



### Check you know

Glass ceiling

### Vocabulary development

Change the words or phrases underlined for a more formal, academic style word or phrase.

1. Women workers across the globe still regularly meet a glass ceiling, despite the big gains of the past ten years, a U.S study said.
2. Only 30 per cent of women high level workers and 43 per cent of males believed that women have the same chances as men in the workplace today, supporting the existence of a glass ceiling, the research argued.
3. Women in the U.S and UK, e.g., were very confident of their own business capabilities and more likely to believe that the highest barriers to their success come not from their own capabilities or even from their own companies' cultures but from society at large.
4. Making a business culture that supports new things, growth and lots of money requires people with different talents, and organisations need to make sure that they value all styles of leadership and work.

### Talking points

Do you agree with the main points made here?

What is the situation in your country: is there a glass ceiling?

What barriers to success exist in your country?

Think about organisations you know: do they value all styles of leadership?



### Check your answers

#### Glass ceiling stretches around the world

10 Mar 2006

Discrimination. Women & Work.

Women workers across the globe still regularly encounter a glass ceiling, despite the significant gains of the past decade, a U.S study has argued. The research by Accenture studied 1,200 male and female executives in eight countries in North America, Europe and Asia – including the U.S, Canada, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, UK, Australia and the Philippines. They were asked to score factors they felt influenced their career success across three "dimensions": individual (career planning, professional competence, assertiveness, etc.); company (supportive supervisors, transparent promotion processes, tailored training programmes); and society (equal rights, government support of parental leave). The differences between the male and female answers were used to calculate the current "thickness" of the glass ceiling.

Only 30 per cent of women executives and 43 per cent of male believed that women have the same opportunities as men in the workplace today, supporting the existence of a glass ceiling, the research argued. But it also found that, overall, women executives were about as personally satisfied with their career opportunities and positions as men. The same percentage of men and women respondents (58) said they were fairly compensated or that their salary reflected their personal achievements. Around the same number of women as men (66 per cent versus 70 per cent) said they felt secure in their jobs.

Some women executives felt the glass ceiling was more a societal obstacle than an individual barrier. Women in the U.S and UK, for instance, were very confident of their own business capabilities and more likely to believe that the greatest barriers to their success come not from their own capabilities or even from their own companies' cultures but from society at large.

At the other end of the spectrum, women in Canada and the Philippines believed societal issues were less of a barrier to achieving career success and corporate cultures were more so. The company dimension also appeared to pose the greatest barrier to advancement in Austria, whereas Swiss respondents were less inclined to believe this. In Germany and Australia, barriers to advancement were, again, most prevalent in the dimension of society.

"The study reminds us that while there has been progress in shattering the glass ceiling over the past 20 years, organisations – and societies – need to realise how important it is to capitalise and build upon the skills of women," said Kedrick D. Adkins, Accenture's chief diversity officer. "Creating a business culture that supports innovation, growth and prosperity requires people with diverse talents, and organisations need to ensure that they value all styles of leadership and work. "In other words, global inclusion is the key to the long-term success of companies," he added.