



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP STUDY

Together, all the way.®



NEW RESEARCH SHOWS:

Female business leaders have something in common – many have taken less traditional paths to get to where they are today.



Modern career journeys no longer follow one simple approach for progression.

Many female leaders have made nontraditional, sometimes surprising choices in their career – for professional or personal reasons – and it paid off.

In fact, the large majority attribute their success to such moves, along with:



Determination, adaptability and confidence



A willingness to step outside of their comfort zone



Mentorship

Now they are encouraging the next generation of women to be open to pursuing the “less expected” career paths, to diversify their skill sets and more rapidly evolve as new technologies, opportunities and life situations emerge.





The unconventional path



Career progression is a jungle gym.

More than eight in 10 female business leaders (81%) agree that career progression isn't, and shouldn't be, thought of as linear.



More than seven in 10 (73%) say that the potential for career growth is more important than other factors, including job title or status.



Nearly eight in 10 (79%) have made a nontraditional change, such as taking the less glamorous job.

And more importantly,

86% of those women would credit their current position and advanced skill sets to the career changes they've made.



Broad experience is critical.

The next generation of female business leaders believe broad experience is important.

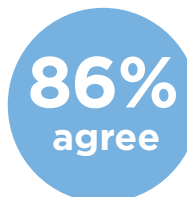
80% MILLENNIALS & 72% BOOMERS

say work experience across industries is important to career progression.

Respondents' advice for the next generation of female leaders

includes being open to a variety of career changes, such as:

working outside their skill set



changing industries



Nearly nine in 10 (89%) say that **continuous technological innovation** will require the female business leaders of tomorrow to actively seek new types of jobs, skills and career experiences.



WOMEN LEADERS AGREE:

The ability to perform at a high level and the confidence to make their opinions heard are necessary to career success.

Successful female leaders agree there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to career success, but certain qualities have come into play on their way to the top.

- › Adaptability
- › Determination
- › Confidence

Of equal importance are the abilities to know their strengths, speak up and work in a diverse/inclusive environment.





Adaptability, determination and confidence



Eight in 10 respondents (80%)

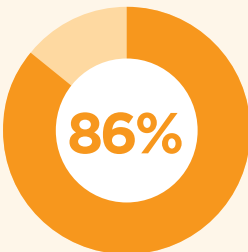
say **confidence** is an essential trait of successful female leaders.



98% believe **determination** and having a strong desire to succeed is important.



99% say having the **ability to adapt** is important to their career progression.



say that working in an environment that **values diversity** is important for the female leaders of tomorrow.



say the next generation of female leaders must feel like **their voices are heard** and taken into account, and like they are part of a team.

Most important was knowing their strengths.



73%

Knowing their strengths



63%

Knowing your self-worth



62%

Having the courage to speak up



It's more than a career – it's a journey.

Female leaders care about enriching their journey as they move forward in their careers. In addition, they are interested in enriching experiences, the intellectual challenge of a new job, learning new skills and working with intelligent colleagues.

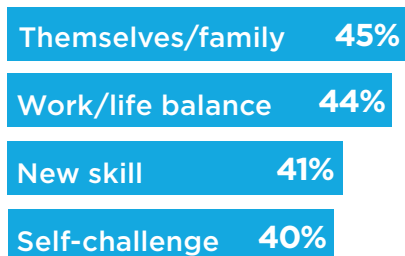
As women, one of the biggest challenges to overcome is the tendency to want to check every box before applying for or pursuing a role – ensuring they are 100% qualified – rather than relying on one's foundation of skills and taking the leap of faith. Learning occurs when allowing oneself to stretch, grow and, sometimes, even learn from failure.





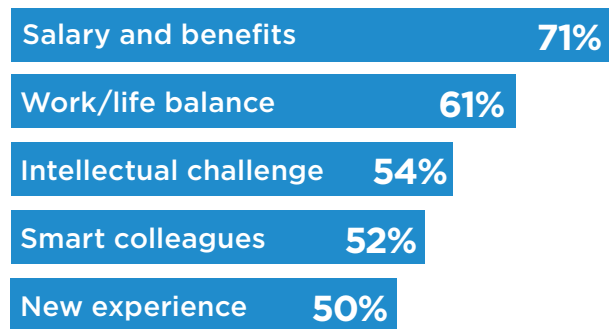
Beyond the comfort zone

When making career moves, **four in 10** consider:



Female business leaders care as much about the career journey and what a new role can offer as they do about reaching the top.

When thinking about taking a new position, respondents consider:



Over half the women (51%) say that maintaining a healthy work/life balance was essential to their career progression.



Other women were considering making changes to: **Gain the skills needed for their dream job** (28%), gain visibility within their company/organization (24%) or make a bigger contribution to their company/organization.



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP BELIEVE:

Mentorship and career support are paramount to career growth.

Successful women are often mentored by other successful women. The support they receive and the confidence they gain is important in overcoming obstacles. Female business leaders recognize this in their career journeys and pay it forward to other women in their own unique journeys.

To be sure, there *will* be barriers along the way. However, successful female business leaders are better equipped to navigate these hurdles when they have support from senior leadership and a strong support system at home.





Mentorship and career support



Seven in 10 (70%) say their success was made possible by the mentorship of other female leaders.



Nine in 10 (90%) have had at least one mentor throughout the course of their careers.



Even those respondents who had less access to mentors are paying it forward by mentoring other women.



More than six in 10 (63%) say they actively mentor other women because it is important for them to pay it forward.



Eight in 10 (81%) agree that to succeed as a woman you must be supported by, and support, other women in the workplace.

When it comes to conquering career barriers, support from senior leadership is nearly as important as support from family.

When overcoming career barriers, it is crucial to have support from





LATINA WOMEN AGREE:

Mentorship is critical and they aren't afraid to make the nontraditional move.

Recognizing the importance of paying it forward, Latinas are actively mentoring their colleagues - imparting knowledge gained through broader experiences across a variety of areas. Furthermore, they are making nontraditional moves to further their careers.





Mentorship and nontraditional moves for Latinas

89%

of Latina leaders value broad industry experience.

1/3

Nearly **30%** of Latina leaders have changed industries at least twice.



Nearly **80%** of Latina leaders have made a nontraditional move to further their careers, and **92%** of those women would credit their current job position to those career changes.

Seven in 10 women overall

eight in 10 Latina women

70%



82%

say their success was made possible by the mentorship of other female leaders.



More than nine in 10 (94%) say they have had at least one mentor.

76% | 85%

Over three-quarters of the **women** overall (76%), and more than eight in 10 **Latinas** (85%), currently mentor at least one woman.

Methodology

The data points referenced in this report come from a study commissioned by Cigna, produced by research firm Edelman Intelligence and conducted as an online survey of: n=1,000 (including n=150 Latinas) U.S. female business leaders.

Female business leaders are defined as women who are 30+ years old, have a bachelor's degree or higher, work full-time, have at least 10 years of work experience and have senior leadership/management roles at their companies/organizations.

Interviews took place November 2-13, 2018. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.1%.

