



Inclusion and Innovation

Retaining and Advancing
Women In Tech, Law
and Policy



A CHIPS SPECIAL REPORT
MAY 2024

ABOUT ChIPS



ChIPS was founded by seven women leaders in intellectual property law: Julie Mar-Spinola, Mallun Yen, the Hon. Michelle K. Lee, Noreen Krall, Emily Ward, Mona Sabet and Anirma Gupta.

ChIPS Network was founded in 2005 by seven female leaders, five of them women of color, to advance women and increase diversity in intellectual property law. Today, we serve a wide range of stakeholders in law, technology, and regulatory policy. Since our founding we have grown to more than 7,000 members in 35 regional chapters and special-interest communities in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia-Pacific. Our name derives from “chiefs in intellectual property” to honor the women who founded this community and our commitment to invest in women in IP.

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FOREWORD

ChIPs is proud to launch our 2024 Innovation Initiative with this groundbreaking survey of our membership. ChIPs partnered with the Diversity Pilots Initiative of UC Berkeley School of Law on the survey, which seeks to identify barriers — and find solutions — to transform our work culture and advance women in tech, law and policy.

Special thanks to Professors Margo Bagley (Emory Law), Colleen Chien (UC Berkeley School of Law), and Jason Sandvik (Eller College of Management at the University of Arizona), and the Diversity Pilots Initiative, who helped design and field this survey.

Inclusion and innovation go hand-in-hand. ChIPs Innovation Initiative includes a memorandum of understanding between ChIPs and the United States Patent and Trademark Office to promote inclusion in innovation, especially gender equity; research and reports for inclusion best practices and mentoring; our new online ChIPs Innovation Community; and our Accelerators event series advancing women inventors and innovators in their organization.

For law firms and in-house teams alike, to make lasting change, we must invest in the next generation. Sponsorship for rising advocates in mentoring and professional development creates a lasting change in our professional culture. ChIPs is prioritizing these efforts with opportunities such as our Mock Program, our NextGen Community, and our NextGen Summit. You can learn more about each of these programs at chipsnetwork.org.

Our profession is making progress on gender equity and inclusion, but not fast enough. ChIPs will continue to advance women in tech, law and policy; please join us in this vital challenge.

Best regards,



Joan Toth
Executive Director
ChIPs Network Inc.

PREFACE

While quit rates have slowed since their Great Resignation peak,¹ employees remain restless and dissatisfied. According to a recent survey by LinkedIn, an astonishing 85% of U.S. workers are looking to change jobs in 2024.²

Surveys of Harvard Business School graduates show that women — especially women of color — were dissatisfied long before the pandemic. One quarter of women and nearly 30% of women of color shared they “often or very often” experience burnout, compared to 17% of all respondents.³

This dissatisfaction is driving women away from tech, law and policy. According to a Leopard Solutions survey of 200 women who left Big Law firms, respondents cited “gender biases, microaggressions, billable hour target pressure, preservation of mental health, lack of mentorship, unequal pay, isolation, long hours and unpredictable schedules, lackluster career trajectory prospects and insufficient work-life balance” as reasons for leaving the field. “The most frustrating work aspect for our respondents was a perception that their law firms did not support them, followed closely by the lack of work-life balance.” Sixty percent of the survey respondents were women in the prime of their careers.⁴

While CHIPs members taking our survey have witnessed positive changes toward women in the past five years, much work remains; only 6% of in-house respondents and 14% of law firm respondents rate their workplace “very good” when it comes to creating career opportunities (see page 6). Lack of management support, lack of flexible work options and bias in favor of men are top reasons respondents would consider quitting (page 10).

A radical culture change is needed to advance the next generation of women professionals and retain women in tech, law and policy. Upward career trajectories, equitable compensation, management support, work from home, flexible work options and mentoring (explored in this survey) are needed to create a workplace culture where female talent is respected, rewarded — and retained.

