

HEIDRICK & STRUGGLES

A more diverse
workplace: Increasing
women's power in
Korea

2013

facilitated by
Heidrick & Struggles



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Women take their first tentative steps up the ladder

The appointment in February of Madam Geun-Hye Park as Korea's first female President has led many to believe that 2013 marks a new era for women in the country. Recent news reports and research seem to show that women are at last being recognized and receiving the vital support they need to finally start climbing the male-dominated corporate ladder.

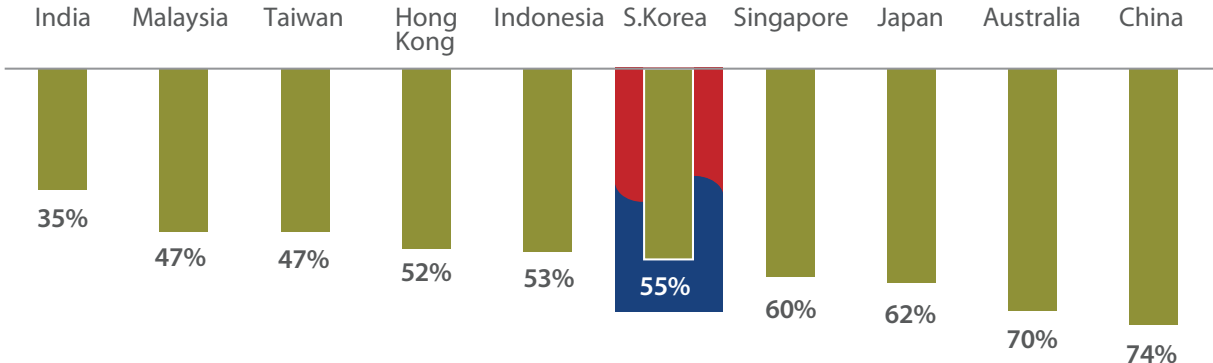
Although the number of working females in South Korea compares positively with other Asian countries, the vast majority of decision-makers in Korean boardrooms and in top leadership teams are men. Since this lack of female leaders was not considered a significant issue in the past, very little research has been done into which diversity programs would work best in Korea.

Change is undeniably upon us – but in this sudden rush for female leaders in a severely limited talent pool, do companies have the necessary insight into what women really want?

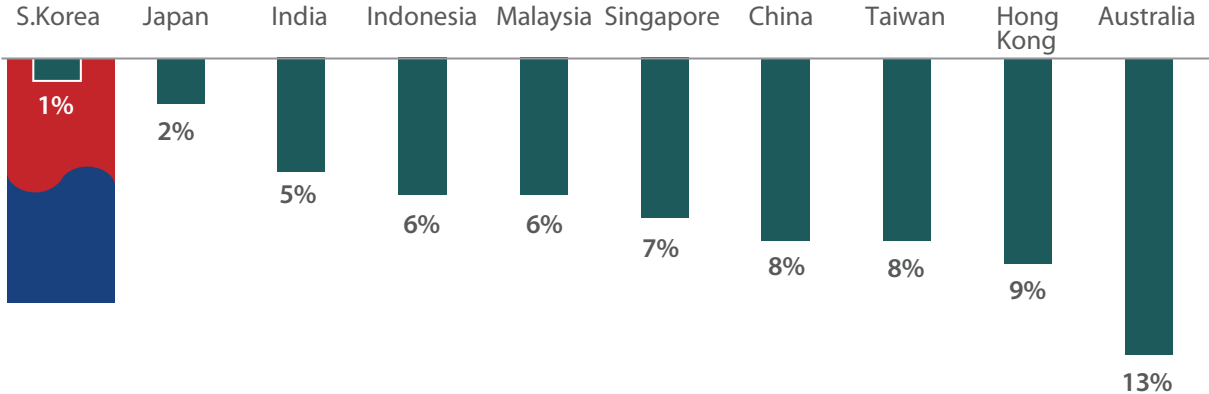
Women Matter: An Asian Perspective - McKinsey & Company 2012

Source 1: Diversity in Asia: Best and worst performers

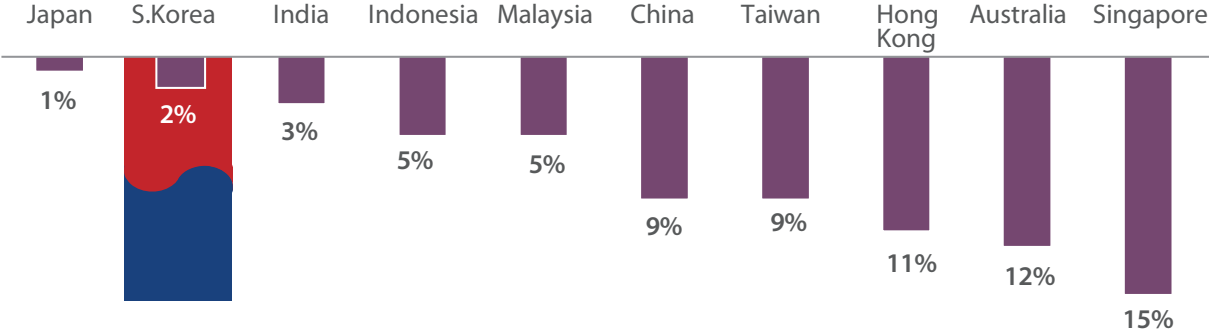
1. Female participation (aged 15-64) in working population



