**Advancing Women in Nashville (AWIN)**

**2020 Member Benchmark Assessment Key Findings**

AWIN carried out the organization’s first member benchmark study in 2020, assessing a variety of critical focus areas that impact women in the workplace: Representation, Paid Time Off, Benefits & Compensation, Advancement, Recruiting, and Accountability. Below are the high-level findings from this study.

**Overall:**

* Of 24 member companies, 13 submitted an assessment. Eight of these were considered “complete” - meaning information was provided in all categories.
* Assessed companies ranged in size from less than 400 employees to more than 60,000 employees, and spanned a broad range of industries - including Healthcare, Law, Technology, Manufacturing, and more.
* We did not see any obvious differences in results based on the size of the organization.
* The numbers below represent averages of all assessments submitted, unless otherwise noted.

**Representation**

* Total workforce representation was very balanced overall, with an even 50/50 split of women to men. Representation of women within the workforce, however, trended toward lower-level positions, with representation decreasing as responsibility and influence increased.
  + 59% of non-exempt roles were filled by women
  + 40% of professional/management roles were filled by women
  + 34% of senior management roles were filled by women
  + 22% of executive roles were filled by women
* Eight companies provided data on the representation of women of color, with most signaling that this is a demographic they do not track. Of those reported, women of color were significantly under-represented, making up only 12% of the overall workforce, mostly found in non-exempt positions:
  + 14% of non-exempt roles were filled by women of color
  + 6% of professional/management roles were filled by women of color
  + 2% of senior management roles were filled by women of color
  + 2% of executive roles were filled by women of color
* 11 companies reported having female representation on their Board of Directors, with five companies having more than two women represented. One company reported having a woman of color on their Board.
* Eight companies shared data on how many women and women of color were reflected in the top 20% of earners. Of those, 25% were women and 4% were women of color.
* Eight companies shared data on how many executives with P&L responsibility were women and women of color. Of those, 24% were women and none were women of color.

**Recruiting & Hiring**

* Eight companies were able to provide hiring data for the last year:
  + 53% of total new hires made across reporting companies were women, and 19% were women of color.
  + 32% of professional/management new hires in the last year were women, and 9% were women of color
* All 13 companies weighed in on how they approach recruiting and hiring for diversity.
  + 75% of respondents indicated providing training for internal recruiters on unconscious bias and/or diverse interviewing skills.
  + 17% of respondents indicated requiring diverse interview slates
  + 8% of respondents indicated requiring a diverse panel of interviewers when evaluating candidates for open positions.
  + 67% of respondents who use external search/recruiting companies indicated that they chose the company based on its ability to provide a diverse slate of candidates.
  + 73% of respondents indicated having a recruiting strategy focused on attracting female candidates through partnerships with women’s professional associations such as Society for Women Engineers and Women in Technology Tennessee and through focused university recruiting for internships.

**Advancement**

* Eight companies were able to provide data on total promotions in the last year, and within those organizations 42% of promoted employees were women and 11% were women of color.
* 77% of participating companies (10 companies) reported offering women’s employee resource/affinity groups, which center around networking, professional development, mentorship/leadership exposure & community outreach.
  + Of these, six track participation in ERGs/affinity groups and reported that men comprise 10% of membership in the women’s ERG and senior leadership comprised 31% of members.
* No companies reported having formal mentoring programs, but three companies have plans to implement programs in 2021.
* 61% of participating companies (eight companies), train leaders on bias and inclusion.
* 46% of participants (six companies) reported having a system for identifying high potential women, and a development program dedicated to specifically advancing women.
* 23% of participants (three companies) track the participation of women in leadership development programs, such as formal education, mentoring or sponsorship programs.
  + Of those who tracked, 45% of participants in the last year were women, and 14% were women of color.
* 46% of participants (six companies) report having a formal succession planning program. Two companies track the participation of women in these programs (average of these two: 19% women, >1% women of color).

