



**Feeling Different:
Being the “Other” in
US Workplaces**

About the Catalyst Research Centers



The Catalyst Research Center for Equity in Business Leadership

examines and documents workforce demographics and their impact on employees, companies, communities, and society. In particular, the Center identifies how women's underrepresentation affects corporate governance and executive teams, and it explores how diverse leadership contributes to business success. By verifying gaps in representation and creating results-oriented solutions, the Center's findings and recommendations help organizations diversify leadership.



The Catalyst Research Center for Career Pathways

exposes root causes of gender gaps from the classroom to the boardroom, conducting research that sorts myth from fact, identifies the true problems that hold women and other underrepresented groups back from advancement, and provides a solid basis for more effective talent development. The Center's findings allow businesses, media, governments, and individuals to gauge women's progress and develop solutions and action plans to advance women into leadership.



The Catalyst Research Center for Advancing Leader Effectiveness

explores a central challenge facing today's business leaders: how to leverage employee diversity to achieve success through inclusive decision-making and talent management. The Center's research examines the nature, impact, and practice of inclusive leadership. It helps committed leaders learn how to become individual change agents, shaping the workplace culture by role modeling effective interpersonal interactions and capitalizing on opportunities to build inclusive talent management systems.



The Catalyst Research Center for Corporate Practice

conducts research distinguishing sound talent management strategies from programmatic fads and documents best practices. These findings enable organizations to strategically create and support inclusive cultures for both women and men. The Center's partnership with its Expert Community, a consortium of business leaders who contribute to and act on the Center's work, informs organizational policy and practices, leading to actionable solutions and systemic change.

About Catalyst

Founded in 1962, Catalyst is the leading nonprofit organization expanding opportunities for women and business. With offices in the United States, Canada, Europe, India, and Australia, and more than 700 members, Catalyst is the trusted resource for research, information, and advice about women at work. Catalyst annually honors exemplary organizational initiatives that promote women's advancement with the Catalyst Award.

Feeling Different: Being the “Other” in US Workplaces

Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon
Alixandra Pollack

Research Partners:

AT&T Inc.
Bloomberg
BMO Financial Group
Cardinal Health, Inc.
Chevron Corporation
Credit Suisse
Dell Inc.
Deloitte LLP
Desjardins Group
Deutsche Bank AG
EY

General Motors Company
Hewlett-Packard Company
IBM Corporation
KeyBank
Kimberly-Clark Corporation
McDonald’s Corporation
Sodexo
State Street Corporation
UPS

Catalyst Publication Number: D126
ISBN Number: 0-89584-337-4

The findings, views, and recommendations expressed in Catalyst reports are not prepared by, are not the responsibility of, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funding organizations.

Unauthorized reproduction of this publication or any part thereof is prohibited.

catalyst.org

© 2014 Catalyst

My experiences...have made me far more aware of my "Blackness" than ever before. I have found that...no matter how liberal and open-minded some [people] try to be toward me, I sometimes feel like a visitor...as if I really don't belong.¹

—Michelle Obama

Meet Jamie

Jamie is a young, ambitious African-American woman who is a new mid-level employee at InfoTech. She is the first black person in her workgroup and one of only a few women. She works long hours, produces high-quality products, and works well with her coworkers. Her supervisor is always very pleased with her work and has told her that she is going to do great things at InfoTech. But even though her coworkers are nice to her, she can't help but feel different from them, and she's certain they see her as being different too. It's not that they treat her poorly, but sometimes there is a disconnect between her and them. Jamie remembers the day after Barack Obama was re-elected US President, when one of her colleagues patted her shoulder and said "Bet you feel good today!" She—and half of her coworkers—had voted for Obama, but not because of his race, and she felt uncomfortable being singled out.

Other times Jamie feels as though she carries the weight of representing her race and gender on her shoulders—that if she fails, she's making black women look bad. Sometimes her coworkers socialize outside of work, but Jamie hesitates to speak up at those gatherings. She worries that revealing anything personal and negative might confirm the stereotypes the others have about black people. Even when she faced tragedy in her personal life, she was reluctant to let on that anything had happened, and when she took time off to cope with it, she never said anything.

