

**Soroptimist International  
Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Ltd  
80<sup>th</sup> Federation Conference**

**Women Leading Change Together**

**Harrogate International Centre  
6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2014**



# **Myths and Challenges Facing Women Leaders**

**Professor Susan Vinnicombe CBE**



# Myths Around Women and Top Leadership

## Myth 1

### Women aren't interested

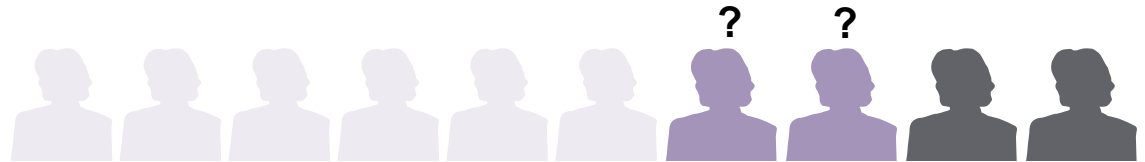
#### Data

I have the ambition to become partner

Men



Women



I have the desire to advance to the next level

Men



Women



**“Women express their ambitions less explicitly”**

(Source: 30%Club/McKinsey 2012)

# Myths Around Women and Top Leadership

## Myth 2

**Women aren't seen as having the right leadership style**

### Data

**Once women are appointed onto FTSE 100 boards, they are more likely to hold multiple directorships (15% as opposed to 11% men)**

(Cranfield, 2010)

# Myths Around Women and Top Leadership

## Myth 3

**Women haven't got the right experience**

### Data

**Male CEOs say there aren't more women on boards because they lack general management experience and they haven't been in the pipeline long enough**

**Female directors say there aren't more women on boards because of male stereotyping**

(Catalyst, 1999)

# Work Experience of New FTSE 100 Directors 2001 - 2004

	Male	Female
Financial Institutions	31.9%	44.4%
Management Consultancy	13.9%	27.8%
Accountant	20.8%	19.4%
Law	6.9%	15.3%
Political	4.2%	11.1%
Academia	5.6%	12.5%
Public Sector	18.1%	31.9%
Voluntary/Charity Sector	13.9%	22.2%
Other/Government	13.9%	23.6%

- Sample size 72 for men
- Whole population 72 for women

(Female FTSE Report, 2005)

# Myths Around Women and Top Leadership

## Myth 4

**Women don't take risks**

### Data

**Women are more likely than men to be appointed onto corporate boards when the circumstances surrounding the appointment are precarious**

(Ryan and Haslam, 2005)

# Myths Around Women and Top Leadership

## Myth 5

**Highly educated women are opting out of the workforce to become full time parents**

### Data

**59% said their careers were not satisfying, compared with 26% who wanted more time for children.**

(Sylvia Ann Hewlett, 2007 - American sample)



