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*Women*  
OF THE  
VINE & SPIRITS®



## Women raising the bar

**Key findings from the 2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Beverage Alcohol Industry Study**



# Introduction

Promoting gender diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace is a marathon, not a sprint. It is rooted in the core principle of continuous improvement rather than a “box-checking” exercise to be addressed and filed away. Progress takes commitment to implementing fundamental change in business culture. Company leadership should think about how it can better reflect not only its own employees but also the diversity of customers and consumers it serves. As such, Deloitte, in collaboration with Women of the Vine & Spirits (WOTVS), has refreshed its research platform to further a holistic conversation around gender diversity in the beverage alcohol industry. The primary goal of this ongoing effort is to help companies operating in all tiers of the industry identify leading practices and areas for improvement.

Now in its second year, this study is meant to be a resource to help establish a standard against which individual company performance can be measured. As part of our data collection strategy, we reached out to industry leaders representing different sectors of the beverage alcohol supply chain to gather their input on the challenges they face and successful strategies they are implementing to help make positive progress toward gender equity goals. The insights gathered from the interview process have been fused together with the results of a quantitative survey fielded at the same time. The resulting study is designed to help enhance the ongoing discussion around building more gender-diverse, -equitable, and -inclusive workplaces in the beverage alcohol industry.

“If you see DEI as a must-have, it becomes the way you do business. You wouldn’t stop investing in manufacturing equipment and maintenance, and the same should be true for your workforce.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

# About the study

The Women Raising the Bar Study involved two main data collection efforts. The first was an online survey fielded among women working in the beverage alcohol industry between October and December 2022. This primary data collection effort was supplemented by a series of executive interviews conducted among industry leaders in fall 2022.

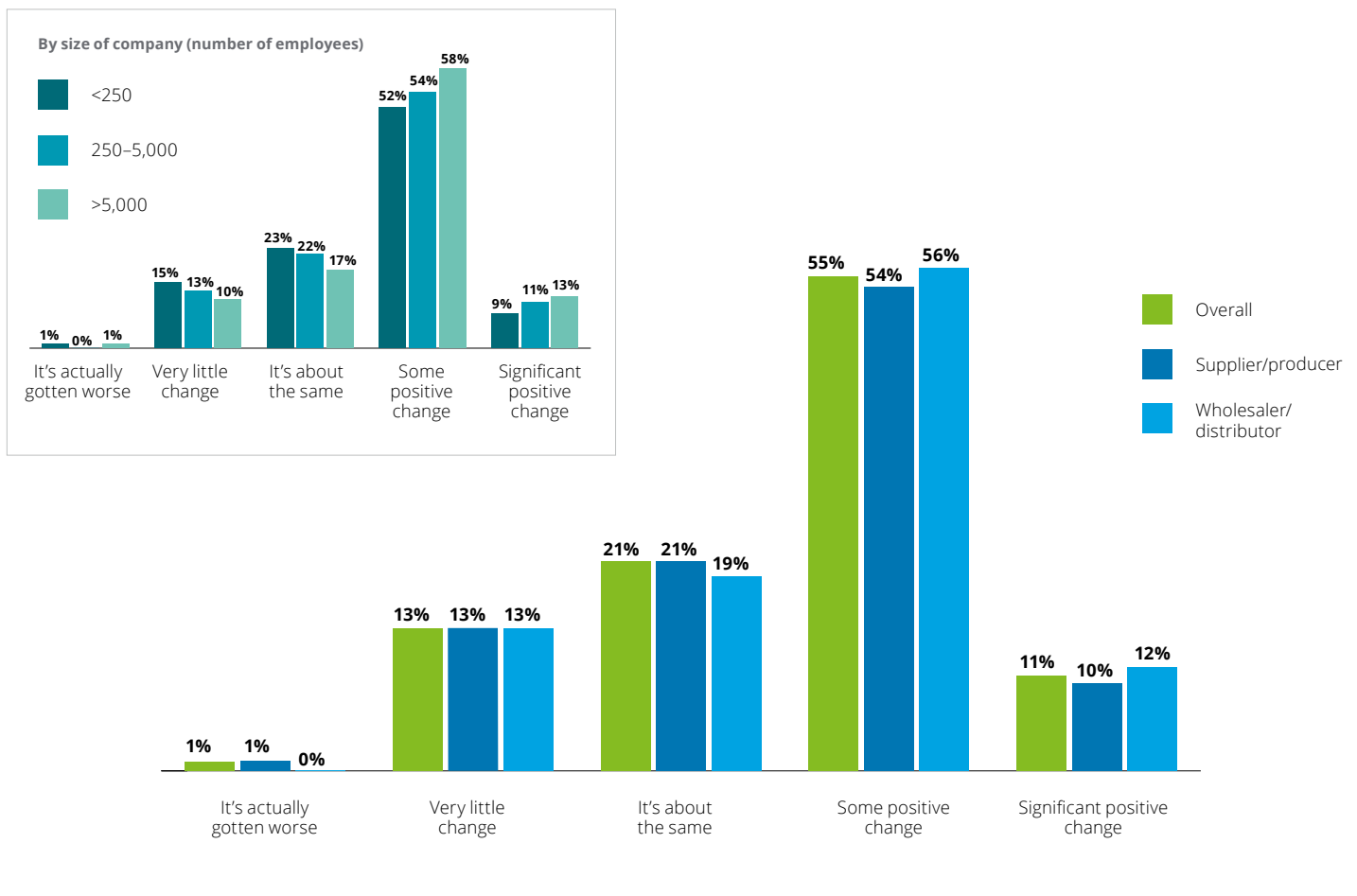
## Study highlights

- Similar to the results of last year's study, only one in 10 women working in the beverage alcohol industry believe there has been a significant positive change toward women overall in the last five years.
- Despite close to half of survey respondents indicating their company was somewhat successful in creating a better workplace through their DEI efforts, fewer than one in five women give their company top marks, suggesting room for improvement.
- Fewer than four in 10 women surveyed rate their company's efforts on retaining a diverse workforce as either good or excellent, while less than half give their company high marks for being able to recruit a diverse workforce in the first place.
- Some women could avoid the industry altogether because of the lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion, which outpaces a lack of exposure to career opportunities and a lack of work/life balance as the top issues preventing people from considering a career in the sector.
- Seventy-six percent of women working in the beverage alcohol industry would encourage other women to pursue a career in the sector.
- A majority of survey respondents believe women and people with diverse backgrounds are underrepresented among their company's leadership team, signaling a structural issue for the beverage alcohol sector to overcome.
- Women surveyed believe the benefits associated with a diverse leadership team include better decision-making, enhanced creativity, greater organizational balance, and even improved financial performance.
- Only 57% of survey respondents think their company's culture is very accepting of their family/personal commitments.
- Seven in 10 women surveyed believe mentorship programs are one of the most important factors in terms of attracting and retaining a more gender-diverse workforce, signaling the need for proactive, engaged company leadership.
- Finally, many women believe that relationship-building skills and empathetic leadership skills, such as interpersonal communication and trustworthiness, are required for leadership success.

# Where we are now

Similar to the results of last year’s study, only one in 10 women working in the beverage alcohol industry believe there has been a significant positive change toward women overall in the last five years.

