accenture
INTO
THE NEW
EQUALITY = INNOVATION
Getting to Equal 2019: Creating a culture that drives innovation

The secret to innovation? Your workplace culture.

Innovation equals survival. It's well documented that in this age of widespread disruption, companies must innovate continuously, creating new markets, experiences, products, services, content or processes.

So how can leaders encourage innovation? It's more than recruiting the brightest minds. While having the best talent is clearly an asset, people need the right culture to flourish.

Accenture has found that a culture of equality—the same kind of workplace environment that helps everyone advance to higher positions—is a powerful multiplier of innovation and growth.

This means that building a culture of equality (measured by the 40 specific workplace factors Accenture research identified last year) is not just an ethical imperative, but a business priority.

If organizations want to thrive, they have to "get to equal."

The power of a workplace culture of equality to drive employees' innovation mindset—or their willingness and ability to innovate—is strong. It has more impact than age or gender and leads to an increase in innovation mindset in all industries and all countries.

In fact, employees' innovation mindset is six times higher in the most-equal cultures than in the least-equal ones.

Innovation also equals economic potential. Among the more than 18,000 employees in 27 countries

surveyed, we found that people are more willing and able to innovate in faster-growing economies and in geographies with higher labor-productivity growth.

And the stakes are enormous:

Accenture calculates that global gross domestic product would increase by up to US$8 trillion by 2028 if innovation mindset in all countries were raised by 10 percent.

No matter who or where they are, if people feel a sense of belonging and are valued by their employers for their unique contributions, perspectives and circumstances, they are empowered to innovate more.

What is a culture of equality?

A culture of equality is one where most of the 40 factors that influence advancement at work are present. Where more of these are present, employees are more likely to advance and thrive. We've grouped these factors, which were identified in last year's Getting to Equal research, **When She Rises, We All Rise**, into three pillars:

Empowering Environment

One that trusts employees, respects individuals and offers the freedom to be creative and to train and work flexibly.

Bold Leadership

A diverse leadership team that sets, shares and measures equality targets openly.

Comprehensive Action

Policies and practices that are family-friendly, support all genders and are bias-free in attracting and retaining people.

SEE FULL LIST IN APPENDIX

What is an innovation mindset?

Innovation mindset is a new way to measure an individual's ability and willingness to innovate. It is enabled by six key elements which are based on extensive sources, including academic and business research and Accenture-owned diagnostic tools and thought leadership.

We surveyed employees about their experience with these six elements in their workplaces, e.g., we asked about the extent to which "I am encouraged to look for inspiration outside my organization" (Inspiration) or "The purpose of the organization makes me proud to work here" (Purpose).

The more strongly a person agreed that these elements apply, the higher their innovation mindset score.

Using an econometric model, we were then able to show how an innovation mindset would change if people worked in more-equal cultures: as culture improves, innovation mindset improves. For every 10 percent improvement in culture factors, innovation mindset increases by 10.6 percent. The change is underpinned by all three pillars of our workplace culture-of-equality factors, but it's the empowerment factors that have the strongest impact.

The six elements of an innovation mindset:

Purpose Alignment around and support for the purpose of the organization.	**Resources** Having the tools, time and incentives necessary to innovate.	**Collaboration** Working with other departments or in fluid, cross-function teams.
Autonomy Being shown a clear mandate for change—and being trusted to follow through.	**Inspiration** Tapping into inspiration from beyond the organization.	**Experimentation** Experimenting with new ideas quickly without fear of failure.

A strong case for mixing business and culture.

One example of a company committed to—and benefiting from—a culture of equality is Mastercard. Its stock soared over 35 percent last year, and the company is growing rapidly here and abroad as it focuses on ushering in a cashless society. Mastercard President and CEO Ajay Banga leads with a compelling metaphor: "I will create the feeling of my hand at your back, not in your face, and then you should run with it. When you're on a level playing field, you can win what you're capable of winning—and you deserve every single win that you get."

"Diversity is built into the core of what we do," Banga says. Indeed, the company boasts twice the number of women in leadership as other companies in the S&P 500.

"We're in an industry where technology and innovation flow around you all the time. If you surround yourself with people who look like you, walk like you, talk like you, went to the same schools as you and had the same experiences, you'll have the very same blind spots. You'll miss the same trends, curves in the road and opportunities."

Ajay Banga, President and CEO,

Mastercard

Banga cultivates a bright, diverse workforce, but he's also looking for something he calls a high D.Q.—Decency Quotient.

