



# Ivanti Women in Tech Survey Report 2019

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## Executive Summary

### Women in Tech: What does 2020 hold for them?

Launched in 2018, the Ivanti 'Women in Tech' Report is an annual barometer of the issues and challenges faced by women working in technology across the globe. This year's survey has collated over 800 responses, and yet again reveals pertinent findings. Despite years of working towards workplace equality, women in tech continue to face well-known barriers to career development. Technology professionals are still mostly men, and the percentage of women in technology roles is actually shrinking as they move up the corporate ladder. According to McKinsey<sup>1</sup>, women make up just 26% of the technology workforce and only 11% of senior leadership positions.

The causes of such imbalance include bias (both conscious and unconscious), structural barriers, and organisational culture. Additionally, this research has found that women working in traditionally male-dominated industries and functions still have access to fewer progression opportunities and have less focus placed on their career advancement by their employer than men in those fields. As a result, the attrition rate for women in tech is higher than it is for men; they leave at more than twice the rate<sup>2</sup>. Companies that invest in developing leadership qualities in women are more likely to retain their talent and improve business outcomes. This is supported by the International Labour Organization's recent report 'Women in Business and Management: The business case for change'<sup>3</sup>. The report revealed that almost three-quarters of those companies that tracked gender diversity in their management reported profit increases of between five and 20%, with the majority seeing increases of between 10 and 15%.

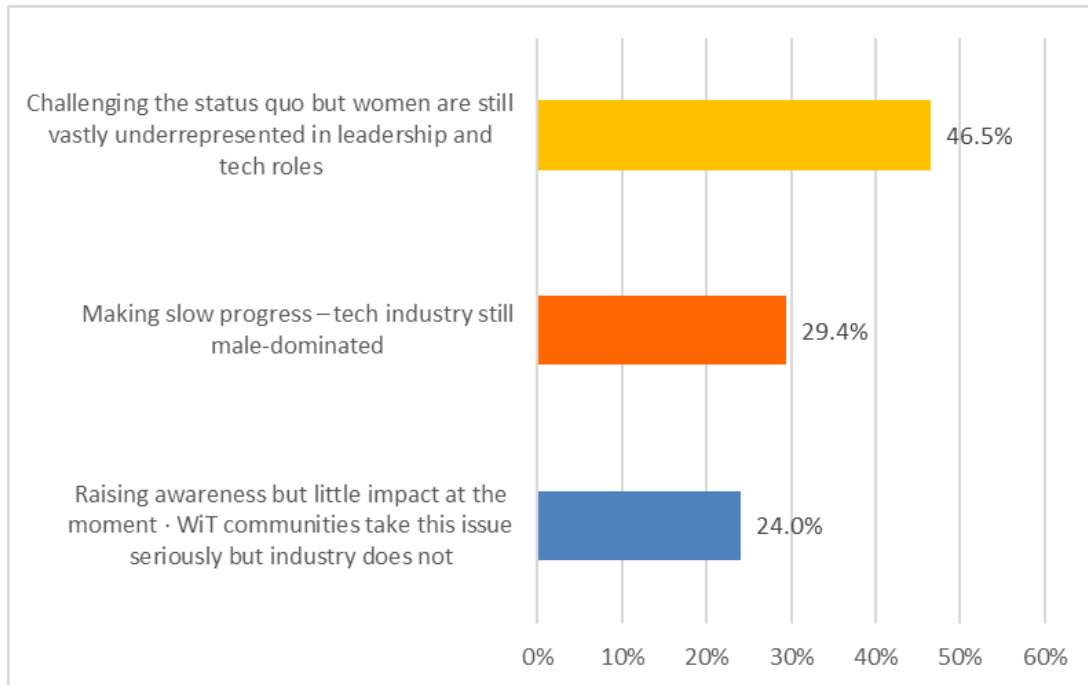
Diversity in technology is therefore vital, as it helps companies have a gender-balanced view and diverse skill sets to draw upon when working on decision-making and product and services development. This can ultimately drive business innovation and growth. However, successfully growing the number of women in tech will not happen overnight. To make any significant progress, employers must implement all-inclusive strategies that support the advancement, engagement, and development of this significant and growing pool of talent.

Highlights of this year's Ivanti global Women in Tech Survey:

- Despite the implementation of legislation, equal pay remains a battle to be won
- Increased employer focus on female advancement and career paths is considered a priority which, when executed, will help women in tech pursue their careers
- Women are seeking to work in organisations that promote flexible and part-time working without penalising progression opportunities
- A dearth of female role models is seen by respondents as holding women back from entering the technology industry
- Companies can better attract and retain female talent by offering equal pay and benefits, and clearly documenting progression opportunities
- Over half of women cited gender perceptions as the biggest challenge they face within the industry, and reported that their careers often progress slower than those of men because of gender stereotypes

In an era of a significant technology skills shortage, women represent a formidable talent pool that companies are just not capitalising on. By encouraging diversity within technology through the hiring and development of women, the under-representation of women in tech could be addressed whilst at the same time, closing the skills gap.