Jamie would love to advance within the company, so she seeks out a mentor. She tries to get one at the top ranks of her company, but no one at the senior levels seems interested in helping her; Jamie figures that they are just too busy. Eventually she finds a mentor, but he is only one level above her. He gives her lots of great advice, but doesn't seem to have much influence on decisions that are being made at the top.

After three years, a position at the level above Jamie is available. She expresses her interest in the position, laying out for her manager the reasons why she deserves the promotion. But the promotion is given to a man named Steve. She begins to feel lost, not sure why she hadn't been promoted or whether her performance is to blame. Two more years pass and another promotion is available. Again Jamie applies for it, but is rejected in favor of another employee named Chris. Chris just finished an assignment in Japan, which Jamie would have loved to take on but didn't even know was available. Jamie becomes disenchanted—she knows that she could do so much good for the company in a more senior position, but is less and less sure she'll ever be given the chance. She begins to wonder if it's something she did wrong, but she never received any feedback so she has no way of knowing why she isn't advancing. Jamie once dreamed of a corner office, but now she tries to be content with the job she has.

Do You Feel Different From the Majority of People in Your Workgroup Based on Your Race or Ethnicity?

We all have complex and multiple identities that define both how we see ourselves and how others perceive us. Identities, which can include personal attributes such as gender, race, ethnicity, or nationality, are lenses through which we view the world, and this is as true in our workgroups as anywhere else. As we strive to feel as though we have a secure and valued seat at the table in our workplaces, different identities may come to bear. The more different we are and feel from our workgroup or workplace as a whole, the more we may feel like the “other” at the table.

What Does it Mean to be an “Other?”

Otherness is about being different or having characteristics that set you apart from the dominant group or groups in a given context. In many organizations, characteristics of the dominant group (the group that has decision-making power and influence), like maleness, become normative—the default. Mark Zuckerberg is described simply as a CEO. But Ursula Burns is described as a female CEO—in fact, a female African-American CEO. On the flip side, women taking care of patients in medical settings are called nurses, while men doing the same thing are often referred to as “male nurses.”² The common association of the dominant group with the position means that we only feel the need to specify group membership when it is non-dominant; that is, we only specify it when it is the “other” group. Moreover, the association of the dominant group with the position reinforces the belief that those holding that position are or should be from that group.

Why Is This Important to Business?

People who feel like an “other” not only feel different, but also feel separated from the essential

aspects of a group. And if they do not experience belonging in a group, they may consequently be excluded. People who are different may take on the status of “outsider:” they are not truly embraced as part of the team, and they are excluded from opportunities. In a business setting, this typically also means that they are set apart from the power structures at the top. Companies that hinder segments of the population from accessing the top will lose out on an enormous amount of talent.

Gender³ and race/ethnicity⁴ are two common bases on which you can feel like the “other.” Previous research has made clear that women—“others” in a predominantly male-led workforce—are impeded in their advancement through the business world.⁵ Women who are also set apart by their racial/ethnic identities often fare even worse.

Beyond the personal, psychological experience of feeling different from the majority, there are measurable consequences for being the “other” in the United States. For example, women generally make 77 cents for every dollar a man makes,⁶ but African-American and Latina women make even less—64 and 55 cents, respectively.⁷ While these women may not always experience otherness in their workgroups, in our white- and male-dominated business world, they commonly do. To the extent that these women are being excluded, companies are losing out on their talent.

Jamie’s story highlights the consequences of being excluded from opportunities in the workplace. She was excluded from sponsorship by executives with clout and denied access to an international assignment. These experiences ultimately led to her exclusion from the higher ranks of the company.

What is the impact to your business if highly talented employees feel like the “other,” and, worse yet, if that leads to their being excluded? Do women like Jamie work in your company? What value are you losing if they feel like the “other?”

Examining Otherness in the Workplace

In this report, we will examine the experience of otherness in the workplace. In particular, we will explore how those with multiple sources of otherness in a workplace are impacted in terms of their opportunities, advancement, and aspirations. We argue that a combination of diverse attributes, such as feeling different based on race/ethnicity and gender, provides a unique experience not reducible to the sum of its parts.⁸

Some evidence supporting this notion is that women of color often find that they do not benefit from diversity and inclusion initiatives as much as white women⁹ or men of color.¹⁰ In these cases, people who are only different in gender benefit, as do people who are only different in race/ethnicity, but people who are different on both characteristics do not. Organizational efforts to address the issues of each group separately are not addressing the issues of those who experience both differences together.

