Advocacy Study

—

THE STATE OF WOMEN IN PRODUCT

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Version 1.1

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WOMEN IN PRODUCT®

is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to provide women with equal access and representation in product management careers at all levels.

GOALS

+ Gain unique industry insights

+ Create public awareness

+ Inform future WIP offerings

+ Create best practice guide for leaders
  and individuals

We value your feedback for this first report.

PHASE 1

—

> Qualitative Research

> Quantitative Study

> Secondary Research

> Roundtable Dinner Discussions

THE STUDY − THE STATE OF WOMEN IN PRODUCT

ADVOCACY

We aim to influence decisions in the workplace across the industry to achieve equality for women in product at all career levels including senior leadership roles.

Study Design:

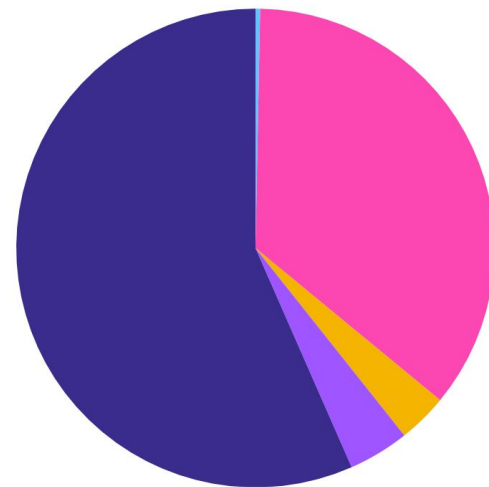- *n*   n= 1,019 (Jan 5 - Jan 17 2019)
- US, Canada, Bay Area Focus
- Tech Companies
- Product Managers (APM, PM, Sr. PM, Director, VP, CPO)
- 85% US, 9% Canada, 3% UK, 2% India, 1% Other
- 85% women in product, 1% men in product, 10% women in tech, 4% Other
- 46% 1,000+ employees, 31% 101-1,000, 23% <100

> **Demographics**

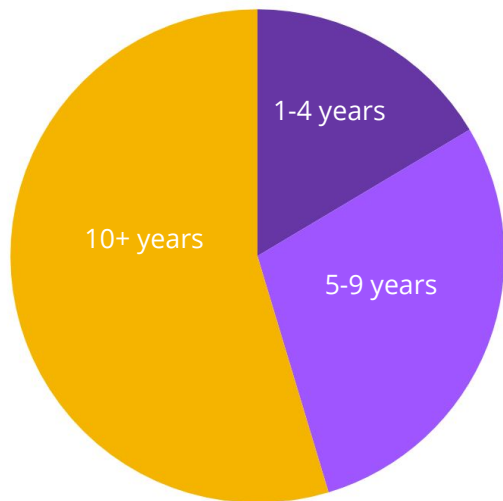- White / Caucasian
  53.74%
- Asian / Pacific Islander
  33.85%
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
  0.10%
- Black or African American
  3.18%
- Hispanics
  3.90%

THE STUDY – THE STATE OF WOMEN IN PRODUCT

How long have you been in the workforce?

- 1-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10+ years

● 1-4 years	● 5-9 years	● 10+ years
16.05%	29.01%	54.84%

How long have you been in your product career?

- 10+ years
- 1-4 years
- 5-9 years
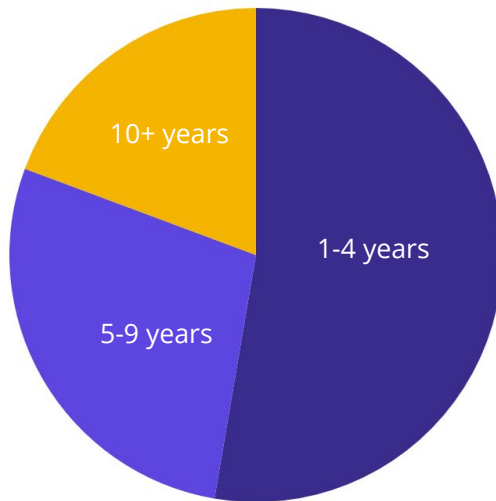
● 1-4 years	● 5-9 years	● 10+ years
51.02%	27.10%	18.71%

What's your current role?