2. Female representation on boards



3. Female representation on executive committees



Source 2: The lack of women power in South Korea

0%

of women executives in Korea's biggest state-run companies (13 public companies with 81 male executives only)

Source: Chosun Ilbo, Jan 15, 2013

0.73%

of female CEOs at 1,787 (KOSPI) listed companies in South Korea

Source: Segye Finance News, Mar 8, 2013

1.5%

of female executives at South Korea's top ten corporate groups

Source: KBS World, Jan 30, 2013

This paper highlights the current status of women executives in Korea and the enormous opportunity for Korean corporates to leverage a highly competent leadership resource

Methodology

Heidrick & Struggles has long been aware of the lack of women in leadership in Korea, and in March 2013 conducted a survey to establish the possible reasons for and solutions to this issue. The survey comprised 93 women and looked at their careers and perceived obstacles to advancement. The survey also included a list of Asia Pacific diversity programs listed in the McKinsey Women Matter report. In addition, we conducted numerous candid first-hand interviews with top female executives in Korea, and leveraged our more than 14 years' experience in the Korean market to bring you this insightful and thought-provoking paper. The results are intended to guide working women in Korea and help employers better retain and grow female leaders.

The current situation for Korean female executives

Slowly but surely, organizations in Korea are realizing the importance of gender diversity

Until a few years ago, it was largely understood that women leaders at large Korean companies most likely inherited their senior titles from their grandfathers, uncles or fathers. However, a recent review of top women leaders in Korea indicates that this is no longer the case. The review shows that a higher number of younger women are being promoted to CEO and other senior positions on merit, joining the many senior women leaders who have successfully grown their family businesses.

Source 3: Some notable female CEOs and executives

Name	Job title	Age	Company	Industry
Young-Shin Chang*	Chairman	77	Aekyung Group	Consumer Industrial
Byoung Ok Sohn	CEO	61	Prudential Life Korea	Finance
Jeong-Eun Hyun*	CEO/Chairman	58	Hyundai Group	Industrial Construction
Sun Hye Cho	CEO/Vice Chairman	58	Geo-Young	Pharma Distribution
Sung-Joo Kim	CEO/Chairman	57	Sungjoo Group & MCM Holdings	Fashion Retail
Song Kyoung Park*	Vice Chairman	56	E-Land Group	Fashion Retail
Eun Sun Kim*	CEO/Chairman	55	Boryung Pharm	Pharmaceutical
Mie-Kyung Lee*	Vice Chairman	55	CJ Entertainment & Media	Media Entertainment
Eun Young Choi*	CEO/Chairman	51	Hanjin Shipping	Logistics Shipping
Sung E Jung*	Adviser	51	Innocean Worldwide	Media Marketing
Su Ok Shim	Chief Marketing Officer Senior Executive VP	51	Samsung Electronic	Consumer Electronics
Seon Gyeong Bae	President	50	SK Networks Walker Hill	Hospitality
Romi Kyeong Hee Han	CEO/Founder	49	Haan Corp.	Consumer Electronics
Yoon Sun Yang	CEO/Professor	49	Medi-Post	Healthcare
Sue Kyung Lee	CEO/General Manager	47	P&G Korea	Consumer
Oak-Yeon Kim	CEO/General Manager	46	Janssen Korea	Pharmaceutical
Soo Young Lee	CEO	45	Kolon Water & Energy	Energy
Boo Jin Lee*	CEO	43	Samsung Everland & Hotel Shilla	Hospitality

* Related to the founder

Source: Heidrick & Struggles, JOINS, Financial Supervisory Service (DART), company websites, 2013

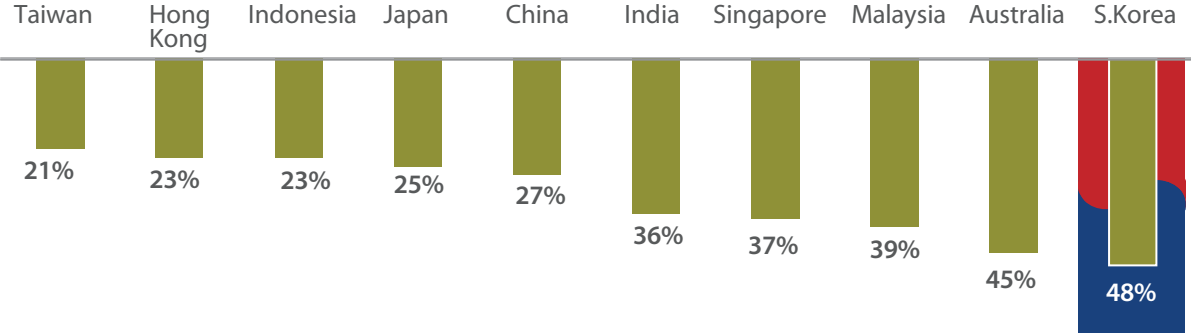
Today, nine out of the 13 women CEOs of the 1,787 listed companies (KOSPI) are in fact not directly related to the founding families.