# Myths Around Women and Top Leadership

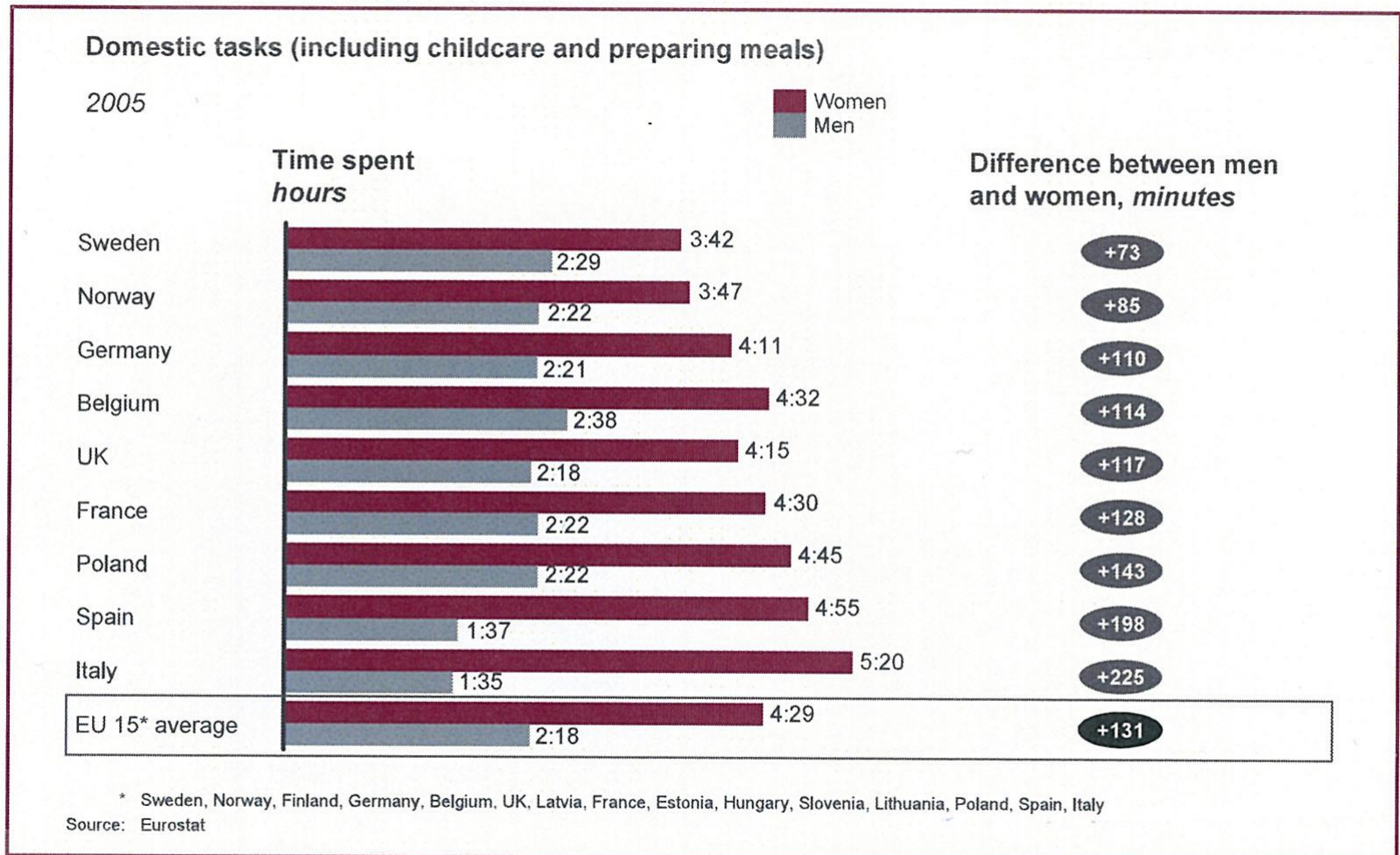
## Myth 5

### Data

**17% of women believe that raising or caring for children has presented barriers to career development, compared to 7% of men.**

(Source: 'Ambition and gender at work',  
Institute of Leadership and Management, 2011)

# Time Spent on Domestic Tasks



(Source: McKinsey & Company, 2007  
Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver)

# Women on Boards in Europe 2013 \*

Country	% WoB
Portugal	8.8
Ireland	11.1
Spain	14.8
Italy	15.0
Belgium	16.7
UK	21.0
Germany	21.5
Slovakia	24.0
Sweden	26.5
Latvia	28.6
France	29.7
Finland	29.8
Norway**	36.5

\*Source: *Gender Balance on Corporate Boards*, European Commission, March 2014. Based on data collected October 2013 covering 610 of the largest publicly listed companies from the 28 EU Member States. \*\* Source: Boardex OBX listing, 19 April 2014

# Three Phases of Women's Careers

- Women's careers proceed through 3 distinct age-related phases:
  - Phase 1 - Idealistic Achievement
  - Phase 2 - Pragmatic Endurance
  - Phase 3 - Reinventive Contribution



(Source: Women's Career Development Phases: Idealism, Endurance and Reinvention by Deborah A. O'Neil & Diana Bilimoria, Career Development International, 10, 3, p. 168-189, 2005)

# Phase 1: Idealistic Achievement (ages 24-35)

- Proactive, strategic
- Internal career locus: in charge of career direction
- Achievement oriented
- Careers viewed as opportunities to make a difference and paths to personal happiness and fulfillment
- Future of unlimited possibilities
- Expectation of having a successful career and family



**Key Issues: Self-confidence and self-identity**

# The “Big Three-O”: a Time for Setting Aspirations

As our survey showed, the first moment of truth in the career path of men and women comes after about 8 years of work, around the age of 30.

But this milestone appears to be more critical for women: more women than men (25% vs. 20%) said that at 30 they decided to take more active control of their careers, and that it was time when they faced the choice of whether or not to revise their ambitions upwards (22% of women, 16% of men).

*(Women Matter, 2007)*

## Phase 2: Pragmatic Endurance (ages 36-45)

- Juggling multiple professional and personal responsibilities and demands on their time
- Torn between career and life choices
- Overwhelmingly impacted by negative managers, non-supportive workplaces, and experiences of sex discrimination and sexual harassment
- Career viewed as an extension of self
- Success defined as personal happiness and fulfillment. However, career not seen as path to get there



**Key Issues: Self-esteem and search for meaning**

# Do Women Pay a Higher Price for Success?

Two significant differences between the men and women.