- Executive
- Manager
- Individual contributor
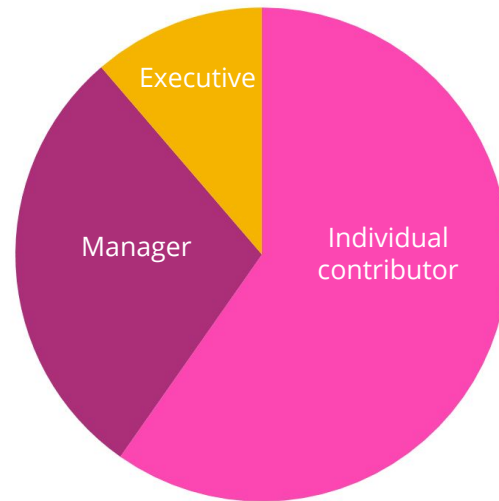
● Individual contributor	● Manager	● Executive (VP level & ab
58.73%	28.47%	11.11%

THE STATE OF WOMEN IN PRODUCT – % OF FEMALE PMs

What is the approximate % of women PMs at your org

80%

69%

60%

Leadership Gap

42%

40%

30%

20%

19%

17%

9% 8%

6%

0%

0 - 25%   26 - 50%   51% - 75%   76% - 100%

% of women PMs in the org

● Total % of female PMs   ● Total % of female PM directors and above

Number of PMs in the org

1 - 5
29,8%

51+
32,7%

6 - 25
28,1%

26 - 50
9,5%
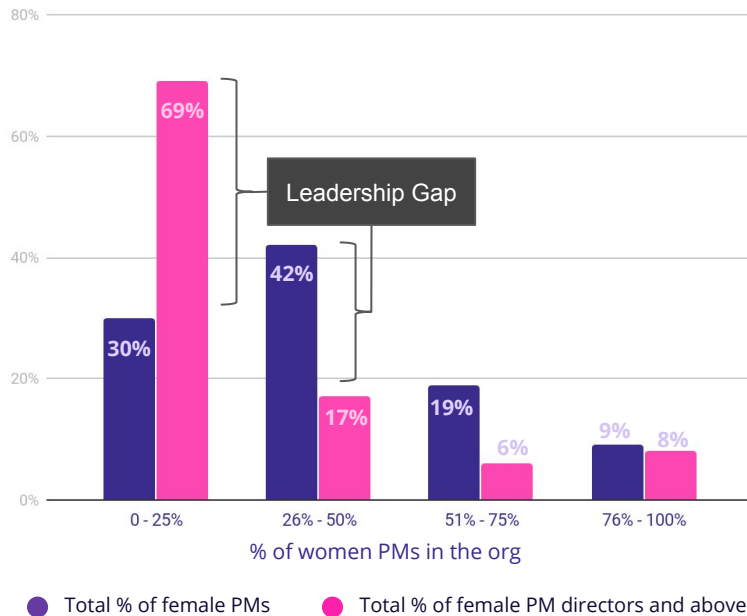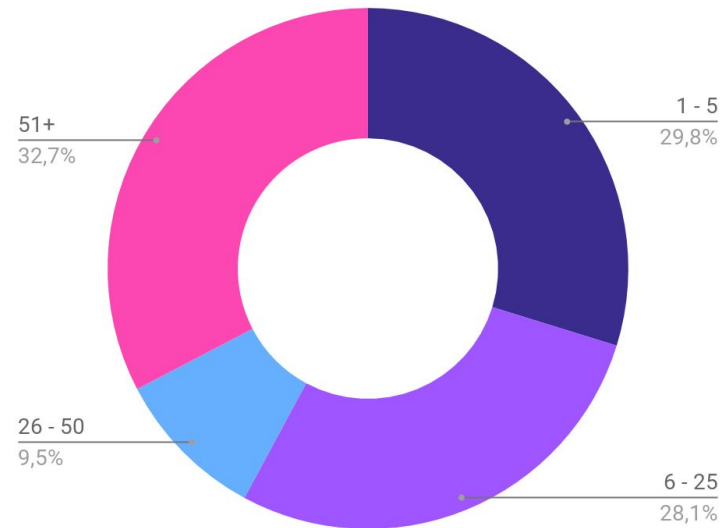
HOW MANY WOMEN RECOMMEND THEIR COMPANY TO A FEMALE COLLEAGUE?