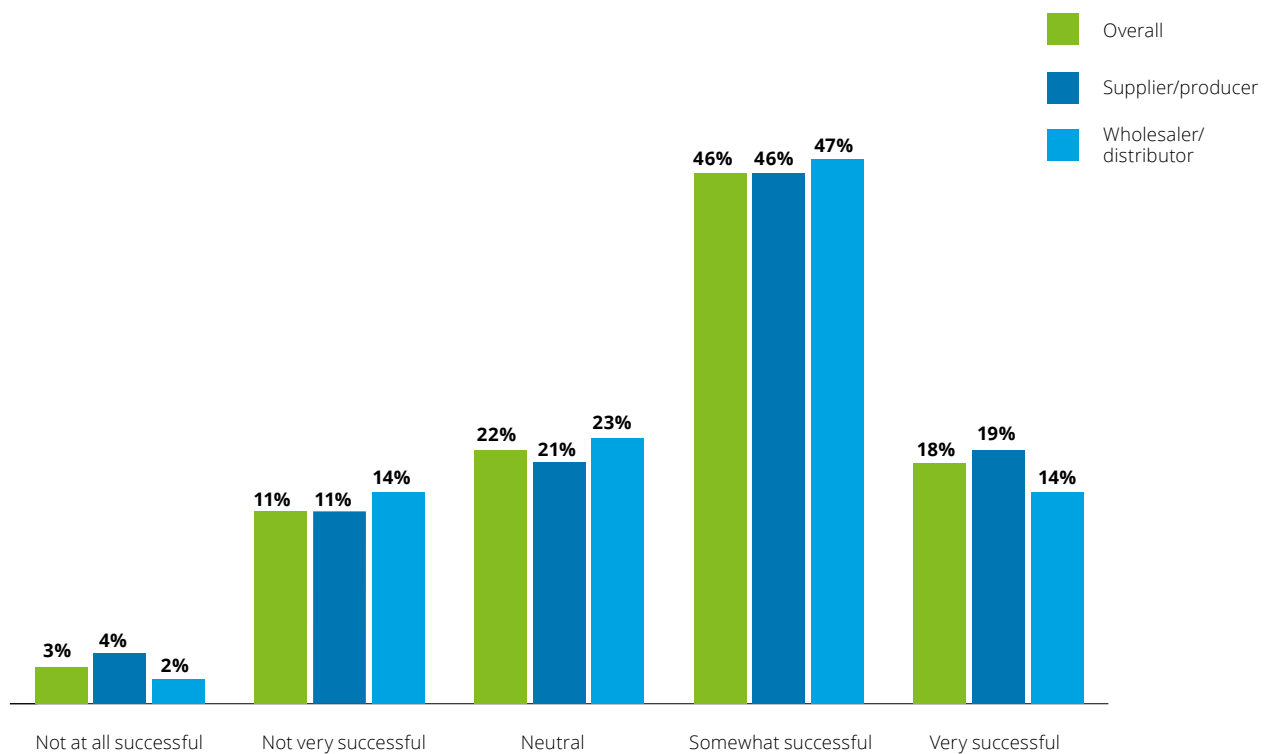
**Figure 1. Have you seen positive changes in the beverage alcohol industry’s attitude toward female employees in the last five years (by tier)?**



Q30. To what extent have you seen positive changes in the beverage alcohol industry's attitude toward women in the last 5 years?  
 Sample size: n=1,118

Despite close to half of survey respondents indicating their company was somewhat successful in creating a better workplace through their DEI efforts, fewer than one in five women give their company top marks, suggesting room for improvement.

**Figure 2. Extent to which company’s efforts on diversity, equity, and inclusion have been successful in creating a better workplace**



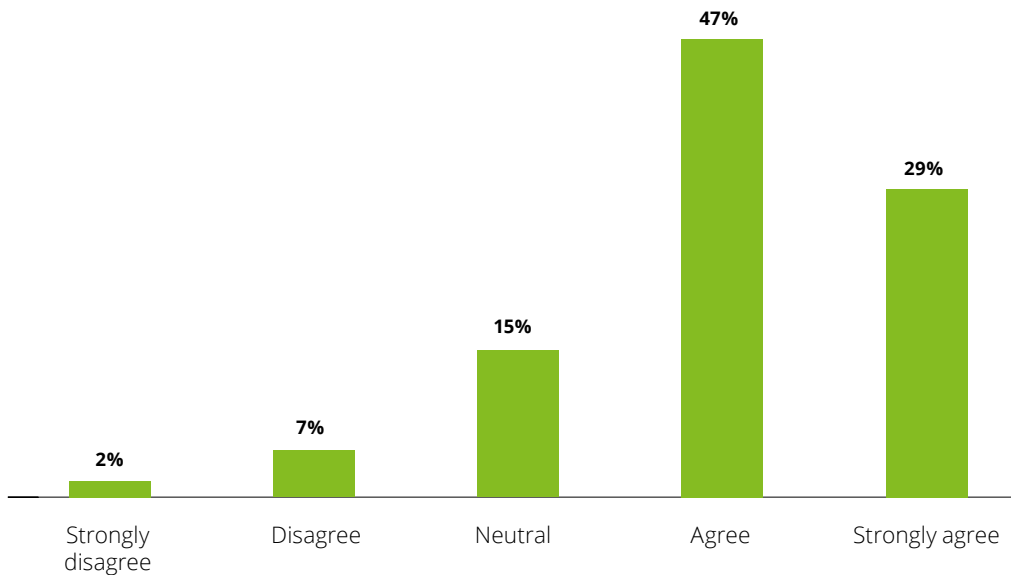
“There is good dialogue around DEI happening, but the industry has not been so successful in turning these discussions into meaningful actions.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

Note: Did not consider “Don’t know” responses.  
Q22. To what extent do you think your company’s efforts on diversity, equity, and inclusion have been successful in creating a better workplace?  
Sample size: n=1,080

Seventy-six percent of women working in the beverage alcohol industry feel they can be their authentic selves at work.

**Figure 3. Extent to which women working in the beverage alcohol industry can be their authentic selves at work**



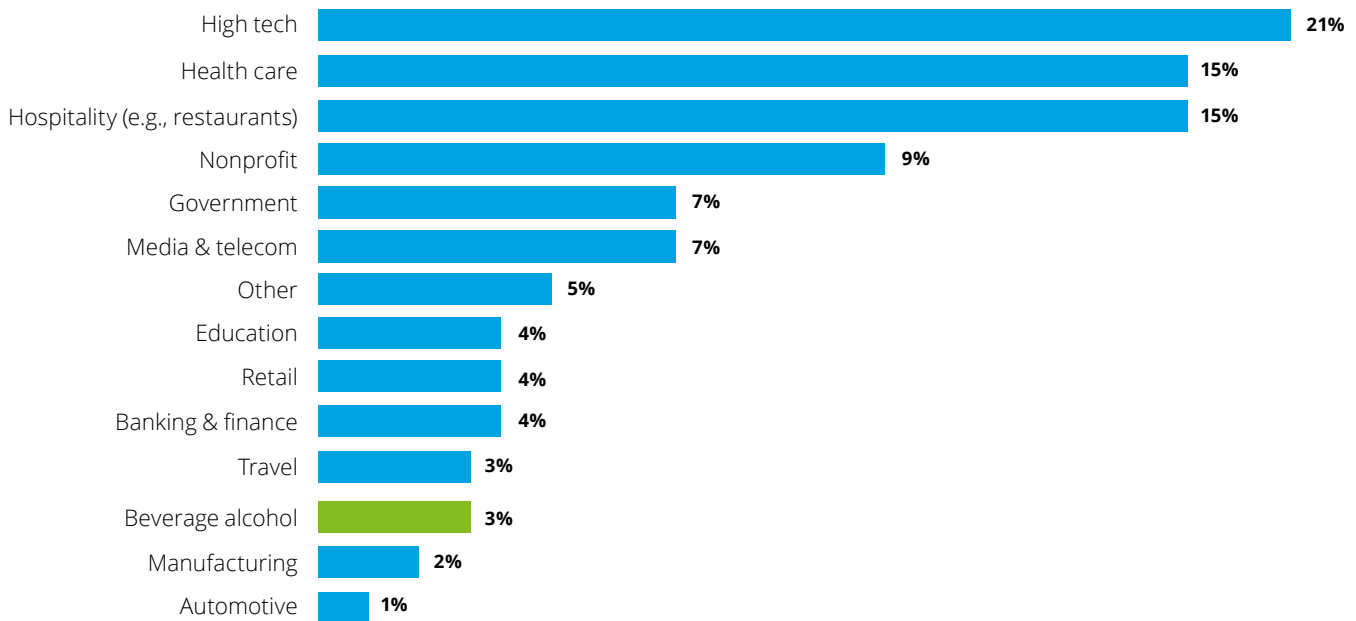
“People are coming for an experience, not just to have a drink, so we want them to also feel like they are being welcomed to a fun, safe, inclusive environment. If team members feel that way, it will transfer to the guests.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

