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2021 WOMEN IN SUPPLY CHAIN RESEARCH

2021 Women in Supply Chain Survey Shows Resilience, Improvement in Representation

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Initiatives: CSCO Strategic Leadership; Supply Chain Head of Strategy Realization

Bucking pandemic-era odds, the annual Gartner/AWESOME survey shows that women are better represented at most levels of the supply chain profession in 2021. But despite promising gains, CSCOs must address looming COVID-19-related burnout and midcareer attrition to sustain progress.

Overview

Key Findings

- Women comprise 41% of the supply chain workforce on average in our 2021 survey, a high point since this research started in 2016.

- Leadership pipelines strengthened across the board, demonstrating improved diversity and inclusion.

- Women of color comprise 14% percent of supply chain organizations, with steeper than average drop-offs as pipelines advance, to where just 1% of chief supply chain officers (CSCOs) are women of color.

- All told, 73% of responding supply chain organizations, the highest proportion ever, have a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) goal related to attracting, developing, retaining and advancing women. More respondents than ever have specific goals and accountability, and more supply chain leaders are leading their own DEI initiatives.

- Surprisingly, 84% of respondents said the pandemic had no impact on the retention and advancement of women in supply chain organizations over the past year.

- Roughly two-thirds of responding supply chain organizations showed concern about the middle of their pipelines. Retaining midcareer women is challenging, with lack of career opportunity as the primary driver.

Recommendations

CSCOs responsible for strategic leadership of their supply chain organization should:

- Set specific goals and share them, and hold yourself and other leaders accountable for them. Prioritize and lead initiatives that are most likely to show results; for example, requiring diverse slates in the recruitment process, or leadership development/sponsorship as part of a strong succession planning process that includes bias champions.

- Reduce the dramatic drop-off of female representation in the first level of leadership by building supporting infrastructure like mentorship programs — this works with both male and female mentors — specifically focused on aspiring women leaders. Sponsorship programs at more senior levels have yielded benefits, too. Measure effectiveness of programs by participants' performance and promotion rates.

- Strengthen succession planning practices for senior leadership positions by being actively inclusive. For example, appoint a bias champion that assists in identifying bias at performance management and succession planning meetings. Asking, for example, "Is this feedback due to a capability gap or simply a work style difference?"

- Watch out for pandemic fallout. Women continue to be incredibly productive and successful, but burnout is real. Use a framework like Gartner's S.A.N.E. (Spot, Assess, Neutralize, Educate) to support teams and leaders (see Address Burnout by Keeping Employees S.A.N.E.).

Survey Objective

Gartner's sixth annual Women in Supply Chain Survey was conducted from 23 February through 31 March 2021. Gartner surveyed 223 supply chain professionals, primarily from companies headquartered in North America, about their companies' goals and initiatives to improve recruitment, development, retention and advancement of women. We collected baseline data on how many women are in frontline manager, senior manager, director, vice president and executive-level roles within supply chain organizations. We also asked questions about representation of women of color. We asked about practices that increase the engagement with, and success of, women in supply chain organizations, and specifics about midcareer pipelines and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gartner's primary research partner for this project is AWESOME, a U.S.-based nonprofit organization focused on advancing women's supply chain leadership. [1] We also partnered with the Council for Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP), a U.S.-based nonprofit organization for supply chain professionals, to reach out to a subset of its membership as well. A third and returning partner this year was boom!, a U.K.-based global community formed to support and link women in the supply chain profession, with membership spanning 30 countries.

This research and analysis is crucial to supply chain leaders for two reasons:

- Women are underutilized resources in the so-called "war for talent" and research studies show that diverse teams are more innovative and perform better on a number of business metrics, including profitability, innovation and resilience.

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- Women make up more than 50% of the professional workforce in most developed markets and this number is on the rise. Supply chain organizations who more effectively hire and retain from this pool will have a competitive advantage over their peers.

Data Insights

As the COVID-19 pandemic ground through years of women's hard-won workforce gains, we were certain that our 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey results would show degraded diversity, equity and inclusion results for supply chain organizations. Why wouldn't we, as statistic after statistic rolled in to show that women were leaving the workforce in droves, or, if they weren't leaving, "downshifting." Let's look at a snapshot from fall, 2020. In September, there were 2.2 million fewer women than there had been in the U.S. workforce a year prior. In October, 800,000 more women dropped out of the workforce, four times as many as men that month. Women with children and other care responsibilities, and women of color, were dropping out at even higher rates. [2]

Other countries were not immune, even those with more substantial social safety nets. Canada's female labor force participation dipped to its lowest level in 30 years. [3] In a study of 24 developed countries over the past year, women were more likely to lose their jobs in 17 of them. [4] In a blow to pay equity policy, the U.K. suspended its required gender pay gap reporting early in the pandemic and may offer a second reprieve in 2021. Also in the U.K., a recent survey of 50,000 women reported that 71% of working mothers surveyed had furlough requests turned down by their employers in recent lockdowns, even though 80% of employees' pay would be government supported. [5]

Beyond the job losses, labor market experts warned of permanent structural impacts — many jobs would likely not come back. For employees fortunate enough to keep jobs, Gartner's research clocked a widening female-male engagement gap, as male employee engagement improved in the second half of 2020, but women's declined throughout (see Talent Pulse: Women Have Shone During the Global Coronavirus Crisis, but They Are Exhausted). The future of work for women — the present, too — looks bleak in this light.

We expected that our survey data would surely reflect this. We'd be lucky to get the same flattish results we saw in our prepandemic 2020 numbers: bright spots in consumer-retail supply chain organizations, but not much else. We expected a dip, or worse.

What we saw instead was remarkable, given the history of the project and the painfully slow progress we dutifully capture each year.
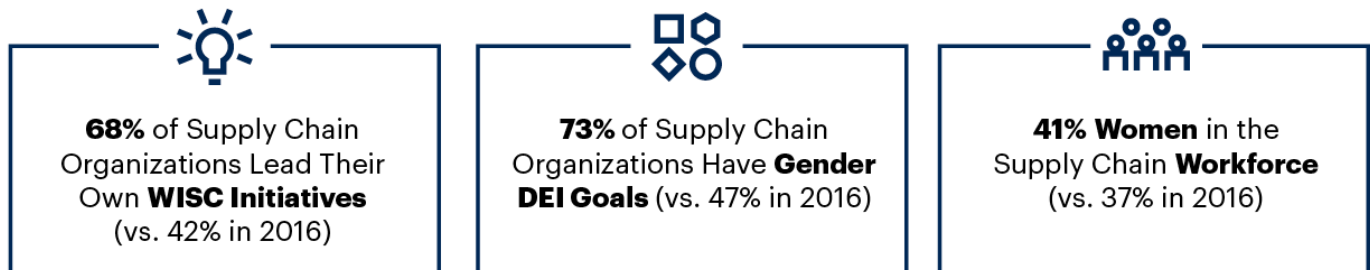
Surprisingly, in every level of the pipeline save the C-level, we saw improved representation (see Figure 1). In respondents' commitment to gender diversity, equity and inclusion, we saw a record number of specific commitments and supply-chain-led actions to ensure follow-through. Increasing the number of

women leaders in supply chain is a stated goal for nearly three out of four responding organizations. In 2016, that number was just 47%.

