



# JUST ABOUT MANAGING

Men and women through the executive pipeline

**30% Club** insights for people managers on the gender diversity challenge



**Why Women Work**  
Catalysing corporate leadership

# WHAT MANAGERS SAY ABOUT HOW THEY MANAGE

## HOW MANAGERS NAVIGATE THEIR WAY THROUGH NOISE IN THE SYSTEM

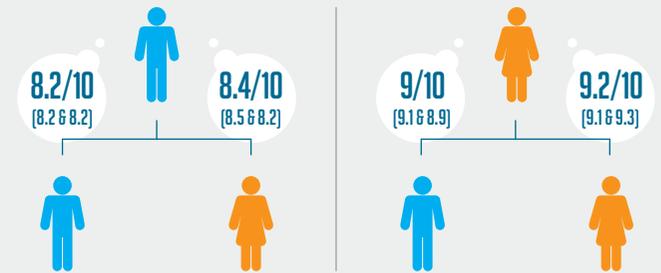
There are 3.3 million managers in the UK, of which 34%<sup>1</sup> are women. 11%<sup>2</sup> of FTSE100 executive directors are women. Managers provide the glue that binds organisations together. They shape employee experiences on a day to day basis by:

- creating the climate for engagement, performance and well-being of their people
- informing people about career structures and role-modelling life at the next level up
- allocating work and holding the key to training and development opportunities
- identifying individuals with longer term leadership potential
- influencing promotion and hiring decisions
- boosting people's confidence and aspiration for career progression

## WOMANAGEMENT

But noise in the system means managers are not always able to pinpoint what carries across from their day to day management of individual team-members into gender diversity in the executive pipeline. We did not set out to explore whether men or women manage differently. But male and female managers describe what they do differently. Female managers appear more attuned to managing relationship dynamics and more positive about diversity within their team. Male managers appear more attuned to managing performance dynamics and more positive about consistency within their team. These descriptions may reflect real management behaviour, awareness of gender stereotypes, or functional vs operational team climates.

## HOW MANAGERS RATE THEIR REPORTS



**Good at their job & Easy to work with**  
 Combined average ratings from questions 3 and 4  
 Rating scale: 0 = Not at all and 10 = extremely

57% of senior executives, 52% of board members & only 39% of middle managers are engaged in diversity & inclusion activities<sup>3</sup>

## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN HOW MANAGERS (SAY THEY) MANAGE



### WOMEN : MEN

- 3:1 value individual difference on their team
- 5:1 adjust their management style to improve individual performance
- 2:1 use their time to develop their people
- 4:1 anticipate shifts in management & leadership in the future
- 3:1 are risk alert for the individual



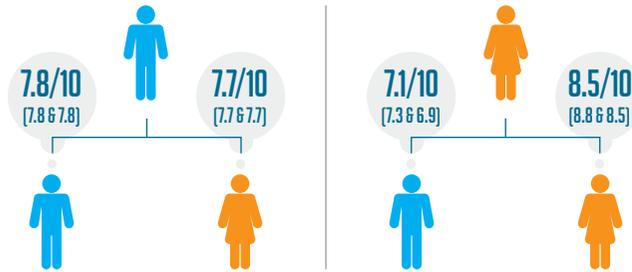
### MEN : WOMEN

- 2:1 value core competence on their team
- 2:1 give constructive feedback to improve individual performance
- 3:1 use organisational resources to develop their people.
- 7:1 optimistic about similarity in management and leadership in the future
- 4:1 are risk averse for the organisation

Ratios derived from frequency counts of themes from answers to interview questions 5, 6 & 7 from 68 male managers and 46 female managers.

# WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT HOW THEY ARE MANAGED

## HOW REPORTS RATE THEIR MANAGER



## MIND THE GAP

Male managers are 3 times more likely to say they manage their male and female team-members in a similar way. Female managers are 5 times more likely to say that they vary their approach to suit different individuals. Managers vary their approach according to a person's performance (skill and experience), trustworthiness (care and dependability) and motivation to assume responsibility. Managers are influenced most by their direct day to day experience. Professional reputation, impression management and third party

experiences start to have more of an influence on manager's approaches towards the top of the pipeline.