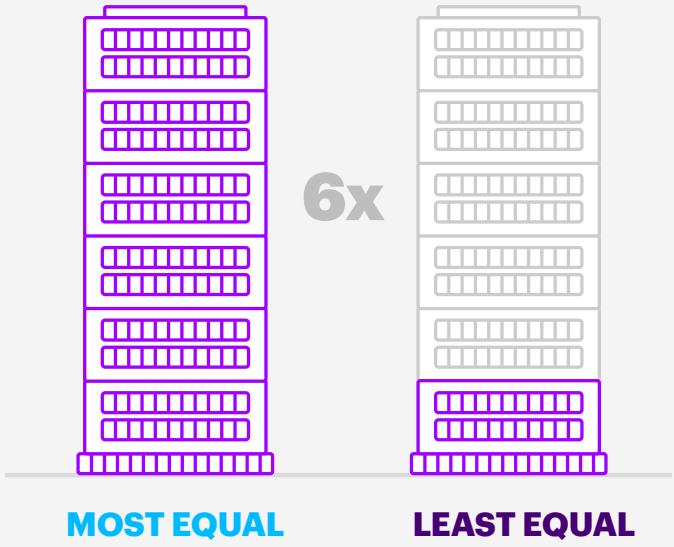
"We want a winning culture with decency at its core." For Banga, decency is about being there for employees and engendering trust between them.

Trust, he says, breeds innovation: "If you want things to happen, everyone has got to be open and trusting."

Banga's leadership philosophy is validated by the new Accenture research: When employees work in more-equal cultures, they're much more likely to have a stronger innovation mindset.

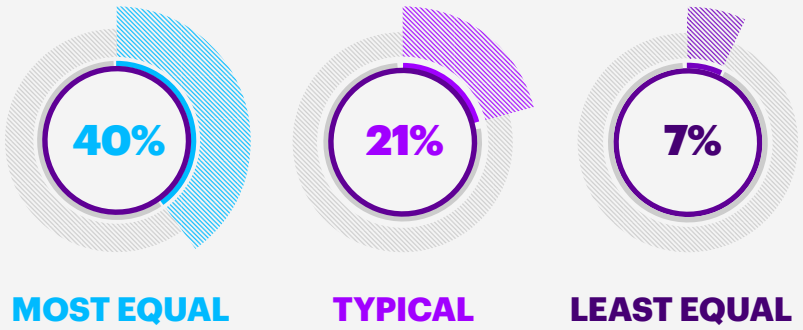
In fact, in the most-equal cultures, employees' innovation mindset is six times higher than in the least-equal ones.

Innovation mindset is six times higher in the most-equal cultures than in the least-equal ones.



Employees in the most-equal cultures see fewer barriers to innovating.

Percent of respondents who answered “Nothing stops me from innovating.”



But even companies that have some, but not most, of the culture-of-equality factors could gain a great deal from being more like the best: An innovation mindset is twice as high in the most-equal companies than in typical ones. It’s a powerful incentive for these organizations to take the leap from “ok” to “truly equal.”

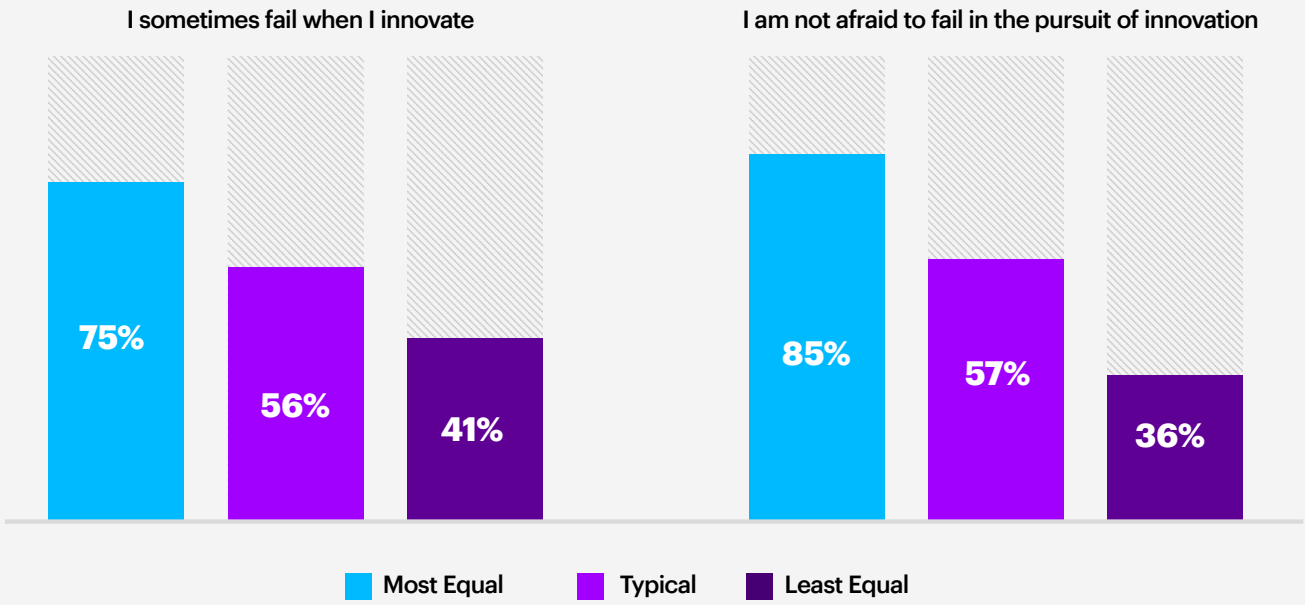
What else do employees in most-equal cultures have in common with one another? For one thing, they see fewer barriers to innovating at work. And they’re also less afraid to fail.