The eNPS **Score is 11** which is considered **fair**. 50 would constitute a great workplace.

63% of participants don't recommend their company or are passive.

EFFECT OF A DISSATISFIED WORKFORCE

ARE YOU PLANNING TO LEAVE YOUR COMPANY ANY TIME SOON?

- ● Super Happy | 8%
- ● Happy | 25%
- ● Opportunist | 24%
- ● Staying - Moving Internal | 6%
- ● Undecided | 5%
- ● Leaving Soon | 31%
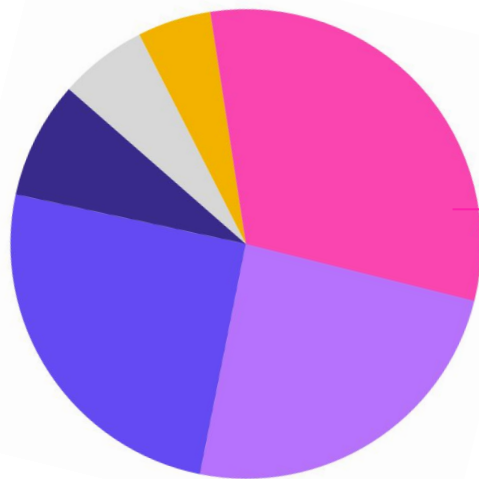
(Leaving - Other Reasons)

Leaving - Gender Related
34%

> **31%** are planning to leave soon

> **34%** of all women who want to leave, say it's related to gender issues

> **61%** are considering leaving and are at risk

As a result a company with **10,000 employees and 25% women**, would be looking at turnover of 350 women = ~$7M Hiring Cost

A PM team with **50 PMs and 25% female PMs** (12) is looking at least ~$150,000 in hiring fees