Figure 1: Women in Supply Chain Defy Pandemic Odds

Women in Supply Chain Defy Pandemic Odds
Three Records Set in 2021

68% of Supply Chain Organizations Lead Their Own **WISC Initiatives** (vs. 42% in 2016)

73% of Supply Chain Organizations Have **Gender DEI Goals** (vs. 47% in 2016)

41% Women in the Supply Chain **Workforce** (vs. 37% in 2016)

Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey
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Why? And especially, why now? For one, years-old initiatives are finally bearing fruit. Second, supply chain's mission-criticality in the pandemic meant that many sectors did not lay off, but continued to hire and even complain of talent shortages, especially in the product supply chains this survey base represents, with many of these roles going completely or mostly remote. Third, supply chain leaders in management positions are mostly older Gen X and boomer women, with, on average, less responsibility for very young children. Fourth, there is a school of thought that shows that when things deteriorate into crisis, that is precisely when women tend to get the nod, and are often quite successful. [6] Finally, and likely generating the most short-term pressures, an intensified focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion through Black Lives Matter and associated social justice movements positively charged the trajectory of women in supply chain organizations. However, women of color continue to be underrepresented across sectors and levels.

While the results are impressive, the survey also shows that pressures in the middle of the pipeline pose risks to future progress.

Representation of Women Improved at Nearly All Levels of the Supply Chain Organization

Millions of women have left the workforce. Yet, this seems not to have been the narrative for the average supply chain organization during the pandemic. In fact, supply chain organizations have not only been able to retain women, but have been able to develop and promote them into higher levels of leadership — all in the wake of a once-in-a-century global health crisis. Women officially make up more than 40% of the total supply chain workforce and have bounced back from the 2020 slump at nearly all levels of leadership (see Figure 2). The only dip, which we predicted last year based on the softness of the 2020 pipeline at the VP level, was at the executive level, a drop to 15% from last year's high of 17%.
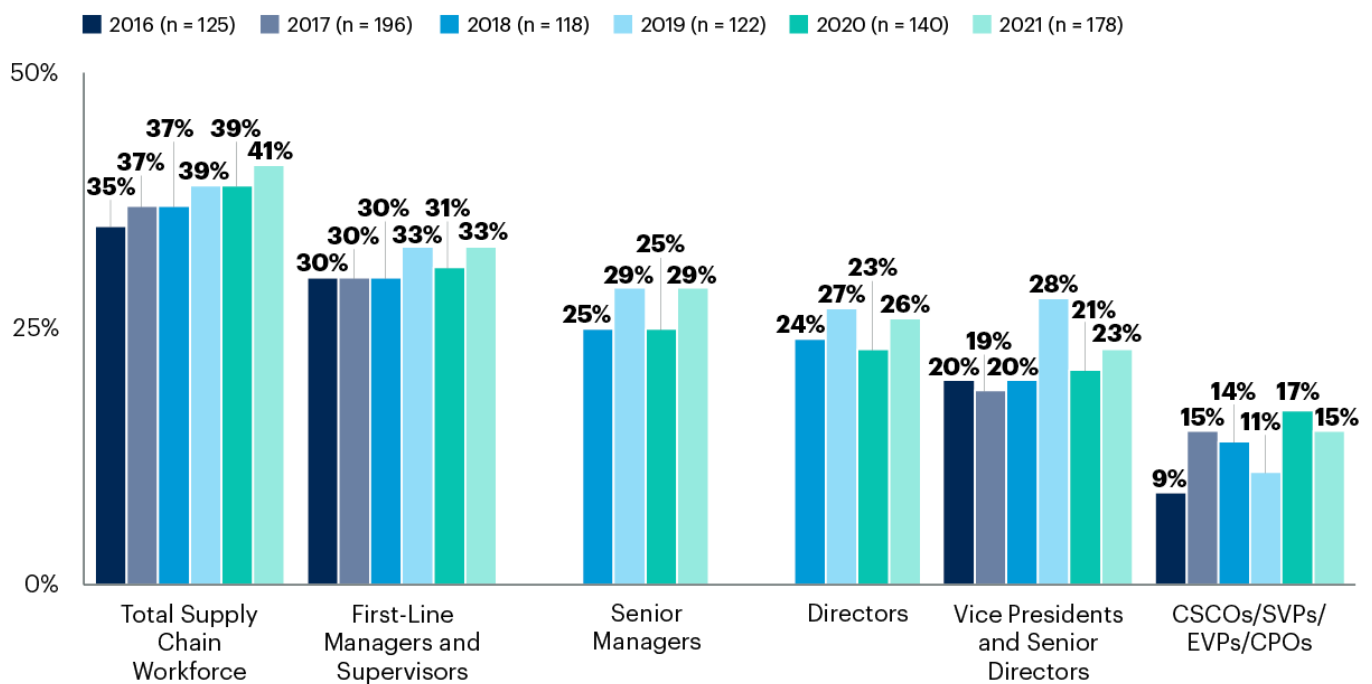
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There is cause for celebration; we haven't seen an increase in representation like this since the shift from 2018 to 2019.

> It's also important to note that the 2020 Women in Supply Chain data was gathered prepandemic, so the comprehensive increase in representation that we've seen in 2021 is directly comparable to a time when there was far more operational stability.