**Question #1: How do you think Women in Tech communities are making an impact in the industry? (choose one)**

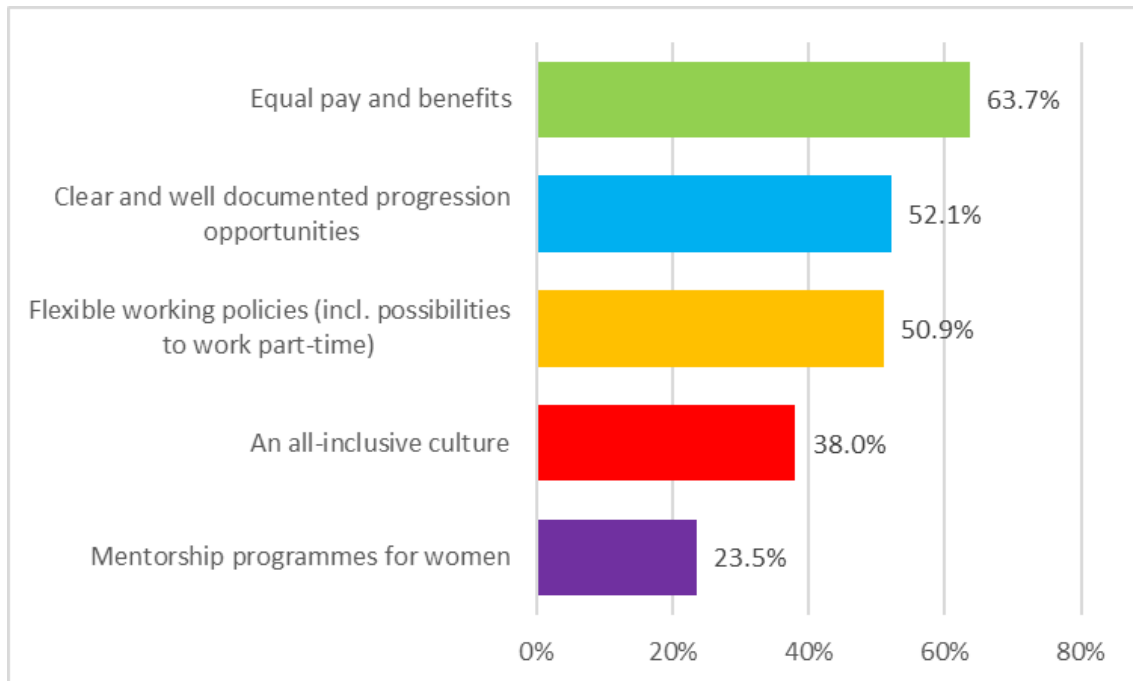


Respondents feel that despite some progress towards workplace equality, women are still not making it to the upper echelons of the technology industry. According to McKinsey<sup>4</sup>, women only make up 21% of the C-suite in 2019, compared to 17% in 2015, and the survey findings fully support this. Nearly a third of those who responded feel that progress is slow and nearly a quarter feel the industry is still not taking the issue of women’s role in tech seriously.

Verbatims made in the ‘other’ section included comments about how women still feel that they need to prove themselves in technology despite being the best candidate for the role and that perhaps the perceived male-dominated culture is putting women off from applying for such roles. Previous research from Training Zone<sup>5</sup> has found that 57% of women find it challenging to appear confident unless they are 100% prepared. Women need the support from employers to fully realise their vision and ensure that they are able to develop their talent and skills on a level playing field, with confidence in their proven ability to fulfil their job specifications.

The survey findings show that women working in traditionally male-dominated industries and functions have access to fewer leadership development opportunities than men in those fields. Clearly, organisations need to set better goals for getting more women into tech if we are to see any difference. This could be done by establishing clear and well-documented progression opportunities. Women in tech communities have begun to make an impact by raising awareness of the issue and encouraging diversity programmes to be set up within organisations, as the findings from question six prove. However, based upon the views of 24% of respondents, there is clearly more that needs to be done to make a bigger impact and further empower women.

