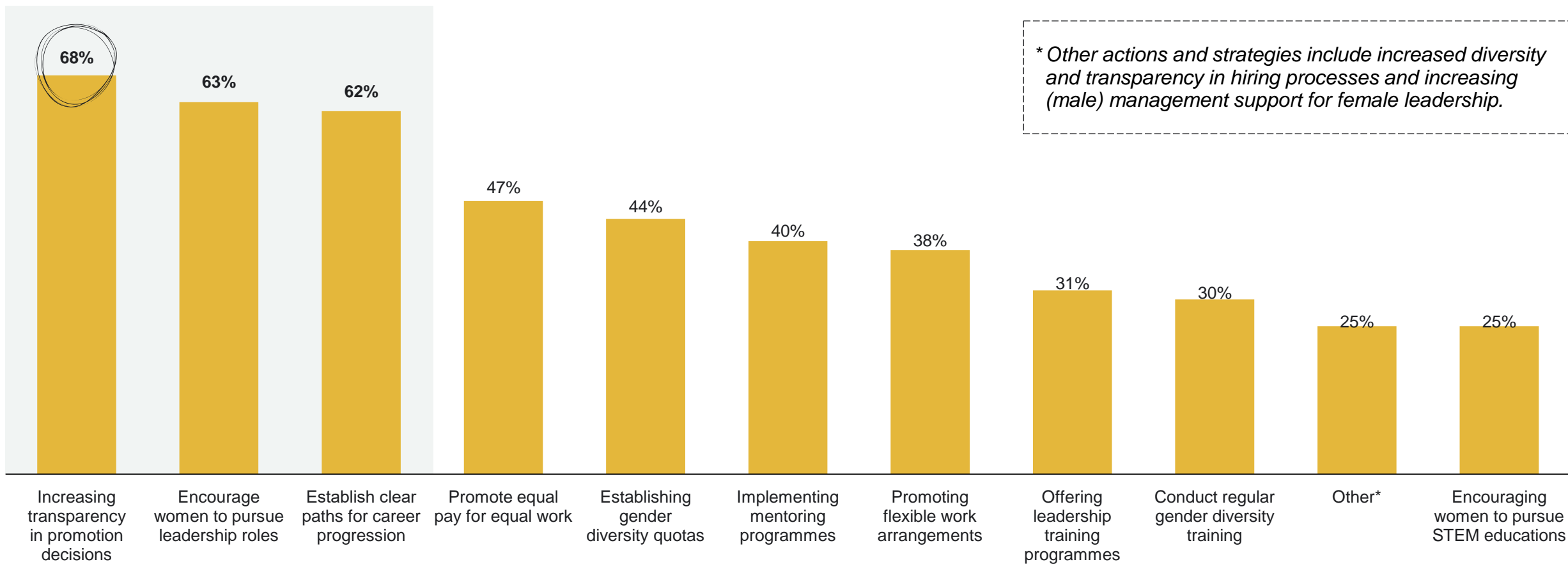
#4
Meritocrats

Our company is a meritocracy – if you have what it takes and you work hard enough, everyone can get to the top. Nobody's holding each other back. And we have more important things to focus on than gender.
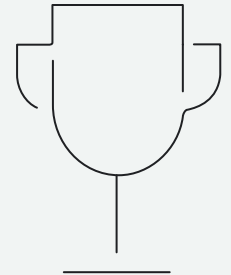
Women call for solutions and actions that increase transparency in promotion decisions *and* improve the representation of female leaders.

4

Increasing transparency in promotion decisions has the highest potential to improve women's representation in leadership roles in the energy sector

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* Other actions and strategies include increased diversity and transparency in hiring processes and increasing (male) management support for female leadership.