Q31. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I can be my authentic self at work.  
Sample size: n=1,118

Women surveyed think that some of the best sectors for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce include high tech, health care, and hospitality, while the beverage alcohol industry lags near the bottom.

**Figure 4. Survey respondents' perception of the industry that does the best job of attracting and retaining a diverse workforce (% of respondents)**

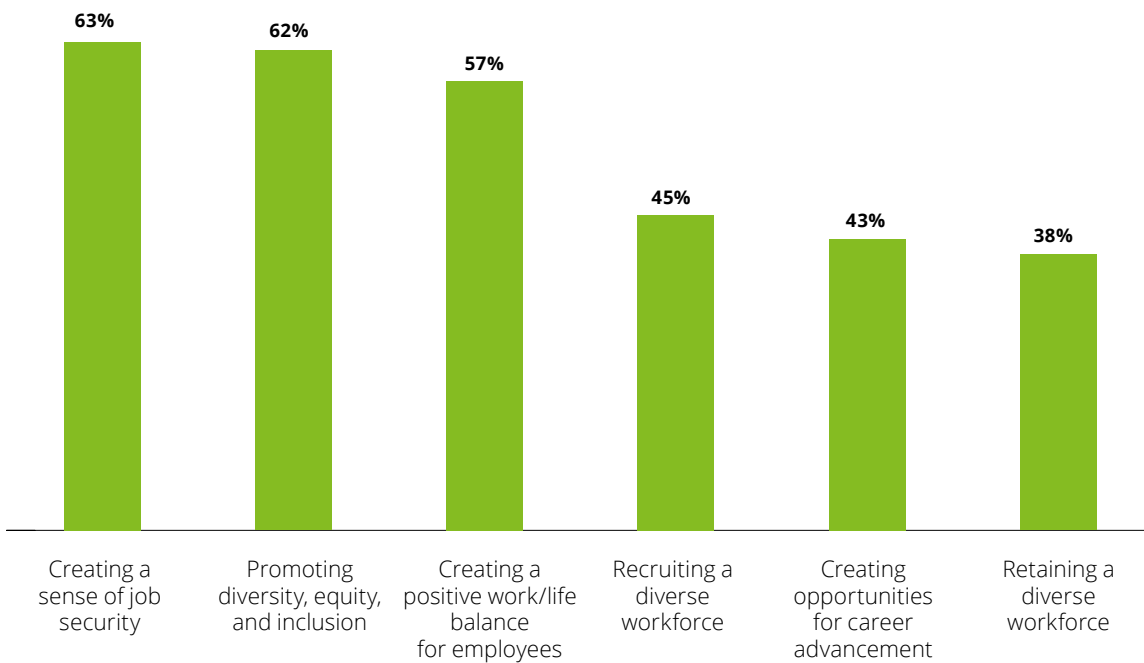


Q18. Which industry do you think does the best job of attracting and retaining a diverse workforce?  
Sample size: n=1,118



Fewer than four in 10 women surveyed rate their company's efforts on retaining a diverse workforce as either good or excellent, while less than half give their company high marks for being able to recruit a diverse workforce in the first place.

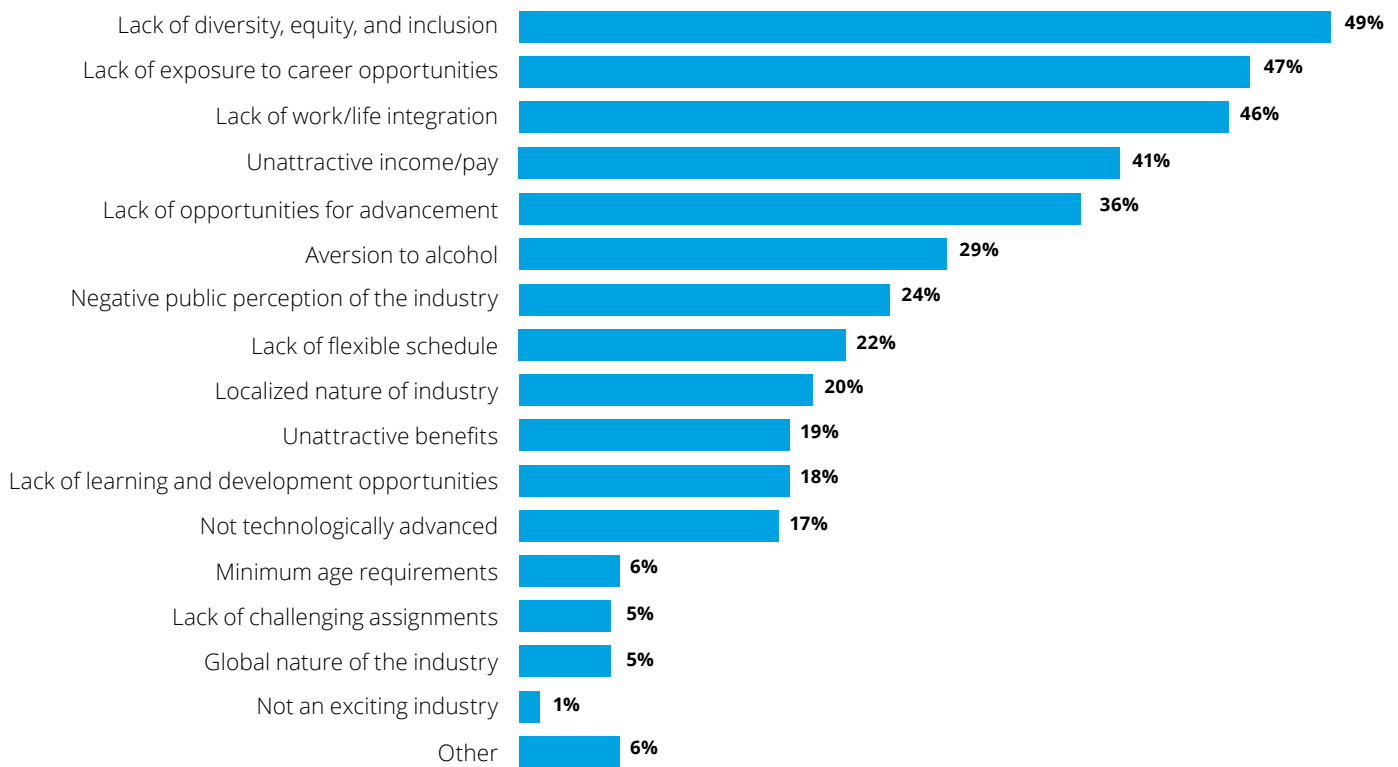
**Figure 5. Percentage of respondents who rated their company's efforts on DEI as good/excellent (i.e., top 2 box)**



Note: "Don't know" responses were not considered.  
Q19. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate your company's efforts on the following items?  
Sample size: n=1,097

But some women could avoid the industry altogether because of the lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion, which outpaces a lack of exposure to career opportunities and a lack of work/life integration as the top issues preventing people from considering a career in the sector.

