

DiversityLeads 2012

Diversity Institute

Ryerson University's Diversity Institute undertakes research on diversity in the workplace to improve practices in organizations.

The Diversity Institute works with organizations to develop customized strategies, programming and resources to promote new, interdisciplinary knowledge and practice about diversity with respect to gender, race/ethnicity, Aboriginal peoples, abilities and sexual orientation. We collaborate with industry, government, not-for-profits and academics to:

- Research existing practices and evaluate programs;
- Explore barriers to full participation in the workplace;
- Develop fact-based policies and programs to help organizations attract, motivate and develop under-represented groups; and
- Provide customized training to support the development of diversity strategies.

The Diversity Institute is located in the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada. For more information please see www.ryerson.ca/diversity.

Women in Senior Leadership Positions: A Profile of the Greater Toronto Area

THE PROJECT

This report is the first of its kind to profile and provide insight on where, how and why women in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) are advancing to senior leadership positions.

Specifically, this project:

- Measures the representation of women, including visible minorities, in leadership positions in seven sectors: elected, public, corporate, voluntary, education, agencies, boards & commissions, and the legal sector;
- Examines similarities and differences between and within sectors; and
- Suggests best practices to help women advance to senior leadership positions.

This analysis is based on data collected on 5081 senior leadership roles.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR DIVERSITY

Advancing talented women to senior leadership positions promotes financial performance, innovation and social inclusion. Increasing the representation of women in senior leadership positions enables organizations to:

- Overcome the skills shortage and the war for talent;
- Respond to increasingly diverse markets;
- Increase innovation and creativity;
- Increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover; and
- Mitigate legal and reputational costs.

FINDINGS

Women are still underrepresented in senior leadership positions.

Though women account for 51.3% of residents in the GTA, in the seven sectors analysed in 2011, 28.0% of leaders were women.

The proportion of women in senior leadership positions varies between sectors.

The education sector and government appointments to agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs) have the highest percentages of women in senior leadership positions (40.8% and 38.5%), while the corporate sector has the lowest percentage of women represented (17.4%).

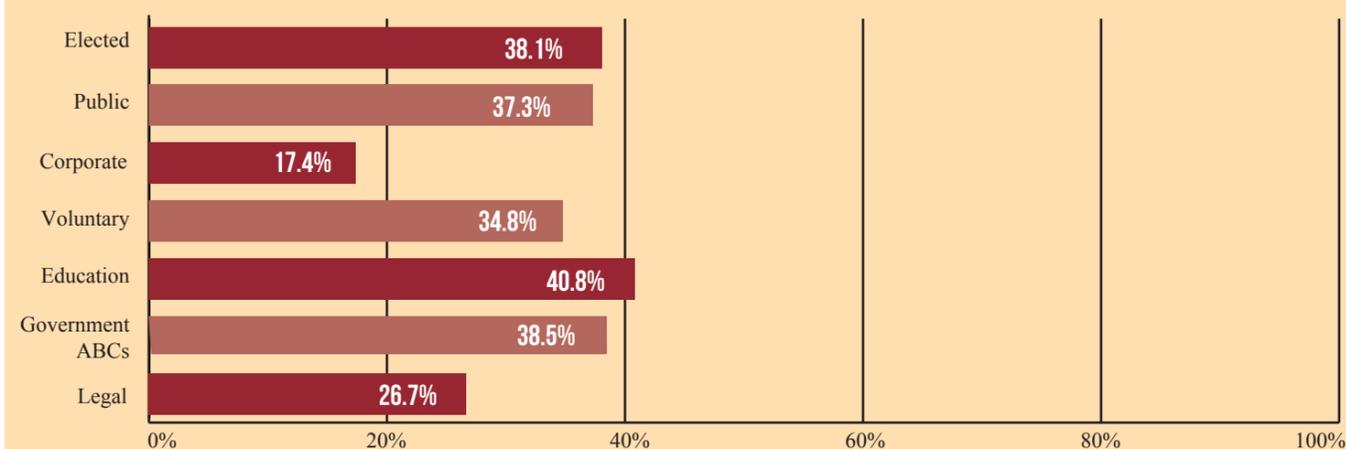
Women's representation in leadership positions varies within sectors.

The averages mask significant differences among organizations that are the leaders and laggards within sectors. In the corporate sector, only two companies (4.3%) had at least 40% women among their board members, while 38.3% of boards had no women at all. Clearly the ability of leading organizations to attract 40% or more women to senior roles suggests that there is a sufficient pool of well qualified and talented women.

The representation of female visible minorities is even lower.