This increase in female leaders should be beneficial to companies, as findings have shown that women representation in top business decisions tends to positively impact a company's return on equity (RoE) and earnings before interest rates and taxes (EBIT). In fact, McKinsey & Company's research of 279 companies between 2007 and 2009 showed that the average combined RoE and EBIT for European and BRIC companies with strong female representation on their executive committees were 47 percent and 56 percent higher respectively, compared to companies without any female representation. Moreover, companies with women in charge tended to have more sound corporate governance.

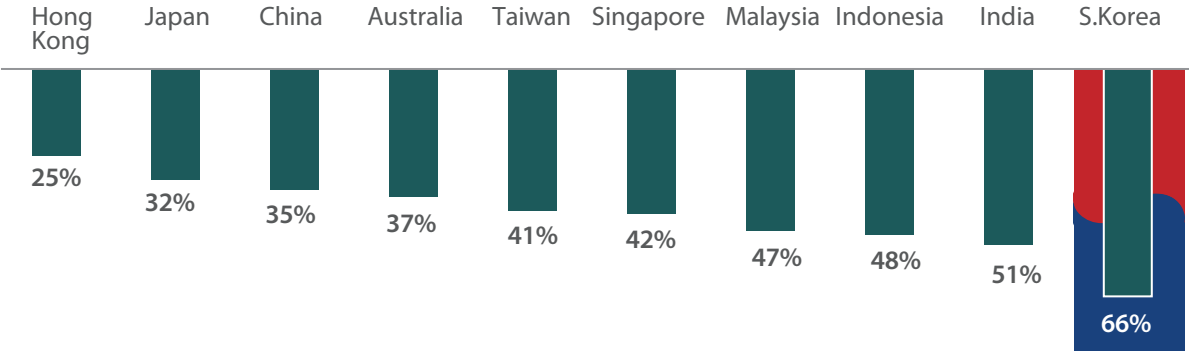
In Asia Pacific, certain Korean companies have been clear leaders in their pursuit for gender diversity programs. One very early Korean pioneer was Samsung, whose decision in 1992 to remove gender discrimination in their recruitment policies was considered incredibly radical at the time. Over 50,000 women now work at Korea's largest business group, with three women being promoted to executive positions in 2012 during a management reshuffle. Although other organizations are not quite at this level yet, both private and public organizations are demonstrating a willingness to join this trend. One noteworthy example is Korea's National Assembly, which has discussed how to increase female representation at some government agencies and is in the process of setting up a rule whereby 30 percent of executive members will need to be female.

Source 4: Plans for diversity programs in Asia Pacific

1. Importance of diversity on company's strategic agenda
(% of those in top 10)



2. Expect to accelerate gender diversity programmes



Source: Women Matter: An Asian Perspective - McKinsey & Company 2012 (235 companies 1768 web-based survey)

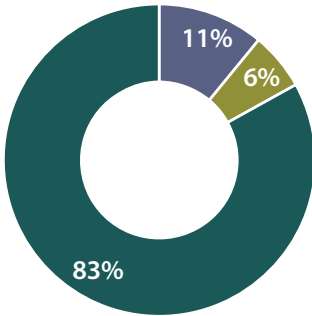
Women are increasingly ambitious, but the Korean style of corporate culture prohibits them from reaching the top

In 2013, Heidrick & Struggles conducted a survey of 93 Korean women in senior ranks and middle management, as well as in-depth interviews, which provided some rather interesting findings:

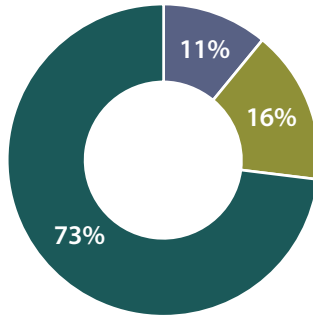
- Over 50 percent thought females were just as ambitious about their careers as men.
- More than a third said that women are just as assertive when it comes to contending for top management positions.
- The women leaders interviewed stated that they had noticed increasingly positive attitudes amongst women towards career advancement at work.
- One third of the respondents said they would be open to travelling and relocating themselves domestically or internationally for work.

Unfortunately, a staggering 83 percent of women executives surveyed said there still remains an invisible barrier to their upward progression, while nearly 60 percent said that there is a general lack of faith in the professional competence of women in Korea. The reasons for these obstacles include some deeply entrenched values in the Korean system – strong cultural barriers, gender discrimination and societal pressure; the Korean work ethic; and the corporate culture and ‘band of brothers’.

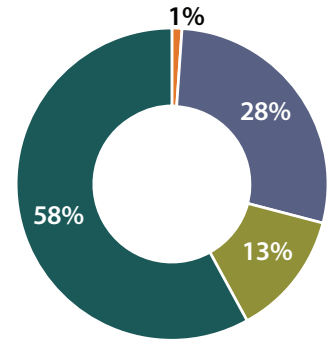
Source 5: Korean women reveal the top obstacles to their advancement



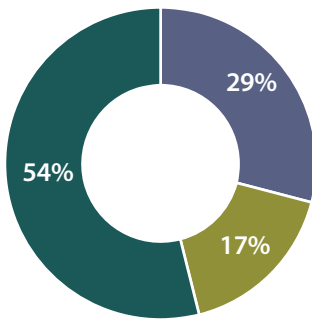
There exists a glass ceiling or invisible barrier for women in S. Korea when it comes to upward advancement