IT IS MUCH CHEAPER TO RETAIN TALENT THAN TO REPLACE TALENT

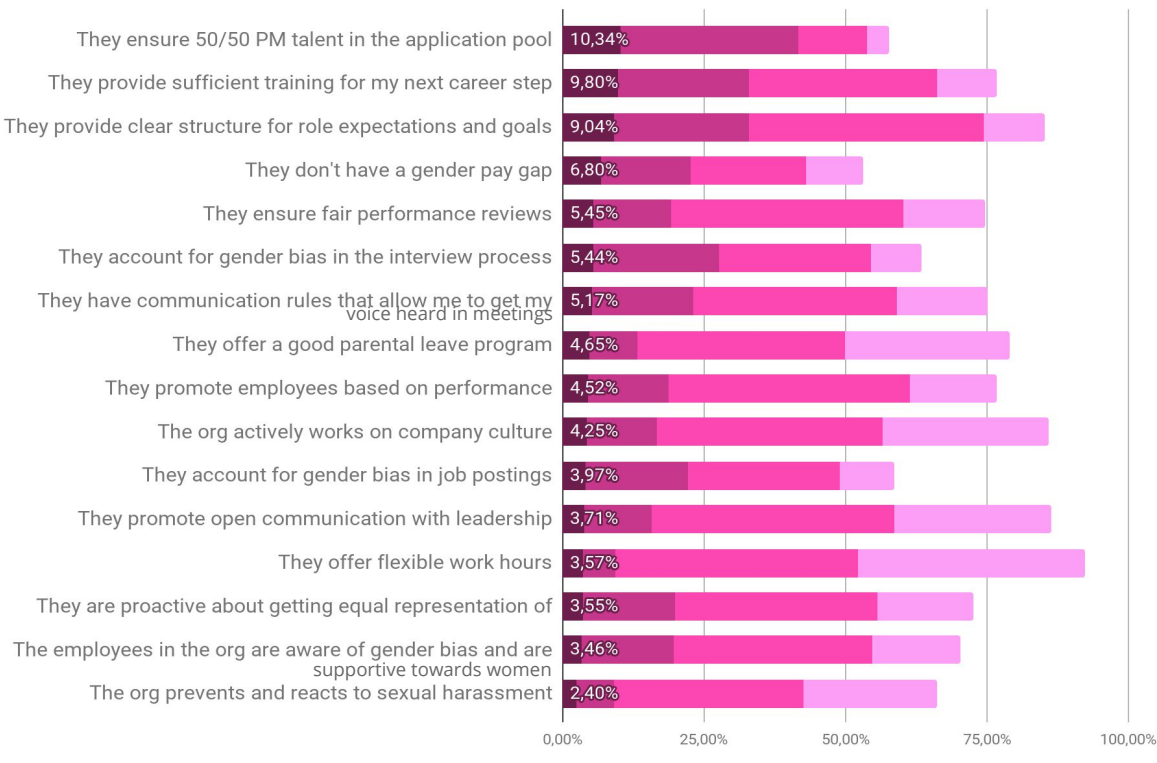# WHAT WE HEARD FROM OUR GROWING COMMUNITY

"

In three PM roles I've never had female leadership or a female mentor. I've experienced direct and indirect discrimination, including financial. Most of what I've learned about a supportive workplace for women has come from WIP, tech ladies, and moms in tech groups.

- survey participant 10 years in PM

WHICH ORGANIZATIONAL MECHANISMS NEED IMPROVEMENT?

Statement	Strongly Disagree
They ensure 50/50 PM talent in the application pool	10,34%
They provide sufficient training for my next career step	9,80%
They provide clear structure for role expectations and goals	9,04%
They don't have a gender pay gap	6,80%
They ensure fair performance reviews	5,45%
They account for gender bias in the interview process	5,44%
They have communication rules that allow me to get my voice heard in meetings	5,17%
They offer a good parental leave program	4,65%
They promote employees based on performance	4,52%
The org actively works on company culture	4,25%
They account for gender bias in job postings	3,97%
They promote open communication with leadership	3,71%
They offer flexible work hours	3,57%
They are proactive about getting equal representation of	3,55%
The employees in the org are aware of gender bias and are supportive towards women	3,46%
The org prevents and reacts to sexual harassment	2,40%

0,00%   25,00%   50,00%   75,00%   100,00%

● Strongly Disagree   ● Disagree   ● Agree   ● Strongly Agree

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

> **50/50 talent pool** is not ensured
(10% Strongly Disagree, 37% Disagree)

> Sufficient training
for the next career step
(10% Strongly Disagree, 26% Disagree)

> Clear structure
for role expectations and **goals is missing**
(9% Strongly Disagree, 28% Disagree)

> **Pay equity** is not a given
(7% Strongly Disagree, 18% Disagree)

> **Gender bias** in the **interview**
process or in job postings accounted for
(5% Strongly Disagree, 20% Disagree)

WHAT WE HEARD

" I have been told it is obvious I can do the job, but what I lack is a quality they referred to as 'being inspirational'. There is no framework that describes these qualities or training to obtain the skills required to break through.

Role Frameworks

" I think the leadership wants to improve gender diversity, but they don't know how to make it happen. One challenge is that they are largely focused on hiring rather than growing talent.

Developing Talent

" With several offices across the country, company culture and awareness of gender bias varies by geographic location. New businesses tend to skew heavily male.