**Figure 6. Top issues that prevent people from considering a career in the beverage alcohol industry**



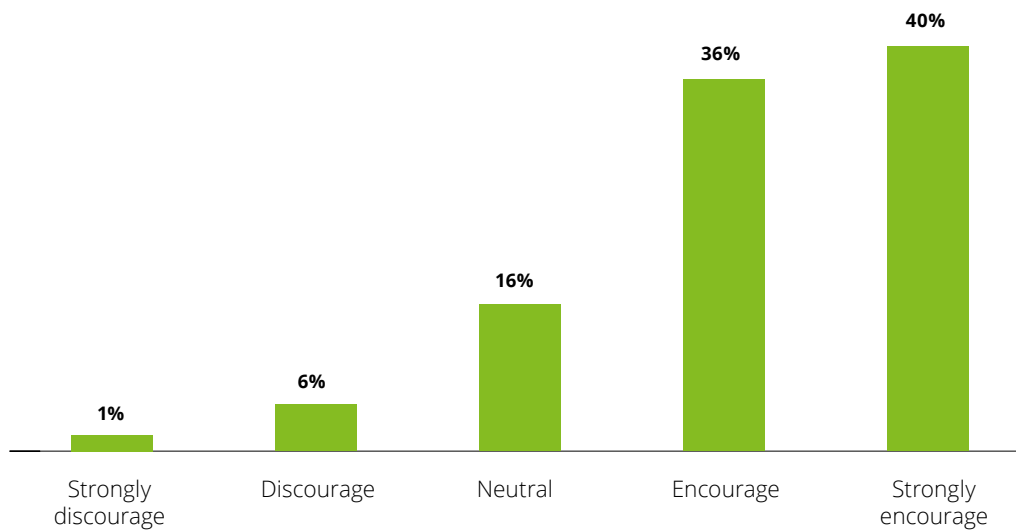
“Attracting talent when there is a strong preference for people with industry experience makes it hard to attract different and more diverse candidates, and if we keep recycling the same talent at a senior level, it will take us a very long time to change.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

Q15. What do you think the top issues are that prevent people from considering a career in the beverage alcohol industry? (Please select all that apply)  
 Sample size: n=1,118

Seventy-six percent of women working in the beverage alcohol industry would encourage other women to pursue a career in the sector.

**Figure 7. Extent to which you would encourage women to pursue a career in the beverage alcohol industry**



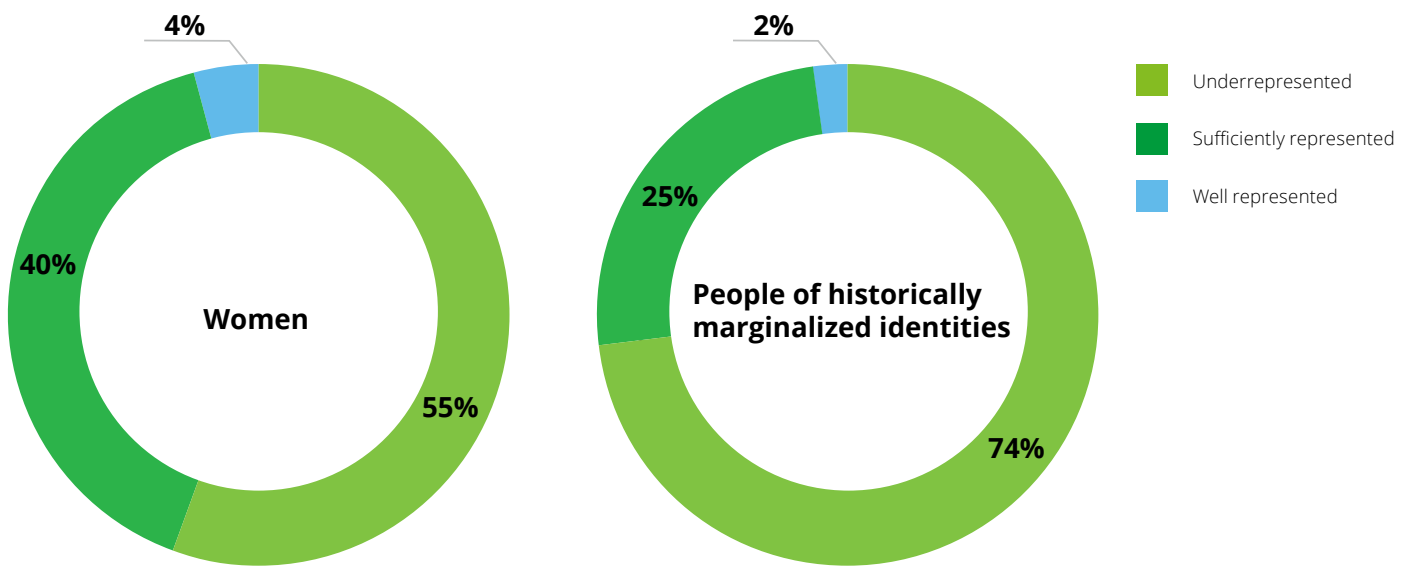
“It’s hard to attract people when they can’t see themselves reflected in leadership, and it can be very disempowering to look around and not see yourself reflected.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

Q23. To what extent would you encourage young women to pursue a career in the beverage alcohol industry?  
Sample size: n=1,118

A majority of survey respondents believe women and people of historically marginalized identities are underrepresented among their company's leadership team, signaling a structural issue for the beverage alcohol sector to overcome.

**Figure 8. Extent to which women are represented in company's leadership team and the extent to which people of historically marginalized identities are represented in company's leadership team**



“How can you know what your consumer wants if the people making the decisions don't reflect the end consumer groups?”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

Note: “Don't know” responses were not considered.

