The road to an inclusive workplace;

where are we and how do we increase the speed of change?

Lived Experience Research - November 2022

Purpose

Creating a culture that is equitable and inclusive is key to business success. In an inclusive firm, everyone feels that they have opportunities to perform and progress without unfair barriers being put in their way.

However, organisations are often unable to create an inclusive culture because the behaviours and values that lead to exclusion remain stubbornly in place. These behaviours and values are often not ill intended and are seen as acceptable by a majority in the firm. In many firms and industries that majority is straight white men.

Leaders often think that these behaviours happen elsewhere and not in their firms. But most women recognise this happening to them on a daily basis. Those of us who work in the field of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) see this time and time again in our work.

This survey aims to create a set of benchmarks for measuring Inclusion. It is a "state of the nation" view on the experience of people in the workplace. We want to help organisations with a greater level of insight on where workplace challenges around Diversity and Inclusion exist. We want to create intelligence on these experiences which can be shared with others to create better options for improving them.

We want to enable organisations to benchmark themselves against this data to know where they are on their journey to an Inclusive workplace.

And for those who work in the D&I landscape, we want to be able to get the data that shows that the work we do is making a difference. Hence, we plan to run this survey on a regular basis to see how it changes over time.

The survey aims to be a useful tool to anyone working in the D&I arena and to organisations seeking to become more inclusive.

The Methodology

Members of E2W, Diversity Project, Men for Inclusion and Women on the Wharf were invited to undertake the survey in November 2022.

400 people took part

24% men

76% women

79% were not from traditional under-represented ethnicities

69% were from the financial services sector

Nearly **400 people** took part in the survey.

Of those who identified their gender, **76% were women** and **24% were men**.

Of those people that described their ethnicity, **21% were from traditionally under-represented ethnicities** and **79% were not**.

Of those people that identified the sector in which they worked **69% were from the Financial Services sector**.

The survey asked the following questions and gave the opportunity for comment and sharing of experiences.

- Do you / can you bring your whole self to work?

- How important is an inclusive workplace for you?

- Have you ever been insulted or dismissed when you have raised issues about workplace behaviours?

- Have you ever felt that you have been more harshly punished when making a mistake than your colleagues?

- Do you think your performance is evaluated fairly?

- Do you suspect or know that you have been unfairly passed over for promotion?

- Do you think there is positive discrimination in your promotion process that favours those from under-represented groups?

- Do you feel you get the same opportunities for career enhancing projects or activities as your colleagues?

- Do you feel that you are asked to do more administrative work that is not part of your core responsibilities than your colleagues?

- Do you feel you have to provide more evidence of your competency than your colleagues?

- Do you feel that colleagues make assumptions about you, your work or career because of outside work commitments (e.g. family or friends)?

- Do you feel that you get direct and actionable feedback from your managers?

- Do you feel that you struggle to get your voice heard in group situations?

- Do you feel that you are more frequently interrupted than your colleagues?

- Do you feel that your ideas are not considered in group situations or only heard when repeated by someone else?

- Do you feel that you have the right access to sponsorship to make it to a senior role?

- Do you feel that your workplace has informal and formal social networks that are difficult for you to break in to?

- Has a work colleague ever suggested you owe your position / success to a particular personal characteristic (e.g. race, gender etc.)

- Do you believe that the groups that identify with the same characteristics as you (e.g. race, gender, etc.) are treated fairly in your workplace?

- More broadly, do you believe that success in your organisation is based on merit?

Key Messages

1. There is more work to do

Overall, our survey is suggesting that organisations still have a lot to do to make their places of work more inclusive.

3 areas where urgent focus is required are:

Ensuring that evaluation of performance is fair

– 66% of people feel that it is not.

When inclusion issues are raised, ensuring that they are dealt with appropriately

– 67% of our respondents who raised issues about workplace behaviours have been dismissed or insulted when they did.

Reducing situations where people have to provide more evidence of competency than colleagues in similar positions

– more than 60% of people feel they have to do this.

2. Inclusion challenges exist across all demographics and there is no silver bullet to resolve them

Some level of exclusion is experienced by all demographics represented by this survey, with experiences varying across different groups. However, impacts to career progress are not limited to 1 or 2 issues with respondents identifying multiple barriers to success. Employers must continue to make progress on several fronts, including behaviours, values and culture, as well as policies, procedures and process.