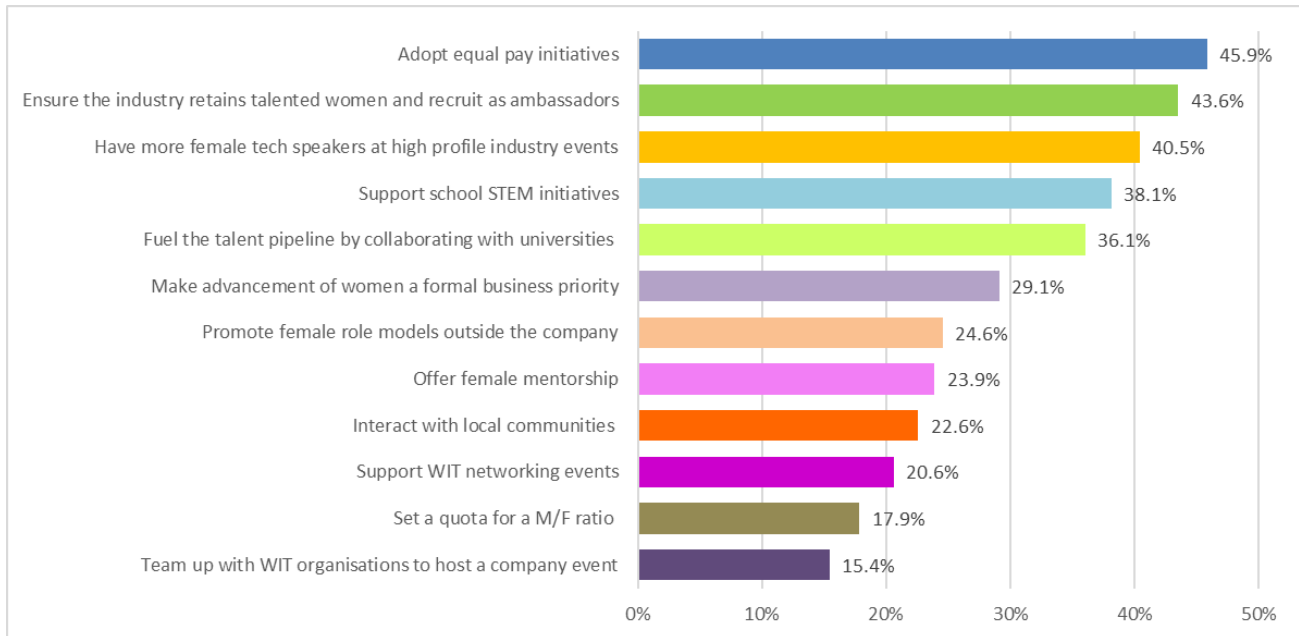
## Question #2: What would attract you most to a new role? (tick the three that most apply)



Whilst mentorship programmes to support women’s progression and tackle unconscious bias are important ways to make individuals feel valued, 64% of respondents feel even stronger about pay discrimination, and want to receive equality in their pay and benefits. Despite equal pay legislation being implemented in the US since 1963 and the UK since 1970, it remains a battle to be won.

Evidence from the survey shows that businesses need to embrace more flexible work schedules, as just over half of respondents (51%) are attracted to companies with policies to allow flexible or part-time working. Other aspects of the job, such as progression opportunities and an all-inclusive culture, were deemed important, but one could argue that this would be the case for all job applicants, regardless of gender. A 2019 survey by the Working Families<sup>6</sup> charity shows that for all genders, flexible working was a key priority, with 97% of survey respondents feeling that transparency around flexible working policies would make an employer more attractive. However, the current reality is that moving to part-time work (as a ‘flexible’ option) can be a big step, with the risk of discrimination and feelings of separation from the wider team and company culture – especially as part-time or flexible hours are often perceived as working less. For the industry to progress, and better attract and retain female talent, flexible working should not be seen as a potential barrier to progression. Flexible working arrangements, including part-time, may seem particularly important for those women returning to work after having children but can also be crucial for those women looking after elderly parents or who have other personal commitments.

### Question #3: How can organisations/the industry encourage more women into technology? (tick the four that most apply)