1. “Quits Return to Pre-Covid Levels” by Felix Richter, Statista, January 8, 2024.
<https://www.statista.com/chart/26186/number-of-people-quitting-their-jobs-in-the-united-states/>

2. “LinkedIn Expert Has Smart Advice for Job Seekers” by Jeffrey Quiggle, The Street, updated January 23, 2024.
<https://www.thestreet.com/social-media/a-linkedin-pro-explains-why-you-are-looking-to-change-jobs>

3. “Women Can’t Go Back to the Pre-Pandemic Status Quo” by Colleen Ammerman and Boris Groysberg, Harvard Business Review, March 8, 2022.
<https://hbr.org/2022/03/women-cant-go-back-to-the-pre-pandemic-status-quo>

4. “Why Are Women Leaving Big Law and What Can Law Firms Do About It?” by Laura Leopard, July 25, 2022, JD Supra.
<https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/why-are-women-leaving-big-law-and-what-6682026/>

ABOUT THE SURVEY

ChIPs collaborated with the University of California Berkeley School of Law on this survey of ChIPs membership. The survey was emailed on November 10, 2023, to 667 ChIPs members attending the ChIPs Global Summit 2023. It was emailed to ChIPs full membership (6,713 recipients) on November 15, 2023. A reminder email was sent November 29, 2023. Three incentives were offered to reduce non-response bias — a ticket to the ChIPs Global Summit 2024, a pair of Apple Air Pods Pro, and a \$100 gift certificate.

Among the ChIPs members completing the anonymous survey, 206 worked in-house at corporations and other organizations, and 168 respondents worked at law firms, totaling 374 responses.

OUR RESPONDENTS

More than 4 in 5 in-house respondents work at large companies. Nearly two-thirds of law firm respondents work in “big law.”

In-house survey respondents had more work experience than law firm respondents — 17.5 years vs. 14.75 years.

More than 4 in 10 in-house respondents hold the title of counsel; 1 in 8 are general counsel. More than half of law firm respondents hold the title of partner/shareholder.

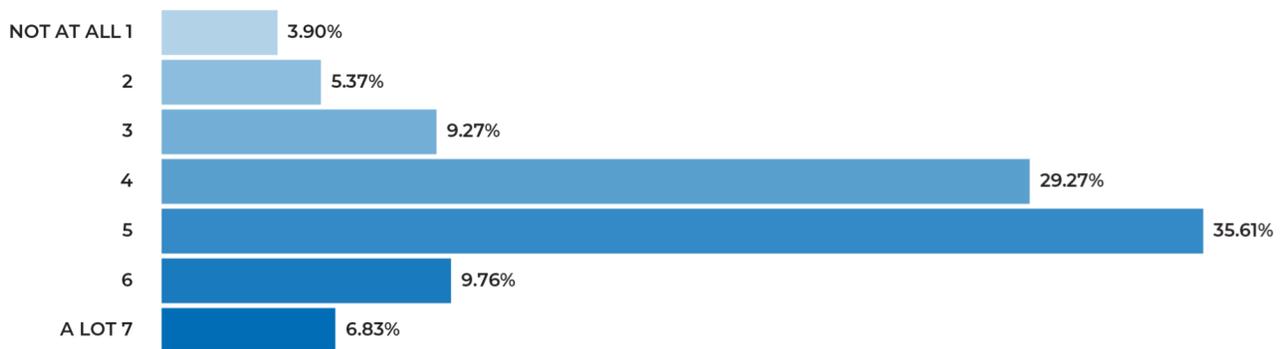
More than 43% of in-house respondents and 59% of law firm respondents received an undergraduate degree in STEM.

INDUSTRY CHANGES

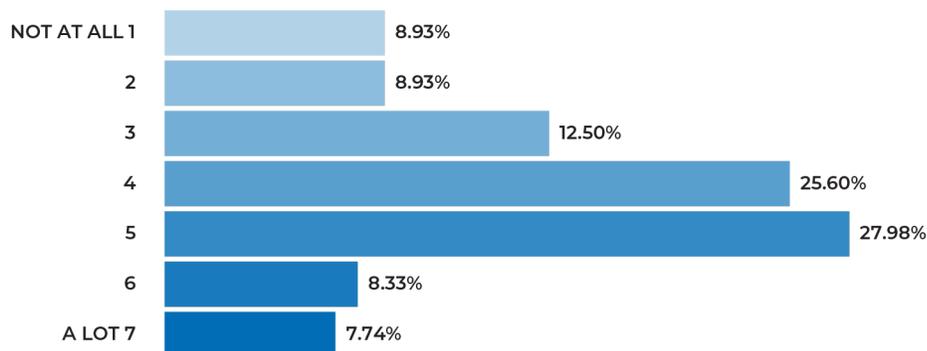
Most respondents see positive changes in the legal industry's attitude toward women in the past five years.