Figure 2: Representation in Total Workforce and Most Leadership Roles Have Increased Since 2020

Representation in Total Workforce and Most Leadership Roles Have Increased Since 2020
Women in Supply Chain Leadership Roles, Year-to-Year Comparison

Legend: 2016 (n = 125) | 2017 (n = 196) | 2018 (n = 118) | 2019 (n = 122) | 2020 (n = 140) | 2021 (n = 178)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Supply Chain Workforce	35%	37%	37%	39%	39%	41%
First-Line Managers and Supervisors	30%	30%	30%	33%	31%	33%
Senior Managers			25%	29%	25%	29%
Directors			24%	27%	23%	26%
Vice Presidents and Senior Directors	20%	19%	20%	28%	21%	23%
CSCOs/SVPs/EVPs/CPOs	9%	15%	14%	11%	17%	15%

n = End-User Respondents

Q: Thinking about all the full-time employees in your supply chain organization/business unit, what percentage is female?
Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey
Note: 2019 forward, excludes revenue <$100 million, senior managers/directors not available in 2016, 2017
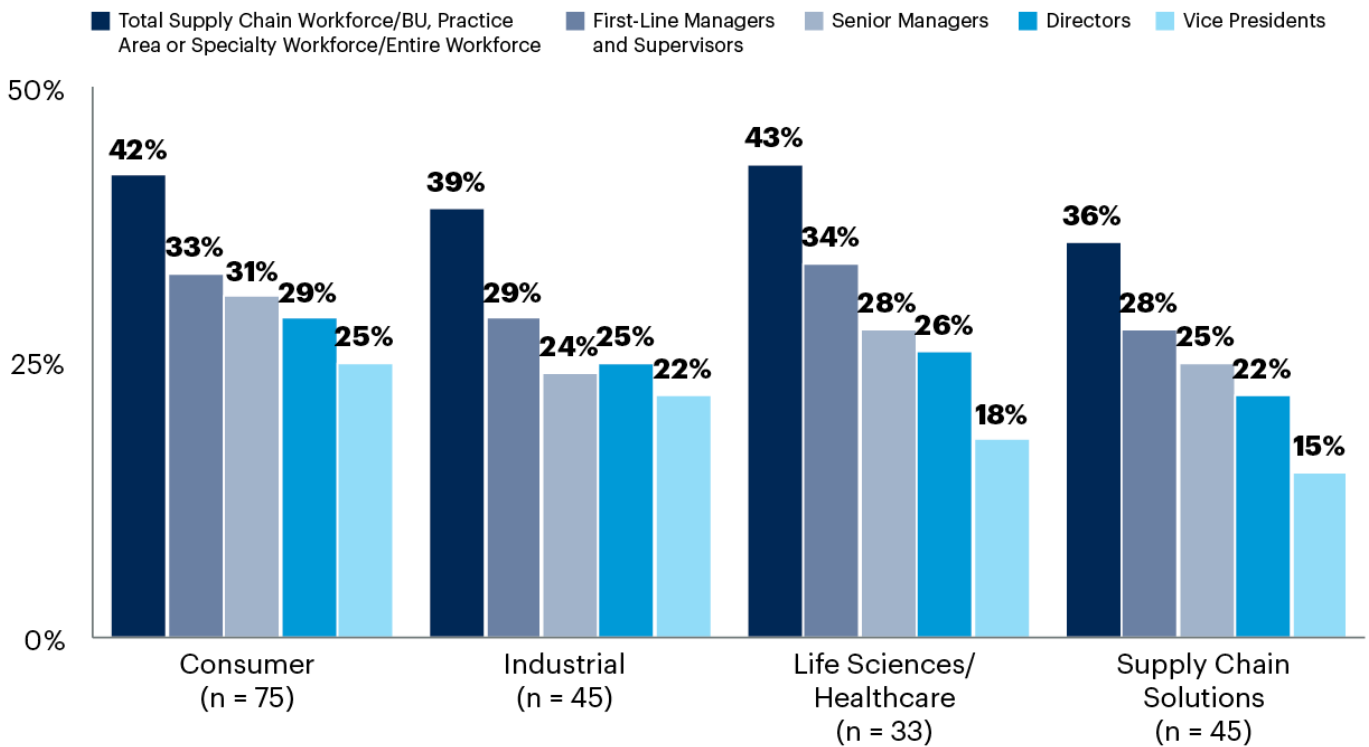751155_C

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There are a few reasons we might credit for improved representation at almost all levels of the supply chain. For one, 2020 was a year when global civil unrest broke out in response to racial injustice and inequality. The public eye was fixed on what commitments and actions corporations would be willing to make to ensure equality and inclusion in their operations. This scrutiny from company stakeholders —

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including customers, employees and shareholders — put pressure on supply chain leaders to actively retain women that may have been inclined to leave the workforce during the pandemic. For example, 40% of S&P 500 earnings calls in 2Q20 addressed diversity, compared to 6% in 2Q19. [7] These social pressures are also a likely reason for an increase in stated gender equality objectives and goals from supply chain leaders in 2021 (see Figure 4), which we correlate to more gender-balanced pipelines.

This positive trend in representation is even carried across industry segments. When we look across consumer, industrial, life science, healthcare and supply chain solutions and services, we see healthier talent pipelines than in prior years (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: All Industry Segments Show Improvements in Representation

All Industry Segments Show Improvements in Representation
Women in Supply Chain Leadership Roles by Industry Segment

n = End-User and Supply Chain Solution Respondents

Q: Thinking about all the full-time employees in your supply chain organization/business unit, what percentage is female?
Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey
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Across industries, we saw considerable year-over-year (YoY) improvements in representation at the first-line manager or senior manager levels. Consumer supply chains were able to improve reprentation at the senior manager level, from 25% in 2020 to 31% in 2021. Industrial organizations also made significant strides in improving representation of women, with frontline manager and supervisor representation jumping from 26% to 29%. Most remarkably, industrial supply chain organizations improved representation of women at the VP level, from 13% to 22%. Even supply chain solutions and

services organizations — which includes logistics and transportation providers, supply chain consultants, and supply chain software and technology providers — saw an increase in female representation in manager and supervisor ranks, from 24% to 28%.

These data findings are quite positive. However, it is important to know that despite improvements in representation when compared to 2020, there is one trend that has remained since this survey was launched in 2016: as the corporate ladder advances, the proportion of women leaders declines. Women only make up 23% of VP-level positions in the average supply chain organization, and apart from consumer sector supply chains, that number continues to decline as we look at specific industry segments. Despite improvements in representation at all levels this year, supply chain still continues to have a problem in pulling women up the ranks. This is in large part because talent strategies are not designed to pull women up the corporate ladder; many women do not receive proper (or any) development, mentorship or sponsorship support needed to advance into higher levels of leadership.

