

Workplace confidence in women is rising, but gender bias persists around required future skills such as AI

Paris, October 8, 2025 – A [Capgemini](#) Research Institute research brief, "[Gender and leadership: Navigating bias, opportunity and change](#)," released today, finds parity in how both female and male leaders currently perceive their own performance and skills. However, the data also reveals that persistent gender stereotypes continue to shape how leadership attributes and skills are perceived, notably around technical skills like AI, data analysis, and innovation. These skills are mostly seen by men as predominantly masculine which could further widen the gender gap and hinder career progression for both male and female leaders.

Leadership skills are currently transcending genders

The report confirms how both male and female leaders are equally equipped, with more than three-quarters (77%) of both genders recognizing that women are as effective as men in leadership roles. This is a shift from historical trends, which indicated that women often underestimate their abilities. This year's data shows that 58% of women recognize confidence in themselves citing it as a key strength, consistent with men (at 59%). This is underlined by 68% of respondents noting how having more women in leadership roles improves business performance.

Gender stereotypes emerge in perceptions of future skills

Despite many top-line trends towards inclusive leadership, the report reveals that when this is broken down into individual skills, gender stereotypes emerge. Notably, most men were found to view critical leadership skills of the future such as using AI and automation, innovation, agility or data analysis as 'inherently masculine'. Yet, most women viewed those same skills as non-gendered or 'inherently feminine' (36%) in the case of innovation - revealing a significant perception gap.

This disconnect is especially evident in the case of AI and automation. Nearly half of male respondents perceive these as masculine skills, whereas an equal proportion of women regard them gender-neutral. But three quarters of leaders agree that AI proficiency is critical for advancing into leadership roles. Both groups, however, report relatively low confidence in their technical capabilities and fewer than half (45%) of female and male (47%) respondents consider their use of AI and automation as a key strength. This ongoing gender stereotyping around critical future skills might not only reinforce existing biases but also threaten to further widen the leadership gap.

"As technologies such as AI continue to disrupt the current business environment, leaders regardless of their gender, must equip themselves with skills to navigate and shape the future of their function," said Sarika Naik, Chief Corporate Responsibility Officer at Capgemini and member of the Group Executive Committee. "It is crucial to recognize that gender stereotypes distort perceptions of leadership skills and consequently influence career progression for male and female executives. If left unaddressed, bias can also lead to widening the gender gap in the workforce. Organizations must work to disrupt these biases through increased training and intentional systematic interventions to build truly inclusive leadership cultures."



Both women and men face barriers impeding career growth due to gender stereotypes. The report reveals that 53% of female leaders have experienced a negative bias in their pay because of their gender, compared to 40% of male leaders who feel they have received a pay advantage due to their gender. Outside of financial rewards, the gap persists in terms of promotions, with only just over half (52%) of leaders agreeing that both men and women have equal opportunities for promotion at their organization. Furthermore, 39% of respondents agree that qualified women are often overlooked for leadership roles in their current organizations.

However, it is not just female leaders who feel the impact of gender bias in the workplace. The report also revealed how nearly four in 10 (38%) men select 'poor work-life balance' as among the top barriers to career advancement.

To access the full report: <https://www.capgemini.com/insights/research-library/gender-and-leadership/>

Report Methodology

The Capgemini Research Institute conducted a global survey of 2,750 leaders (senior managers and above) across 11 countries and 10 key sectors. The survey sample includes 1,375 women, 1,372 men, and 3 non-binary leaders. Due to the limited representation of non-binary respondents, the quantitative findings in this report have been analyzed for men and women only.

About Capgemini

Capgemini is a global business and technology transformation partner, helping organizations to accelerate their dual transition to a digital and sustainable world, while creating tangible impact for enterprises and society. It is a responsible and diverse group of 350,000 team members in more than 50 countries. With its strong over 55-year heritage, Capgemini is trusted by its clients to unlock the value of technology to address the entire breadth of their business needs. It delivers end-to-end services and solutions leveraging strengths from strategy and design to engineering, all fuelled by its market leading capabilities in AI, cloud and data, combined with its deep industry expertise and partner ecosystem. The Group reported 2024 global revenues of €22.1 billion.

Get The Future You Want | www.capgemini.com

About the Capgemini Research Institute

The Capgemini Research Institute is Capgemini's in-house think-tank on all things digital. The Institute publishes research on the impact of digital technologies on large traditional businesses. The team draws on the worldwide network of Capgemini experts and works closely with academic and technology partners. The Institute has dedicated research centers in India, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States. It was ranked #1 in the world for the quality of its research by independent analysts for six consecutive times – an industry first.

Visit us at <https://www.capgemini.com/researchinstitute/>