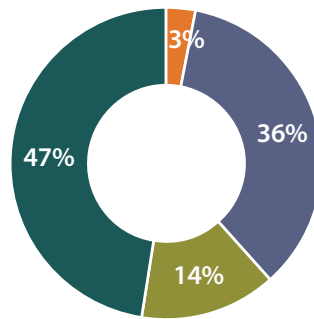
Women find it difficult to maintain a balance between family life & professional requirements of top management positions



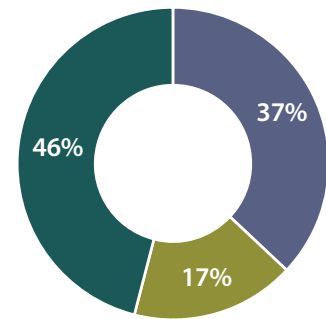
There is less faith in the professional competence of women



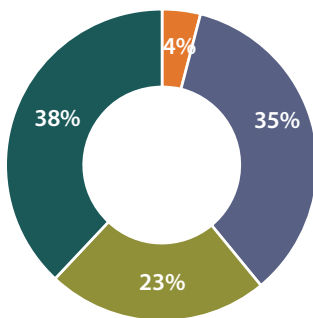
Women lack the necessary networking skills to be successful in integrating into male executives' network



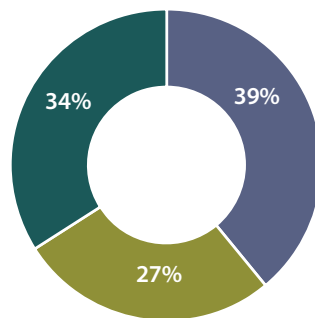
Women prefer jobs that requires less travel (such as in sales) and this may affect their prospects



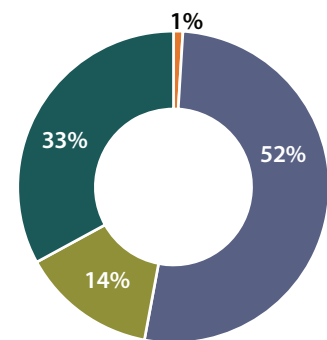
Women are less assertive when it comes to contending for top management positions



Women are less keen on changing their job locations domestically and internationally



There is a lack of professional training and education for women



Women are less ambitious about their careers

Don't Know Disagree Neither Agree Nor Disagree Agree

Source: Heidrick & Struggles, A More Diverse Workplace: Increasing Women's Power in Korea

A. Strong cultural barriers, gender discrimination and societal pressure

Strong cultural barriers and gender discrimination prevent women from growing their careers

In this often hierarchical and patriarchal society, women's most celebrated roles have traditionally been those of dutiful daughter, wife or mother rather than successful career woman. This impacts the workplace in some very obvious and other less tangible ways. A country manager, for example, related her shock at finding that the training center at her first employer had no female washrooms, as females were expected to resign once they had married.

Romi Haan, founder of a multi-million dollar international business in Korea, is an excellent example of overcoming such prejudice. When she first began her company almost 15 years ago, she often encountered male-dominated business evaluation teams for government funds and small business programs, and dealt with the mostly male merchandisers for women's products in Korean department stores. They were unable to see the value of her revolutionary home steam cleaning product and its huge potential demand, since housework was – and predominantly still is – seen as 'the woman's job'. Ms Haan "was probably one of the main forces to persuade policy and decision-makers to review this approach, seeing that at least 50 percent of buyers and consumers are women," and says that today there are many more female evaluators and merchandisers in Korea.

While all this is slowly changing, gender discrimination is still very ingrained in mainstream business. In fact, some men 'thoughtfully' offered to complete our survey on behalf of their female colleagues, rather than ask them to speak for themselves! Some women leaders also asked not to be identified because of possible repercussions in their male-dominated environments. To make it worse, overseas-based hiring managers often ask to fill all senior positions at their Korean offices with men.

One lady who has overcome such views, however, is Byung-Ok Sohn, President and Chief Executive of Prudential Life Insurance Company in Korea. She stated matter-of-factly in an interview with Korea Joongang Daily, "Men say company politics is important in getting promoted in a workplace, but what should be really important is to build up competence based on wisdom. An employee who is competent definitely stands out – whether or not it is a he or she."

Despite this optimism, such cultural barriers have led to high dropout rates of women as they move through Korea's corporate pipelines. As one woman executive told Heidrick & Struggles, "There are no invisible glass ceilings for talented women executives in Korea – just very visible ones!"

Source 6: Losses along the corporate pipeline in Korea (% of women)



Source: Women Matter: An Asian Perspective - McKinsey & Company 2012 (235 companies 1768 web-based survey)