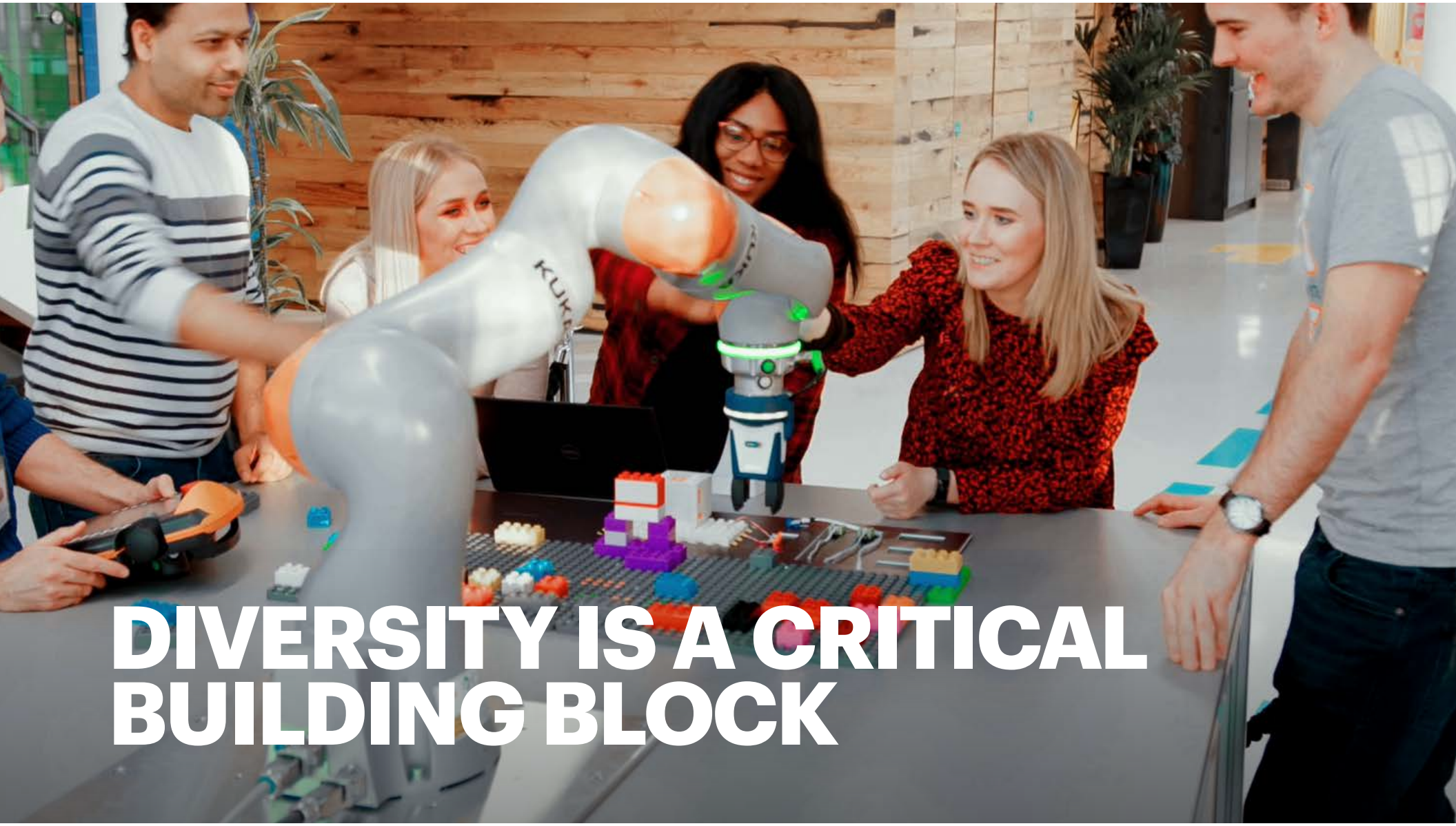
Culture’s power to unleash innovation is blind to industry, country and various workforce demographics. Among those surveyed, people across all genders, sexual identities, ages and ethnicities show a stronger innovation mindset in more-equal workplace cultures.