Similarity has an impact on how people feel about their manager. Throughout the pipeline, women are most positive about their female manager. Men are marginally more positive than women about their male manager. Men are least positive about their female manager. Since managers exert power and influence, people are careful about providing upward feedback to their manager. Without regular open dialogue based on mutual trust and respect, some surprising perception gaps open up between managers and their people.

**EARLY CAREER-BUILDING:**  
Navigating pathways & building experience

**Women look for support and challenge from their manager**

- TIME TOGETHER: 29%
- TRUST IN: 34%
- RESPECT FOR: 28%
- POSITIVE ABOUT: 9/10

**Men look for clarity and autonomy from their manager**

- TIME TOGETHER: 24%
- TRUST IN: 27%
- RESPECT FOR: 28%
- POSITIVE ABOUT: 8/10

**“You come out of a 1:1 and you feel really good about yourself and like “yeah, come on, we can do this!”**

**“He lets me run my own area. He is very clear, straight to the point and pragmatic, very effective.”**

**MID CAREER-BUILDING:**  
Sense-testing strategy & building bandwidth

**Women are broadened and accommodated by their manager**

- TIME TOGETHER: 14%
- TRUST IN: 27%
- RESPECT FOR: 23%
- POSITIVE ABOUT: 6/10

**Men are developed and deepened by their manager**

- TIME TOGETHER: 17%
- TRUST IN: 25%
- RESPECT FOR: 26%
- POSITIVE ABOUT: 5/10

**“She’s very strong in terms of thinking. She speaks her mind freely. She appreciates a very open relationship. She makes me reconsider.”**

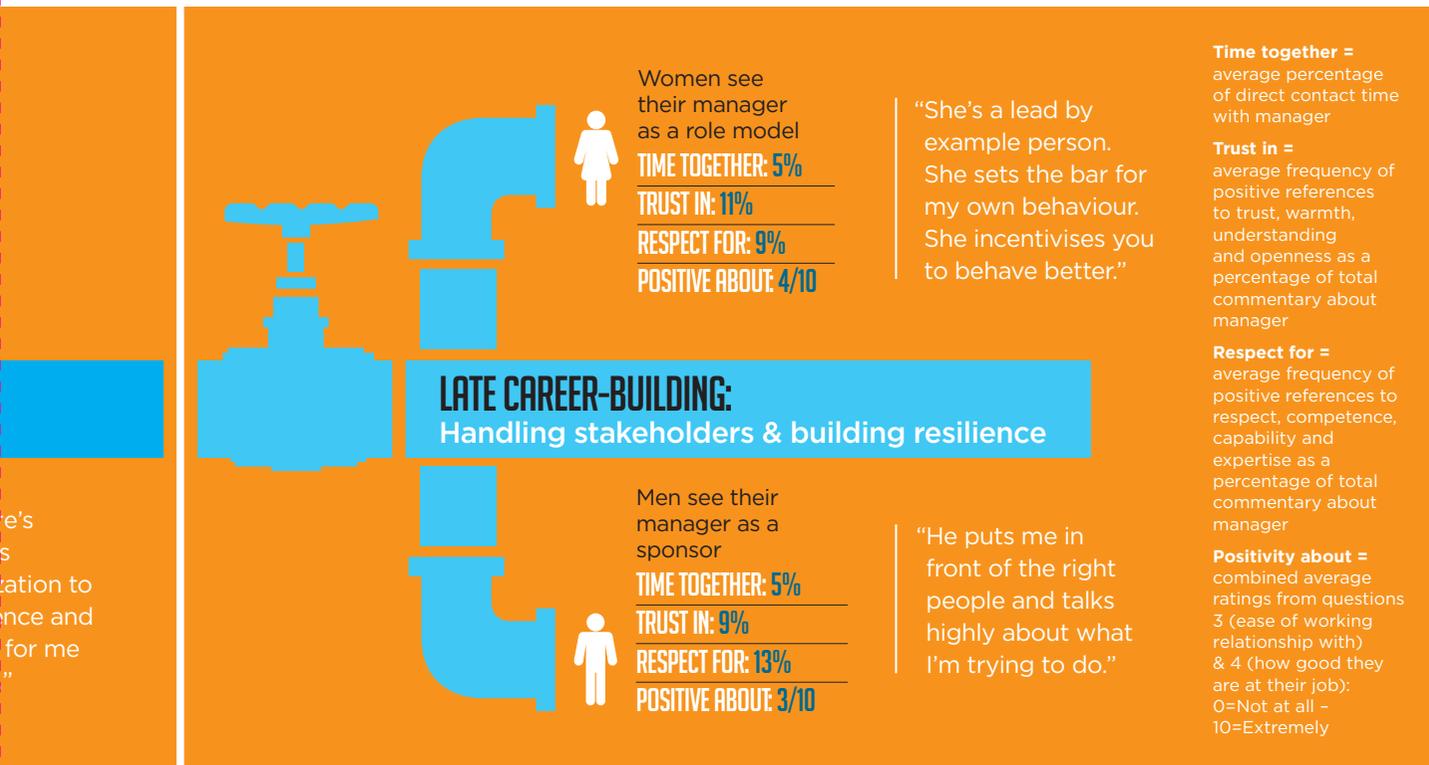
**“We look at whether the short-term opportunities elsewhere in the organization just broaden my experience make it a little bit easier to go after the next role”**