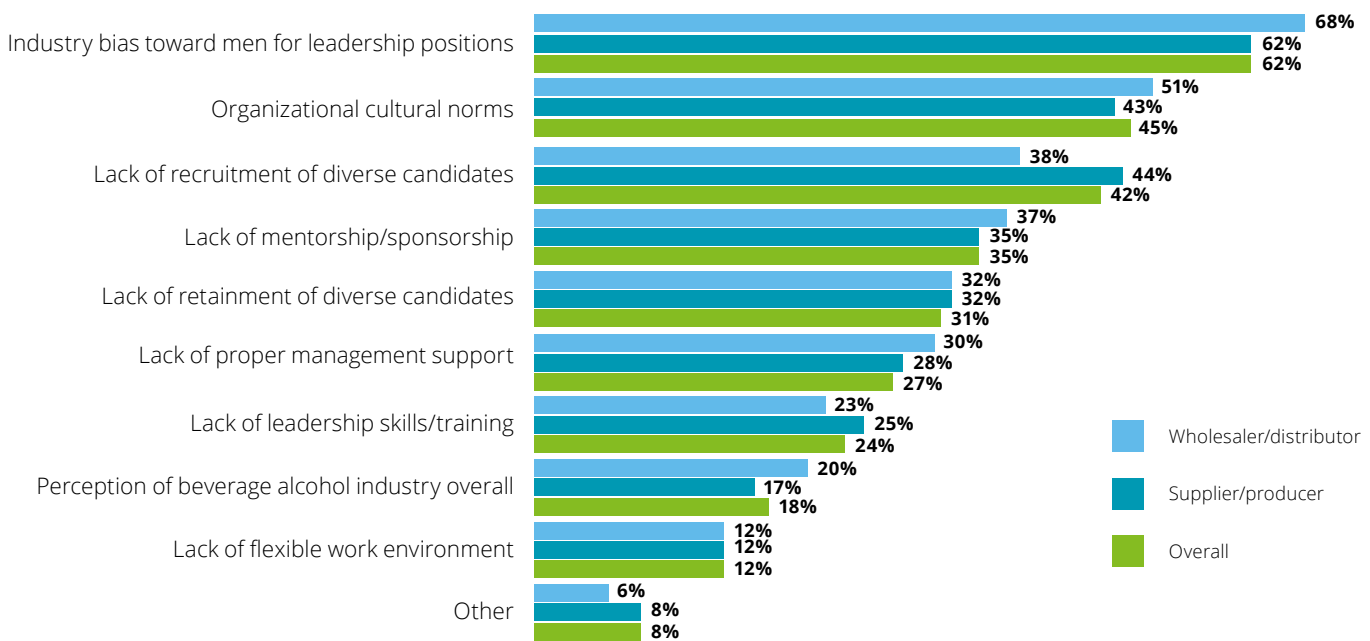
Q26. To what extent are women represented within your company's leadership team?

Q27. To what extent are people with diverse backgrounds represented within your company's leadership team?

Sample size: n [26]=1,091; [27]= 1,057

When it comes to factors that most likely contribute to a lack of diversity in leadership positions, the perception of industry bias toward men tops the list, particularly in the wholesaler/distributor tier.

**Figure 9. Factors that generally contribute most to a lack of diversity in leadership positions**



“Companies can’t rely on the people that got them there, or else they won’t survive innovation and disruption.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

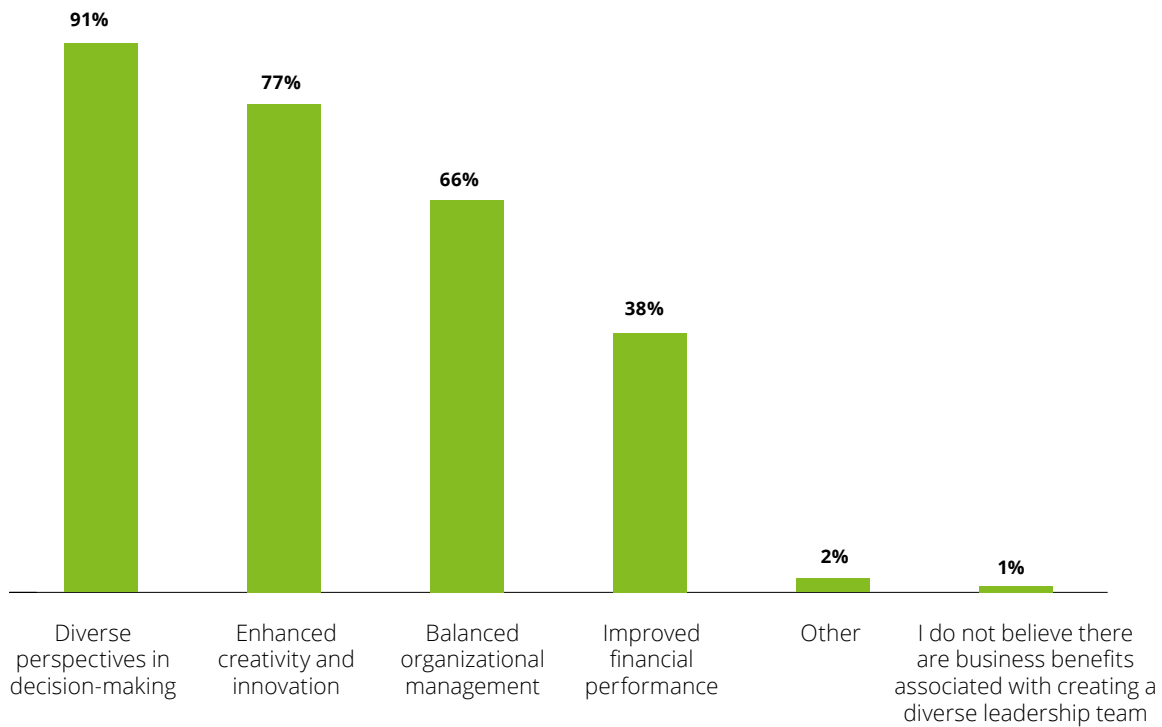
Q25. In your opinion, what factors generally contribute most to a lack of diversity in your company's leadership? (Please select all that apply)

Sample size: n=1,118

# A path forward

Women surveyed believe the benefits associated with a diverse leadership team include better decision-making, enhanced creativity, greater organizational balance, and even improved financial performance.

**Figure 10. Business benefits of a diverse leadership team**



“If your workforce represents the community at large, then you make better decisions.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

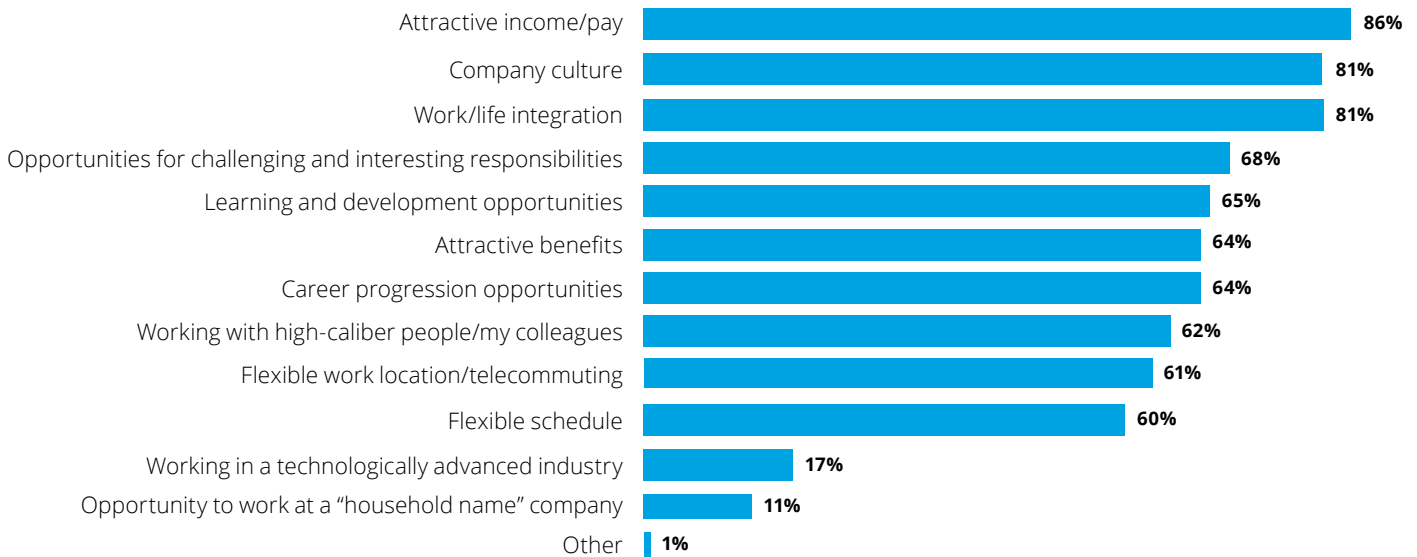
“Work is better with diversity at the table, telling better stories, so consumers can see themselves reflected authentically in the brand.”