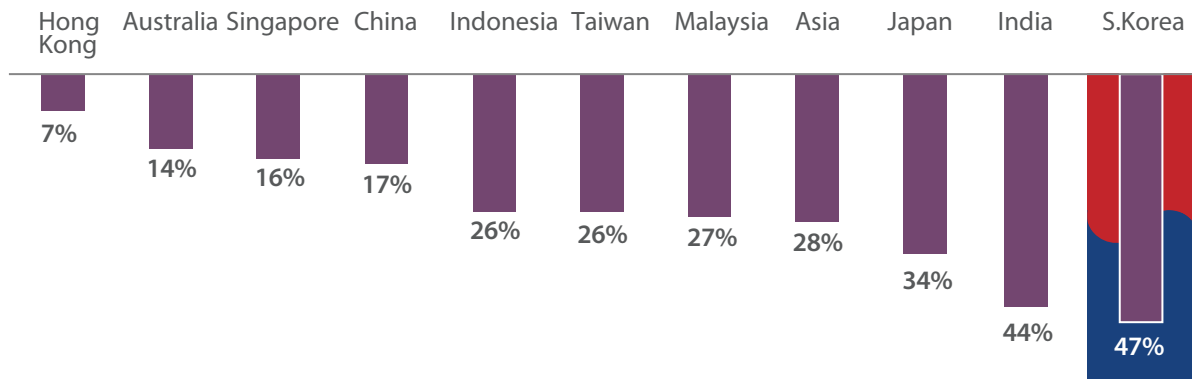
Societal pressure to take care of the children

Research in McKinsey's Women Matter report shows an alarming finding – more than any other country in Asia Pacific, women in Korea face the greatest pressure to leave their jobs and take care of the children once they have a family. Catalyst, a non-profit organization that aims to expand business opportunities for women and raise awareness on the benefits of diversity, found that many other countries where women are the primary caregivers have resolutions to this problem. For example, accessibility to low-cost childcare and help from extended family networks in China allow parents to manage work and family responsibilities, while in India, help from extended families is the most common arrangement for childcare.

Dr Yang Hee Kim, Director of Gender and Leadership, and former senior researcher at Seoul's state-run Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI), explains: "While many women often cite the reason for leaving their jobs as needing to provide childcare at home, it is usually a combination of this plus the pressure to provide children with the best education possible, as well as organizational conflicts due to male-dominated cultures and institutions, that drive women to quit their careers." Tae Hong Kim, research director at KWDI in an interview with Bloomberg, agrees: "The choice for women between a job and family is still stark. Policies alone can't change the people's long-held belief that mom is fully responsible for childcare."

Fortunately, there are still some success stories. Dr Soo Kyung Park, a Vice President (VP) at AMOREPACIFIC Corporation, explains how she has made it work: "My family's enthusiastic support helped me a lot in making my work life compatible with my family life. For work, I have had to make many sacrifices, particularly time spent in nurturing and educating my children. This bothered me the most, but fortunately my parents stepped in to help me out so I could overcome such challenges."

Source 7: Korean women rank highest in leaving their jobs for family commitments



Source: Women Matter: An Asian Perspective - McKinsey & Company 2012 (235 companies 1768 web-based survey)

B. Korean work ethic – married to the company

Over 70 percent of the women in our survey said that females in top management positions find it difficult to maintain a balance between their family life and professional requirements. As one senior woman manager candidly explained, “In Korea, you must first be prepared to be married to the company if you are an ambitious woman.” One main reason is that the Korean work ethic is exceptionally strong, and long hours and overtime are the norm. Data compiled by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that Koreans work an average of 2,193 hours annually, the highest of the 34 OECD countries.

Despite this already demanding environment, many Korean women find they must develop ‘manly’ traits like strong assertiveness, work even harder and put in longer hours than their male counterparts to advance in their careers. Women seem pressed to meet the opposing demands of career and family, while the men are often free to network after work, without the stress of children’s homework and household chores. Some top women leaders in the study said that such pressures have prevented them from going back to work after maternity leave, despite being offered senior positions with attractive growth opportunities and generous compensation packages. The success of those who have persevered has come at a great personal cost – we estimate that of the top female executives, more than half are either single or divorced.

C. Corporate culture and the band of brothers

One network that Korean women find impossible to replicate is the one men form during their compulsory army training. The lifelong friendships developed during conscription often provide them with very useful resources when they first enter the workforce and way beyond. The intimate professional networks in these close-knit 'bands of brothers' alleviates the need to seek new contacts, as they can instead leverage these old, trusty relationships.

Over 50 percent of the women executives in our survey say they and their peers lack the necessary networking skills to successfully integrate into male executives' networks, putting them at a huge disadvantage. They find it virtually impossible to infiltrate these long-standing friendships and must instead form new networks of their own. However, the new contacts women make may not be as solid as the long-term bonds the men share.

In the words of successful women – the attributes of success

Surmounting cultural obstacles

A. Create equal footing with the men

- a. ***Be a strong communicator. Learn how to express yourself and understand people better, and leverage your unique female strengths. And remember – your opinion is just as valid as your male counterparts.***

“Communicate, communicate, and communicate! Women tend to be more open minded and flexible so are able to understand people around them better, but they often face difficulties because they aren’t able to communicate what they know and understand. They can become effective leaders by learning how to express themselves and communicate well.” *Romi Haan, CEO of HAAN Corporation (H&S interview)*

- b. ***Enhance your endurance and strength at work and be perceived as having a strong character. Let work pressure motivate you, not break you, and offer solutions instead of being defensive.***

“Women need to enhance their endurance and strength at work, in order to overcome what others may view as their ‘weak’ points. As a woman executive officer in Korea, you need to have extra strength! Women should select and develop their own areas of specialization and work towards being better at it than others.” *Soo Kyung Park, Chief Customer Officer and VP of AMOREPACIFIC Corporation (H&S interview)*

- c. ***Be proactive and ambitious. Do not wait to be offered growth opportunities – ask for work to extend your experience and make it clear you intend to climb.***

“Be proactive. Take on challenges and have a critical perspective. You should not be forced into a situation but try to take charge of a situation by yourself. In the 21st century knowledge-based economy, this world desperately needs high-quality women’s leadership. Therefore my motto is ‘Girls, be ambitious!’” *Sung-Joo Kim, Chairperson of luxury fashion brand MCM Holdings AG & Sungjoo Group (‘Global Leadership Post’ interview)*

- d. ***Do not question your decisions – once you have decided***

something, follow through with it. Your initial instinct is often the right one.