3. The female experience remains worse than their male colleagues

Organisations must improve the culture, behaviours and values in the work environment so that women are treated, and are seen to be treated, in a more fair and equitable manner. This ranges from how work is allocated, how effective performance is measured and evaluated and how that evaluation feeds into rewards and recognition, including promotion and career progression. There is more to do to ensure that the voices of women are heard and valued when they contribute.

20% difference

Of the 20 quantitative questions we asked, 17 were answered more negatively by women than men.
Of the 17, 8 had a percentile difference **between men and women of more than 20%**

4. Experiences are worse for those from ethnic minorities

The responses from people from ethnic minorities suggested that their workplace experiences are worse than those who identified as part of the majority group.

Of the 20 quantitative questions, the ethnic minority group answered more negatively to 14 of the questions. Of the 14, **6 had a percentile difference between the groups of more than 15.**

Given that most of the people identifying with an ethnic minority group also identified as female, these answers do seem to confirm previous research that women in this group experience the "double whammy" of being both a woman and from an ethnic minority.

5. Some well intentioned D&I strategies are creating a backlash and need to be dealt with thoughtfully

20% of men in our survey answer "Yes" to the question about whether there is positive discrimination happening in their organisations, versus only **8% of women**

This data begins to show just how complex tackling equality in the workplace is and how thoughtful organisations must be in their approach to dealing with it. Changes to create better equality of opportunity and to create more balance in the demographic of their senior ranks must be accompanied by a clear communication strategy and ensure opportunities are not removed from those that have had better representation at senior levels in the past.

6. An Inclusive workplace remains a bigger challenge for Financial Services

Our results suggest that the Financial Services (FS) sector has more work to do on Inclusion than others - the sector scores worse on all 20 of the quantitative questions with nearly half of the questions being **more than 10% negative for FS**.

These results are a wake-up call for the sector. It is clear that it has been focused on the subject of Diversity and Inclusion for some years and whilst progress is being made, it is slow. Typically, FS organisations are large and global, which means activities in this area take continued effort and no small amount of resilience to be successful. Cultural nuances in different locations also mean programmes to improve in this area need to be continuously assessed and revised.

Inclusion for All

The following data points show the inclusion picture for all demographic groups that took part in the survey.

Inclusive Environment

78%
Respondents who felt that an inclusive workplace is essential

82%
Respondents who answered positively to the question of whether they could bring their whole selves to work

56%
Respondents who have been insulted or dismissed when they have raised issues about workplace behaviours

57%
Respondents who felt that they struggled to get their voices heard in group situations

22%
Respondents who felt that they were more frequently interrupted than their colleagues

19%
Respondents who felt that their ideas were not heard or considered until repeated by someone else

Performance Evaluation

36%
Respondents who felt that they had been more harshly punished when making a mistake than their colleagues

67%
Respondents who felt that their performance is not being evaluated fairly

40%
Respondents who felt that they had been unfairly passed over for promotion

36%
Respondents who felt that there was positive discrimination in the promotion process that favoured those from under-represented groups

Career Development

54%
Respondents who felt that they get the same opportunities to career enhancing projects as their colleagues

65%
Respondents who felt that they had to provide more evidence of their competency than their colleagues

57%
Respondents who felt that they were asked to do more administrative work that was not part of their core responsibilities than their colleagues

60%
Respondents who said that colleagues make assumptions about them because of outside work commitments such as family or friends

73%
Respondents who said that they get direct and actionable feedback from their managers frequently or from time to time

Leadership Access

15%
Respondents who reported that they don't have the right access to make it to a senior role

32%
Respondents who also reported that their firm has social groups that don't include them

Meritocracy

41%
Respondents who felt that groups that identify with the same characteristics as them were treated unfairly in the workplace

36%
Respondents who have seen or heard their colleagues suggesting that they or others like them have benefited from a personal characteristic (e.g. gender, race, etc.)

43%
Respondents who felt that success in their organisation was not based on merit

The Stories

Inclusive Environment - Behaviours

There are still pockets of male bastions! Hard to break into pub gatherings etc. Jokey remarks in meetings also seen and heard, again mostly when majority in room is male.

I find our workplace talks the talk but does not walk the walk. We contradict ourselves at a management level.