- First, 27% of women, versus 7% of men, admit that they have felt discriminated against during their professional career;
- The second difference is demographic, revealing a substantial disparity in the situations of the respondents: 54% of women in our sample – vs only 29% of men – were childless, and 33% of the women were single, compared to 18% of the men.

(McKinsey & Company, 2007  
Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver)



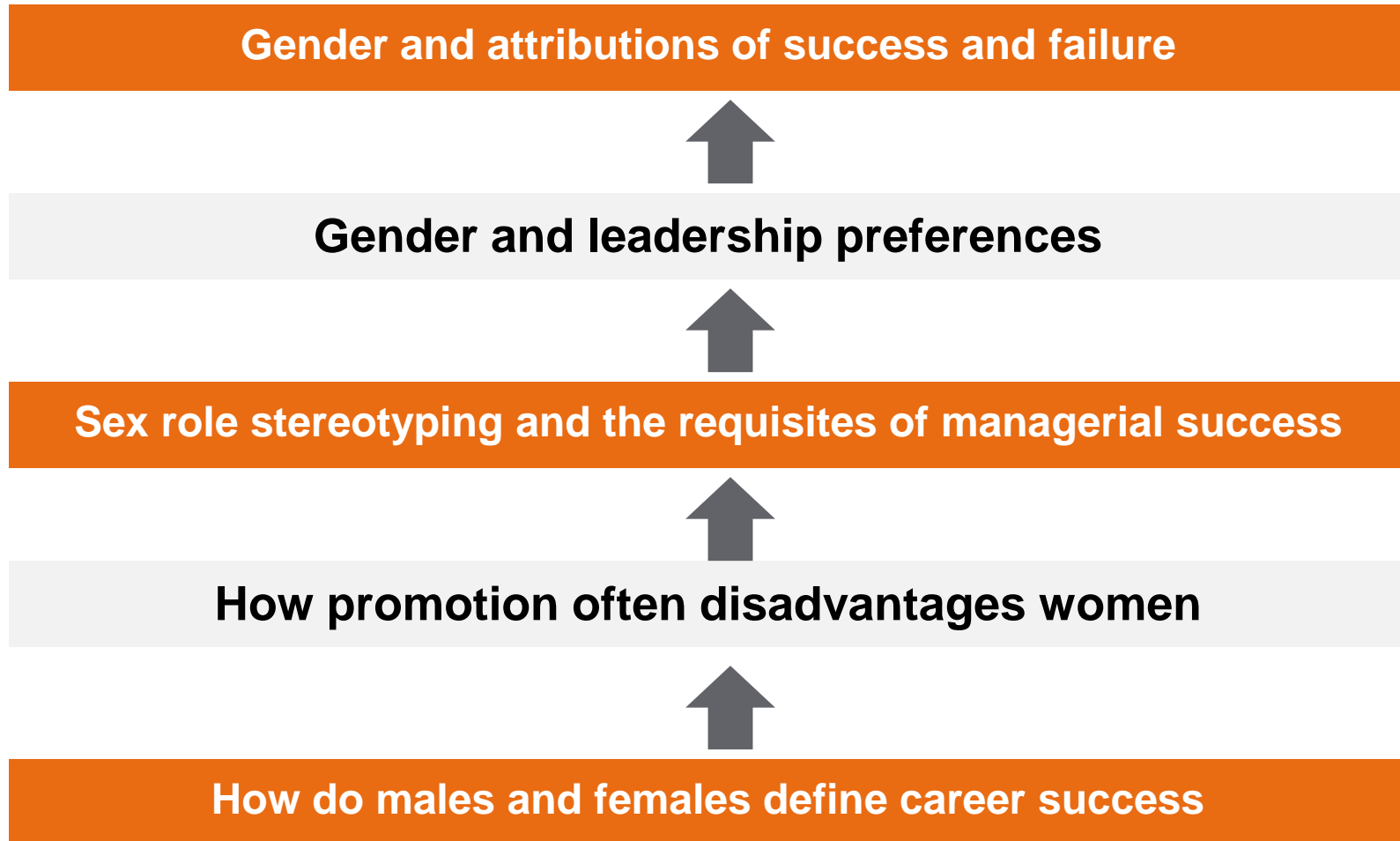
# Phase 3: Reinventive Contribution (ages 46 and up)



- Contributing to organizations, families and communities
- External career locus: personal and professional others have impacted their career choices
- Career viewed as an opportunity to be of service
- Tend toward work that provides opportunities to continue to learn

**Key Issues: Recognition, respect, integration, authenticity**

# Hurdles Facing Women



# Managers and Personal Definitions of Success – 4 Types

- **CLIMBERS**
  - Seniority, level and pay achieved, status conscious, competitive, want to combine material success with enjoyment at work
- **EXPERTS**
  - Being good at what they do, getting recognition, technical expertise over status
- **INFLUENCERS**
  - Degree of organisational influence achieved
- **SELF-REALISERS**
  - Personal level, challenge and self-development, ability to balance work and personal life