Company Culture

" Our company pushes transparency through slack with an #ama channel as a direct line to the CEO and an ideas channel where anyone can submit ideas.
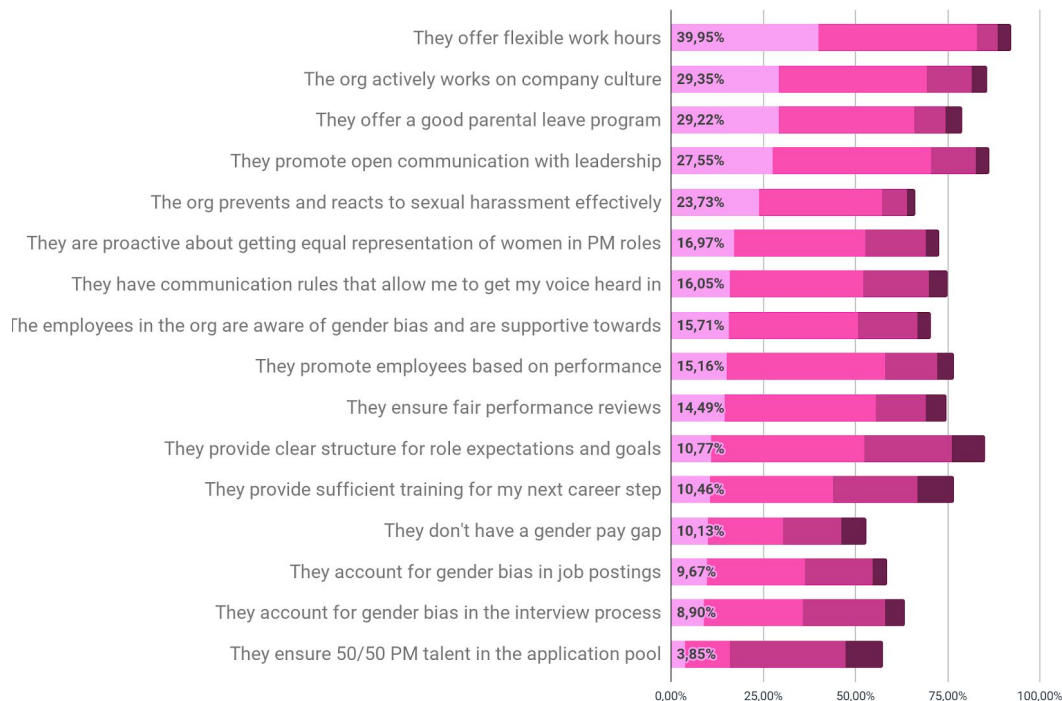
Transparent Communication

" My company has a service to send breast milk when you travel. It shows me that they deeply care about women in the workplace.

Benefits

WHICH ORGANIZATIONAL MECHANISMS WORK WELL?

They offer flexible work hours	39,95%
The org actively works on company culture	29,35%
They offer a good parental leave program	29,22%
They promote open communication with leadership	27,55%
The org prevents and reacts to sexual harassment effectively	23,73%
They are proactive about getting equal representation of women in PM roles	16,97%
They have communication rules that allow me to get my voice heard in	16,05%
The employees in the org are aware of gender bias and are supportive towards	15,71%
They promote employees based on performance	15,16%
They ensure fair performance reviews	14,49%
They provide clear structure for role expectations and goals	10,77%
They provide sufficient training for my next career step	10,46%
They don't have a gender pay gap	10,13%
They account for gender bias in job postings	9,67%
They account for gender bias in the interview process	8,90%
They ensure 50/50 PM talent in the application pool	3,85%

0,00%   25,00%   50,00%   75,00%   100,00%

● Strongly Agree   ● Agree   ● Disagree   ● Strongly Disagree

WHAT COMPANIES DO WELL

> Organization offer **flexible work hours**
(40% Strongly Agree, 44% Agree)

> Organizations promote **open communication with the leadership**
(29% Strongly Agree, 40% Agree)

> Organizations **actively work on company culture**
(29% Strongly Agree, 37% Agree)

> Organizations offer a **good parental leave program**
(28% Strongly Agree, 38% Agree)

> Orgs **prevent and react to sexual harassment effectively** (24% Strongly Agree, 33% Agree)

BEST PRACTICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Broaden recruiting strategies

We posted our job openings at day care centers, and went to women oriented events and conferences to recruit

Create new roles

I created an "ombudsman role" who is a "go to" counselor type who would anonymize comments but share with leadership when there was an issue. Different than HR the ombudsman is working on behalf of the individual.