Recommendation	Percentage
Increasing transparency in promotion decisions	68%
Encourage women to pursue leadership roles	63%
Establish clear paths for career progression	62%
Promote equal pay for equal work	47%
Establishing gender diversity quotas	44%
Implementing mentoring programmes	40%
Promoting flexible work arrangements	38%
Offering leadership training programmes	31%
Conduct regular gender diversity training	30%
Other*	25%
Encouraging women to pursue STEM educations	25%

Question: What recommendations do you have for the energy industry to enhance gender diversity and promote women's advancement in leadership roles?

Balancing the need to promote more females with the goal of maintaining equal opportunities is crucial.
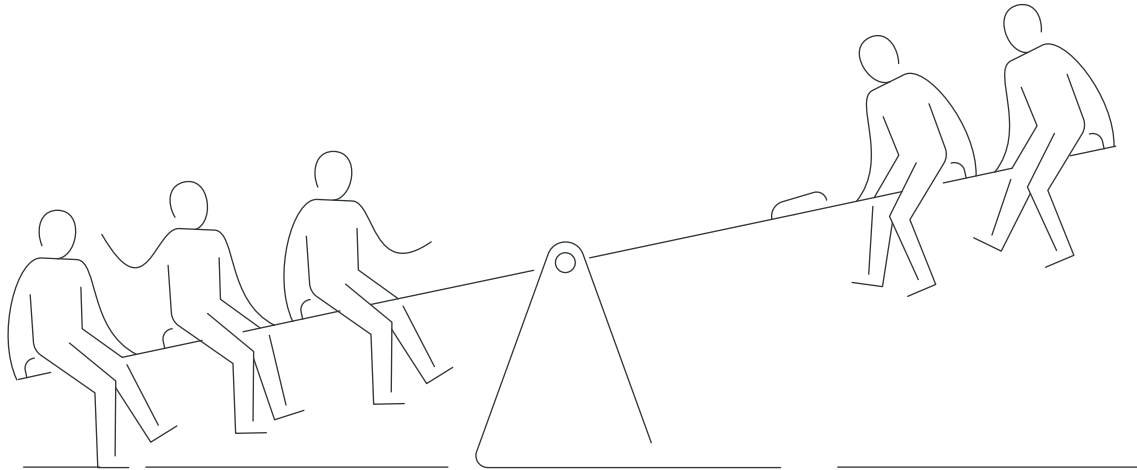
"It is **increasingly common for men to feel that they face discrimination** in terms of promotions and similar opportunities."

"Some leaders have openly admitted to making promotions solely for the sake of diversity in order to appear favourable in the eyes of their superiors and HR. However, **prioritising diversity over selecting the best person for the job may have negative consequences** for companies in the future."

"Men should not feel that there are fewer opportunities available to them due to the predominance of males in the status quo."

Three questions to bring home to your organisation

1.

How might we both leverage more fair processes in pursuit of transparency and equal opportunity and address the affinity bias that all leaders are prone to?

- Transparent promotion process
- Salary gap analysis
- Salary range frameworks
- Reverse mentoring programmes
- Leadership training
- Proportionality targets/KPIs in promotions

2.

How might we both encourage more women to pursue leadership roles and make our organisations more fit for them?

- Revamping performance process and 1:1 conversation tools
- Diversifying talent pipeline
- Sponsorship programmes
- Promoting flexible work arrangements
- Culture transformation

3.

How might we both establish more clear paths for career progression and embed flexibility into the way we design our careers?

- Career pathing
- Talent programmes
- Professional networks
- Leadership training
- Rotational leadership positions

We have a dream

Our dream is to help people and organisations succeed with their most important change initiatives.

This is a simple dream of turning plans and ambitions into reality – to move something forward, to improve and to create impact.

We want to make sure that deep functional expertise is put into play in a way that creates real change. Real impact. To improve something tangible – not just to point to, plan or articulate something but to actually get it done. To think and do.

And we want to have fun while doing it. To laugh, live, play and bring an appreciative and positive energy into a business world that is often serious and problem-oriented.

This is the dream that Implement was founded on and the one we still have today: to create a community of passion for real, lasting and impactful change.

Let's make a change!

The world is begging for change. Let's go make it.

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Thank you.

Implement Consulting Group