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

Q28. In your opinion, what are the most important business benefits associated with creating a gender-diverse leadership team? (Please select all that apply)  
Sample size: n=1,118

Attractive pay, company culture, and work/life integration are the most critical career objectives for women, outpacing learning/development opportunities and having challenging responsibilities.

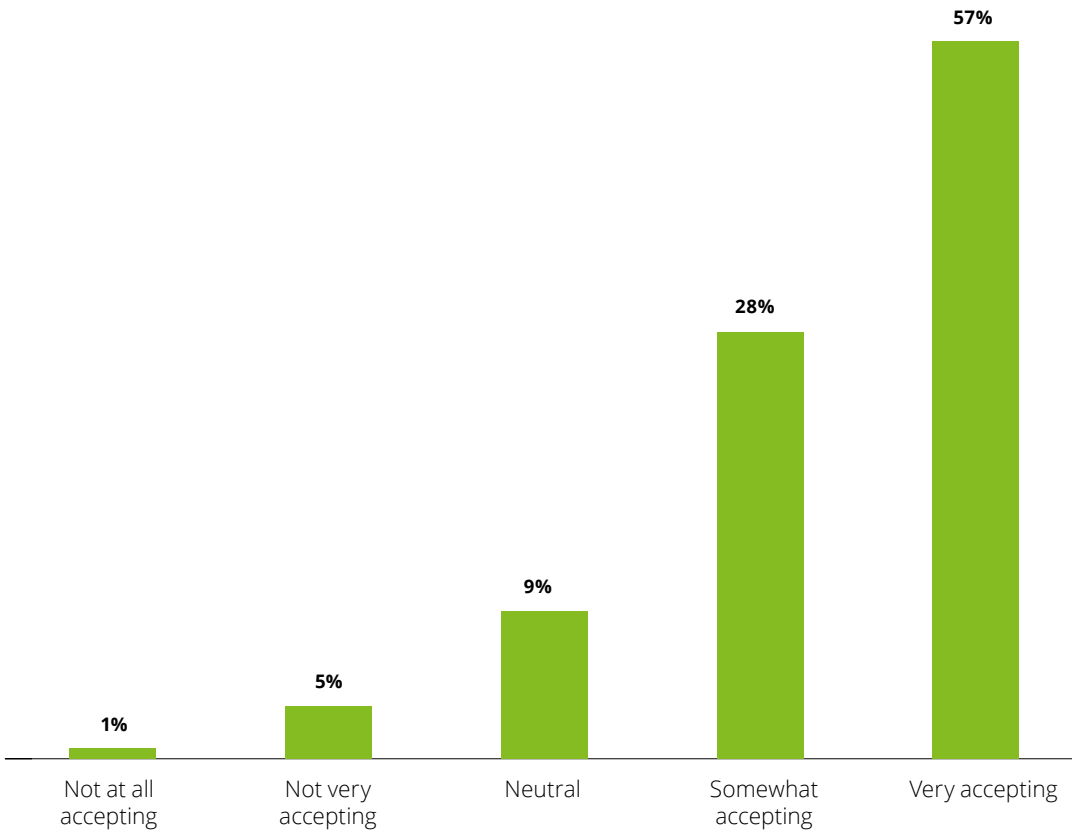
**Figure 11. Most important career objectives**



Q14. Thinking about your career in general, which of the following objectives are most important to you?  
 (Please select all that apply)  
 Sample size: n=1,118

Only 57% of survey respondents think their company's culture is very accepting of their family/personal commitments.

Figure 12. How accepting of family/personal commitments do you think your company is?

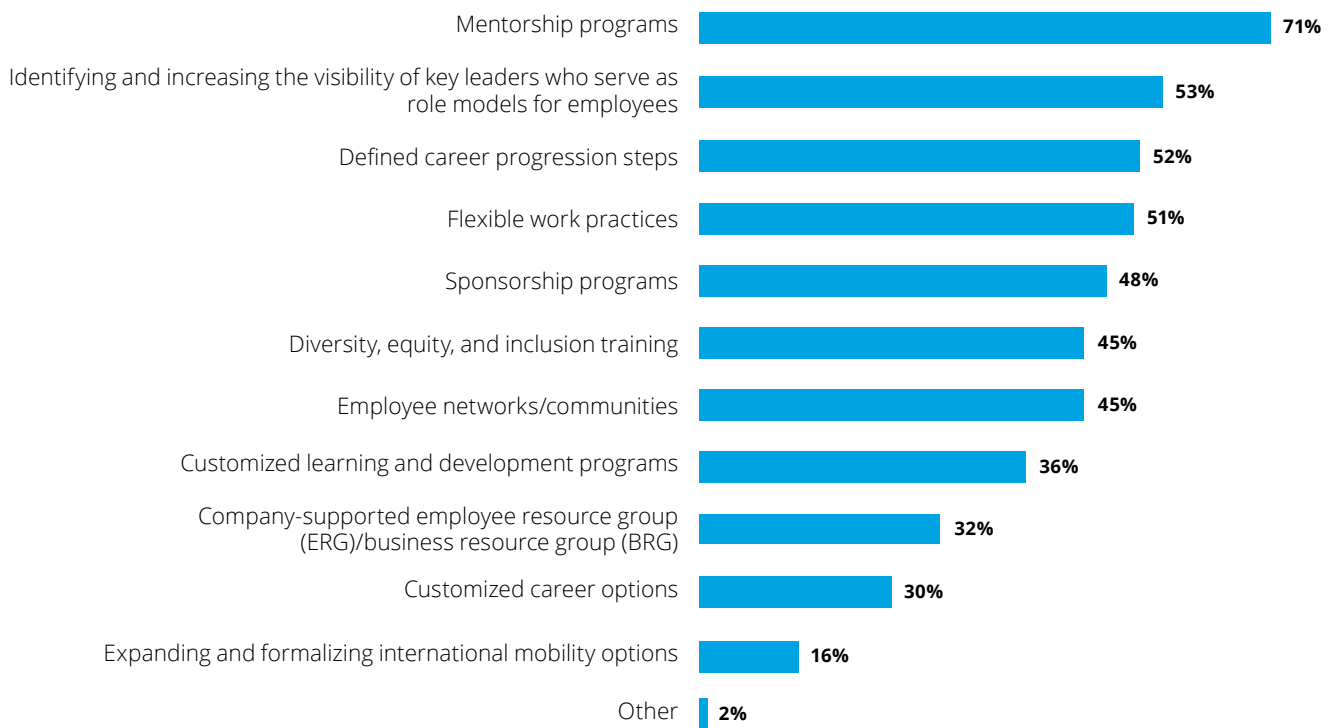


Note: "Don't know" responses were not considered.  
Q21. How accepting of family/personal commitments do you think your company is?  
Sample size: n=1,110



Seven in 10 women surveyed believe mentorship programs are the most important factor in terms of attracting and retaining a more gender-diverse workforce, signaling the need for proactive, engaged company leadership.