Similar to women overall, the proportion of women of color declines as the corporate ladder advances. Women of color make up 14% of the supply chain workforce overall, which is similar to the percentage of women of color that comprise the U.S. labor force (13%). [8] However, they only make up 10% of manager/supervisor roles, 8% of senior managers, 7% of directors, a mere 5% of vice presidents, and 1% of CSCOs in supply chain. The challenge lies in intersectionality: the intersections of identity categorizations within individuals and groups. We must consider everything and anything that can marginalize people — gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etc. Women of color are disadvantaged by multiple forms of oppression, and this affects the development and career support they receive within their organizations. [9]

While the representation data for 2021 is encouraging, we should be wary of a cyclical pattern of progress and then immediate regression. The #metoo movement reached peak media attention at the end of 2017 and beginning of 2018, and this led to greater scrutiny of women in enterprises and supply chain. We could attribute the vast improvements we saw in 2019 to organizational reaction to the #metoo movement. However, 2020 was a sobering recalibration — where gender equality clearly took a back seat to other organizational issues. The social justice movements of 2020 clearly had a similar effect on supply chain organizational commitments and actions on gender equality or broader DEI outcomes (see 2021 Supply Chain Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Survey: Commitment Skyrockets, Requires Follow-Through).

Action Item

Supply chain leaders will need to shift from reactionary diversity initiatives to a more sustainable gender equality strategy that ensures intersectionality and its additional biases are addressed, particularly in pulling in women of color. The greatest challenge supply chain leaders still face when it comes to gender equality is building more diverse leadership benches. To reduce the dramatic drop-off of female representation in the first level of leadership and build supporting infrastructure, develop mentorship and sponsorship programs specifically focused on aspiring women leaders. Improving succession planning practices for senior leadership positions will require active inclusivity. For example, appoint a bias champion that assists in identifying bias at succession planning meetings. This champion might ask, "Is

this feedback due to a capability gap or simply a work style difference?" (See Building Inclusive Leadership Behaviors: Beyond Bias Training.)

A Record Number of Supply Chain Organizations Set Goals for Gender Diversity and Are Leading Their Own Initiatives

Let's look at some of the underlying data for why pipelines improved. Previous years showed that articulating and adopting goals and objectives are crucial drivers for improvements in pipelines and other DEI outcomes. In 2021, the proportion of supply chain organizations with any type of goal jumped to 73%, up from 64% in 2020 (see Figure 4). We differentiate between general objectives ("we will be more diverse and inclusive") and more specific goals that are also on management scorecards ("senior supply chain leadership will reach gender parity by 2030"). The larger share of this jump was for more formal targets and specific goals on management scorecards. For these respondents, there is greater accountability for results — and we see the correlation with stronger representation and inclusion showing up in pipelines.
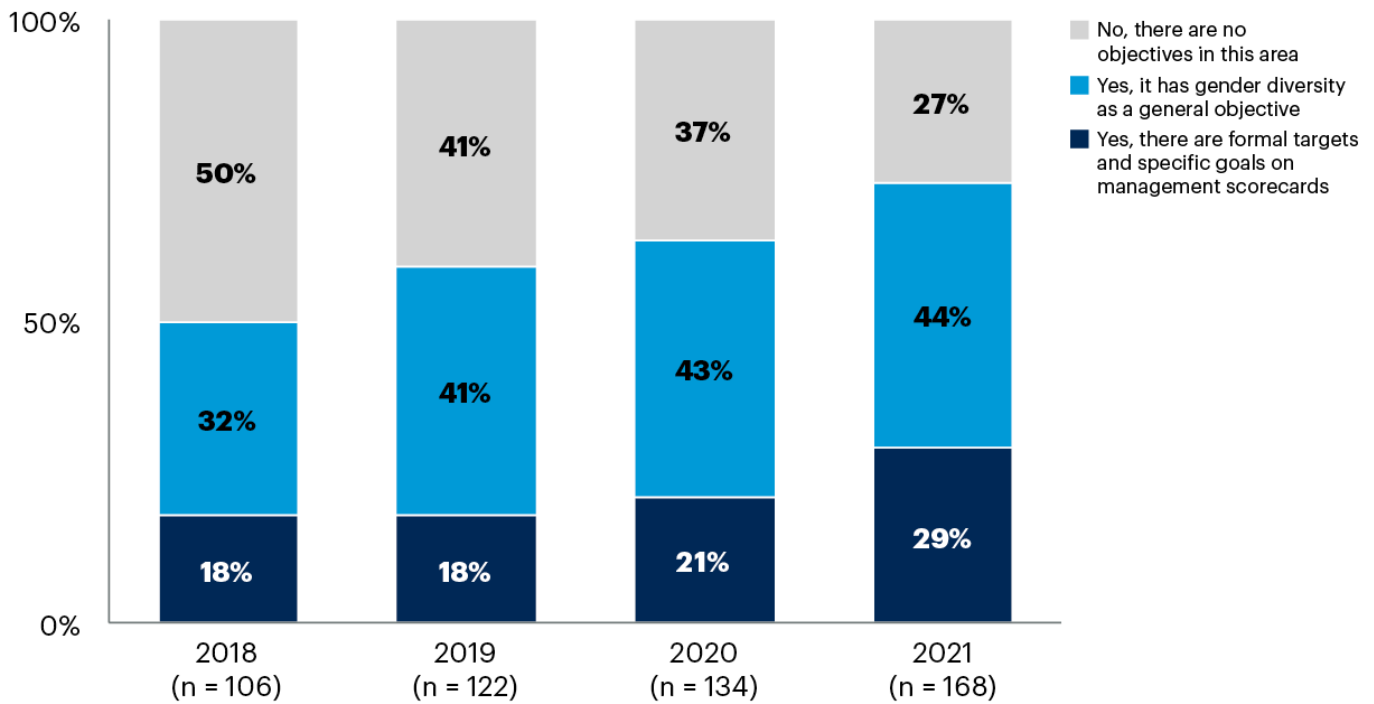
As of this year, many companies in the Gartner Supply Chain Top 25 now tie portions of executive compensation to DEI outcomes, including gender. Notable examples are Intel, McDonald's, and Nike, with their public gender diversity and inclusion targets:

- Intel: 40% technical roles held by women by 2030.

- McDonald's: Gender parity at all positions by YE2030.

- Nike: Women are 45% of senior leaders by 2025.

Intel and McDonald's publicly stated commitments include pay equity. Also, starting this year, McDonald's will ask its suppliers to sign their commitment to progress diversity, equity and inclusion across their own organizations.

