

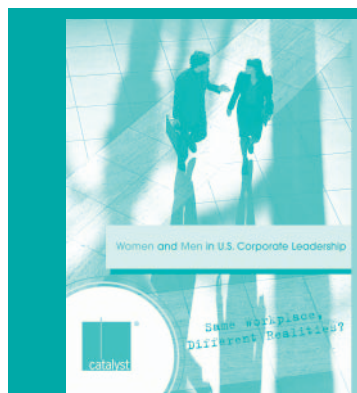


# perspective

New Catalyst Study Compares Perceptions and Experiences of Women and Men Executives

Expanding  
opportunities  
for  
women  
and  
business

August 2004



## The Buzz

With this issue of  
**Perspective**  
Catalyst thanks

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

How do the career experiences of executive women compare to those of men? Catalyst surveyed more than 900 senior-level women and men from Fortune 1000 companies to find out. Released in June, *Women and Men in U.S. Corporate Leadership: Same Workplace, Different Realities?* is the latest from Catalyst's research series devoted to women in corporate leadership, established in 1996. Findings from the new study show that women and men report similar career aspirations and advancement strategies. However, the study also reveals some striking differences in the types of barriers experienced by each group and in how they balance work/life responsibilities. Sponsored by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, the report sheds light on the recent "opt out" debate and serves as a call to action for companies and individuals to take responsibility for making change.

“Career women have been concerned about the recent media attention focusing on anecdotes about women choosing to ‘opt out’ of fast-track careers,” said Catalyst President Ilene H. Lang. “Our latest research provides new data to inform this debate, and shows that, while the glass ceiling is yet to be shattered, women and men share equal ambitions and similar strategies.” The findings also challenge an assumption that the reason more women aren’t at the top is because they don’t want to be there. Furthermore, the study reveals that despite many similarities with men, women executives experience an extra layer of cultural and environmental barriers to advancement. “Clearly, workplaces need to change,” said Paulette R. Gerkovich, Ph.D., Senior Director, Research, Catalyst. “And our study participants agree that the responsibility for making change needs to be shared—by women and men, as well as their companies.”

## Key Findings

- 📁 Men and women equally aspire to be CEO. In addition, women who have children living with them are just as likely to want the corner office as women without children at home.
- 📁 To get ahead, men and women use many of the same strategies, including: exceeding performance expectations, successfully managing others, seeking high-visibility assignments, and demonstrating expertise.
- 📁 Men and women experience some of the same barriers to advancement, including: lack of line experience, displaying a style that is different from the organizational norm, and lack of understanding of organizational politics.
- 📁 However, women face a host of stereotypes and environmental challenges that very few of their male colleagues do. Women’s top barriers include: exclusion from informal networks, gender-based stereotypes, lack of role models, and inhospitable corporate culture.
- 📁 Although women have made more trade-offs and adopted more strategies to achieve balance compared to their male counterparts, they also report high levels of career satisfaction and are comfortable with the trade-offs they have made.

## Spotlight: Release Event

On June 24th, Catalyst released *Women and Men in U.S. Corporate Leadership: Same Workplace, Different Realities?* at an event in New York City sponsored by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. Toni L. Riccardi, Partner and Chief Diversity Officer at PwC, gave welcoming remarks, followed by an overview of the study findings presented by Catalyst President Ilene H. Lang. Paulette R. Gerkovich, Ph.D., Senior Director, Research, Catalyst, moderated a panel of men and women executives discussing barriers to advancement, strategies for success, and what organizations can do to foster inclusive work environments. Panelists (pictured below from left to right) included: Susan E. Arnold, Vice Chairman—Global Beauty Care, The Procter & Gamble Company; Donna L. Coallier, Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP; Michael M. Wathen, Global Engagement Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP; and Michael E. Pralle, President and CEO, GE Real Estate. An audience of more than 130 attendees participated in person, through the web, and by telephone.



To order your copy of *Women and Men in U.S. Corporate Leadership: Same Workplace, Different Realities?*, visit [www.catalystwomen.org](http://www.catalystwomen.org).

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