Against every factor we tested, culture wins.

Employees in the most-equal cultures are less afraid to fail.

Percent of respondents who answered “agree” and “strongly agree.”





DIVERSITY IS A CRITICAL BUILDING BLOCK

A culture of equality is a multiplier.

Organizations know that fostering diversity—the extent to which members of a company's workforce, including the leadership team, differ from each other in terms of age, ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, religion or sexual orientation—is important.

Diversity remains a critical building block to unleashing innovation. However, a culture of equality is an essential multiplier to help maximize innovation. While the impact of diversity factors alone on an innovation mindset is significant, it is much higher when combined with a culture of equality. In the most-equal and diverse cultures, an innovation mindset is 11 times greater than in the least-equal and diverse cultures. For the purpose of this research, we defined diversity factors as follows: a diverse leadership team as well as teams throughout the organization that are diverse across gender, age, industry/organizational/cultural backgrounds.

While companies might be hitting their "numbers" in terms of diversity, they might not be building a true culture of equality. A culture of equality, which offers an Empowering Environment, Bold Leadership and Comprehensive Action, enables people from all backgrounds to succeed.

That's because in a culture of equality, people are truly valued for their differences and free to be who they are. They're not just there to check a box—they're empowered to contribute.

Diversity positively influences an innovation mindset, and equality is the multiplier.

The combined effect of culture-of-equality and diversity factors on innovation mindset.

Equality drives innovation: Procter & Gamble

One of Procter & Gamble's priorities is creating a culture that empowers all employees to "perform at their peak" to help lead the innovation, brand-building and digital transformation of their industry. To achieve this, company leadership has rolled out programs dedicated to achieving equal representation of women at every level and arming employees with the skills and experiences they need to bring disruptive ideas to the table. These include their Women's Accelerator Program and Athena in Action—initiatives that engage high-potential women at critical career points to prepare them for senior roles. Additionally, the company's Intentionally Inclusive Leadership Training program teaches employees how to identify and overcome bias. As one of the world's largest advertisers, P&G also leverages its voice in advertising and media to tackle bias, spark conversations and promote equality through campaigns such as Always #LikeAGirl, Ariel #ShareTheLoad and Gillette's We Believe.

A LEADER-EMPLOYEE INNOVATION DISCONNECT

Accenture research shows the strength of the innovation-culture connection. How are people perceiving the link between workplace environment and innovation today?

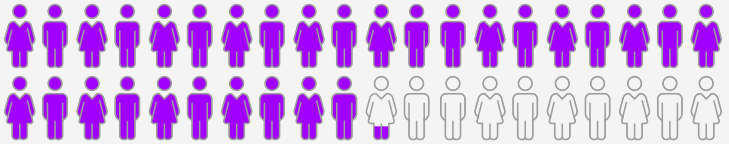
Nearly everyone wants—and needs—to innovate. Ninety-five percent of business leaders see innovation as vital to competitiveness and business viability, and 91 percent of employees want to be innovative.

But while 76 percent of leaders say they regularly empower employees to be innovative, only 42 percent of employees agree.

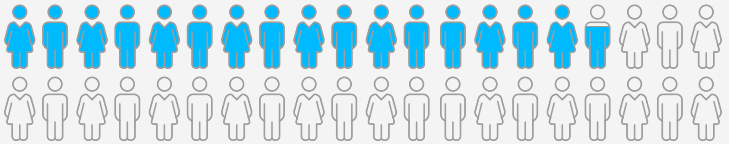
Why such a disconnect? It seems that leaders mistakenly believe that some encourage innovation more than they actually do. For instance, they overestimate financial rewards (which are nevertheless still important) and underestimate purpose as a motivator to innovate.

Business leaders say they empower employees to innovate—but employees are less likely to agree.

76% Business leaders who say they empower employees to innovate



42% Employees who feel empowered to innovate

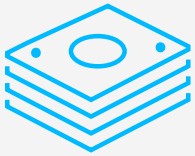


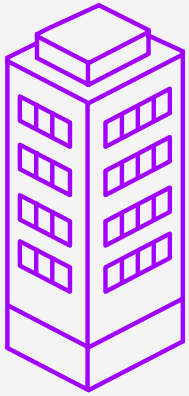
When it comes to driving innovation, increasing pay is considerably less effective than bolstering a more-equal culture.

Percent increase in innovation mindset of a 10% increase in pay vs. a 10% increase in workplace culture factors.

Average pay

0.25%





Workplace culture factors

10.6%

In fact, the impact of improving culture on innovation mindset is 42 times greater than the impact of increasing salary.

