

## Gender Themes: Attainment Trap

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Too many organisations seek the perfect women candidate before making senior appointments. Yet for men it seems they are prepared to take risks. So, men are appointed for potential and women for attainment. This 'attainment trap' stops women of potential getting onto executive committees. Businesses must take the same risks on promoting and appointing women as they do with men and encourage women to seek opportunities that stretch their capabilities.

This focus on attainment causes many women to look down and develop great attention to detail. They frequently miss out on developing networks and participating in strategic conversations so do not develop a known personal brand amongst decision makers, which is key to future career success. This pattern begins very early in careers – female graduates in their 20s tend not to have set themselves any medium or long term career goals where as their male counterparts have a 3-5 year horizon (YSC 2015).

Women are further hindered by receiving less feedback from senior managers, so they frequently have to navigate their way blind folded through their organisations and do not get to address issues that maybe limiting their promotion (Hewlett 2015). This feedback is not simply of a formal nature but also informal feedback around softer skills and impact including personal presentation.

Failure to progress means that women have few female role models to learn from and in turn this leads them to believe that they themselves will not succeed. This is a downward spiral causing attrition at senior levels where corporate UK has lost 40% of senior female executives over the last decade

A link to the article in The Times Style magazine which talks about the 'merit trap'.

[https://www.thetimes.co.uk/magazine/style/why-are-men-more-likely-to-be-promoted-than-women-p7ztf660?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=newsletter\\_108&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=108\\_22.03.2018%20Style%20Weekly%20John%20Legend%20\(1\)&CMP=TNLEmail\\_118918\\_3069235\\_108](https://www.thetimes.co.uk/magazine/style/why-are-men-more-likely-to-be-promoted-than-women-p7ztf660?utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=newsletter_108&utm_medium=email&utm_content=108_22.03.2018%20Style%20Weekly%20John%20Legend%20(1)&CMP=TNLEmail_118918_3069235_108)