Figure 4: Companies With Stated Objectives to Increase Women Leaders

Companies With Stated Objectives to Increase Women Leaders
Percentage of Companies, Year to Year

Legend:
- No, there are no objectives in this area (gray)
- Yes, it has gender diversity as a general objective (light blue)
- Yes, there are formal targets and specific goals on management scorecards (dark blue)

	2018 (n = 106)	2019 (n = 122)	2020 (n = 134)	2021 (n = 168)
No objectives (gray)	50%	41%	37%	27%
Gender diversity general objective (light blue)	32%	41%	43%	44%
Formal targets (dark blue)	18%	18%	21%	29%

n = End-User Respondents

Q: Does your organization/business unit have a stated objective to increase the number of women leaders in supply chain?
Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey
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Comparing different industries, we immediately see striking differences, notably in the high incidence of formal targets in healthcare and life science organizations — 61% — and the high incidence of general goals and formal targets in supply chain solution providers (see Figure 5). Industrial supply chain organizations are the least likely to have goals, but compared to 2020, there has still been a nice uptick in formal targets and goals, from 12% last year to 18% today.

We can draw lines between this activity and the strengthening of industrial supply chain talent pipelines compared to 2020, particularly at the director (up from 17% to 25%) and VP (up from 13% to 22%) levels. Consumer and retail respondents slightly increased their commitment in 2021, with higher levels of general goals and formal targets. This showed up in their pipelines in Figure 3, especially at the senior manager and director levels.

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Figure 5: Companies With Stated Objectives to Increase Women Leaders by Industry Segment

Companies With Stated Objectives to Increase Women Leaders by Industry Segment
Percentage of Companies
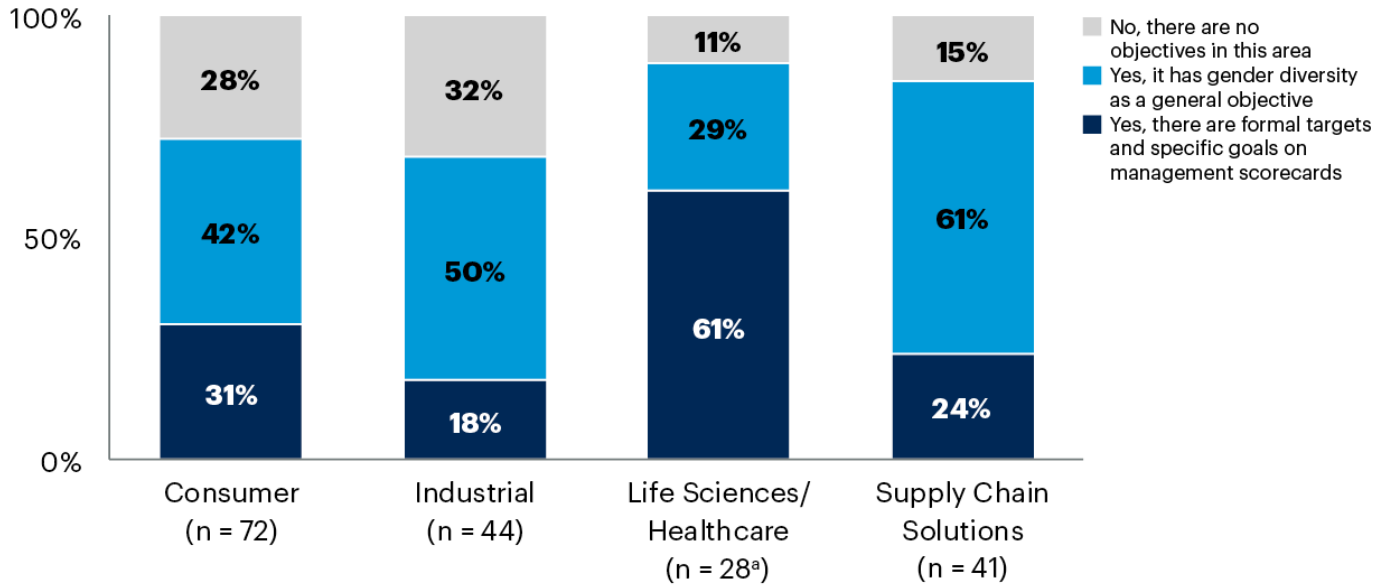
n = End-User Respondents

Q: Does your organization/business unit have a stated objective to increase the number of women leaders in supply chain?
Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey
Note: 2019 forward, excludes revenue <$100 million, senior managers/directors not available in 2016, 2017.
a low base size, interpret with caution.
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Other notable differences in the likelihood to have goals showed up between U.S.-based supply chain organizations and the non-U.S. respondents, the majority of which were European. These non-U.S. respondents were significantly more likely to have formal targets. Finally, company size has a major bearing on whether or not a supply chain organization has goals, with 46% of the largest global organizations ($5 billion+) reporting formal targets, while only 4% of small and midsize business (SMB) respondents (<$5 billion) said the same. Over half of these smaller companies' supply chain organizations have no general or specific objective to increase gender diversity or inclusion.

Once supply chain leaders have objectives, what are they doing to achieve them? For other supply chain and business priorities, typically when an objective is set, a project or activity is launched to meet the objective. Within the subset of respondents who have stated objectives, 68% said the supply chain organization had a targeted initiative focused on women, a huge step up from 46% in 2020 (see Figure 6). Twenty-three percent rely on enterprisewide DEI initiatives, and 10% said they were considering starting a supply-chain-specific one. This is an all-time high in respondents reporting active initiatives at 90% in total. For the supply chain leaders who were leading their own initiatives, we also wanted to know whether these initiatives included, tracked and measured women of color. Seventy-one percent indicated "yes."

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Percentage of Supply Chain Organizations With Targeted Gender Initiatives
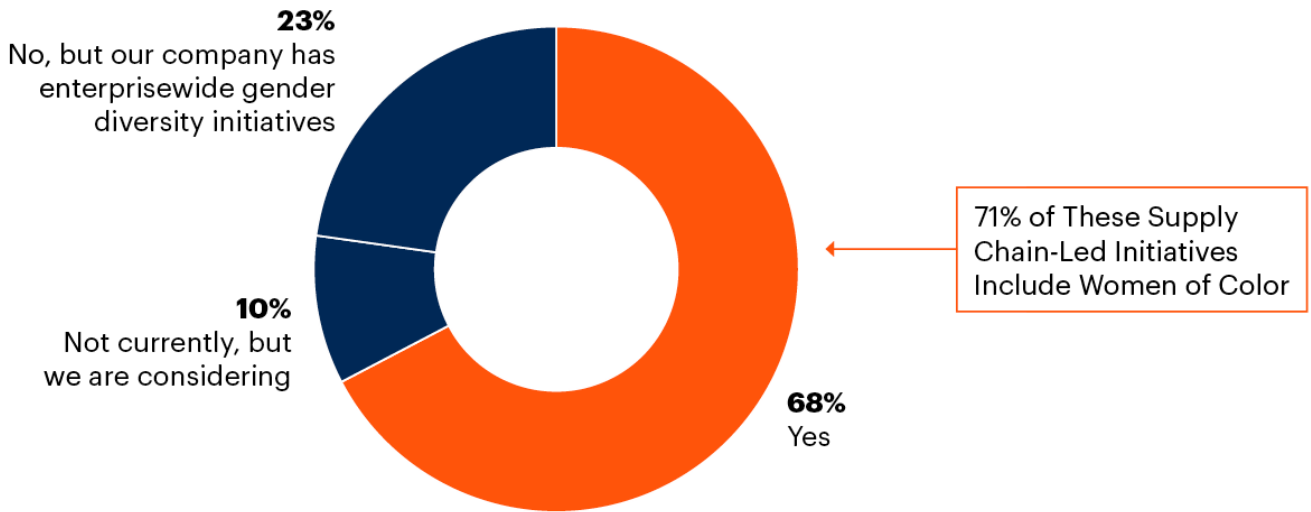
23%
No, but our company has enterprisewide gender diversity initiatives

