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More women are actively pursuing their career goals than ever before

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- Women in Singapore have strong leadership aspirations with 73% of women saying it is important to them that they get to the

- top of their chosen career.
- 45% of female employees believe that their work demands interfere with their personal lives.
- Only 10% of females stated that they will stay with their current company in the long term.
- 51% of women in Singapore feel that say their managers give work experiences that provide accelerated developmental opportunities, lower than global colleagues (58%) and women in the broader Asian (69%) region.

Singapore, 8 March 2018 – To mark International Women’s Day (IWD) on Thursday, 8 March 2018, PwC surveyed over 3,600 professional women globally (aged 28-40) to find out about their career development experiences and aspirations. The survey included respondents from employers across 27 industry sectors and from over 60 countries worldwide.

The Singapore cut of the report – *Staying Ahead of the Pack: What She Said*– reveals that women are confident, ambitious and ready for what’s next, but many don’t trust what their employers are telling them about career development and promotion; or what helps or hurts their career.

Women in Singapore are confident and more ambitious than ever and ready for what’s next in their careers with 73% of them reflecting that it’s important to them that they get to the top of their chosen career.

Karen Loon, Diversity Leader, PwC Singapore says:

“It’s no doubt that women in Singapore are looking for career advancement and opportunities but are not loyal as to where they find success with only 10% of females stating that they will stay with their current company in the long term. Organisations need to address key issues in order to increase this retention rate or risk losing valuable female talent.”

Flexibility and balancing priorities

In Singapore, about half of women (45%) believe that their work demands interfere with their personal lives. While flexible work measures have been increasingly introduced to mitigate this, employees remain sceptical on whether employers value flexible work as an efficient way of working. There

is also a real stigma regarding the perception of people who do take advantage of flexible work schemes, with 48% of female respondents in Singapore stating that they believe taking advantage of work-life balance or flexibility programmes has negative career consequences at their workplace.

This is even more pronounced with almost 57% of new mothers in Singapore that they were overlooked for career advancement opportunities, such as promotions, upon their return from maternity leave.

With the uncertainties surrounding the impact of flexible work practices and maternity leave on career advancement, are employers are doing enough to ensure the transparency of their promotion and appraisal systems?

Building trust through transparency

In Singapore, women are sceptical about how employers manage opportunities when compared to both their global and Asian counterparts – only 60% of women in Singapore believing that opportunities are equal, fair and go to the most deserving employee, compared to 65% globally and 74% in Asia.

About one in five women continue to believe that employers are biased towards men, particularly in relation to developing employees (23%) and promoting from within (21%).

Yeoh Oon Jin, Executive Chairman, PwC Singapore said:

“Leaders need to create an environment where women – and men – can have open conversations, and where there is clarity on what it takes to progress. This will benefit everyone and will lead to a better organisation overall. But this greater transparency must also go hand in hand with efforts to mitigate unconscious biases and gender stereotypes that have traditionally impacted career success and progression in the workplace.”

Provide strategic support

Just over half of women (51%) in Singapore say their managers give work experiences that provide accelerated developmental opportunities such as access to stretch-assignments and public speaking engagements. This is

lower than the global average (58%) and the broader Asian region (69%). They also felt that their managers do not advocate on their behalf enough for opportunities, such as promotions (49%) or provide enough networking support (46%).

Karen Loon, Diversity Leader, PwC Singapore says:

“In order to succeed, women need proactive networks of leaders and peers who will develop, promote and champion them at home and in the workplace. Role models and dedicated mentors and sponsors will work to underpin the self-advocacy women need to advance.

“We need a multi-pronged approach to help individuals succeed and the workplace plays a central role in helping to make this a reality. Organisations can differentiate themselves through increasing transparency and providing the right support for all their employees. This is not an issue that can be resolved overnight. Organisations, governments and individuals can come together to take steps in the right direction. Only then will we see a truly inclusive society.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

- 1.All figures represent data from Singapore respondents unless otherwise stated.
- 2.To find out more about PwC’s IWD activities and to download the report, visit www.pwc.com/timetotalk. The report is based on a survey of 3,627 female professionals representing the views of organisations from 27 sectors across the world. The PwC employees that completed the survey have been excluded from the totals and report findings to maintain an independent sample set. More thoughts on diversity can also be found on [PwC’s](#)

[Gender Agenda blog.](#)

- 3.PwC is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion and has a range of programmes in place to make progress on the issue. Learn more about our diversity strategy approach in our [PwC diversity journey: Creating impact, achieving results](#) publication.
- 4.PwC has partnered with the UN Women's [HeForShe](#) campaign, which aims to mobilise one billion men and boys as advocates and agents of change in ending the persisting inequalities faced by women and girls globally.
- 5.To read more PwC research on female talent, take a look at [Winning the fight for female talent](#), [Modern mobility: Moving women with purpose](#), and [The female millennial: A new era of talent](#).
- 6.On Monday 5 March 2018, PwC launched its latest Women in Work Index. This index ranks 33 OECD countries on a weighted average of various measures that reflect female economic empowerment, including the equality of earnings, the ability of women to access employment opportunities and job security. To download the report, visit <https://www.pwc.co.uk/womeninwork>.

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