Though female visible minorities are approximately 25.6% of GTA residents, they account for a much smaller percentage of leaders: 2.6% of leaders across sectors compared to 22.5% of non-visible minorities. Among elected officials, 6.6% were female visible minorities compared to less than 1% among corporate sector leaders.

GRAPH 1: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN SENIOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, 2011



DiversityLeads

Leadership is vital to Canada's social and economic prosperity. We need the best leaders to address the pressing challenges of global competitiveness, economic and social development. Diversity in leadership helps organizations attract top talent, meet the needs of diverse markets and communities, promote innovation, improve employee satisfaction and performance and reduce risks. It also shapes the aspirations of young people.

DiversityLeads aims to:

- Benchmark and assess the progress of diversity in leadership;
- Examine barriers at the individual, organizational, and societal levels;
- Explore leadership representation in media; and
- Develop an integrated approach across groups, sectors and levels for sustained change.

This project will produce new knowledge that informs and offers practical and creative tools to enable organizations to operate effectively and implement sustained change.

DiversityLeads includes faculty from Ryerson University, McGill University, York University, OCAD University and the University of Toronto, working with a growing list of community partners including:

- Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN)
- Assembly of First Nations (AFN)
- City of Toronto
- DiversiPro Inc.
- Environics Institute
- Equal Voice
- The Globe and Mail
- KPMG (Canada)
- Maytree
- Multimedia Nova Corporation
- OMNI Television
- Pride at Work Canada
- Region of Peel
- Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)
- Social Planning and Research Council BC (SPARC BC)
- TD Bank Financial Group
- Toronto Board of Trade
- Toronto Workforce Innovation Group
- Women in Film and Television - Toronto
- York Region

DiversityLeads is a five-year Community University Research Alliance (CURA) project generously supported by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

You can download the full PDF report at our website:

www.ryerson.ca/diversity

The Diversity Institute
in Management & Technology
RYERSON UNIVERSITY

An Integrated Strategy to Advance Women in Leadership

DiversityLeads is developing an evidence-based ecological model to advance inclusion and diverse leadership. A comprehensive strategy to advance talented women, including visible minorities, to senior leadership positions in all sectors must address all three levels: the societal level, the organizational level and the individual level.

FIGURE 1: THE ECOLOGICAL MODEL TO EFFECTING CHANGE



SOCIETAL LEVEL

Organizations do not exist in a vacuum: context is important. Policies related to equity and human rights, immigration, social services, childcare and same sex marriage shape and reflect our values, and public policies can have significant effects on the opportunities for women. Media also play a critical role: negative and stereotypical images in the media reinforce gendered notions of leadership.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

Leadership and Governance: For diversity initiatives to be successful, they must have the support and commitment of executive management who have the power to influence change across the organization. Diversity must be tied to corporate strategy and embedded through the value chain with clear accountability mechanisms in place.

Strong and Transparent Human Resource Practices: How an organization recruits, selects, manages, develops, promotes, and engages its employees has a profound impact on its ability to attract, retain and advance women.

Quality of Life and Organizational Culture: Creating an inclusive environment which welcomes and supports women is critical to retaining them. Leading organizations have a wide range of programs aimed to reduce the challenges of balancing work life and family life which benefit all employees but particularly women.

Measuring and Tracking Diversity: What gets measured gets done. To ensure that policies aimed at increasing diversity translate into concrete results, organizations must be prepared to look at their numbers. Metrics enable goal setting and accountability as well as evidence-based strategies.

Integrating or Mainstreaming Diversity across the Value Chain:

Increasing diversity is more than just a human resource function and requires applying a diversity lens to all functions, including procurement and inbound logistics; product and/or service development; marketing and customer service; communications; media buys; philanthropic decisions; and government relations. Organizations should use their “sphere of influence” and consider diversity in their interactions with suppliers, customers, policy makers and the media to help create a more inclusive society.

Developing the pipeline: A long term, integrated strategy will ensure that young women have the aspirations, skills and confidence needed to succeed. Organizations committed to diversity should actively support programs that shape opportunities for girls and women.

The Diversity Institute’s **Diversity Assessment Tool** helps organizations across sectors compare their practices to leaders in the field in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to advance diversity and inclusion.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Regardless of the barriers that persist, talented women are succeeding and taking their place in leadership roles. We must learn from and share their experiences in order to inspire and coach aspiring female leaders. We should encourage young women to set their goals high and equip them with the skills, the confidence, the attitudes, the coaching and the networks they need to succeed. Visible minority women face additional hurdles and need additional support.

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2012