“With our society as it is, Korean women repeatedly question whether they have made the right decision to continue pursuing their careers. Men never ask themselves that question! Just decide once and for all, and stick to it. Don’t question your decision over and over throughout your career. That will become a big barrier before anything else.” *Sue Kyung Lee, CEO & General Manager of P&G Korea (H&S interview)*

e. Demonstrate competency through hard work. Always try your best and be prepared to put in the groundwork to succeed.

“I often speak to young women who are starting their career and advise them to outperform others first with their right skills and abilities. If the skills and abilities are similar, then they need to work 1.5 times harder. In particular, females are typically weak at establishing networks and so am I. The only way to compensate for this demerit is to demonstrate competency through hard work.” *Byung-Ok Sohn, President and CEO of Prudential Life Insurance Company (The Korea Times’ interview)*

Overcoming time constraints

f. Don’t give up too soon. Everybody has difficult times, but persevering shows your strength and proves you are a worthy candidate for future promotion.

“Above everything else, women must have the patience and resilience it takes to rise up the corporation. Many women give up too soon in the face of conflict or business challenges. You must accept that business goes up and down, results don’t always come as you expect, and that you will face criticisms at times. Women should not react emotionally, but should stay cool and focused on what needs to be done in order to do better. Accept the criticism and turn it into lessons for yourself. Disappointments and failure can be very good ‘teachers!’” *Country Manager at an international fashion house (H&S interview)*

How can we build successful organizations that embrace diversity?

What kind of diversity programs do Korean women executives prefer?

Heidrick & Struggles research shows that Korean women would appreciate the benefits of any diversity programs, particularly the formation of their own networking groups and initiatives that will allow for better work-life balance.

The critical success factors of making it happen

1. *Sponsorship from top management*

Dr Park from AMOREPACIFIC Corporation stated that her CEO's clearly articulated vision recognizing woman leaders in the business provided her with the courage to pursue her career. Another pioneering group, Samsung, has been successful in nurturing more women leaders because the chairman himself had the resolve to remove discrimination against women in the *chaebol*^[1]. This type of strong, top-down approach to nurturing female talent within the company has the power to create change that can be truly transformational and lasting.

Companies should also ensure that their recruitment, appraisal and career management systems do not obstruct women's professional development. For example, instead of only identifying high-potential candidates by looking at managers aged 28–35, they could incorporate more flexible criteria, such as the number of years they have worked for the company, to accommodate aspects like maternity leave. In addition, HR functions could train recruiters and senior staff on the importance of diversity, help them identify their prejudices, increase their ability to spot potential women candidates, or even ensure there is at least one woman on each promotion shortlist. Finally, the company could offer women personalized career paths to help them retain the best talent.

[1] A chaebol is a type of South Korean business conglomerate, often a multinational and/or family-owned business.

2. *Building an organization culture that embraces diversity*

To help close the gender gaps in organizations, it is vital to create and monitor gender diversity indicators. Some of the main indicators include the proportion of women in the company's various business lines, at different management levels and among new recruits; the pay levels and attrition rates between men and women in similar functions; and the ratio of women promoted to the number of females eligible for promotion.

One senior woman executive, however, observed that women want more than a good package, as she explains, "many chaebols want to hire women directors but find the mandate almost impossible to fulfill, because most women candidates will value factors other than just the job description or pay". Her friend turned down a director role at a local company because she recognized the high risk of being a female 'newcomer' in an organization of mostly men who had been working there for over 20 years. Other friends feel that they cannot 'abandon' their families, as local companies expect women to start work at 6:30am and finish late at night, leaving no time for their families whatsoever.

Providing a good work-life balance for women is therefore also vital. This can be achieved by providing flexible working hours and making the work itself more flexible by allowing for remote working, part-time work and flexi-time. This technique, which can benefit male staff too, not only gives employees more freedom, but could also save the company a lot of money. Women could also be given career flexibility and support during breaks throughout their career, especially long breaks for maternity leave. The companies that best manage the daunting return to work after maternity leave are those which actively manage these breaks, meeting with the women before and after to ensure they are properly reintegrated, and keeping in touch during the breaks.