It is important to note that people of color are not the only ones who may feel different based on their race/ethnicity. People of all groups—regardless of whether their racial/ethnic identity reflects that of the majority in society as a whole—can feel different from their workgroup based on race/ethnicity.¹¹ This is reflected in our data, which show that some of those who reported feeling different from their workgroup based on race/ethnicity are white. Because race/ethnicity is not necessarily a determinant of having the experience of otherness,¹² we examined otherness based on participants' reports of feeling different from their workgroup based on their race/ethnicity instead of simply based on their demographics.

Listening to, understanding, and building structures to address the interactive effects of different minority statuses among employees are imperative. These practices and structures will enable companies to devise solutions that will address the unique barriers that diverse women and other minority groups face.¹³

The findings in this report are based on data from high-potential women and men who have MBA degrees. While this report focuses specifically on respondents' experiences in US workplaces, the findings about the impact of otherness on employees should be considered by organizations all around the world. As you will see, even strong credentials do not buffer employees from the effects of differing from their workgroup on multiple dimensions.

STUDY SAMPLE

These findings are based on 2,463 MBA graduates—33% women and 67% men—working in corporate and non-corporate firms in the United States at the time of the survey.¹⁴ The data used are a local subset of a larger global data set. The anonymous quotations included in this report come from interviews with selected participants from this sample.

Those With Multiple Dimensions of Otherness are Positioned at Lower Levels in Companies

*[There are] things out of my control, like my gender and race. First impressions [are that] either I am a dragon lady when too direct, or too meek. [It's] hard to process.*¹⁵

—Chinese-American Woman

Women Who Felt Racially/Ethnically Different Were Least Likely to Be at the Top

Women were less likely to have made it to the top than men, and those who felt racially/ethnically different were less likely to make it to the top than those who did not feel different.¹⁶

- Women who felt racially/ethnically different were the least likely to be at the senior executive/CEO level (10%) compared to men who felt different (19%) and those who did not feel different (16% women; 25% men).¹⁷

And Experience Doesn't Explain Why

- Contrary to commonly held stereotypes,¹⁸ women who felt racially/ethnically different were not less qualified to lead. Differences in experience, such as the time since they received their degrees, did not explain the gaps in rank that existed between women who felt racially/ethnically different and those who did not or between these women and men who felt different.

Women Who Felt Racially/Ethnically Different Received Fewer Promotions

Both women and those who felt racially/ethnically different received fewer promotions in their current

organization than men and those who did not feel racially/ethnically different, such that women who felt racially/ethnically different received the fewest promotions.¹⁹

- Of women who felt racially/ethnically different, 48.2% had received two or more promotions. In contrast, 51.4% of men who felt racially/ethnically different had received two or more promotions as had 55.6% of women and 58.4% of men who did not feel racially/ethnically different.²⁰

CONSIDER THIS: FAIR AND EQUITABLE DECISION-MAKING

Efforts to ensure fair and equitable decision-making regarding career development and advancement are critical to building and supporting inclusive workplaces.

- What mechanisms does your company have in place to ensure that those with backgrounds that differ from the majority in the workgroup are evaluated fairly, based on their performance and potential?
- What formal and informal networks does your organization use to solicit performance feedback, including feedback from supervisors, direct reports, and peers?²¹

Those With Multiple Dimensions of Otherness Are Held Back From Advancement Opportunities

I sense my “otherness” now. No one looks like me....[They say the] secret to success [is to] find good mentors who don’t look like me. Who understand what I am like.

—Chinese-American Woman

Those who experience otherness in the workplace are by definition not part of the dominant power structure at the top of a company. Many people believe that their lack of advancement is a result of a lack of insider knowledge or training²²—for instance, not knowing that they should seek out mentors within their company or that a lack of visible projects can hold them back. Our findings, however, suggest that it is not lack of knowledge, but rather lack of access, that impedes the advancement of those who feel different from the majority in their workgroup.

Prior Catalyst research has demonstrated that the level of one’s mentor predicts advancement.²³ The more senior a mentor, the better positioned he or she is to recommend an employee for a highly-visible project, mission-critical role, or promotion.