Leaders value prospective employees' educational backgrounds, but it's not enough to hire people with impressive résumés.

Having employees with an advanced degree or who have studied a STEM subject at college has a less powerful impact on workers' willingness and ability to innovate than culture factors do.

Leaders should bridge the innovation gap by concentrating on a culture of equality.

Equality drives innovation: Microsoft

Over the past five years, Microsoft has set about reinventing itself and is once again one of the most valuable companies in the world today. This re-emergence has manifested in different ways, including a strategic shift toward cloud computing. But this resurgence would not be occurring if it weren't for the strength of its evolving culture, which underpins everything the company is doing today.

This culture evolution is grounded in the fundamental belief that inclusion throughout the organization, from executives and managers to employees around the world, is table stakes for innovation. It means that every employee be their best self at work and apply a growth mindset to help Microsoft be more responsive to the needs of both customers and employees. This can be seen in everything from the company's "core priority" on inclusion for all employees; to posters and signage that encourage people to invite in new ideas and foster creativity; to Microsoft's "Outside In" program, in which luminaries and thought leaders from all walks of life are invited to the company's Redmond campus to meet with employees; to a monthly all-company Q&A with CEO Satya Nadella and his leadership team. Employees are encouraged to take an active role—working with their managers—to chart the career path that is right for them, and managers in turn are given tools and training that help them be better leaders for their teams. This evolving culture can perhaps best be seen during Microsoft's One Week event, when employees from around the world come together each July for a week of collaboration, partnership and learning opportunities. The event is highlighted by a three-day Hackathon where thousands of employees work on small teams creating new technology solutions and products—many of which are designed for social good.

Microsoft's shift from a "know it all" culture to a "learn it all" culture has invited an entirely new world of potential for the company, producing game-changing innovations and a more empathetic workplace. From its augmented reality HoloLens to artificial intelligence for the visually impaired, Microsoft is making the world a better place. But it started with making Microsoft a better company first.

EQUALITY = EMPOWERMENT

A key innovation driver in a culture of equality.

What is it about a culture of equality that matters most to innovation?

Again, a culture of equality is anchored by three pillars: an Empowering Environment (one that trusts employees, respects individuals and offers freedom to be creative and to train and work flexibly), Bold Leadership (a diverse leadership team that sets, shares and measures equality targets openly), and Comprehensive Action (policies and practices that are family-friendly, support all genders and are bias-free in attracting and retaining people).

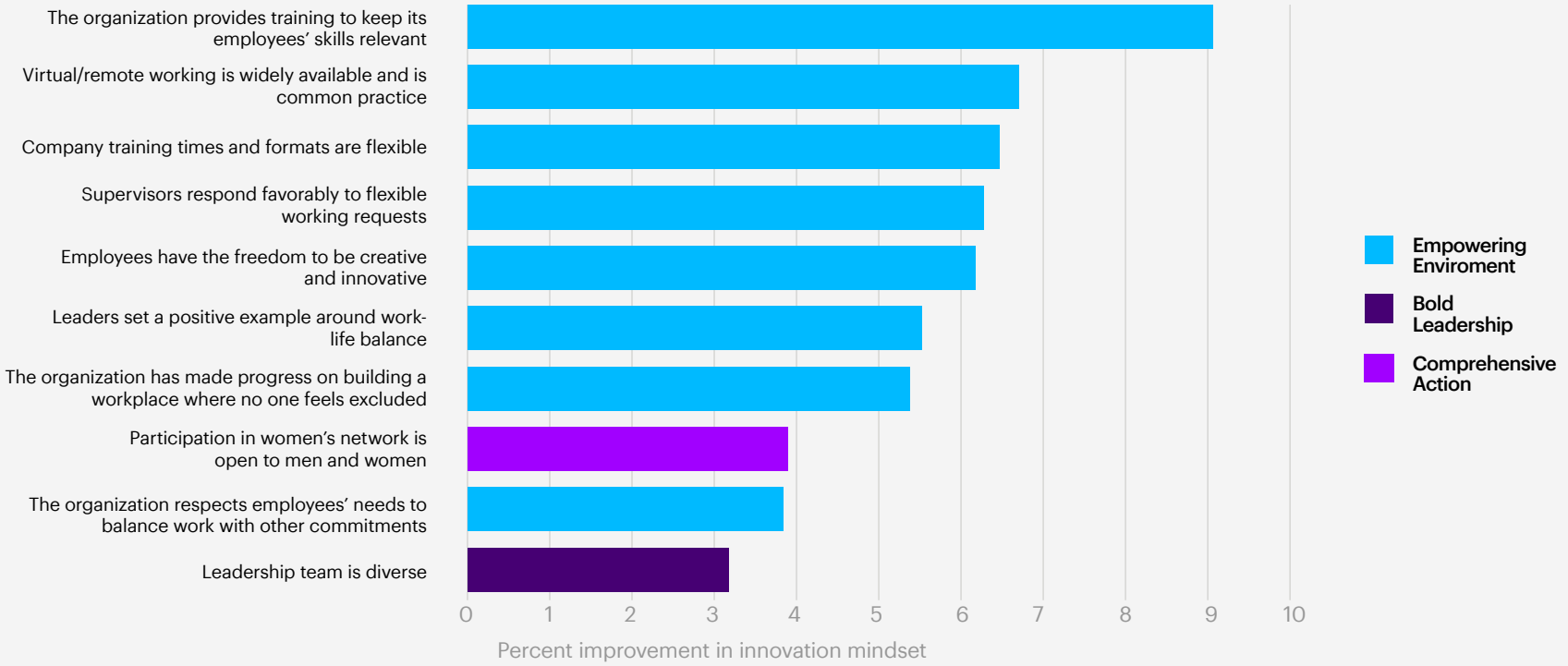
It turns out that of those three, an Empowering Environment is by far the most important when it comes to enabling innovation. In fact, eight of the 10 strongest factors underpinning innovation are about empowerment.

