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Press release:

Attitudes to gender equality in the boardroom *appear* to be shifting, according to new survey

But reality on the ground may be different, says specialist recruiter for women executives

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Companies appear to be hiring more women into senior roles as attitudes to gender balance at senior level shift, according to new research by executive recruitment company, CEO Worldwide.

The survey, targeting C-level executives and HR professionals across the US, Europe and Asia, revealed that 40% of applications for senior management roles now come from women, with well over half of businesses having hired more than one female executive in the last 12 months. Close to 70% of respondents in both groups have seen this gender split in applications change over the past five years.

But the reality for women candidates is a little different, according to France Dequilbec, International Talent Acquisition Director for CEO Worldwide:

“Time and time again, studies show that gender diversity at boardroom level is good for business.” she said. “The survey was designed to provide a glimpse of attitudes in boardrooms and HR departments and it appears that companies *are* hiring more women into senior roles.

“But over the past year I have interviewed hundreds of very senior women and nearly all of them have told me how difficult it is for them to access those top executive roles.



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“The survey results demonstrate that attitudes are shifting, but there’s definitely work to be done.”

As expert in international executive recruitment, CEO Worldwide offers a dedicated recruitment platform designed to drive boardroom equality—Female Executive Search (www.female-executive-search.com). Its purpose is to connect recruiters with quality, vetted female executives, empowering women leaders and businesses that value female leadership.

“There’s a difference between *saying* the right thing, and *doing* the right thing,” continues Ms Dequilbec.

“For example, most respondents indicated that their company has no policy in place in respect to gender balance, and while just 24% of the C-level executives said they’d experienced noticeable reticence to hire female executives, amongst HR personnel the figure was much higher, at 41%. This indicates an issue with perceptions, and a reticence to take decisive action at a strategic level.”

CEO Worldwide itself leads by example with a C-suite comprising a 2:1 female to male ratio. Its own CEO, Patrick Mataix, was the visionary leader of VistaPrint prior to establishing CEO Worldwide and saw first-hand the value of a more diverse leadership team. He said:

“The growth and success of VistaPrint was driven by a mix of female and male executives across our operations, leading to its current position as a 3bn USD Nasdaq venture.

“We established Female Executive Search to demonstrate the value of diversity for the good of business, and the benefit of the global economy. Our survey demonstrates that attitudes are moving in the right direction, but as a business dedicated to placing women executives, we feel their frustration that many boardroom doors remain stubbornly closed.

“Our aim will always be to see female leadership the norm, rather than a novelty.”

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*<https://www.forbes.com/best-executive-recruiting-firms/list/5/#tab:overall>

**<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/business-ethnic-gender-diversity-performance-levels-better-study-workplace-office-mckinsey-a8166601.html>

For industry insights, please visit <https://www.female-executive-search.com/insights-and-events/>

About CEO Worldwide

CEO Worldwide was launched in 2001 to challenge the lengthy and expensive process of recruiting international executives.

They are committed to: Fixed recruitment fees, payable on successful placement flexible contract terms – contract, interim or permanent, to suit each client, a selection of suitable candidates supplied to clients within 10 days and a 100%, 12-month replacement guarantee.

Since 2001, CEO Worldwide has gained a reputation for its ability to match candidates to urgent requirements, alongside its cross-border placement expertise. Its Investors on Demand service can also connect businesses with investment, when it is needed most. In 2018, CEO Worldwide was named in Forbes' list of the best 250 US executive recruitment firms. With more than 17,000 certified executives on its global iCEO™ database, including hundreds of female leaders, CEO Worldwide is uniquely placed to source the very best candidates for your executive position.