3. *Mentoring and role models*

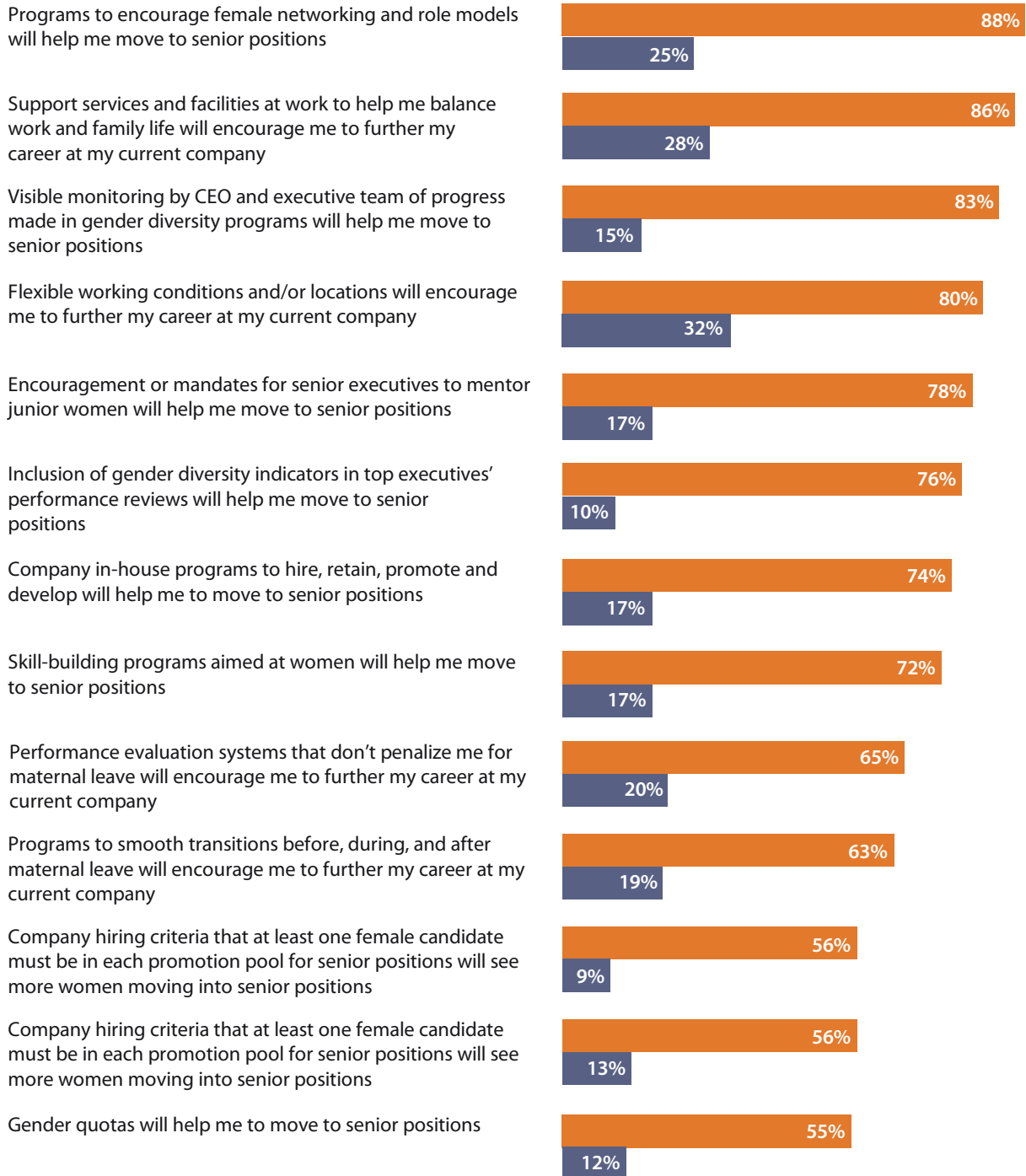
Coaching, network-building or mentoring programs can help women identify their self-imposed limitations and assist them to grow in their male-dominated environments. Setting up women's networks in the company can highlight the importance of networking and also raise women's profiles internally, allowing young women to find role models within. By encouraging and helping women to develop, companies are often able to retain their female staff and grow the female talent pool.

"Most companies resort to hiring women executives from outside the company as a 'quick win', but many must do more to nurture their female talent and promote from within. This not only means providing formal mentoring or coaching programs and forming women's networking groups, but also doing more to foster gender-inclusive organizational cultures and holding their leaders and managers accountable for promoting gender diversity," explains *Dr Kim of Gender and Leadership*.

4. *Learning from the expats, localizing it in a Korean way*

Many multinationals have long established gender diversity programs in Asia Pacific, some of which are tailored by country. Korea is unique and would benefit from such customization. As seen in Source 7, Korean women do not necessarily pick the most popularly implemented programs in Asia Pacific as being the most important to them – they are unique and their programs should reflect this.

Source 8: Diversity programs preferred by Korean women executives



■ % Korean women's choice of diversity programmes

■ % Asia Pacific women's choice of diversity programmes

Source: Heidrick & Struggles, A More Diverse Workplace: Increasing Women's Power in Korea

Source: Women Matter: An Asian Perspective - McKinsey & Company 2012 (235 companies 1768 web-based survey)

As Source 8 shows, Korean companies can also look at firms in Asia Pacific and beyond for inspiration for diversity programs. Google, for example, which falls in the typically male-dominated technology sector, has created an award for deserving women in the field to encourage them to join the technology sector. Others, like GE, Merck, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup and Dow understand the importance of networking and give women the opportunity to find role models, share ideas and ultimately grow their leadership abilities in their unique and strategic networks. Deutsche Bank provides a diversity council which focuses on attracting female candidates. Korean firms could tailor the perfect mix to address their needs.