On a scale of 1 to 7, to what extent have you seen positive changes in the legal industry's attitude toward women in the last 5 years?

IN HOUSE



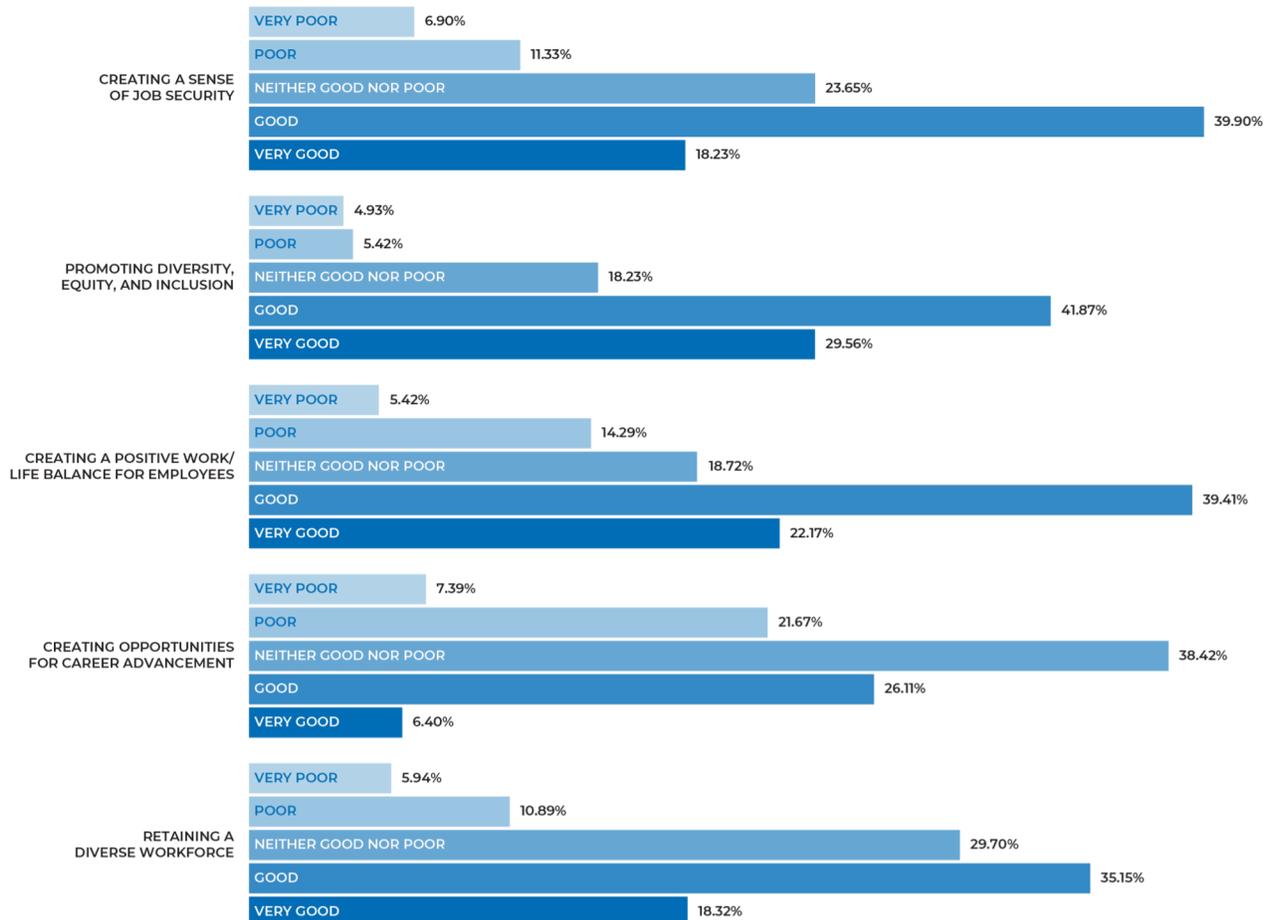
LAW FIRMS



WORKPLACE CHANGES: IN HOUSE

In-house respondents found their employers were successful in advancing DEI and job security efforts, but still struggle to create opportunities for career advancement.

