

Study shows perception gaps regarding efforts to develop women leaders

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Perceptions about organizational effectiveness regarding recruiting, developing and retaining women vary both by gender and management level, according to a survey conducted by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Kenan-Flagler Business School.

“Significant gaps exist in the ways that business leaders view their firms’ efforts to develop women business leaders,” said Susan Cates, associate dean of executive development. “These differing perceptions can cause unintended consequences for companies, which need to be aware that these gaps exist and ensure that perceptions match reality in their organizations.”

According to the survey results:

- There’s a correlation between the respondents’ management level and their [perception](#) of the increase of women in leadership positions: 60 percent of the highest senior level executives reported an increase over the last five years compared to 38 percent of managers.
- 65 percent of male respondents believed the number of women in leadership positions in their companies has increased over the past five years, and 57 percent believe the number will continue to increase over the next five years. This is significantly higher than 44 percent and 36 percent, respectively, reported by women.
- Only 11 percent of all respondents believe their organizations are

extremely effective in recruiting women executives, while 14 percent stated their companies were not at all effective. The more senior the respondent, the more positive the view on their company's recruiting efforts: 53 percent of the highest senior level executives said firms were extremely or moderately effective, compared to 28 percent of managers.

- 73 percent of men believe their company is extremely or moderately effective in retaining woman, while only 52 percent of women feel similarly.
- Over two-thirds (68 percent) of the highest senior level executives stated retention efforts for [women](#) are extremely or moderately effective compared to 44 percent among managers.

Survey findings are based on responses of 925 business professionals involved in talent development. For the full survey results and a related article, visit

www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/exec ... rograms/white-papers .

Provided by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine

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