Source 9: Some gender diversity programs

Company	Programme Name	Location	Target Women	Description
Google	Women's Engineering Award	India	Women students	Award that aims to recognize and reward deserving women students in Computer Science and related majors, and inspire them to become active participants and leaders in creating technology.
Deutsche Bank	India Diversity Council	India	Women candidates	Diversity council that has exclusive agreements with headhunters to attract women candidates.
GE	Middle East myConnections	Middle East	Women managers	Network that fosters the professional growth and development of women working at GE by providing coaching on career paths, flexibility and role models. Helps retain talent, particularly in the engineering and technology fields.
Intel	Women at Intel (WIN)	China	Women mid-level managers	Group of women Vice Presidents and Fellows who champion existing and newly formed internal efforts around the development and retention of women.
Goldman Sachs	Women's Networks	Asia Pacific	Women, students, candidates and managers	Networks that aim to recruit, retain and develop female professionals and host events utilizing Goldman Sachs leaders and external experts. Campus recruiting teams host onsite recruiting events for women.
Baxter	Building Talent Edge	Asia Pacific	Women, students, candidates and managers	Programme that oversees a formal recruitment process for all leadership positions in the region, with particular focus on recruiting high-potential women. Provides women employees with the leadership skills, technical and functional training, and business knowledge needed to help them advance.
Merck	Merck Women's Network	Global	Women managers	Network that promotes diversity and cultural awareness while fostering a rich business environment for the personal and professional development of members. Support Merck's talent pipeline by providing an environment for women to further demonstrate and grow leadership capabilities. Partners and supports business initiatives and projects relevant to women as well as the broader Merck community.
Citi Group	Global Women's Initiative	Global	Women managers	A global programme that leverages existing diversity councils and networks to share best practices, create champions and role models and build a pipeline of talented women for senior management.
Dow	Women's Innovation Network (WIN)	Global	Women managers	Network that offers mentoring and networking opportunities, and provides access to professional development tailored to the unique needs of women at critical career stages. Focused on catalyzing culture change by engaging champions, both men and women, across the organization. WIN also partners with a number of external organizations which share Dow's commitment to expanding opportunities for women in the workplace, especially in science and engineering.

Source: Heidrick & Struggles, 2013

Gender diversity case: CEO and General Manager of P&G Korea

After several years working overseas, including two stints in the US and four years in Singapore as P&G's Marketing Director for ASEAN, India, Australia, Japan and Korea, Sue Kyung Lee returned to Korea in 2012 to head up the P&G Korea office as CEO and General Manager.

Ms Lee admitted it took her a while to re-adjust to Korea's homogenous, male-dominated and hierarchical society outside of work. However, she spoke very positively of her experience as a woman executive at P&G.

Here are some excerpts from our interview with Ms Lee.

Management culture

"The management and corporate culture at P&G support the development of their people, irrespective of gender. This is something I value highly as a professional.

The company is also willing to accommodate my family responsibilities, as long as I put in my share of meeting the company's goals and performance benchmarks. All these years, the company has kept the communication lines open with me, and we are all very clear about my career path and expectations, as well as my family responsibilities. There have never been any sudden surprises or conflicts."

Flexible time

"P&G also provides employees with some work flexibility so as to accommodate individual needs. These include flexi-hours and allowing employees to work from home. In fact, arrangements were made for me to spend two weeks every month in Seoul during my regional marketing director role that was officially based in Singapore. My family couldn't move with me to Singapore, so this allowed me to spend some precious time with them."

Women's networking groups

"I have also benefited enormously from the women's networking groups and support systems at P&G. These are split into country, functional, regional and global groups. That way, one can approach the right group of professionals for specific guidance and support depending on the challenges you are facing. You can find someone at P&G you can reach out to who will help you! There are even local life-stage groups, so mums can get together to discuss how to raise their preschool kids during lunch breaks, for example.

I am also part of P&G's regional women's symposium that gathers in Singapore annually. The senior executives at P&G provide two full days of advice and mentorship to promising female middle managers. Gifted women get a clear show of support and attention from senior women leaders, and this can be very motivating and certainly helps retain our brightest women.

It can be a very powerful thing, when women help women!"

Heidrick & Struggles' role in gender diversity

At the heart of Heidrick & Struggles is the goal of partnering the right leaders with the right companies. We are also extremely dedicated to enhancing the role of women in business. For this reason, we are one of the key sponsors of the Women Corporate Directors (WCD) organization, which provides a network for women corporate leaders, with our current Asian chapters boasting more than 600 distinguished female corporate board members from China, Hong Kong, India, Japan and Singapore. WCD is currently in the process of forming a chapter in Korea.

Our years of experience have proved how companies with good gender diversity tend to be more successful. The different viewpoints and contributions of female leaders can only add value and depth to any organisation. We therefore increasingly encourage Korean clients to build strong female leaders.

Mark Sungrae Kim

Partner, Consumer Markets and Life Sciences Practice

Mark Sungrae Kim is a partner in the Consumer Markets and Life Sciences Practice in Korea and has more than 21 years of experience in executive search and industry. Working with both Korean and multinational companies, he has personally completed more than 100 searches for CEO and country manager jobs, as well as for key positions in sales, marketing, brand management, finance, human resources, medical, regulatory & government affairs, and supply chain.



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