10%
Not currently, but we are considering

68%
Yes

71% of These Supply Chain-Led Initiatives Include Women of Color

n = 114, End Users Who Have Stated Objective, Excludes "Don't Know"; 77, End Users Who Have an Initiative

Q: Does your organization have any targeted initiatives to recruit, develop, retain and/or advance women in your organization/business unit? Does your organization also track and measure representation/participation of women of color in these initiatives?
Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey
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Also, for the first time, no respondents had a "hard no" to the question about whether they had a targeted initiative, which is encouraging. In previous years, as many as one in 10 respondents who had goals had no plan or initiative for how they would reach them, ensuring that their good intentions would result in zero, or even negative, impact (see 2021 Supply Chain Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Survey: Commitment Skyrockets, Requires Follow-Through).

Reinforcing the pipeline improvements, respondents with specific goals, and especially targeted initiatives, were more likely to report overall improvement (see Figure 7). Based on the start date of these initiatives, most had been well underway for some years. When probed for detail on what levels in the organization were seeing improvement and why, respondents reported the most progress at the manager, senior manager and director levels.

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Organizations With Objectives, Initiatives Significantly More Likely to Report Improvement
Progress Toward Gender Diversity and Inclusion
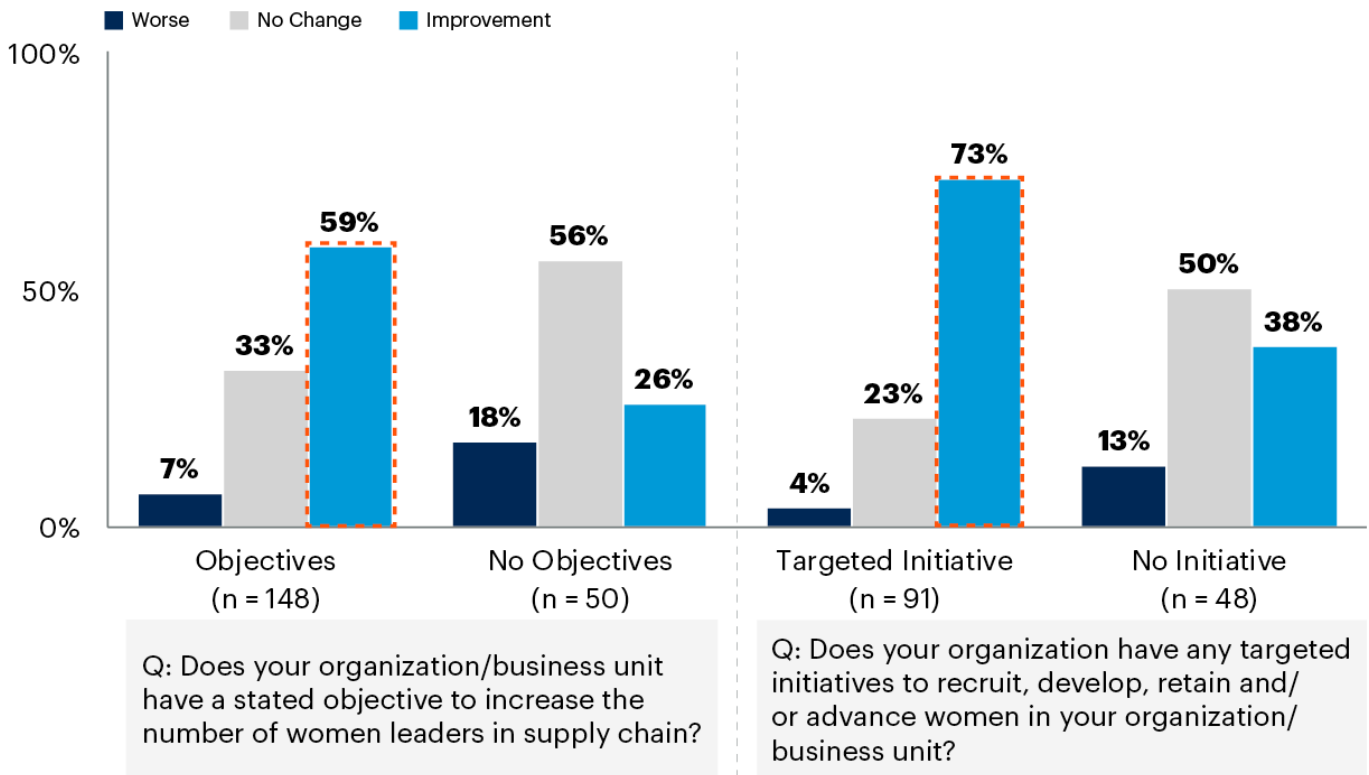
n = 114, End Users Who Have Stated Objective, Excludes "Don't Know"; 77, End Users Who Have an Initiative

Q: How would you characterize your organization/business unit's progress toward achieving gender diversity and inclusion at the top leadership level.

Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey

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Action Item

Set specific goals, and hold yourself and other leaders accountable for them. Prioritize and lead initiatives that are most likely to show results. For example, at the front of the pipeline, Gartner research finds that five initiatives prove more effective: diverse interview panels, diversity referral programs, summer internship programs for diverse students, blind resume reviews and diversity campus recruiting. In integrated pipeline planning, companies go beyond recruiting to succession planning and leadership development, and sponsorship programs. Including men as leads/co-leads is also crucial — highly correlated with reported improvement (see 2019 Women in Supply Chain Survey Finds Improvements Across the Pipeline for the First Time).

