

Press release

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Pages 02

Business can do more to support women's advancement, here is how...

In response to the ongoing challenge of gender imbalance in the financial services industry, today HLB released its Women Advancement Report 2024, [Defining Success: Women, Work, and Leadership](#). This comprehensive report offers global insights into gender parity, diversity, and inclusion within the professional landscape, offering strategies for creating more equitable workplaces and a [toolkit](#) for self-advocacy.

This research, based on an internal HLB member survey, regional focus groups and interviews with bestselling authors and industry experts from Oxford University, UN Women, AICPA*, CISI* among others, identifies five actionable strategies to enhance the advancement of women within organisations:

1. DEIB audit - Go beyond compliance by adopting outcome-driven Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging initiatives.
2. Listening strategy - Encourage open communication. Companies that actively listen innovate more effectively and create a stronger sense of belonging.
3. Hiring and succession planning - Redefine job requirements to encourage wider applicant pools and ensure transparent succession planning.
4. Inclusive corporate policies - Develop policies that accommodate diverse employee needs, such as flexible work arrangements and comprehensive parental support.
5. Human-centred leadership - Promote leadership styles that value empathy and inclusivity, empowering all employees to contribute meaningfully.

"Creating a workplace that values diversity and promotes equity is no longer optional; it is a strategic imperative" says Stephanie Rix, Chief People Officer, HLB. "This report is a call to action for leaders to elevate voices and maximise the potential of every member of their organisation."

Despite increased workforce participation, women hold only *32% of leadership roles globally across all industries. Yet, the report shows that companies that prioritise diversity not only succeed financially but also gain strong stakeholder support and retain top talent. Women-led businesses are setting new benchmarks and demonstrating outstanding growth, showcasing their pivotal role in modern success stories.

HLB Global CEO Marco Donzelli emphasises the importance of addressing systematic challenges within organisations:

"By identifying and dismantling barriers, we strive to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organisation, so that all HLB people can progress and thrive at all levels of their careers. By championing inclusivity, businesses can pave the way for greater innovation, resilience, and success. This research rings true to our belief that empowering women not only enriches the workforce but drives our industry forward."

This report also includes a self-advocacy [toolkit](#) for women to gain the confidence, skills, and support to advance your career.

NOTES TO EDITORS

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*AICPA: [Association of International Certified Professional Accountants](#)

*CISI: [CISI Financial Services Professional Body](#)

*2. *World Economic Forum. 2024. Global Gender Gap Report 2024. Available at <[Global Gender Gap Report 2024 | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#)>. [Retrieved 22 August 2024]*