Act in the moment

Moderate meetings and make sure everyone is heard, if you are cut off don't miss a beat "I just want to complete my thought"

Encourage and validate

When leaders take the time to share ideas of junior people and give them credit, particularly when the junior person is in a complimentary role – VP of engineering uses business intel type insights from a product manager and gives her credit – this is highly effective way to encourage and validate rather than discourage and alienate

I BEST PRACTICES

PHASE 1

> Hire

> Train

> Promote

> Lead

CAREER JOURNEY – Framework illustrating phases and best practice guides

HIRE

> Talent pool
> Job description
> Interview process
> Language
> Benefits

❝

"We stack resumes from Women in Product to show that the idea of the lack of 50/50 talent pool is a myth"
PM at 20-50 ppl

TRAIN

> Relationship building
> 1x1 / meetings
> Communication
> Challenging bias
> Company Culture

❝

"Grouping together to make a point can be a powerful way to make change"
VP at 500+ ppl

PROMOTE

> Mentorship
> Negotiation
> Training
> Validation & rewards
> Transparency

❝

"Many current salary assessment tools are considered invalid like glassdoor but WIP has real life examples with real people to use as example"
SVP at 1,000 ppl org

LEAD

> Management
> The "only"
> Involvement in hiring
> Advocate

❝

"I model behavior so more junior staff see how I show up, I encourage others to seek a promotion even if it means leaving the org, sometimes there are no leadership positions open we should support going to another organization"
Leadership training expert at VP 1,000+ org

HIRING BEST PRACTICES – PART 1

> Ensure transparent detailed job responsibilities in job description

> Consider more phone interviews if resume doesn't seem as strong

> Anonymize resumes

> Proactively reach out to candidates with diverse backgrounds. Seek out forums and events with minorities represented

> Target colleges with more diverse populations for interns who you then can convert

> Organize your own hiring events. Reach out to more people before hiring the first candidate that fits

> Open job posting to internal candidates

> Talk to your recruiter about diversity expectations in the candidate pool

> Use job bias software for job postings (e.g. textio, WeSolv) or use a 3rd party company to review all job listings, redact gender pronouns from interview feedback that goes to hiring committee

> Ensure everyone is aware of externally posted jobs and encourage referrals and internal applicants. List job for at least 5 days

HIRING BEST PRACTICES – PART 2

> Build a diverse hiring team and ensure that women are on interview panels with female candidates (and others)

> Offer candidates to talk to any person in the company in the interview process

> Consider creating an interview scorecard and an interview question bank

> Share scorecard results after everybody had a chance to interview

> Create a transparent role matrix with detailed role descriptions and clear requirements for advancement

> Use behavioral interviewing

> Invest in training for interviewers

> Include other departments to consult when making hiring decisions

> Communicate diverse hiring as a goal (leadership)

> Consistently communicate core values throughout your employment brand, including on your website, social media platforms, and in job descriptions

> Set and communicate goals - min. % of candidates have to be female. Celebrate success toward these goals

> Put goals in management targets. Manage active quotas

> Hold positions open until you reach the goal

> Socialize with potential talent within your company

> Frequently review your hiring process

TRAINING BEST PRACTICES – PART 1

> Offer executive coaches for leadership and managers

> Consider bringing in external thought leaders for cross sharing sessions to learn and get inspired from similar roles in different spaces