The Pandemic Had a Neutral Influence, but Departure of Midcareer Women Is an Increasing Issue

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Our 2021 Women in Supply Chain Survey, despite the tumultuous events that led up to it, shows overwhelmingly positive results. We found record levels of commitments and specified objectives and goals for gender equality. Representation of women has improved at nearly all levels of leadership, and women finally make up more than 40% of the average supply chain organization.

At face value, the pandemic does not appear to have disrupted supply chain gender equality efforts. This sentiment came through in the data as well; 84% of responding organizations advised that COVID-19 had no discernible impact on their ability to retain and advance women.

In fact, women at all job levels across industries reported receiving promotions more than men shortly before and during the pandemic, according to a survey of 5,000 employees conducted in September 2020 (see Talent Pulse: Women Have Shone During the Global Coronavirus Crisis, but They Are Exhausted). The trend is a reversal of the pattern before COVID-19 emerged; men reported more frequent promotions over time in each of the previous years.

However, underneath this positive data is a simmering workforce crisis. After a year of pandemic-induced stress, more women than men report a productivity increase during the virus crisis. But the price is high, with levels of burnout and disengagement among women also exceeding that of men, according to analysis of six recent enterprisewide Gartner surveys (see Talent Pulse: Women Have Shone During the Global Coronavirus Crisis, but They Are Exhausted).

At the entry level, men and women report the same level of burnout (41%) — but the gender gap is stark for midlevel and senior executives. We find that 46% of midlevel female leaders felt burnout last year versus only 33% of midlevel male leaders (see Figure 8). Implications of burnout are decreased productivity, increases in errors, decreased engagement and intent to stay, and attrition.

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Figure 8: The Largest Burnout Difference by Gender Is for Midlevel Employees

The Largest Burnout Difference by Gender Is for Midlevel Employees
Feelings of Burnout by Gender and Employee Level
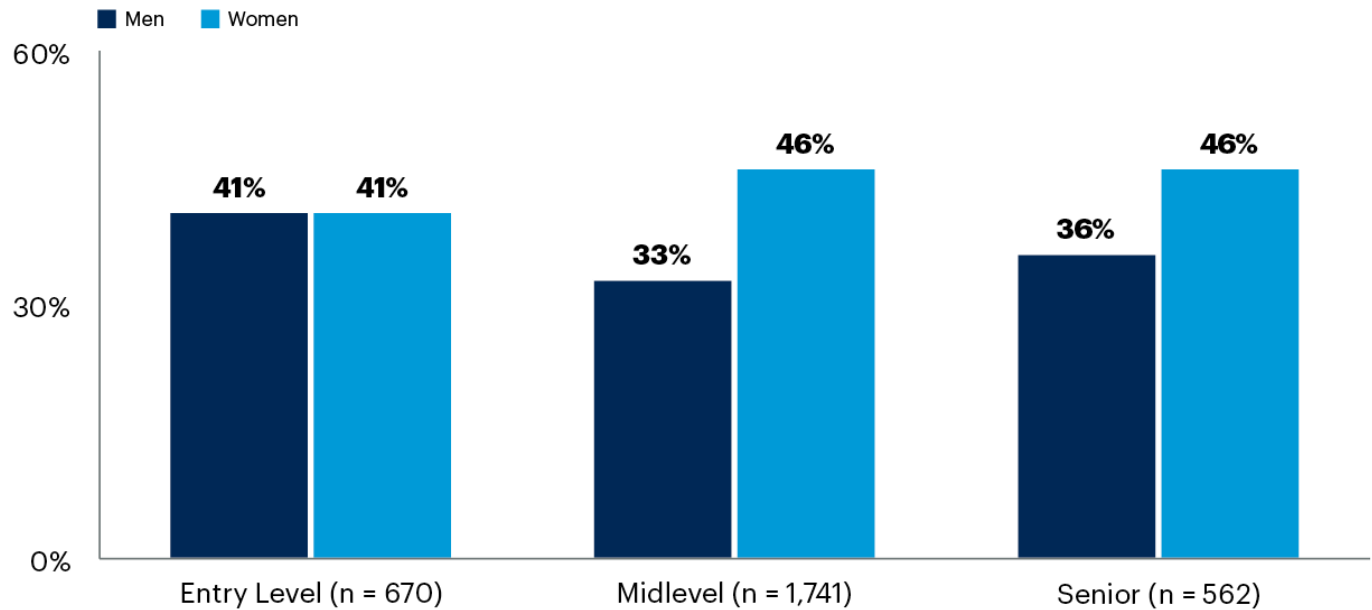
n = 3,001

Q: To what extent do you agree with the following statement? I feel burnt out.
Source: 2021 Gartner Inclusion Index Employee Survey
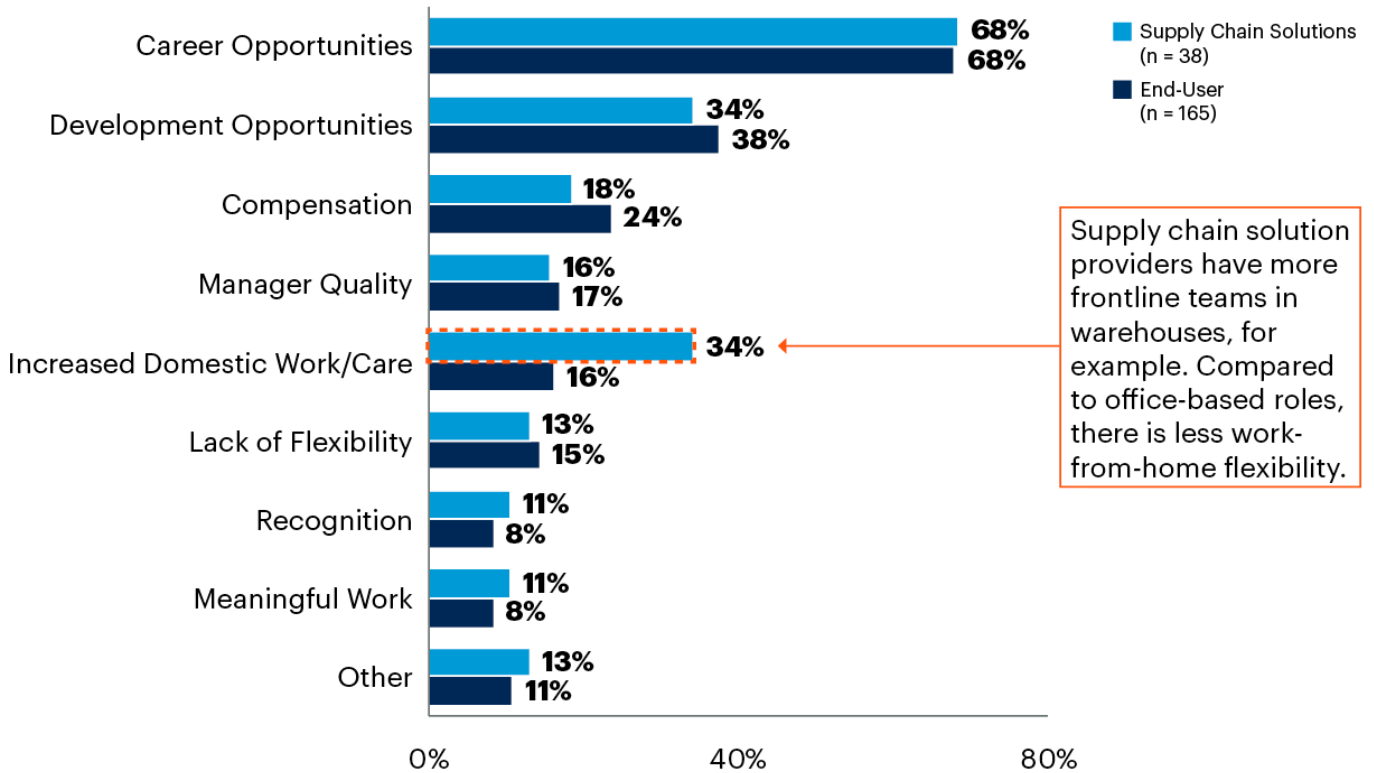751155_C