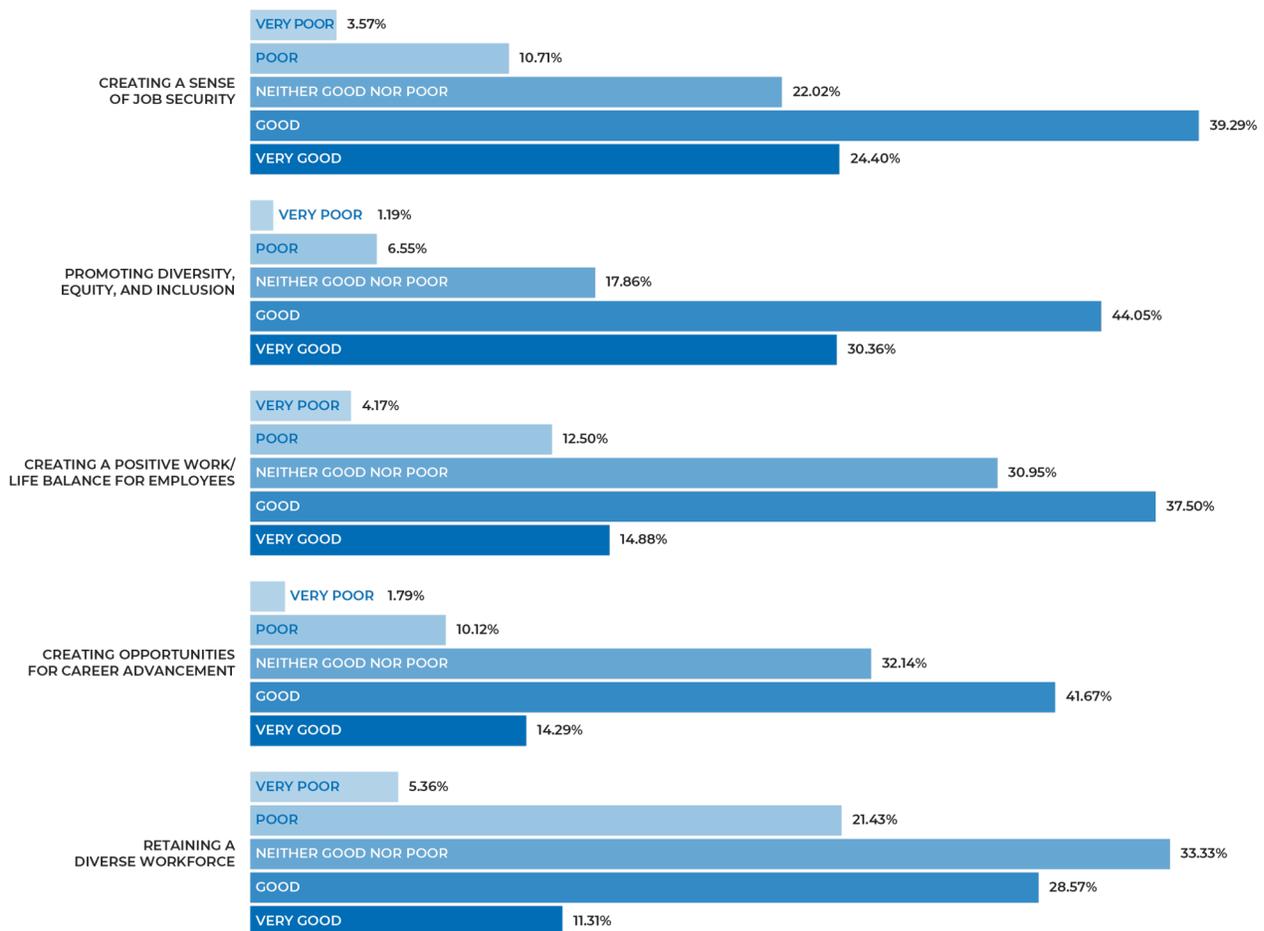
On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate your workplace's efforts on the following?



WORKPLACE CHANGES: LAW FIRMS

Law firm respondents also scored their organizations highest on advancing DEI and job security and lowest on creating career opportunities.

On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate your workplace's efforts on the following?