Following a survey of female colleagues, the most consistent and striking feedback has been how inclusive male colleagues think they are, and want to be, yet how unaware they are of their subconscious biases.

Performance Evaluation

Unfairly discounted from a European role because of gender (female) with a child - it was thought it would not be practical for a woman to undertake a role with so much travel.

Women are viewed more harshly for displaying the same behaviours/attributes as men. When you add additional layers of diversity, then women are viewed even more harshly and expected to represent 'their community'.

Affinity bias is rife, and often promotions are based on favoritism rather than performance.

Career Development

Left to organise lunches, Christmas parties and anything that supports early careers, this is very much pushed on and left to females across the organisation. Often left out of strategy conversations within tech as the leads are all male.

People in my organisation don't have time to give good quality feedback. When we have to gather feedback for internal performance management processes, I often have to chase multiple times to get a response or receive none.

In my previous role, I felt I had to work at least twice as hard as male counterparts to have even a similar perception that I was as competent as them.

Inclusive Environment - Group Situations

My boss keeps repeating what I just said as if others couldn't understand or as if he is helping me. Constantly interrupted.

These 3 questions [on being heard, being interrupted or having ideas credited to others] are the story of my life. EVERY SINGLE DAY....

SO often it happens where my ideas and suggestions are ignored or talked over and only taken seriously when someone else repeats them.

Leadership Access

Senior team go out (prearranged) about once a month - I have never been invited, except last minute when I have happened to be in the office just before (and not always then either).

Senior leaders just want more of the same and people like them. Don't feel they are really interested in me when I have tried sponsorship and felt like they only did it because they had to. Spent more time talking about them and their issues.

There are upper middle class circles that are hard to break into as a working class person.

Meritocracy

All white men are on a classic career path. The louder and more unpleasant, the faster. All women of colour have to go above and beyond over and over again to get the minimum of what they deserve.

I see the thing that blocks fairness in the workplace is the mindset of senior leaders, those that are not open to change.

We need only to look at promotion numbers to see unfairness. No women have been promoted to the top level in London in my division in close to six years. Each year between 1 and 3 men are promoted. When you challenge a senior man about this they say "oh but it's so much better than it was! There are women there now". Yes, but because they've been relocated from other locations or hired in from other companies. If we're saying there are genuinely no women worthy of promotion, then we need to go back and look at our hiring and progression practices to make sure we're hiring the right women. However, I feel the truth is there's bias in our progression processes that mean capable women aren't being given opportunity.

Gender Differences

Given that previous research has shown clear differences between the experiences of men and women in the workplace, it would be surprising if our survey did not find that there are issues that remain to be solved.
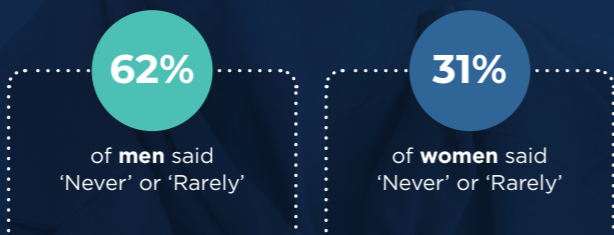
Of the 20 quantitative questions we asked, 17 were answered more negatively by women than men, 2 showed a small difference between the genders (< 6%) and only 1 suggested a worse experience for men than women. Of the 17, 8 had a percentile difference between men and women of more than 20% and 16 had a difference of more than 10%.

Significant work remains for organisations to ensure that the voices of women are heard and valued when they contribute. In addition, organisations must improve the culture, behaviours and values in the work environment so that women are treated, and are seen to be treated, in a more fair and equitable manner. This ranges from how work is allocated, how effective performance is measured and evaluated and how that evaluation feeds into rewards and recognition, including promotion and career progression.

Do you feel your ideas are not considered or only heard when repeated by someone else?

68% of **men** said this never happens to them

35% of **women** said this never happens to them

Do you feel you struggle to get your voice heard in group situations?

62% of **men** said 'Never' or 'Rarely'

31% of **women** said 'Never' or 'Rarely'

Do you feel groups with characteristics you identify with are treated fairly?

57% of **men** said 'Yes'

34% of **women** said 'Yes'

Do you believe success in your workplace is based on merit?

68% of **men** said 'Yes' or 'Mostly'

46% of **women** said 'Yes' or 'Mostly'

Do you suspect or know you have been unfairly passed over for promotion?