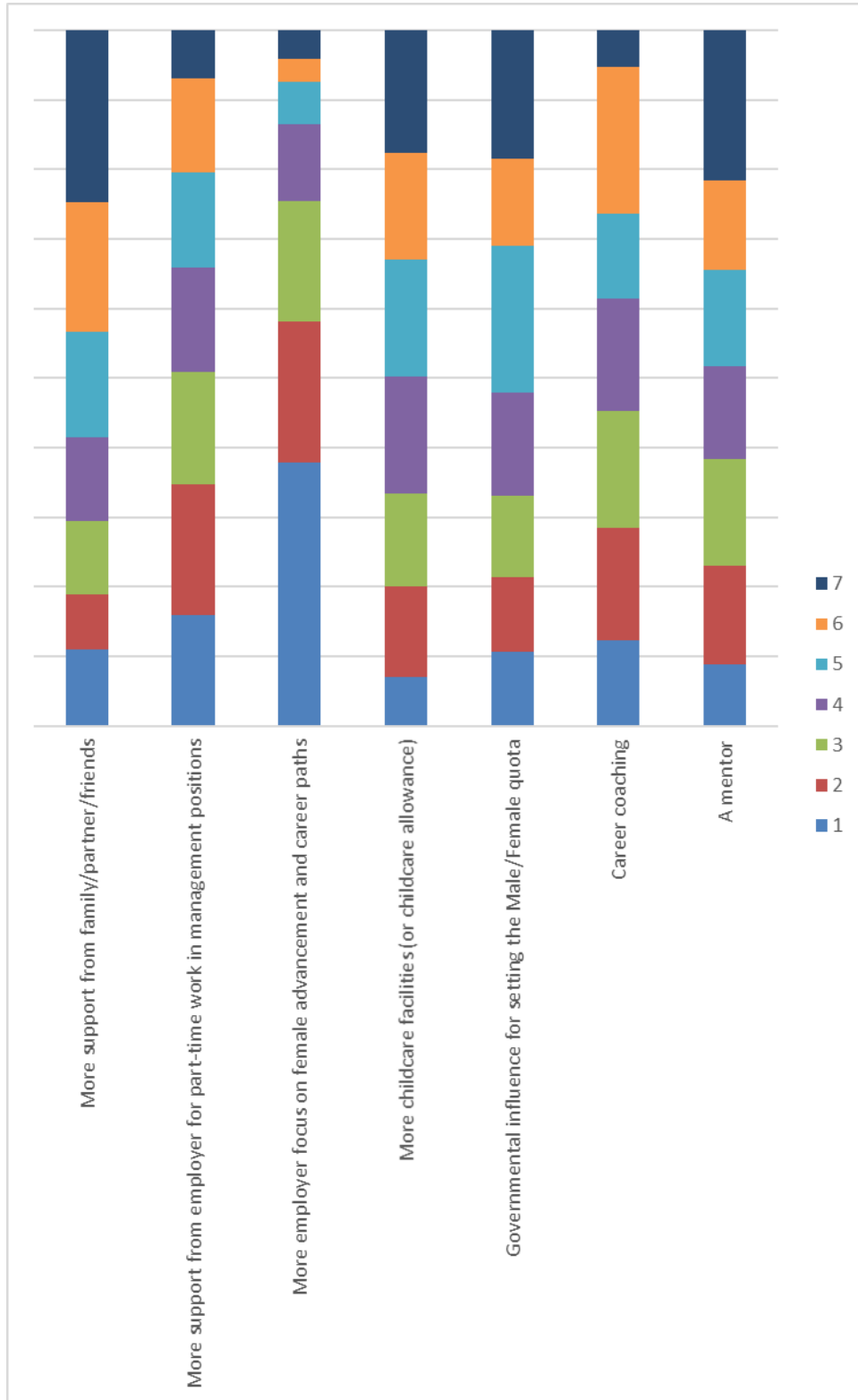


Nearly half of all respondents (46%) suggested the industry needs to ensure that businesses adopt equal pay initiatives in order to encourage more women into the technology industry. Additionally, there is clearly more that needs to be done to address stereotypes with nearly two-thirds of respondents wanting to see more visible female role models both within companies and representing the sector at key industry events. Whilst there are a lot of successful women in tech to celebrate there is still room for more, especially if they will help to nurture and motivate the upcoming talent pool.

Nearly 75% of respondents highlight the importance of industry collaboration and partnership with schools and universities to encourage more women to take up STEM subjects and build the next generation of women in tech. Initiatives within organisations seem to be most valued when they are support based (such as mentor schemes and advancement programmes) rather than quotas, with only 17.9% of respondents feeling that quotas would be encouraging.

Companies are generally seen to not be doing enough to attract or retain female talent, and as a result many organisations are missing out on quality employees. Respondents believe that if organisations were better at retaining and promoting talented women, this would be a key inspiration for more joining the industry. Companies need to have female role models at every level and implement mentoring programmes to ensure their female workforce feels confident, empowered and supported. According to some researchers, gender diversity and balance can lead to increased productivity and innovation<sup>7</sup> within the workplace, benefiting the business and its employees.

**Question #4: What do you need from others to progress your career as a woman in tech? (ranked in order of importance)**



Whilst progress is being made in terms of awareness of diversity and the gender gap, more needs to be done to drive through actions that will result in positive outcomes for women in tech.

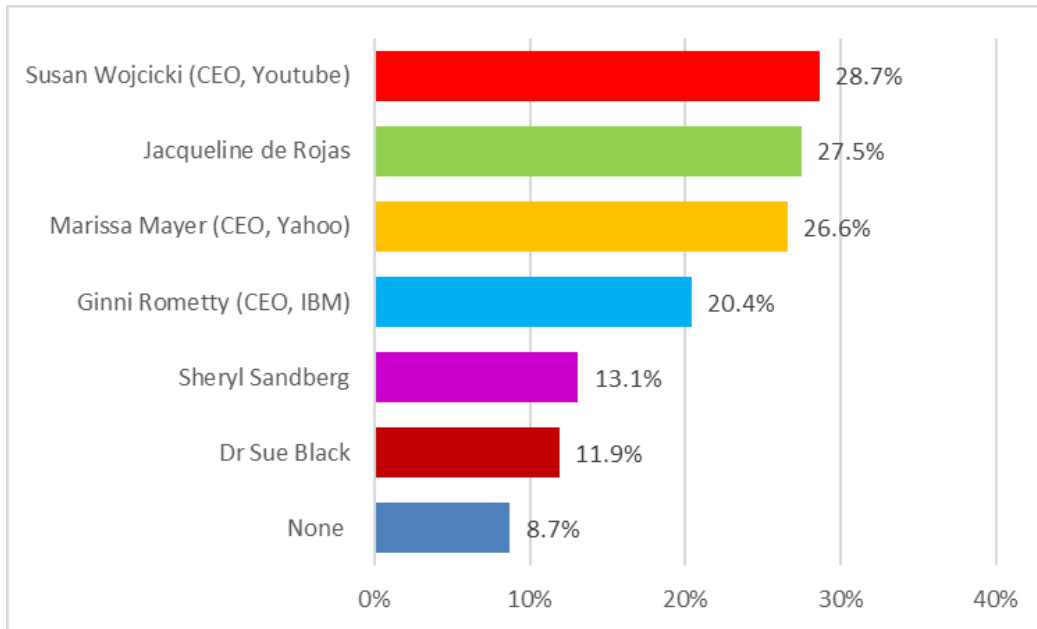
For instance, respondents predominantly ranked “more focus on female advancement and career paths” as the top way their employer could help progress their career, with over half of respondents ranking this either one or two in terms of importance. It can therefore be drawn that career advancement is one of the most important drivers for employee satisfaction and retention. Whilst this could be seen as ‘reaching a top position’ it must also be appreciated that for many women, advancement may not always mean management. It could also mean gaining experience in multiple professional fields, or with new and emerging technologies in order to create a unique and versatile role and keep up to date with the pace of technological change.