## PIPELINE DYNAMICS

People spend less time with their manager as they move towards the top of the pipeline. Similarly, people spend increasingly less time with their manager discussing their personal development as they progress through the pipeline. Opportunities for career-relevant advice, feedback and coaching are increasingly outsourced to mentors or coaches. Women at this stage receive less directly career-related advice from their manager than men by a ratio of 4:1.

## HOW MANAGERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Women and men broadly agree on how a manager gets the best out of them – by providing exciting and interesting challenges backed up by appropriate resources and their support. However, subtle gender differences emerge in the way that managers develop their people. A manager who shows close involvement and personal interest in the individual along with a whole life approach to career-building is a key differentiator for women and builds mutual trust.



## MISMANAGEMENT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PIPELINE

“People don’t leave bad companies, they leave bad managers”<sup>4</sup>

It is an accumulation of day to day interactions that really shapes career decisions for men and for women. However, the tipping point for gender diversity kicks in at the middle of the executive pipeline. This frequently coincides with women taking on more domestic responsibility than their male peers.

Care-giving plays into gender stereotypes, heightening perceptions of warmth and undermining perceptions of competence for women. It is here that motivationally astute managers are ideally placed to keep women investing in career-building whilst less gender-aware managers can inadvertently compound career risk for women.



<sup>4</sup>Marcus Buckingham

# MIND THE GAP

MIND THE GAP FINDING	HINT	IN PRACTICE
<b>MANAGING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men don't like their (female) boss being too involved.</li> <li>Women don't like to 'bother' their boss.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear and keep checking in with him to build trust.</li> <li>Be supportive and keep stretching her to build trust.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't rely on being available for ad hoc advice.</li> <li>Make specific time to connect.</li> <li>Use all the time you have scheduled.</li> <li>Little and often conversations are best.</li> </ul>
<b>DEVELOPING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men get less advice on what they need to do differently to be successful.</li> <li>Women get less specific advice on what they need to do to get promoted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore options and encourage him to experiment.</li> <li>Explore aspiration and reaffirm her aims.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't rely on what worked for you.</li> <li>Be clear about personal and professional success criteria.</li> <li>Calibrate under- and over-confidence with real-time feedback from multiple sources.</li> <li>Back up any development advice with action and access.</li> </ul>
<b>PROMOTABILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men are caveated but not discounted by a perceived lack of people skills.</li> <li>Women are caveated by a perceived lack of ambition and discounted by a perceived lack of experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider his depth of experience alongside any future need for leadership skills.</li> <li>Consider her breadth of experience alongside any strategic need for learning agility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss what it would take to do your job.</li> <li>Deal with the gender stereotypes – name them and reframe them.</li> <li>Extend the range of role models.</li> <li>Don't assume. Explore what people want to do next in depth.</li> </ul>

## WHAT WE DID

Gender diversity is a tricky topic. It makes men feel defensive and women feel uncomfortable. Organisations are complex, busy environments and research has to be pragmatic. We have some hypotheses about what causes what but no hard proof yet!