25% of **men** said 'Yes'

47% of **women** said 'Yes'

Do you feel that you have to provide more evidence of your competency than your colleagues?

2% of **men** said 'Yes - all the time'

26% of **women** said 'Yes - all the time'

Do you think there is positive discrimination in your promotion process that favours those from under-represented groups?

20% of **men** said 'Yes'
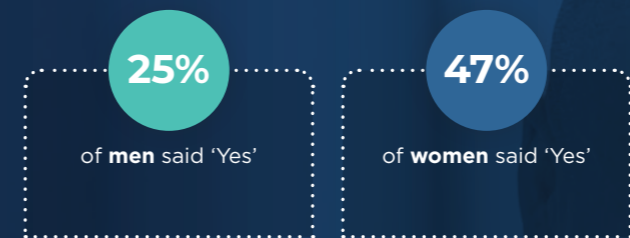
8% of **women** said 'Yes'
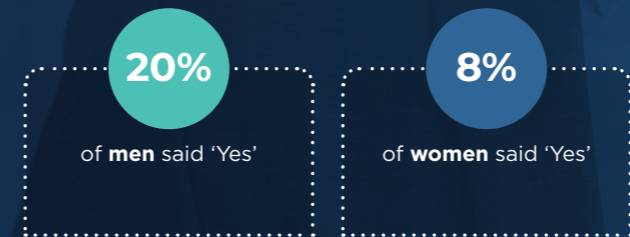
Has a work colleague ever suggested you owe your success to a particular personal characteristic?

21% of **men** said 'Yes'

40% of **women** said 'Yes'

Do you feel you get the same opportunities to career-enhancing opportunities as colleagues?

68% of **men** said this never happens to them

35% of **women** said this never happens to them

Do you feel that you are asked to do more administrative work than your colleagues?

62% of **men** said 'Never' or 'Rarely'

31% of **women** said 'Never' or 'Rarely'

Ethnic Differences

The responses from people who described their ethnicity in terms that typically align to a group that has been traditionally underrepresented at work suggested that their workplace experiences are worse than those who identified with the majority workplace group.

Of the 20 quantitative questions, the ethnic minority group answered more negatively to 14 of the questions, with 1 question answered more negatively by the majority group and the other 5 having relatively small differences. Of the 14, 2 had a percentile difference between the groups of more than 20 and another 4 had a percentile difference of more than 15.

Given that most of the people identifying with an ethnic minority group also identified as female, these answers do seem to confirm previous research that women in this group experience the "double whammy" of being both a woman and from an ethnic group.

Do you suspect or know you have been unfairly passed over for promotion?

37%
of the **majority group** said 'Yes'

56%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'Yes'

Do you feel that you have to provide more evidence of your competency than your colleagues?

19%
of the **majority group** said 'Yes - all the time'

33%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'Yes - all the time'

Have you ever been insulted or dismissed when raising issues about workplace behaviours?

7%
of the **majority group** said 'Yes - often'

26%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'Yes - often'

Do you feel that your colleagues make assumptions about you because of outside work commitments?

17%
of the **majority group** said 'Yes - all the time'

33%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'Yes - all the time'

Do you feel groups with characteristics that you identify with are treated fairly?

40%
of the **majority group** said 'No'

63%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'No'

Do you believe success in your workplace is based on merit?

53%
of the **majority group** said 'Yes' or 'Mostly'

33%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'Yes' or 'Mostly'

Have you ever felt more harshly punished when making a mistake than colleagues?

34%
of the **majority group** said 'Yes'

56%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'Yes'

Do you feel you are asked to do more administrative work than your colleagues?

19%
of the **majority group** said 'Yes - all the time'

33%
of **ethnic minorities** said 'Yes - all the time'

What Can We Do

This research reinforces the facts that our naturally biased behaviours continue to create barriers to an inclusive and equitable workplace. Some call this unconscious bias which can create a false sense that we cannot change these biases. At Men for Inclusion, we refer to this as Accidental Sexism.

All men and women exhibit some level of accidental sexism. We can't help it as gender stereotypes remain deeply ingrained within our society. It affects both men and women's careers. However, our research confirms once more that it is impacting the careers of women far more than men.

Even if your firm has achieved a 50/50 gender ratio, if half of your team are experiencing accidental sexism on a daily basis, how much is that affecting their performance and potential? How much is that costing your firm?