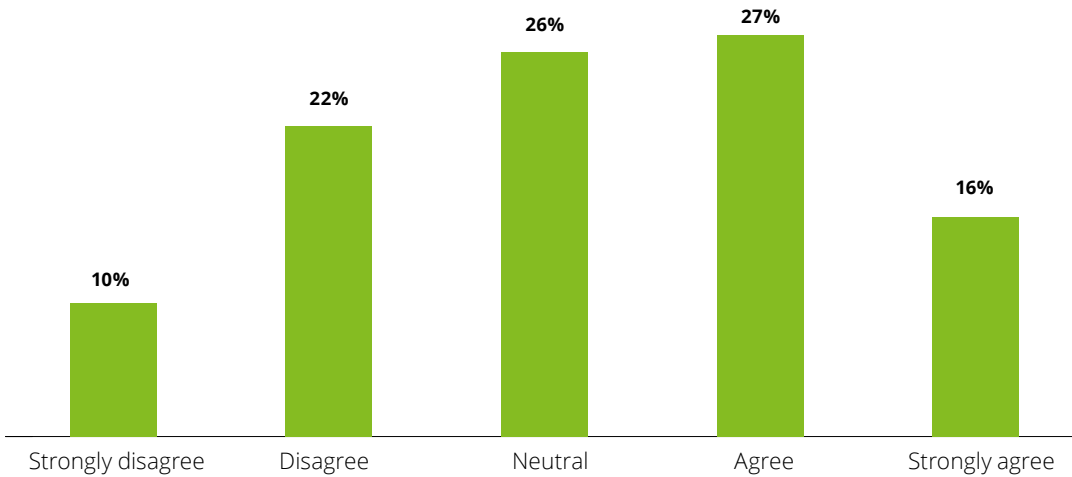
**Figure 13. Most successful factors to attract and retain a more diverse workforce**



Q29. In your opinion, which of the following talent programs are the most successful in terms of attracting and retaining a more gender-diverse workforce? (Please select all that apply)  
 Sample size: n=1,118

But one-third of women surveyed feel they do not have an opportunity to engage with more senior employees through mentorship programs.

**Figure 14. Extent to which women working in the beverage alcohol industry feel they have mentorship opportunities with leaders at higher management levels**



“We need to redefine what we mean by ‘best’ and, if we hire people more for potential, how we teach and support folks on their journey.”

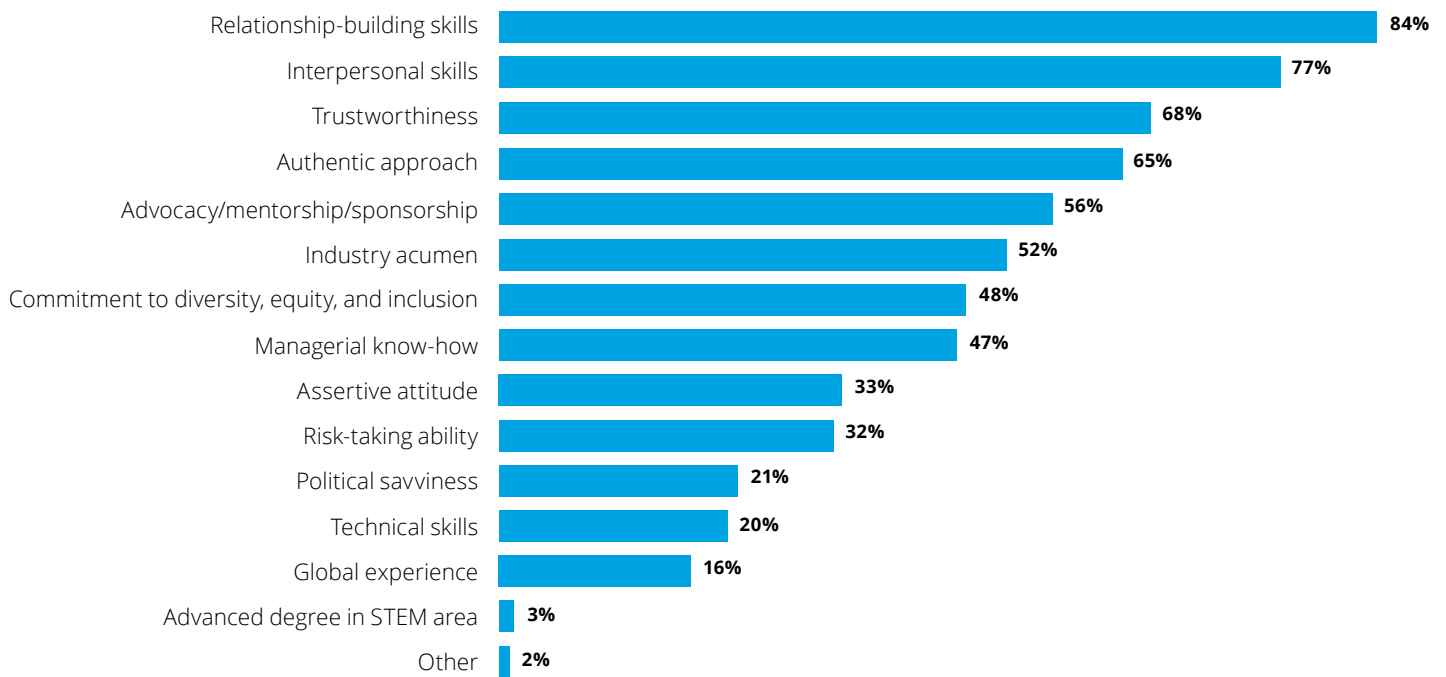
— **INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE**

Q31. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I have mentorship opportunities with leaders at higher management levels.

Sample size: n=1,118

Finally, most women surveyed believe that relationship-building skills and empathetic leadership skills, such as interpersonal communication and trustworthiness, are required for leadership success.

**Figure 15. Most important aspects that make a leader most successful in beverage alcohol industry**



Q17. Which of the following do you believe makes a leader most successful in the beverage alcohol industry?  
 (Please select all that apply)

Sample size: n=1,118

Study results suggest the beverage alcohol industry still has a way to go in terms of making solid progress toward longer-term DEI objectives.

The survey suggests that the industry is **not moving the needle on gender DEI very quickly**, as many of the same issues persist from last year's study. While executives interviewed point to many positive conversations articulating the need to effect change, these conversations do not appear to be resulting **in concrete action**.

The **underrepresentation of women and people of historically marginalized identities can be a "catch-22"**—it can be hard to hire for senior positions given the **qualification criteria**, and it can be hard to hire for more junior positions because they may not see themselves reflected in senior leaders.

It is not only employees who need to see themselves reflected, but **consumers also should see themselves reflected authentically in a brand** in order to help feel connected and engaged.

Mentorship is important (when it happens), but **companies should also focus on introducing sponsorship programs** to get senior leaders engaged in actively supporting the careers of junior colleagues.