### THE RESEARCH FORMULA:

**7 QUESTIONS X 3 PEOPLE (1 MANAGER + 1 MALE REPORT + 1 FEMALE REPORT) X 3 PIPELINE STAGES**

We identified a cross-section of management trios at lower, mid and upper executive pipeline stages. We asked everyone the same 7 questions about time, talent and energy NOT gender. We recorded, transcribed and anonymised all the answers. We counted how often things were said. We looked for themes and patterns. We compared and contrasted patterns according to interviewees' gender, place in their management trio, and pipeline stage. Details of methodology, including significance testing are available on request. Contact [rachel.short@whywomenwork.com](mailto:rachel.short@whywomenwork.com).

## WHO WAS INVOLVED

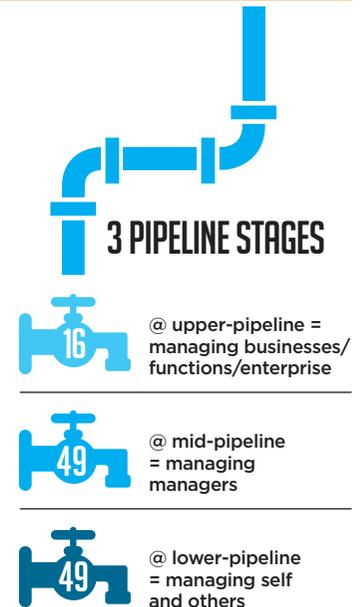
**07**  
SECTORS

Management consulting, travel, financial services, oil & gas, engineering, retail, insurance

**10**  
ORGANISATIONS

**46** had female managers  
**114** MANAGEMENT TRIOS  
**68** had male managers

**342** INTERVIEWS  
**182** (Male)  
**160** (Female)



## WHAT WE ASKED

### Our questions for managers

**Q1. How long have you managed [your male/female report]?**

**Q2. What percentage of your time at work do you spend with [her/him]?**

**Q3. How easy is [she/he] to work with?**

(On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being not at all easy to work with and 10 being extremely easy to work with)

**Q4. How good is [he/she] at his/her job?**

(On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being not at all competent and 10 being extremely competent)

**Q5. What do you do as a manager to get the best out of him/her?**

**Q6. What do you do to develop her/him? This could be in current role or for future opportunities.**

**Q7. If he/she were to be promoted into your role, how would he/she do things differently from you?**

### Our questions for those being managed

**Q1. How long have you been managed by your current manager?**

**Q2. What percentage of your time at work do you spend with your manager?**

**Q3. How easy is your manager to work with?**

(On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being not at all easy to work with and 10 being extremely easy to work with)

**Q4. How good is your manager at her/his job?**

(On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being not at all competent and 10 being extremely competent)

**Q5. What does your manager do to get the best out of you?**

**Q6. What does your manager do to develop you? This could be in current role or for future opportunities.**

**Q7. If you were to be promoted into your managers role, how would you do things differently from him/her?**

## 30% CLUB CAMPAIGN

The 30% Club was founded in the UK in 2010. We now have chapters in 9 other countries. Led by Brenda Trenowden, our Global Chair, we collaborate with businesses, governments and other campaigns to improve gender diversity and accelerate the pace of change from schoolroom to boardroom. Our campaign targets include a minimum 30% women at senior management level of FTSE-100 companies by 2020. We support research on why women are good for business and what works to ensure more women progress through the executive pipeline.

## IF YOU ARE INTERESTED:

**Get involved:** This research was only possible with the active involvement of our corporate members. The 30% Club's Executive Pipeline practitioner forum connects regularly to shape our research agenda, to share what works, and to encourage best practice. We are not a talking shop and attendees need to be decision-makers who can make things happen in their organisations.

**Contact:** Pavita Cooper at [pavita@moredifference.com](mailto:pavita@moredifference.com) or Rachel Short at [rachel.short@whywomenwork.com](mailto:rachel.short@whywomenwork.com).

**Spread the word:** People managers are our target audience. A toolkit for managers and more detailed reports on managing, developing and promoting women will be available via the 30% Club website in Q2 2017. We also offer workshops for interested companies. In the meantime, please share your thoughts on this summary with your network and on social media. [#mindthegap](#), [#justaboutmanaging](#), [#30pc](#).

**Sign up:** Details of 30% Club efforts to accelerate the pace of change, including our MBA partnerships, Future Apprentice, and Cross Company Mentoring schemes are available via [www.30percentclub.org](http://www.30percentclub.org).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- The **30% Club steering committee members** – for encouragement and challenge.



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