But our research is showing that inclusion goes way beyond just gender. This is about accidental exclusion - constantly reinforced. The questions we ask are deliberately targeted at the specific impacts that affect women - but now we see it affects lots of others too.

Most firms are expecting change to happen with a small minority of the workforce - we estimate less than 0.5% of a typical organisation's efforts are put into building a more inclusive environment. And often that work is "side of the desk" after hours.

Below, we can see how people may have different levels of knowledge and understanding of Diversity and Inclusion. We need to shift the population on the left of the picture to the right

RESISTING

"She only got the job because.."
"There needs to be a group for white men.."
"It's gone too far.."

ALLIES

"I am actively mentoring under-represented groups.."
"I champion them when they are not in the room.."

PASSIVE

"D&I is not about me.."
"I don't know how to help.."
"I am too busy to get involved in this.."

REACTIVE

"I have got a target.."
"This is the only way to succeed.."
"This is important to the boss.."

INCLUSION LEADER

"I challenge my own and others' behaviour.."
"I make sure that inclusion is part of everything I do.."

ADUCE

AWARENESS
"I know about the lived experiences of others..."
"I realise that there is relative advantage for some people..."

DESIRE
"I agree that this needs to be addressed..."
"I want to get involved to help but I don't know how..."

UNDERSTANDING
"I understand what actions I can take..."
"I can see how my behaviours might create issues..."

CAPABILITY
"I know how to take action..."
"I know how to change my behaviour to deliver a more inclusive workplace"

EMBEDDING
"I continue to prioritise my time to increase my knowledge..."
"I know how to deal with my and others mistakes..."

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At Men for Inclusion, we believe that the only way to increase the velocity of change is to get those from the majority groups to take responsibility for changes to culture, accepted behaviours and the values that they own. We encourage them to step forward and to step up to improve diversity and inclusion within their organisations.

We do this by making them aware of the ways in which exclusion is hindering the performance of all of their staff and helping them find their own personal case for prioritising their time to work on it.

We build an understanding of what they can do; how they can hold a mirror up to themselves and ensure that their own behaviours are not holding others back; how they can disrupt their own accidentally non-inclusive behaviours to become a role model as an inclusion leader. And then help them put it into practice.

This does require time, effort and continuous practice and learning. It requires a safe space, where no one feels guilty, where people can explore these deeply nuanced conversations at their own pace. Where mistakes can be made in a culture that allows them to be forgiven as long as people endeavour to do better next time. It requires daring conversations and people getting comfortable with being uncomfortable.

At Men for Inclusion, we make this happen. We help people become the type of leader and colleague that they truly want to be. A person who is proud of what they do and the way that they do it. A person that leaves a legacy - making the workplace and the world a better place.

About Us / Acknowledgements

This survey was created by the joint efforts of four organisations - Men for Inclusion, E2W, Women on the Wharf and The Diversity Project.

Men for Inclusion was created to help organisations unlock the competitive advantage of an inclusive workplace. It is focused on helping everyone, but particularly those who have not been part of Diversity and Inclusion discussions, understand and build a personal case for championing inclusion. It aims to help leaders accelerate cultural change in the workplace. www.e2w.co/men-for-inclusion/corporate-services

E2W - Since 2002, E2W has championed and campaigned for increased gender diversity, equality and equity in the financial services sector. Over these twenty years we have supported and helped thousands of women to flourish and succeed in their financial services careers and enabled, through our recruitment division, Financial Institutions to source amazing female talent for their open roles. www.e2w.co

Women on the Wharf is a network made of up of professionals from member organisations who are either based in Canary Wharf or who have a presence in Canary Wharf. With its unique geographic focus, we can organise and signpost events and encourage networking both face-to-face and on-line, with the objective of supporting the career progression of women professionals in participating member organisations. wotwlondon.wordpress.com

The Diversity Project - The Diversity Project is a cross-company initiative championing a truly diverse and inclusive UK investment and savings industry with the right talent to deliver the best possible financial outcomes for our clients, to reflect the society we serve and ultimately build more sustainable businesses. www.diversityproject.com

We would like to thank everyone who took part in the survey, helped encourage others to complete it and created the insight, the report and any accompanying material.

For more information about Men for Inclusion's work, this research and/or benchmarking your own organisation against your peers, please contact:
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