Mentorship and sponsorship programs need **leaders who can bring relationship-building and empathetic leadership skills**, such as interpersonal communication and trustworthiness, to the table.

It's about clearly articulating what DEI means, what the belief system is, and understanding where companies are in their DEI journeys and determining a plan of action based on that; then, it is about understanding progress made.

—INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

In order to make positive progress toward your DEI objectives, you should take action both within and outside your organization.



### Your people are demanding it

**The Great Resignation<sup>1</sup> is upon us...**

An empowered workforce is demanding inclusive and equitable work environments, benefits, rewards, and better work/life integration, leading to the highest levels of turnover seen in this decade.



### The market expects it

**Stakeholder capitalism<sup>2</sup> is the new normal...**

Evolving expectations from customers, suppliers, and regulators demand that organizations address and pursue equitable outcomes.



### Society will benefit from it

**Businesses today are in a unique position to lead...**

As influential bodies in society, with platforms and resources to enact change, businesses can play an essential role in advancing equity at a systemic level.

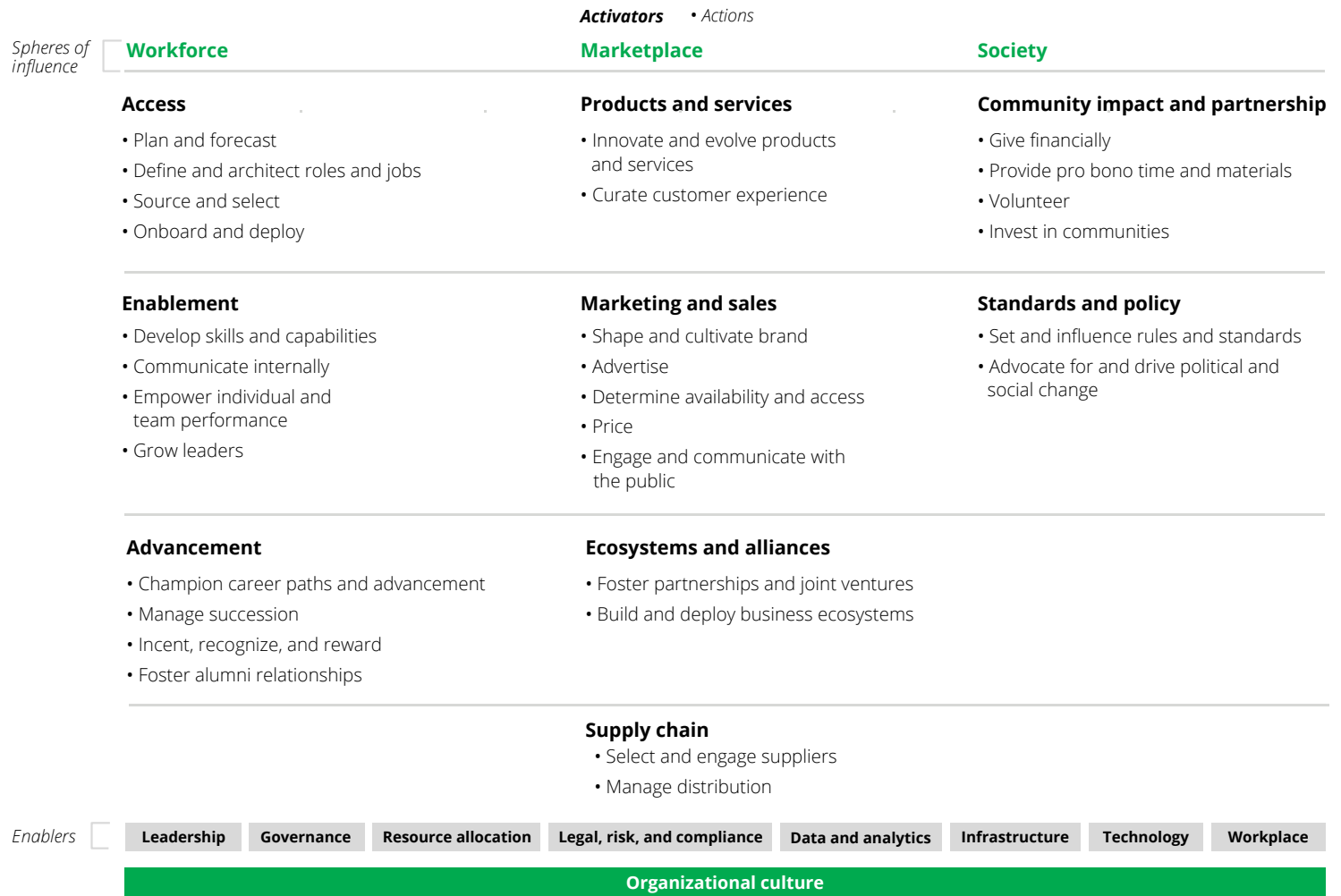


### You have a personal stake

**This can be your legacy...**

Leaders today are being held accountable for equitable outcomes. Those who lead the way can reap personal reward and fulfillment and cement their legacies.

There are certain activators and supporting actions companies can take to drive equity in a proven, robust way.



# Deloitte's equity-related eminence

Deloitte's DEI services are backed by an ecosystem of thought leadership. Our publications can help organizations understand what DEI means today, how it impacts business outcomes, and what leadership behaviors are required to unleash employee and business potential moving forward.



## Buying into better

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*A longer-term view of the six forces that will impact the markets, models, and mechanics of the consumer industry over the coming decade.*

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## Women raising the bar

*How can companies build more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces for women in the beverage alcohol industry? This study explores the biggest challenges facing the industry today and strategies to help alcohol companies make positive progress toward their DEI goals.*

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## Ethical technology and trust

*Those companies that develop an ethical technology mindset—demonstrating a commitment to ethical decision-making and promoting a culture that supports it—have an opportunity to earn the trust of their stakeholders.*

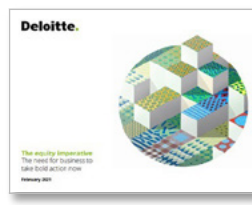
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## Support your Black workforce, now

*Racial inequity is far from new, but a global pandemic and recent instances of violence toward Black people have illuminated and magnified racial disparities with extraordinary fervor. Organizations need to better support their Black workforce, especially in this moment.*

Published: July 2020 | [Read more](#)

## Contacts

### Kimberly Betts

Global Consumer DEI Leader  
Deloitte Consulting LLP  
[kbetts@deloitte.com](mailto:kbetts@deloitte.com)

### Deborah Brenner

Founder & CEO  
Women of the Vine & Spirits  
[brenner@womenofthevine.com](mailto:brenner@womenofthevine.com)

### Elizabeth Boyd

VP, Corporate Membership  
& Engagement  
Women of the Vine & Spirits  
[elizabeth@womenofthevine.com](mailto:elizabeth@womenofthevine.com)

### Ryan Robinson

Director, Consumer Research  
Deloitte LLP  
[ryanrobinson@deloitte.ca](mailto:ryanrobinson@deloitte.ca)

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## Endnotes

1. Kim Parker and Juliana Menasce Horowitz, "[Majority of workers who quit a job in 2021 cite low pay, no opportunities for advancement, feeling disrespected](#)," Pew Research Center, March 9, 2022.
2. Doug Sundheim and Kate Starr, "[Making stakeholder capitalism a reality](#)," *Harvard Business Review*, January 22, 2020.





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