A third of respondents also ranked “more support from employer for part-time work in management positions” either one or two in terms of importance. This could be attributed to the demands that many people face from having to juggle the pressures of family life with their career. According to data from The Office for National Statistics<sup>8</sup> quite a number of women are choosing to leave it late to start a family, which could be attributed to the perception that it would be difficult to return to a high-level career after a considerable break. Whilst women working part-time at a management level do exist, they tend to be those who have worked full-time and are able to negotiate flexible hours with their employer moving forwards. Once employers start to focus on quality rather than quantity, i.e., hours, this trend should become more prevalent.

Career coaching and mentoring are the next most highly rated findings, with over 40% of women putting them as one of their top three priorities. A 2018 report by Training Industry<sup>9</sup> shows that coaching can be particularly effective in helping to narrow the gender gap in leadership development. This is a clear area of potential for employers to continue to develop for their female employees.

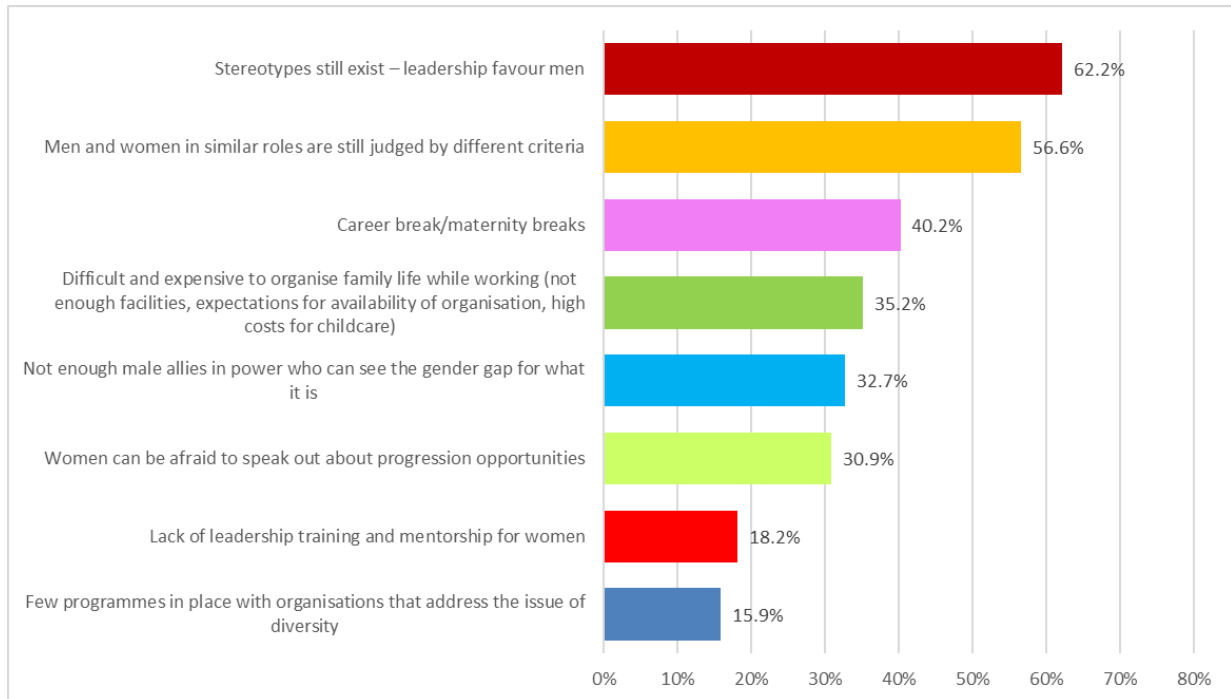


**Question #5: People often talk about more female role models for girls – which of these names are you familiar with? (tick all that apply)**



Whilst inspirational female role models in technology clearly exist, the research rather worryingly highlights that they are not widely recognised by other women in the industry. The inspiration provided by key female figures can be beneficial in encouraging and stimulating the next generation of female executives and so it is worrying that so few women already active within the industry are aware of key female figures. However, this can only be achieved if people are aware of the successes of inspirational female role models, whether this is through media, women in tech or industry awards or industry/educational events.