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Perhaps supply chain leaders are sensing this divide; 54% of survey respondents claim that retaining midcareer women is an increasing challenge, and 10% advise that it is a significant challenge. Only about a third of respondents said that it was not a problem in their organization.

> **For those that are struggling to retain midcareer female leaders, why is this demographic choosing to leave the supply chain organization?**

We find that lack of career opportunities is the top reason that midcareer women have left the organization across all supply chain industries, including supply chain solution providers (see Figure 9). Almost 70% of respondents selected it as one of the top three reasons midcareer women leave the organization. The second-most selected option was development opportunities, but this was a very distant second, selected by only 36% of respondents on average.

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Lack of Career Opportunities Is the Top Reason Women Leave
Reasons Women Have Left Company, Multiple Responses Allowed

Legend:
- Supply Chain Solutions (n = 38)
- End-User (n = 165)

Reason	Supply Chain Solutions	End-User
Career Opportunities	68%	68%
Development Opportunities	34%	38%
Compensation	18%	24%
Manager Quality	16%	17%
Increased Domestic Work/Care	34%	16%
Lack of Flexibility	13%	15%
Recognition	11%	8%
Meaningful Work	11%	8%
Other	13%	11%

Supply chain solution providers have more frontline teams in warehouses, for example. Compared to office-based roles, there is less work-from-home flexibility.

Q: When women have left your organization/business unit at midcareer or later, what have been the reasons?
Source: 2021 Gartner/AWESOME Women in Supply Chain Survey
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However, there is also likely an element of what is not spoken about as frequently in the workplace: personal caregiving challenges. A Catalyst survey of adults ages 20 to 65 working in large companies (500 or more employees) found that two of every five mothers say they must hide their caregiving struggles from colleagues. [10] A separate survey found that women with children are much more likely to report that working from home has hurt their productivity and affected their career. [11]

Even in our own 2021 Women in Supply Chain research, increased domestic work and home responsibilities were chosen significantly more for supply chain solution providers as a reason that midcareer women left the workforce. This makes sense given that a large proportion of these respondents are logistics and transportation providers. The roles within these organizations often require on-site, frontline work that may have been more difficult for women to juggle with home responsibilities.

Clearly, supply chain leaders that have seen improvements in gender-balanced representation in their organization should not become complacent in their efforts. In particular, supply chain organizations should attend to midcareer challenges for women. However, only one-fourth (26%) of end-user industries have an initiative to retain midcareer women. The size of the organization itself appears to determine the

importance of midcareer initiatives; 36% of global companies have an initiative, which is significantly higher than just 14% of medium/large companies.

Action Item

Create development programs that are focused specifically on midcareer women and involve men in the process, either as mentors or facilitators of learning sessions. Women and other underrepresented groups tend to receive vague and unconstructive feedback, which can stunt their development and career progression into senior levels of leadership. Therefore, build leadership development programs that emphasize effective coaching and inclusive behaviors. Also, determine what flexible work policies you can offer to the workforce in order to retain midcareer women. Equip managers with tools to identify burnout for female employees, approach the situation with empathy and address root causes of burnout (see Address Burnout by Keeping Employees S.A.N.E.).

Additional Research Contribution

Heather Ternet

Evidence

[1] **Gartner's Women in Supply Chain Survey 2021**

The research was conducted online from 23 February through 31 March, 2021, among 223 respondents primarily in North America. AWESOME partnered with Gartner to develop the survey and recruit participants. The sample was augmented with recruitment efforts by other organizations for supply chain professionals (e.g., CSCMP, boom!).

Qualified participants work in organizations that have an internal supply chain organization or in organizations where supply chain is a separate business unit, specialty or practice area, or those who are vendors of supply chain services and solutions. Of the 223 respondents, 178 were organizations with internal supply chains, 45 were supply chain business services and solutions. Organizations tracked and analyzed had to have a minimum of $100 million in annual revenue.

The survey was developed collaboratively by a team of Gartner analysts who research supply chain workforce and organization dynamics, along with AWESOME leadership. It was reviewed, tested and administered by Gartner's Research Data and Analytics team.

[2] Nearly 2.2 Million Women Have Left the Labor Force Since February, National Women's Law Center.

[3] Covid Further Clouded the Outlook for Canadian Women at Risk of Disruption, RBC.

[4] Women in Work Index 2021, PwC.

[5] Furlough Refused to 71% of U.K. Working Mothers While Schools Shut — Survey, The Guardian.

6 Research: Women Are Better Leaders During a Crisis, Harvard Business Review.

7 40% of Companies Discussed Diversity on Earnings Calls, Up From 4% In Prior Quarter, New Data Shows, CNBC.

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Recommended by the Authors

2021 Supply Chain Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Survey: Commitment Skyrockets, Requires Follow-Through

Survey Analysis: What Motivates Supply Chain Employees

Ignition Guide to Developing a Diversity Recruitment Strategy for Supply Chain

Initiatives That Drive Inclusion

Employees Want Leaders to Take a Stand

3 Steps to Bridging the Supply Chain Gender Gap

Leadership Vision for 2021: Chief Supply Chain Officer

Address Burnout by Keeping Employees S.A.N.E.