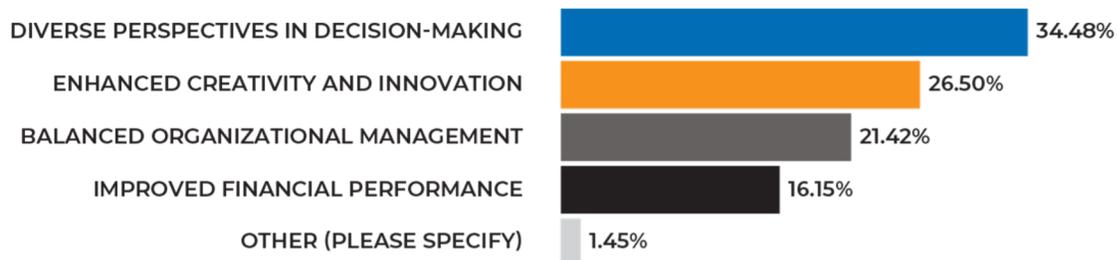


DIVERSITY BENEFITS

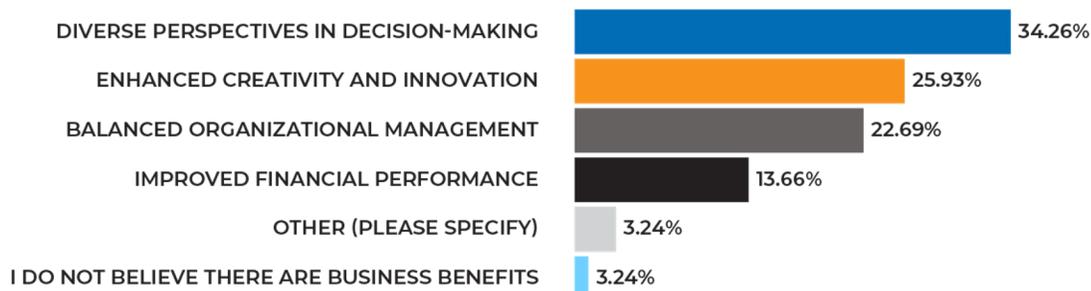
Both in-house and law firm respondents named diverse perspectives and enhanced creativity as top benefits of DEI.

In your opinion, what are the most important business benefits associated with creating a diverse leadership team? (select all that apply, or none at all).