## Question #6: Why do you think women’s careers often advance slower than male counterparts? (tick the three that most apply)

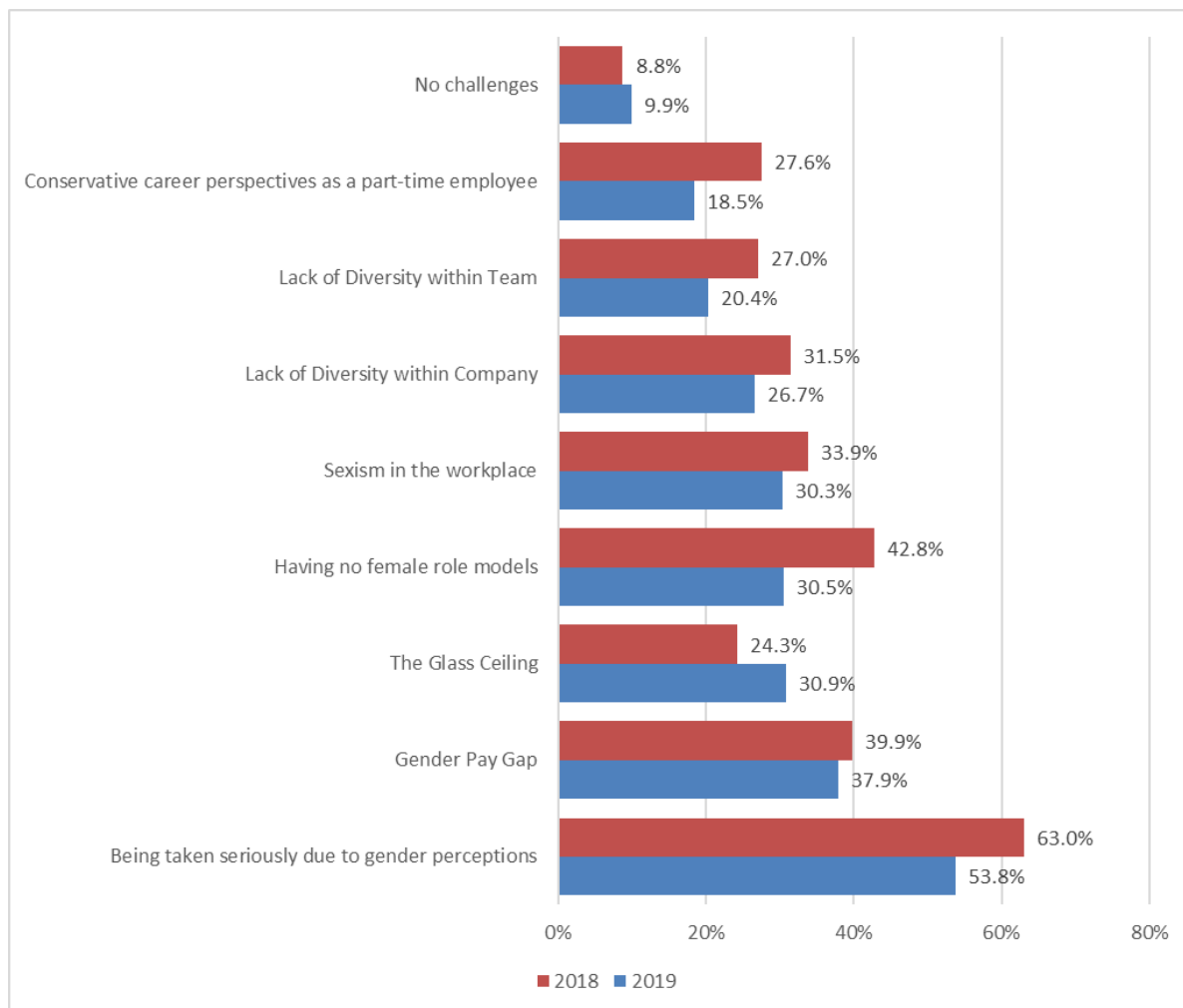


There is clearly a perception that women are still fighting against a culture that judges men and women differently, resulting in women’s careers advancing slower than their male counterparts. 62% of all respondents feel that stereotypes still favour men in leadership roles and 57% feel that men and women in similar roles are judged by different criteria. Traditionally, women have been wrongly perceived as unsuitable for leadership roles due to their stereotypically emotional and sensitive characteristics<sup>10</sup>, whereas men are often seen as ambitious and confident, traits more readily associated with the qualities of effective leadership.

Respondents also cited that family life negatively impacted their career progression, with over 75% of respondents feeling that career breaks (40%) and the challenges/costs of managing family life (35%) hold women back. Employers who offer true flexible and part-time working arrangements may be able to retain talent in the long run.

31% of respondents also reported that women are afraid to speak out about progression opportunities. This could be down to a lack of self-confidence, having been out of the working environment for a long period of time, or due to a career break or maternity leave. The research suggests it could also be due to the fact that there are not enough male allies in power to help support progression opportunities, a view that 33% of all respondents agreed with.