> Encourage people to ask for help and ask their colleagues

> Consider "product principles" on how the team operates available to all members

> Consider offering a coach to all employees through services like (e.g. Soundingboard, Marlow)

> Create detailed role descriptions and clear requirements for development

> Provide actionable training to managers and include real life scenarios

> Consider hiring entry-level roles without technical requirements and develop them

> Offer mentoring & networking programs with both peers and leadership

> Create a clear monetary fund per employees or a financial learning credit to encourage employees to further their skills. This includes external training courses and budget for conferences (e.g. WIP Conference :))

> Consider asking your manager to proactively find courses for employees. Ask your leadership to proactively reach out to women PMs with opportunities to attend women-focused conferences.

> Consider offering free online courses, audio books, ebooks (e.g. access to Harvard Business School classes, Lynda)

> Consider putting development of self and team in management targets

> Create a great learning culture

TRAINING BEST PRACTICES – PART 2

> Consider creating an internal employee network to build effective career development strategy & share with others across the firm

> Consider an employee survey to understand where employees need most training and shape the content of your internal training program around that.

> Consider mandatory harassment in the workplace training for every employee that must be completed within 3 months of hire

> Offer internal training programs (e.g. Executive lunches, Executive Shadow programs, monthly "women in tech" lunches, LeanIn Circles, etc.)

> Implement circle training, employee-led company-supported training

> Frequently review your internal training offerings and ask for feedback from employees

> Offer unconscious bias training and "listening" training

> Consider a women's "Ask me anything" lunch and learn within your org where female employees can ask female leadership questions about any topic.

> Consider including a review of development goals in 1:1. Document next steps and progress

> Establish ERG groups with training experts

> Utilize templates for smaller companies to effectively offer training and structure for women to succeed

PROMOTE BEST PRACTICES

> Enforce career ladders and promotion maps, connect training exercises to career ladders and communicate during onboarding

> Consider public recognition for promotions

> If you have a committee that reviews promotions, ensure equal representation on the committee

> Consider 360 reviews

> Write promotions and goals in targets

> Make pay above director level transparent

> Hire and promote pregnant women

> Consider hiring a rewards manager

> Offer D&I training to leadership before calibration

> Track your numbers

> Implement a review score. Automatically consider promotion when the overall review score reaches a certain level. Don't make people ask for it

> Include "how" and "what" work got done in performance reviews to address learnings that women may get evaluated on "how" and men on "what."

> Celebrate promotions

> Offer promotion and salary negotiations workshops

> Offer and encourage mentorship programs across career levels for leaders to become advocates and mentors for women

> Consider setting salaries with one number per band

> Retrospectively explain how promotion decisions were made

> Clearly communicate which behaviors get rewarded in the company

COMPANY CULTURE BEST PRACTICES – PART 1

> Offer workshops for employees to understand their roles

> Post company's guiding principles in the office and re-iterate/re-evaluate at every quarterly offsite. Create a communication guide and culture (e.g. "fail wall" and continuous improvement for all team members including leadership)

> Establish and fund Employee Resource Groups (ERG) and promote gender and diversity focused programming

> Offer events that appeal to different groups and types of employees such as women in business, LGBT, veterans,… discuss diverse topics, including gender, LGBTQ, behaviours v. values

> Ensure access to leadership through open communication policy, forums, slack channels, ask me anything events or lean-in circles

> Establish channels for regular feedback, both face-to-face and anonymous (e.g. TINYpulse, sli.do)

> Offer unconscious bias training / offer microaggression HR training. Offer an onboarding and orientation process (e.g. a big sibs)

> Consider a chief of diversity who leads assessing where we are as a company and what we can do better

> Offer room for team bonding activities

> As founders or CEOs, emphasize culture from the beginning and lead by example

> Bake company values into performance reviews and interviews

> Follow through on company culture values from CEO to manager. Define company values that are tied to performance/evaluation and reference during the year

> Be approachable - offer 1:1 lunches to employees

> Celebrate different cultural events to help your employees connect with other employees from other cultures