IN HOUSE



LAW FIRMS

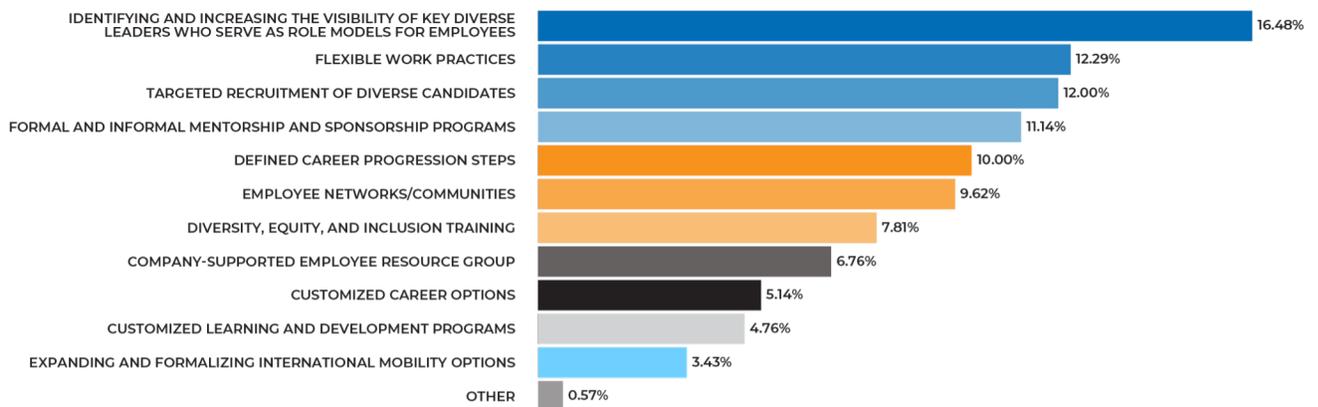


ATTRACTING DIVERSE TALENT

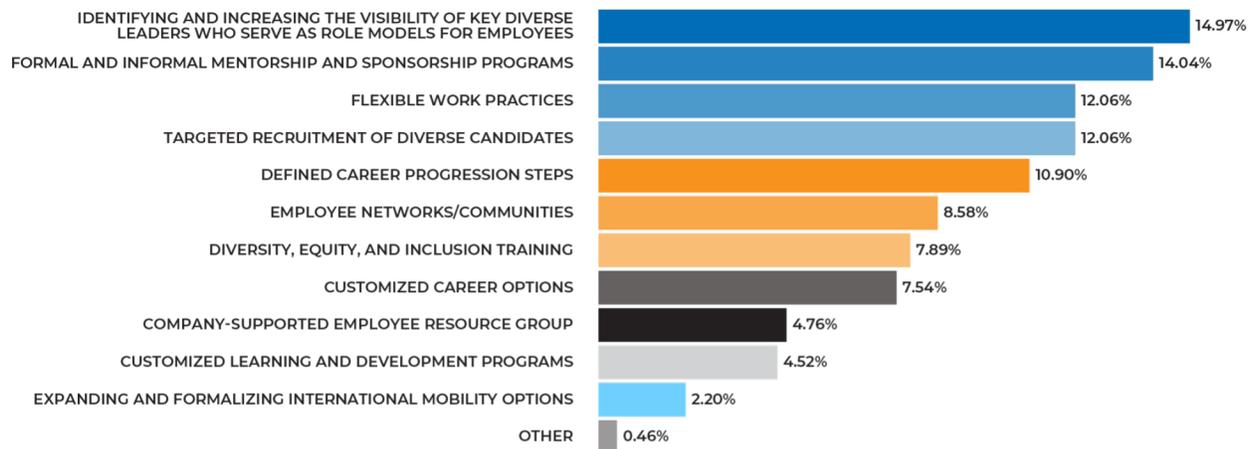
Respondents in both groups said increasing the visibility of diverse leaders was the top success factor in DEI.

In your opinion, which of the following matters for attracting/retaining diverse attorneys (select all that apply, or none at all).