## Question #7: What is your biggest challenge as a woman in technology (tick all that apply)?

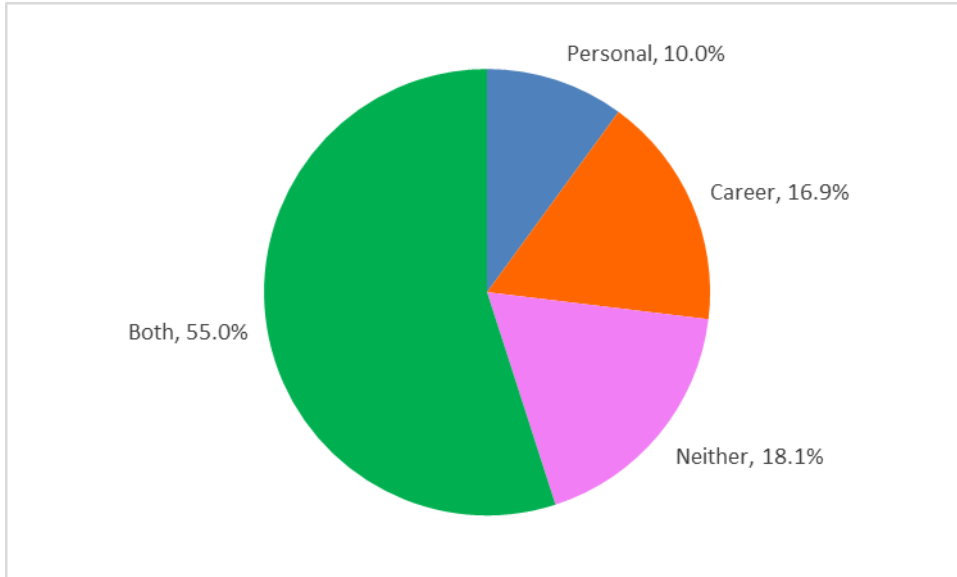


This question was asked in last year’s report and it’s interesting to see that although the main challenge faced by respondents is still not being taken seriously in the industry due to negative gender perceptions, the percentage of those feeling this way has slightly dropped from 63% last year to 54% this year. This is an encouraging trend for women in tech. Whilst this could be attributed to changing attitudes within the workplace in regards to flexible working, such as the growing acceptance of extended periods of paternity leave<sup>11</sup>, it is still seen as an issue within the industry. According to a study by the CIPD<sup>12</sup>, 55% of part-time workers feel that their job doesn’t offer good prospects for career advancement, compared to 40% of full-time workers.

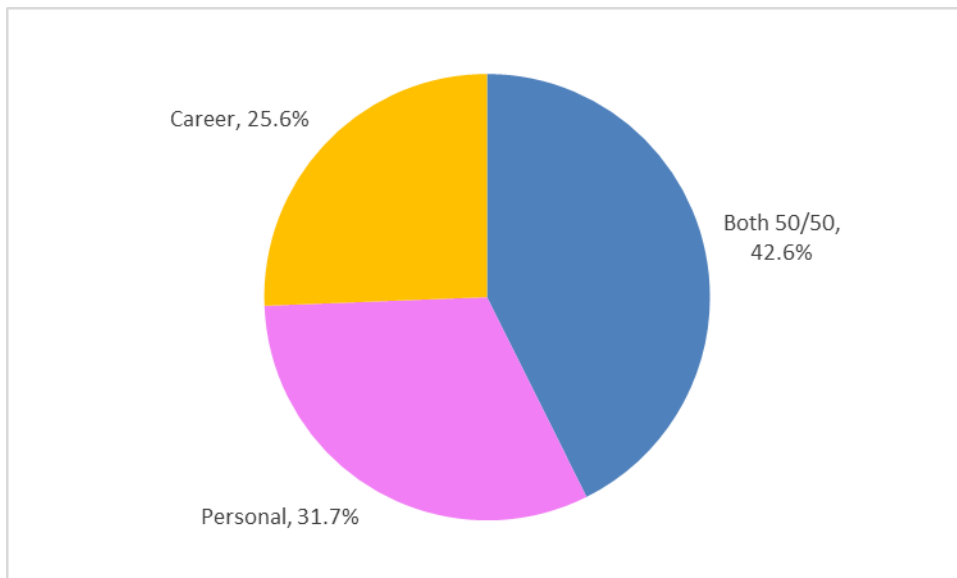
The second biggest challenge last year was a lack of female role models in the technology sector (43%). Although this remains an issue this year (31%), it is encouraging to see that it is seen as less impactful and that it is perhaps being addressed. However, the dial has now shifted towards role models really needing to make an impact within the women in tech movement, rather than just being figureheads.

The perception of a glass ceiling holding women back is cited as a key challenge by 31% of respondents, which is up from last year’s 24%. Additionally, the issue of pay is still seen as a challenge with 38% of respondents saying that this is something that needs to be addressed, compared to 40% last year.

**Question #8: Have you made and written down goals this year for both your personal life and your career? (choose one)**



**If “yes”, which goals are you executing on better? (choose one) (chart analyses “yes” answer only)**



Whilst around a fifth of respondents (18%) say they have not written any personal or professional goals, 82% reported that they have made and written down goals for the year ahead. According to LeadershipIQ<sup>13</sup>, vividly describing goals in written form is strongly associated with success. Those who document their goals are anywhere from 1.2 to 1.4 times more likely to achieve success than people who don't.

As only 72% of respondents reported that they have made and written down professional goals, there is clearly still room for improvement. As those that document their goals are more likely to achieve them, 30% of women in tech still have the opportunity to enhance their own career by visualising what they want their future to look like.

Unfortunately, there is a disparity between which goals respondents feel they are executing on better – professional or personal. Around 30% of respondents feel that they are executing their personal goals better, whilst 25% feel the same about their career goals. Of the women that only documented either their career or personal goals, more documented career goals, so it is interesting to see that women don't feel that they are being better fulfilled.