(Cranfield)

# Gender Role Stereotyping and Managerial Success

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Ambitious	Affectionate	Adaptable
Independent	Gentle	Conscientious
Confident	Appreciative	Conventional
Aggressive	Sensitive	Helpful
Assertive	Emotional	Reliable
Dominant	Sentimental	Sincere
Forceful	Dependent	Solemn
Autocratic	Excitable	Tactful
Stern	Mild	Truthful
Tough	Submissive	Predictable
Analytical	Compassionate	Systematic
Competitive	Understanding	Efficient

# Think Manager, Think Male – Gender Stereotyping (V. Schein)

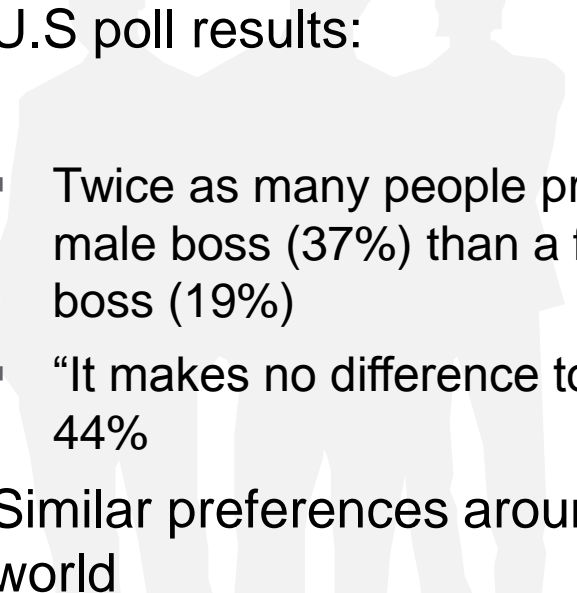
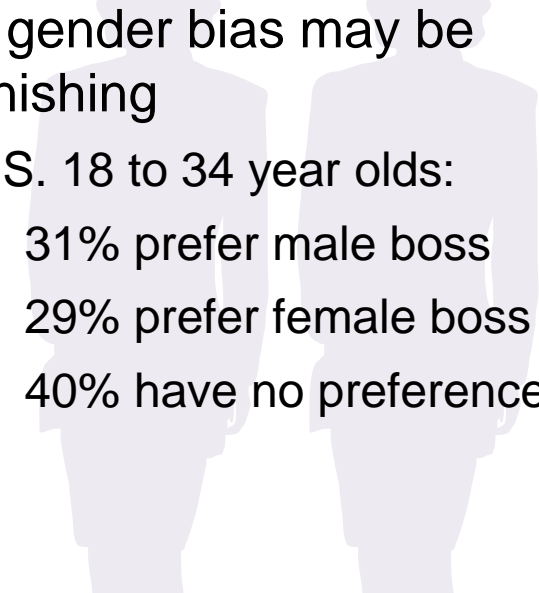
Source	China	Japan	Germany	U.K.	U.S.
Males					
Managers and Men	0.91	0.54	0.74	0.67	0.70
Managers and Women	- 0.04	- 0.07	- 0.04	- 0.02	- 0.11
Females					
Managers and Men	0.91	0.68	0.66	0.60	0.51
Managers and Women	0.28	- 0.04	- 0.19	- 0.31	- 0.43

The correlation between the attributes of successful managers and either male attributes or female attributes

# Because of Incongruity: Double Bind for Women



# Leadership Preferences

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- U.S poll results:
    - Twice as many people prefer a male boss (37%) than a female boss (19%)
    - “It makes no difference to me” – 44%
  - Similar preferences around the world
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- This gender bias may be diminishing
    - U.S. 18 to 34 year olds:
      - 31% prefer male boss
      - 29% prefer female boss
      - 40% have no preference

(G. Powell, 2011)

# Leadership Style – Gender Differences

- Female leaders higher in dimensions of transformational leadership style that are positively associated with leader effectiveness, i.e. charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration
- Female leaders more democratic, less autocratic decision makers

(G. Powell, 2011)



# Gender and Attribution of Success/Failure

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Internal Cause	=	Ability, effort
External Cause	=	Luck, easy/ difficult task

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## Findings:

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Male Success	=	Skill
Female Success	=	Effort, luck, easy task
Male Failure	=	Bad luck
Female Failure	=	Lack of skill

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**85% of women would only apply for a job if they met the job description ‘fully’ or ‘pretty well’.**

(Source: ‘Ambition and gender at work’,  
Institute of Leadership and Management, 2011)

# Key Factors for Career Success