COMPANY CULTURE BEST PRACTICES – PART 2

> Survey your culture, set KPIs and measure over time. Discuss with your teams

> Offer equal parental leave and encourage men to take it to level the professional playing field during reproductive years

> Give employees a forum to present (e.g. monthly product demos)

> Create a "social committee"" to celebrate birthdays etc. encourage men to join so women are not always the "office mom"

> Consider a reward strategy (e.g. give compliments to staff on weekly basis, offer gift card rewards program)

> Communicate often and transparently

> Offer remote working opportunities with open communication on channels like SLACK

> Create a praise channel on Slack where people praise each other for embodying different company values

> Promote women's leadership through talks, workshops and events

> Offer returnships

BENEFITS IMPORTANT TO WOMEN – BEST PRACTICES

> Benchmark HR benefits against other regional companies to stay competitive

> Offer seminars and printed material made available before Annual Benefits Enrollment

> Good parental leave for both genders also for adoptions

> Offer remote work policy

"We want the best talent and do not want geography or specific office hours to get in the way of hiring the best people."

> Generous learning stipend

> Unlimited PTO

> Offer good health insurance options

> 401k Matching

> Disability leave benefits

> Childcare benefits

> Unlimited mental health days

> Obligatory additional days off for sick children AND caring responsibility (e.g. aging family members)

> Pay for wifi hotspots to work on the train

> Partially fund employee side projects that include usage of the company's product

> Free lunch

> Family Leave Benefits:
> Diaper subscription
> House cleaning help
> Subscription meal service

> Tampons in the bathrooms

> Locked nursing rooms on every floor

> Fertility benefits for women

> Company discounts

> Sabbatical after x years

> End of year break

SUPPORT THE DAY TO DAY BEST PRACTICES – PART 1

> Communicate your core values and implement rules (e.g. allow kid time on schedule)

> Host weekly and quarterly structured sessions with your team to ensure ongoing communication channels are open

> Consider leveraging design thinking (e.g. via LUMA practices) methods in your meetings to ensure everyone has a voice

> Make it a common habit to share articles on healthy communication practices

> Call out unhealthy communication behaviors (incl. leadership)

> Consider an external consultant to run comms training with your team

> Create an open door communications guideline involving the team in the process. Set clear rules around what is (un)acceptable language and behavior

> Track your decision making process to include all voices

> Seek an open debate with employees at town halls and 1:1

> Consider upvoting for questions at large meetings. (e.g. Sli.do)

> Leadership and CEO should embody an open communication policy by leading by example

> Give remote employees as much of a voice as internal employees

> Train managers to give the underrepresented a voice.
  > E.g. teach facilitation styles that ensure everyone can contribute (silent generation, dot-voting, retrospectives, red and green cards for agreement and disagreement in large meetings)
  > Give people recognition by name for their ideas and contributions during meetings.
  > Request input from all attendees and ensure all have an opportunity to share

SUPPORT THE DAY TO DAY BEST PRACTICES – PART 2

> Consider open collaboration and sharing platforms (e.g. SLACK)

> Consider a campaign to the entire company with daily emails w/ specific actions that employees can take to avoid biases in your workplace over the course of 2 weeks

> Provide exposure to communal vs. agentic language and how they might be perceived by our peers.

> Hold frequent listening sessions that are open to all (Leadership)

> Create multiple channels for employees to communicate with the leadership

Interested in more best practices?

COME TALK TO US!

How can we help you hire more women and hit your goals? **Come talk to us!**

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WHAT WE DO

womenpm.org

COMMUNITY

Through online platforms and in-person events across the globe, we bring women in product together to network, mentor, and learn.

MOBILITY

We enable women to reach all levels of product careers by facilitating upward and lateral mobility, partnering with companies, and providing resources and programs.

ADVOCACY

We aim to influence decisions in the workplace across the industry to achieve equality for women in product at all career levels including senior leadership roles.

THANK YOU!