## Conclusion

Despite some steps being taken towards gender diversity and inclusion within the technology industry, there still seems to be a perceived persistent gender imbalance, which is even more apparent in leadership roles.

The research has revealed that inequality in pay and workplace benefits still exists, with 64% of respondents citing that pay equality would be biggest thing that would attract them to a new role, despite legislation being put in place to mitigate this issue and a greater awareness of negative bias. However, closing the gender pay gap isn't a quick fix and will take some time to resolve. Therefore, long-term plans and schemes such as clearly documented progression opportunities, training and recruitment policies need to be adopted now to ensure that real progress can be made in the next few years and a cultural shift achieved.

Although some progress has been made, more needs to be done in the way of awareness and support for women in tech, especially in terms of the presence of female role models within the industry and making the progression of women a business priority. The need to focus on women's progression was a key finding as 52% of respondents cited that it would attract them to a new role. Technology companies must be committed to investing in initiatives that will boost the number of female applicants and then address ways to proactively retain and promote this talent pool, helping them to become future leaders. Perhaps equally as important is connecting businesses with schools and universities to support women in making more tech-orientated choices from a young age. 38% of women believe that this is one of the top four ways to encourage more women into tech, therefore ensuring that there will be top talent coming down the pipeline.

As an industry, we need to see more commitment to supporting diversity and consideration in how to offer a more supportive working environment which includes part-time and flexible working. 51% respondents cited part-time and flexible working as something that would attract them to a new role, and it was the second most chosen option when looking at what support women need from other to progress their career. As the CIPD<sup>14</sup> notes, in many cases, flexibility leads to improvements in motivation, mental wellbeing and productivity, which all contribute towards business growth. When people feel supported and valued – regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnicity – they thrive, which has a positive impact on the growth of any organisation.

The research shows that we need to ensure the technology sector provides an attractive and inclusive working environment, as 62% of those surveyed cited stereotypes as the biggest barriers to their career advancement. Promoting an inclusive environment will enable people are able to reach their full potential. So, as well as attracting more women into the sector, we need to make sure that their careers can progress unhindered by gender stereotypes and perceptions. This requires a dedicated focus.

## Third-Party Resources

1. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/technology-media-and-telecommunications/our-insights/closing-the-tech-gender-gap-through-philanthropy-and-corporate-social-responsibility>
2. [https://www.ncwit.org/sites/default/files/resources/ncwit\\_women-in-it\\_2016-full-report\\_final-web06012016.pdf](https://www.ncwit.org/sites/default/files/resources/ncwit_women-in-it_2016-full-report_final-web06012016.pdf)
3. [https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS\\_700953/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_700953/lang--en/index.htm)
4. <https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Gender%20Equality/Women%20in%20the%20Workplace%202019/Women-in-the-workplace-2019.ashx>
5. <https://www.trainingzone.co.uk/develop/talent/developing-female-leaders-where-are-we-going-wrong>
6. [https://solutions.brighthorizons.co.uk/resources/research/modern-families-index-2019?kw=%2B2019%20%2Bmodern%20%2Bfamilies%20%2Bindex&ci=336310322291&network=g&pm=&cid=1616875560&aid=66836378571&tid=kwd-828663800806&dev=c&mt=b&lim=&lpm=9045909&pos=1t1&dm=&fid=&source=google&gclid=EA1alQobChMl4anusn25QIVgrTtCh1mjgf0EAAYASAAEgJDhfD\\_BwE](https://solutions.brighthorizons.co.uk/resources/research/modern-families-index-2019?kw=%2B2019%20%2Bmodern%20%2Bfamilies%20%2Bindex&ci=336310322291&network=g&pm=&cid=1616875560&aid=66836378571&tid=kwd-828663800806&dev=c&mt=b&lim=&lpm=9045909&pos=1t1&dm=&fid=&source=google&gclid=EA1alQobChMl4anusn25QIVgrTtCh1mjgf0EAAYASAAEgJDhfD_BwE)
7. <https://hbr.org/2019/02/research-when-gender-diversity-makes-firms-more-productive>
8. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/03/27/older-mothers-rise-over-40s-become-group-rising-conception-rate/>
9. <https://trainingindustry.com/articles/leadership/coaching-as-an-equalizer-closing-the-gender-gap-in-leadership/>
10. [https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Women\\_Take\\_Care\\_Men\\_Take\\_Charge\\_Stereotyping\\_of\\_U.S.\\_Business\\_Leaders\\_Exposed.pdf](https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Women_Take_Care_Men_Take_Charge_Stereotyping_of_U.S._Business_Leaders_Exposed.pdf)
11. <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2019/nov/17/more-fathers-are-taking-paternity-leave-but-mothers-are-still-doing-all-the-work>
12. [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/megatrends-report-flexible-working-1\\_tcm18-52769.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/megatrends-report-flexible-working-1_tcm18-52769.pdf)
13. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/markmurphy/2018/04/15/neuroscience-explains-why-you-need-to-write-down-your-goals-if-you-actually-want-to-achieve-them/#36e9c3de7905>
14. [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/megatrends-report-flexible-working-1\\_tcm18-52769.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/megatrends-report-flexible-working-1_tcm18-52769.pdf)

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