Equality drives innovation: Faurecia

Faurecia understands that innovation is at the heart of the engine driving its leadership in an automotive technology space that's changing rapidly. To stay on the cutting edge, the company is fully invested in the growth and development of its talented workforce. Faurecia Learning Lab offers managers and professionals rich, advanced programs using digital tools to build their skills and better prepare them for new challenges. Complementing the vast array of training options is the company's coaching and mentoring programs for helping younger, emerging leaders. In two years the Learning Lab has already helped train more than 47,000 employees. As a result, Faurecia remains at the forefront of the industry, leading the way in creating the "Cockpit of the Future" by developing the innovations that will make vehicles more intuitive, connected and personalized.

The impact of the top 10 workplace culture factors on an innovation mindset.

8 of the 10 strongest drivers are about empowerment



Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga's "hand at the back" credo empowers his people.

But he stresses that it's a company-wide effort and shared sense of purpose that has helped Mastercard thrive as a more-equal culture and as a corporation.

Mastercard is innovating in the area of financial inclusion, helping to provide access and tools to 2 billion people in the world without a bank account.

"We've reached 380 million people as of now. I think we have a line of sight to 500 million," Banga says. "The idea is to make it happen everywhere, from Africa to Brazil to Eastern Europe."

It's a business priority that is perfectly aligned with, and driven by, Mastercard's culture of equality.

"If you wander around the corridors and ask people what excites them about this company, you will hear them say our social messaging, our financial inclusion, decency quotient—you'll get all these answers in some form or other."

Ajay Banga, President and CEO,

Mastercard

When the right tone is set from the top and everyone in an organization is empowered, trusted and armed with a mission, together they can unlock unprecedented opportunity.

A ROADMAP TO UNLEASHING INNOVATION

Ready to build a culture of equality where people can thrive and create?

Companies should have an inclusion and diversity (I&D) strategy in place, one synchronized with the overall business strategy. An I&D strategy will form a critical foundation on which leaders can take action and drive progress.

Here we've identified complementary drivers of a culture of equality and of an innovation mindset to help you focus your efforts. These three broad recommendations reinforce each other in a virtuous circle, meaning that their impact as a whole is greater than the sum of their parts. Leaders should keep in mind that some actions have a particularly strong effect on an innovation mindset.

Empowering Environment + Purpose + Autonomy CLICK TO READ MORE

Bold Leadership + Experimentation + Resources CLICK TO READ MORE

Comprehensive Action + Inspiration + Collaboration CLICK TO READ MORE

Empowering Environment + Purpose + Autonomy

Training, greater flexibility and commitment to work-life balance are the most powerful drivers of an innovation mindset. This area is where there is the greatest opportunity for impact, as it accounts for 70 percent of innovation mindset gains. Employees are empowered by a shared sense of purpose paired with autonomy, which helps them reach their individual potential.

Get clear on purpose: Ensure that employees know the purpose of their organization and how their work aligns with it.

Fiercely promote flexible working: Have the leadership team set a positive example around work-life balance. Use technology to enable people to have more say over where, when and how they work.

Train effectively: Offer employees engaging and flexible training programs so they can acquire skills for the future.

Let people be themselves: Don't ask employees to conform when it comes to appearance; encourage inclusion in every way.

