



BARRIERS WOMEN FACE IN PURSUING CAREER ASPIRATIONS



INTRODUCTION

Despite significant progress in workplace equality, women continue to face numerous obstacles as they strive to achieve their career goals.

This e-book explores the top 10 barriers that hinder women's professional advancement and offers insights into how these challenges manifest in various industries.



TOP TEN BARRIERS

WOMEN FACE IN PURSUING THEIR CAREER ASPIRATIONS

1. THE PERSISTENT GENDER PAY GAP



The gender pay gap remains a significant barrier for women across industries. Women consistently earn less than their male counterparts for performing the same jobs, which can have long-lasting effects on their career trajectories and financial stability.

Learning to negotiate compensation packages is one tool that women can leverage to address this issue.

Key Statistics:

- In 2022, women earned 82% of what men earned for full-time, year-round work. (1)
- The pay gap is even wider for women of color, with Black women earning only 58% and Hispanic women earning 49% of what white men earn. (1)

2. UNDERREPRESENTATION IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



Women continue to be underrepresented in leadership roles, particularly in high-level positions and corporate boards. This lack of representation can create a self-perpetuating cycle, making it harder for women to envision themselves in leadership roles and limiting their access to mentorship opportunities.

Several tactics to include leadership “Ally meetings”, taking specific actions and getting appropriate mentoring or coaching can address this issue.

Key Statistics:

- Only 24% of leadership roles in the technology industry are held by women. (1)
- Across all industries, only 86 women are promoted to manager for every 100 men. (3)

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3. WORK-LIFE BALANCE CHALLENGES



Balancing career aspirations with personal and family responsibilities remains a significant challenge for many women. The expectation that women should be the primary caregivers can lead to career interruptions and missed opportunities for advancement.

Establishing your values and priorities, as well as leveraging coaching can help address this topic.

Key Statistics:

- 14% of women cite inflexible working hours as a reason for leaving their jobs. (3)
- 46% of women feel unsupported by their employers in balancing work and home life. (3)

4. LACK OF MENTORSHIP, SPONSORSHIP AND COACHING



Access to mentors and sponsors who can provide guidance, support, and advocacy is crucial for career advancement. However, women often face difficulties in finding and establishing these important relationships, particularly in male-dominated industries.

Understanding how to establish mentors, sponsors and coaches is critical to address this issue.

Key Insight:

Research shows that early-career women uniquely benefit from receiving sponsorship from high-ranking, highly tenured women in their firm and industry. (4)

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5. UNCONSCIOUS BIAS AND STEREOTYPES



Unconscious biases and gender stereotypes continue to influence hiring, promotion, and workplace interactions. These biases can lead to women being overlooked for opportunities or having their abilities underestimated.

Understanding the impact of relationships, as well as results can help to impact this challenge.

Key Statistics:

- 50% of women report experiencing gender discrimination at work, compared to only 19% of men. (3)
- In male-dominated workplaces, 78% of women feel they need to prove themselves all or some of the time. (3)

6. LIMITED ACCESS TO NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES



Networking plays a crucial role in career advancement, but women often face barriers in accessing and benefiting from these opportunities. This can be due to exclusion from informal networks or difficulty balancing networking events with personal responsibilities.

Establishing values and priorities, and learning how to leverage resources for networking are key for this topic.

Key Insight:

Building strong professional networks and seeking out sponsorship opportunities are crucial strategies for women to overcome career advancement barriers. (4)

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7. “INNER CRITIC” IMPACT



Imposter syndrome, the persistent feeling of self-doubt despite evidence of competence and success, disproportionately affects women in the workplace. This can lead to hesitation in pursuing promotions or taking on challenging assignments.

Coaching to recognize how your “Inner Critic” speaks to you and then learning to address it and take action is a helpful approach for growth

Key Insight:

Imposter syndrome is particularly prevalent among women in male-dominated fields like data analytics, hindering their career growth and discouraging them from pursuing leadership positions. (2)

8. LACK OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS



Balancing career aspirations with personal and family responsibilities remains a significant challenge for many women. The expectation that women should be the primary caregivers can lead to career interruptions and missed opportunities for advancement.

Working thru the approach for managing home and work responsibilities, given your specific circumstances, with a coach or mentor, can help address this challenge.

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9. HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENTS



Sexual harassment and hostile work environments continue to be significant barriers for women in many industries. These experiences can lead to stress, decreased job satisfaction, and even career changes.

Taking appropriate action is critical in these circumstances.

Key Statistic:

36% of women report that sexual harassment is a problem in their workplace. (3)

10. LIMITED ACCESS TO FUNDING AND RESOURCES



Women entrepreneurs and those in STEM fields often face challenges in accessing funding and resources necessary for career advancement or business growth. This disparity can limit innovation and career opportunities for women. (2)

Leveraging specific communication and actions can mitigate this issue.

Key Insight:

Evidence suggests that venture capitalists and other funding bodies are more likely to invest in male-led projects, creating a significant barrier for women entrepreneurs in the data analytics sector.

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CONCLUSION

While progress has been made in addressing gender inequalities in the workplace, significant barriers still exist for women pursuing their career aspirations.

Women can leverage coaches, mentors and sponsor to increase confidence, take appropriate action and grow both personally and professionally ,

Addressing these challenges requires concerted effort from individuals, organizations, and society as a whole. By recognizing and actively working to dismantle these barriers, we can create more conducive work environments that allow all individuals to thrive and reach their full potential.



If you are experiencing some of these barriers as an aspiring executive and want to:

- **Get clarity on your dreams and career aspirations**
- **Grow professionally and advance your career**
- **Gain confidence and take decisive action**
- **Experience greater fulfillment and joy in both your personal and professional life**

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References

- 1.U.S. Census Bureau (2022)
- 2.McKinsey & Company (2022)
- 3.LeanIn.org (2022)



THANK YOU FOR READING!



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