IN HOUSE



LAW FIRMS

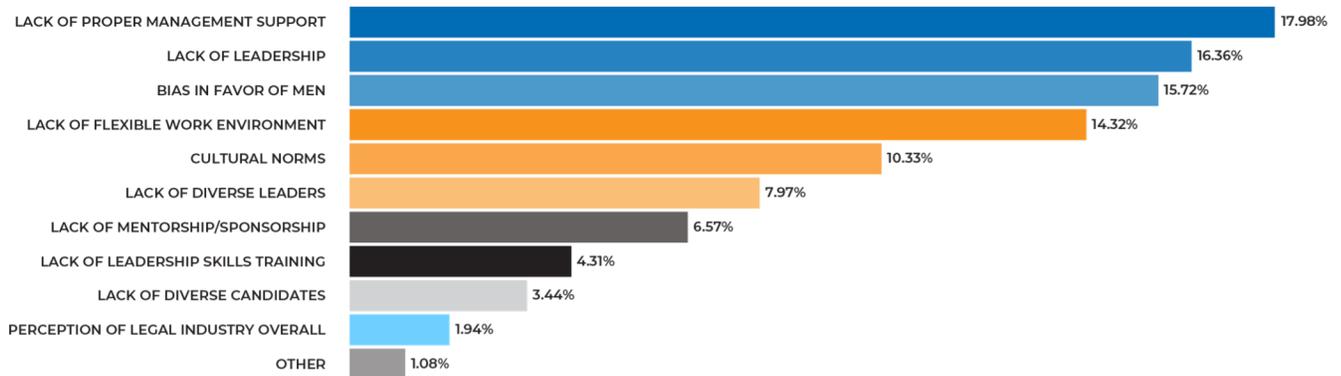


WHY WOMEN QUIT

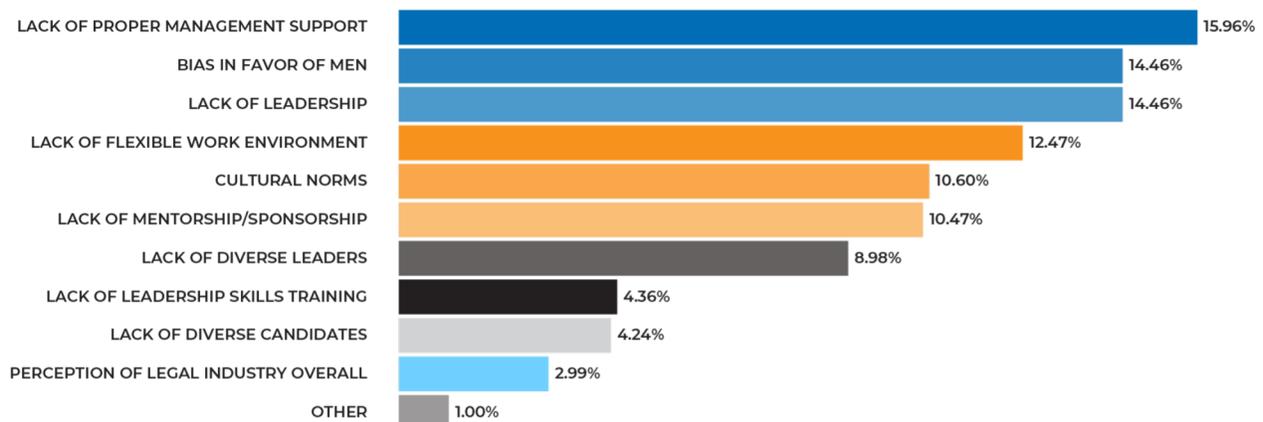
Gender bias, poor leadership, and lack of management support are top reasons women would consider leaving a workplace.

What would cause you to consider leaving a workplace? (select all that apply, or none at all).

IN HOUSE



LAW FIRMS

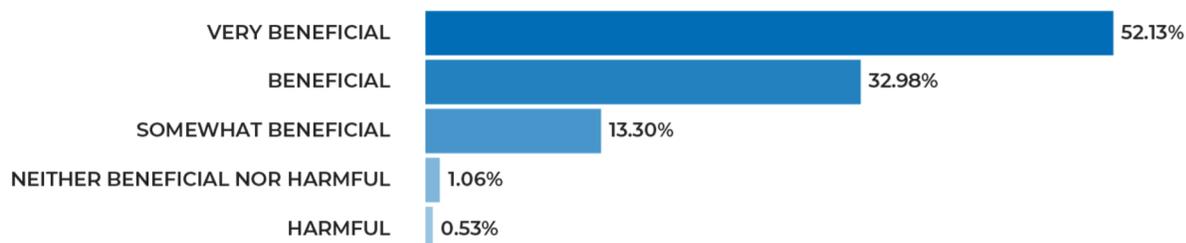


MENTORING IS KEY

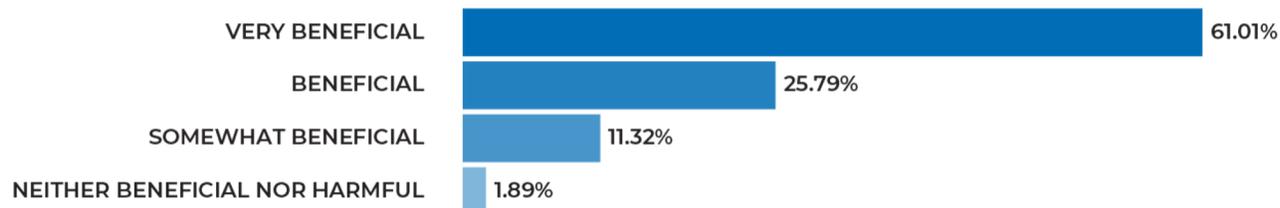
Virtually all respondents from both groups (98%) said mentoring was beneficial; more than half said it was very beneficial.

How beneficial has your relationship with your most effective mentor been to your professional development and career trajectory?