Equality drives innovation:
Marriott International

At Marriott International, unlocking innovation means empowering the future leaders of tomorrow. That's why the company launched the Voyage Global Leadership Development program—an award-winning program offering resources and support for future company leaders across Marriott International's hotel brands. Additionally, the company's Emerging Leaders program has rapidly accelerated the advancement of women and minorities to senior leadership positions. Marriott International's deep commitment to the professional development of its diverse employee population has allowed it to put innovation at the center of its growth strategy. It continues to reshape travel and leisure and attract the next generation of travelers by launching new brands, creating tech-centric guest experiences and fostering unique partnerships, including one with Alibaba in China.

Bold Leadership + Experimentation + Resources

Culture starts at the top. Setting and publishing diversity targets, holding the leadership team accountable and measuring progress are critical steps. Leaders must give employees the resources they need to innovate and the freedom to fail.

Prioritize diversity and equality: Establish diversity, equal pay and advancement goals.

Make leaders accountable: Track progress and make leaders accountable.

Set up to innovate: Design-in the necessary time, space, resources and technologies needed to innovate and continually encourage and reward innovation.

Encourage risk-taking: Ensure that employees know they have the freedom to experiment, and help them learn from their failures.

Equality drives innovation: Duke Energy

Building and enabling a diverse workforce is a critical element of Duke Energy's commitment to delivering for its customers and its business. Central to these efforts are training and education to help employees unlock their full potential. Through grants awarded by the Duke Energy Foundation, the company is investing in workforce education and training programs that prepare future workers to develop innovative solutions for the energy industry's most pressing challenges. Additionally, the company offers unconscious-bias training—already completed by the company's top 500 leaders—which provides a step-by-step system for mitigating biases. Duke Energy's deep commitment to building a culture rooted in equality and professional enrichment is empowering the company to introduce breakthrough technologies, from drone technology and hydro plants to energy storage innovation, and helping it lead the way in creating a cleaner, more reliable energy future.

Comprehensive Action + Inspiration + Collaboration

Forward-looking policies and practices are important, but they must also be evenly accessible to ensure that individuals or groups don't feel singled out or held back. When employees are inspired by those inside and outside the organization, their commitment to living the company's core values, and for collaborating with one another, grows.

Send a loud and broad signal: For example, encourage all new parents, not just birth mothers, to take leave.

Cross-train and rearrange teams: Use work rotations, temporary assignments or horizontal career moves to give people opportunities to grow skills and to share knowledge across the organization.

Use networks: Encourage collaboration and support through networks for your employees.

Look outward: Bring the outside in. Encourage people to develop external networks and partnerships and to attend events where they meet others and hear new ideas.

Equality drives innovation: Fast Retailing

Fast Retailing believes it takes the bold thinking of an inclusive workforce to manufacture top-quality clothing. That's why its Diversity and Inclusion Office has a mission to ensure the hiring of more diverse individuals and encourage their advancement. The company is working to hire more women, eradicate discrimination in the workplace, and champion persons with disabilities—a commitment exemplified by its goal to hire at least one person with a disability in each of its stores in Japan. These comprehensive efforts, which started in its headquarters in Japan, are now spreading throughout the global organization. In addition, the company's new sustainability statement, "Unlocking the Power of Clothing," has challenged all employees to enrich people's lives and society as a whole, in large part by producing built-to-last clothes with digital technology that minimizes environmental impact.

METHODOLOGY

The 40 factors that influence advancement and characterize a culture of equality.

Bold Leadership

- Gender diversity is a priority for management
- A diversity target or goal is shared outside the organization
- The organization clearly states gender pay gap goals and ambitions
- Progress on gender diversity is measured and shared with employees
- Leaders are held accountable for improving gender diversity
- A diversity target or goal is shared inside the organization
- The leadership team is diverse

Comprehensive Action

- Progress has been made in attracting, retaining and progressing women
- The company has a women's network open only to women
- The company has a women's network that is open to both women and men
- Men are encouraged to take parental leave
- Employees trust that the organization pays women and men equally for the same work
- The proportion of women in senior leadership has increased over the last five years

- The organization is fully committed to hiring, progressing and retaining women
- Progress has been made in improving gender equality in senior leadership
- There is a clear maternity policy in place
- Women are encouraged to take maternity leave
- There is a clear parental policy in place
- The organization hires people from a variety of backgrounds
- Leaders take action to get more women into senior roles

Empowering Environment

- Employees have never been asked to change their appearance to conform to company culture
- Employees have the freedom to be creative and innovative
- Virtual/remote working is widely available and is common practice
- The organization provides training to keep its employees' skills relevant
- Employees can avoid overseas or long-distance travel via virtual meetings
- Employees can work from home on a day when they have a personal commitment
- Employees are comfortable reporting sexual discrimination/harassment incident(s) to the company
- Employees feel trusted and are given responsibility

- Employees have the freedom to be themselves at work
- Leadership has a positive attitude toward failure
- Leaders set a positive example around work-life balance
- Networking events with company leaders take place during office hours
- Employees can decline a request to work late without negative consequences
- Employees can decline a request to attend early-morning/late-evening meetings without negative consequences
- Sexual discrimination/harassment is not tolerated
- The company has made progress in reducing tolerance of sex discrimination or gender-biased language
- Company training times and formats are flexible
- Supervisors respond favorably to flexible working requests
- The organization respects employees' needs to balance work with other commitments
- The organization has made progress on building a workplace where no one feels excluded

About the research

The Accenture research program was built on three proprietary research initiatives:

An established **methodology for measuring the culture of the workplace,** developed for our 2018 study, When She Rises, We All Rise.