**Benefits & Compensation**

11 companies completed the Benefits portion of the assessment. Of those reporting:

* 91% provide healthcare coverage for employee only and adults with special needs.
* 100% provide spouse and child healthcare coverage.
* 73% provide domestic partner coverage (including domestic partner’s children)
* 9% provide coverage for Grandchildren
* All companies participating reported providing the following:
  + Dependent Daycare FSA
  + Private Mother’s Rooms
  + Stress Management program
  + Work from home/flexibility work options
  + An EAP to encompass total emotional and wellbeing services
* 27% offer some type of back-up childcare services
* 36% of the responding companies provide financial assistance for adoption
* None of the responding companies provide support for the following:
  + children’s tuition reimbursement,
  + student loan forgiveness *(2/3 of all student loan debt is held by women)*
  + fertility treatment reimbursement
  + company sponsored childcare (on-site or near-site).

Nine companies completed the Compensation portion of the assessment.

* 89% of those report auditing compensation regularly to ensure gender pay equity, with most auditing annually.

**Time Off / Leaves**

* Eight companies reported offering fully paid maternity leave, four had partial paid leave. The average length of time available for new mothers was 11.5 weeks.
* Nine companies report offering parental leave (non-birth parents) with an average of six weeks available for new parents.
* 12 companies report offering leave for adoptive parents with an average of 5 weeks available.
* On average, exempt employees took 22 days off last year.
* On average, non-exempt employees took 21 days off last year.
* On average, part-time employees took 11 days off last year.
* Three companies report having unlimited paid days off policies for exempt employees, none report this offering for non-exempt employees.

**Accountability**

* Nine companies report tracking and regularly reporting diversity statistics, primarily to executive and HR teams and the Board of Directors.
  + Two companies report developing annual D&I focused reports for transparent reporting.
* Three companies report setting and communicating numerical diversity goals.
* Two companies report holding leaders accountable for driving diversity through performance evaluations, with no companies tying bonus eligibility to D&I goals.
* Seven companies report having a dedicated Office of Diversity & Inclusion, in four companies the highest D&I officer reports directly to the CEO or Chairman of the company.

**Recommendations**

Based on these results, we found three critical areas of opportunity.

1. Tracking and reporting – To drive results, you have to know where you currently stand. Many member companies reported they do not track demographic information beyond basic gender data. Member companies would benefit greatly from routine tracking of hiring and career progression for women, specifically women of color. Having a firm grasp of the volume of women moving through the talent pipeline and leadership development programs will help companies understand where internal pain points may exist.
2. Addressing bias in recruiting – Although most companies reported requiring bias training for recruiters, very few report consistent practices or policies that mitigate bias in the process of recruiting or hiring. Requiring diverse interviewing panels and diverse candidate slates (diverse = at least two women and people of color), has been proven to improve the odds of hiring women - specifically women of color - as much as 70%, while ensuring the best talent is being selected for each role with minimal potential for bias to creep into decision-making.
3. Developing the existing pipeline of internal talent - Aligned with national trends, member company demographics show overall gender balance, with a higher distribution of women at lower levels of the organization that diminishes as responsibility and pay increase. The numbers tell us that the pipeline of female talent exists within organizations, and by focusing on removing the following potential barriers a more equitable distribution of female talent could be within reach for many organizations:
   * Focused attention on women’s advancement - Developing women through formal training, apprenticeship, mentorship, and sponsorship programs that focus on creating more visibility for women within the organization and making stronger connections with leadership.
   * Bias and Inclusion training for current leadership teams – almost 40% of AWIN organizations reporting do not require bias training for leaders. This leaves the door open for unconscious or implicit biases to impact decision-making, even among the best leaders.
   * Addressing work/life challenges that exist for women at higher rates than men. Research shows women remain the primary family caretakers despite the fact that 49% of working women are also their family’s breadwinner. Benefits and programs that support women who are splitting time between career and caretaking obligations – such as flexible work schedules and arrangements, childcare support, and parental leave (which supports more gender balance in family caretaking) – level the playing field for women who are facing higher levels of responsibility for caretaking for children, adult children with special needs, and aging relatives.