IN HOUSE



LAW FIRMS

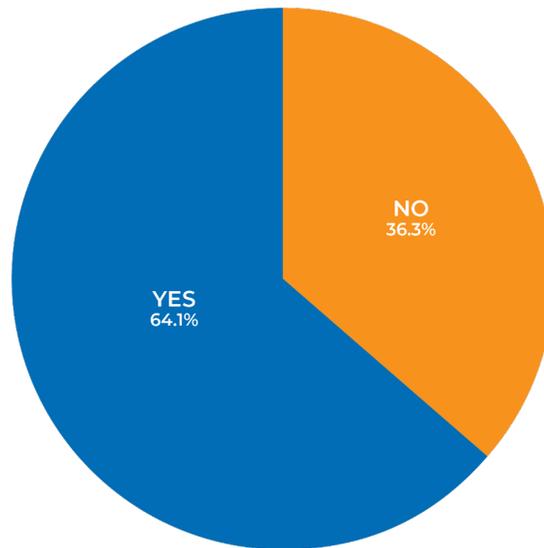


FINDING MENTORS

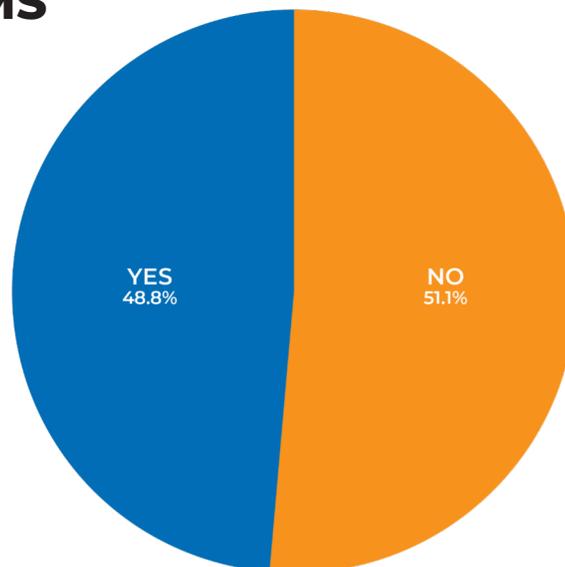
Half of law firm respondents (51%) reported no trouble finding a mentor vs. 64% of in-house respondents who struggle to find mentorship.

Have you ever had trouble finding a mentor?

IN HOUSE



LAW FIRMS

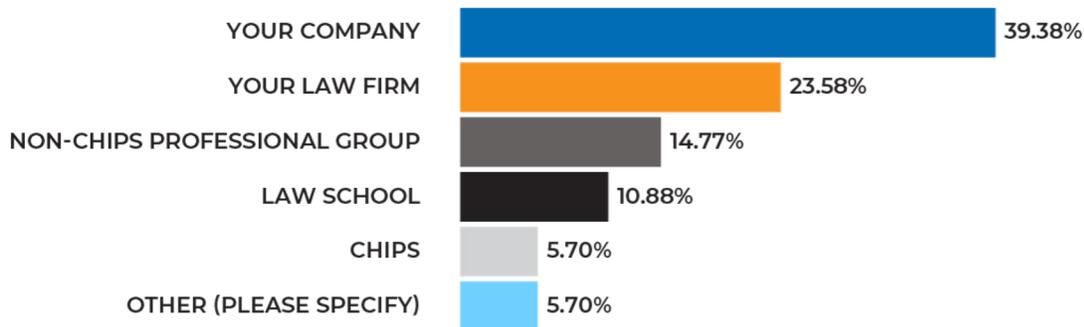


WHERE THE MENTORS ARE

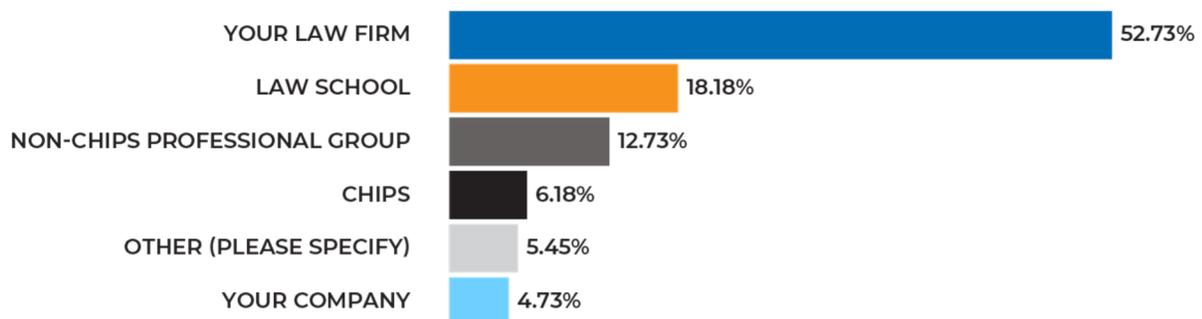
Respondents find their most effective mentors in their firms or organizations.

Which of the following have been sources of effective mentors for you? (select all that apply, or none at all).

IN HOUSE



LAW FIRMS





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