An online **workforce survey** of 18,200 professionals in 27 countries. Conducted in October 2018, the survey used quotas to ensure a good representation across companies of different sizes and across genders.

A phone **survey of 152 C-suite executives**, conducted by phone in eight countries in November and December 2018.

Measuring the relationship between culture and innovation mindset.

We know that a more-equal workplace culture enables everyone to thrive and advance at work. But does a more-equal workplace culture enable employees to be more innovative? We built on the research we conducted for When She Rises, We All Rise, using insights from a new employee survey and econometric modelling to understand the relationship between workplace cultures and employees' willingness and ability to be innovative—their innovation mindset. We did so in four steps.

01 Measure employees' workplace culture

We began by measuring the workplace culture of employees using the approach we developed for our 2018 study. We asked the 18,200 professionals in our survey about the 40 workplace culture factors that influence their advancement. We identified those working in the most-equal cultures (top 10 percent of score), the least equal (bottom 10 percent) and in typical workplace cultures.

02 Measure employees' innovation mindset

Next, we measured the innovation mindset of the employees in our survey. Innovation mindset—the willingness and ability of employees to be innovative at work—is a score, ranging from 0 to 100, derived from their answers to a series of 31 questions.

03 Determine the relationship between workplace culture and innovation mindset

We built an econometric regression model to identify the strength and statistical significance of the relationship between workplace culture and employees' innovation mindset. As workplace culture improves, innovation mindset gets stronger.

04 Estimate the value of innovation mindset

Plotting the aggregated innovation mindset scores for each country against the GDP and labor productivity growth rates for the same countries (using data from the World Bank, the International Labor Organization and Oxford Economics) reveals a strong positive correlation between higher innovation mindset scores and growth. We used these relationship rates to estimate the impact on global GDP of improving innovation mindset scores.

In honor of his legacy, and with everlasting gratitude to our former Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Pierre Nanterme.

“We believe that the future workforce is an equal one, and our ambition is to be the most inclusive and diverse company in the world. We embrace our diversity as a source of innovation, creativity and competitive differentiation.”

Pierre Nanterme

1959 – 2019

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Ellyn Shook

Chief Leadership & Human Resources Officer, Accenture

Ellyn is responsible for helping the company's 469,000 people succeed both professionally and personally. Her global team of HR leaders and experts is reimagining leadership and talent practices—including innovative uses of technology to unlock people's potential—to create the most truly human work environment in the digital age. These help fuel the organization's differentiation in the market and ability to improve the way the world works and lives. She frequently advises clients who seek to learn from the large-scale talent transformation she's led within Accenture.

A member of the company's Global Management Committee and Investment Committee, Ellyn is a strong advocate for inclusion and diversity. She serves on the board of trustees at Harvey Mudd College, the Women's Leadership Board of the Women and Public Policy program at Harvard's Kennedy School, and the steering committee of Paradigm for Parity. She is active in Women in America and Ellevate Women's Network and is also a member of the HR50 division of World50.

A 2015 article in Forbes.com named Ellyn one of the top 10 CHROs. She is a recognized thought leader, author and frequent speaker on the topics of future workforce and inclusion and diversity. Ellyn holds a Bachelor of Science from Purdue University.

Julie Sweet

Chief Executive Officer – North America, Accenture

Julie leads Accenture's business in the United States—the company's largest market—and Canada. She is also a member of Accenture's Global Management Committee.

A leader on issues including innovation, technology's impact on business, and inclusion and diversity, Julie serves on the board of the Business Roundtable and chairs its Technology Committee. She also serves on the Catalyst board of directors, is a member of the TechNet Executive Council, and is co-chair of the Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders. In 2018, she was named to FORTUNE's list of "Most Powerful Women" for the third consecutive year.

Prior to assuming her current position in 2015, Julie served as Accenture's general counsel, secretary and chief compliance officer. Before joining Accenture in 2010, she was a partner in the Corporate department of the law firm of Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP.

Julie holds a Bachelor of Arts from Claremont McKenna College and a Juris Doctor from Columbia Law School. She is married and has two daughters.

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