Women Who Felt Racially/ Ethnically Different Were Least Likely to be Mentored by C-Suite and Senior Executives

Of those with mentors, women who felt racially/ethnically different were less likely to have senior-level mentors than any other group.²⁴

- Only 58% of women who felt racially/ethnically different had mentors who were CEOs or Senior Executives, as compared to 71% of women who did not feel different, 72% of men who did feel different, and 77% of men who did not feel different.

- Those who felt racially/ethnically different had just as many mentors overall as those who did not, and women had more mentors than men.²⁵ Thus those who felt like “others” were at least as likely to have mentors as those who were in the dominant group, but were less likely to be able to access those with clout.

CONSIDER THIS: ENSURING ACCESS TO HIGH-LEVEL SPONSORS

What does your company do to ensure that every high-potential employee has access to high-level sponsors?

- How can you help all employees cast a wide net to bolster their networks?²⁶
- How could your company provide multiple ways of gaining mentors and sponsors, such as one-on-one mentoring as well as group mentoring settings?
- What is the method you use to encourage your senior executives to sponsor people who have different identities from them?²⁷

Women Who Felt Racially/ Ethnically Different Lacked Access to Career-Advancing Projects

One consequence of not having access to senior-level mentors is a decreased likelihood of getting access to “hot jobs” that promote career advancement.²⁸

- Women who felt racially/ethnically different (29%) were nearly twice as likely to perceive a “great” or “very great” negative impact on their career due to a lack of visible projects as women and men without the experience of otherness based on race/ethnicity (each 15%). Only 21% of men who felt racially/ethnically different had the same perception.²⁹

CONSIDER THIS: EQUAL ACCESS TO HOT JOBS

Previous Catalyst research has shown that highly visible projects are one type of “hot job” that propels high potentials’ careers ahead further and faster, but women get fewer of these projects than men.³⁰ As a key decision-maker in your company, it is important to be aware that women who feel different from their workgroups based on race/ethnicity may have less access to these critical development opportunities than others.

- What metrics do you use to track who gets access to these important opportunities?
- How can you hold employees accountable for ensuring all high potentials get equal access to the career-accelerating “hot jobs?”
- How might a lack of access to these “hot jobs” impact employee aspirations to contribute to your company?

Fewer Opportunities for Those With Multiple Dimensions of Otherness May Harm Aspirations

When a young person, even a gifted one, grows up without proximate living examples of what she may aspire to become—whether lawyer, scientist, artist, or leader in any realm—her goal remains abstract....But a role model in the flesh provides more than inspiration; his or her very existence is confirmation of possibilities one may have every reason to doubt, saying, “Yes, someone like me can do this.”³¹

—US Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor

For those with multiple identities that create an experience of otherness, our findings suggest some measurable consequences, such as a lack of advancement opportunities and access to career

development experiences.³² Furthermore, these consequences can lead to changes in what one thinks is possible in the future.

Women Who Felt Racially/ Ethnically Different Were Likely to Downsize Aspirations

For women who feel different from their workgroups based on their race/ethnicity, the consequences of being excluded may extend well beyond their current jobs.

- Women were more likely to downsize their aspirations (35%) than men (21%).³³
- Women who felt racially/ethnically different (46%) were more likely to downsize their aspirations than women who did not feel different (33%).³⁴
- Among those who felt racially/ethnically different, women were almost twice as likely as men (25%) to downsize their aspirations. Additionally, women who were racially/ethnically different were more than twice as likely to downsize their aspirations as men who did not feel racially/ethnically different (20%).³⁵

Especially Those With Children and Spouses/ Partners Working Full-Time

- The United States has one of the weakest parental leave policies among industrialized countries,³⁶ and there is enormous pressure on working mothers, even many years after giving birth.³⁷ For those who already feel excluded from their workgroup, the career impacts of motherhood may be even more harmful.
- Among women who felt racially/ethnically different, those with children (59%) were more likely to downsize their aspirations than those without children (40%).³⁸
- Among women who felt racially/ethnically different and had children, those with a spouse or partner who works full-time (63%) were more likely to downsize their aspirations than those who did not have such a spouse or partner (40%).³⁹

Expatriates and LGBT Individuals Also Face Obstacles in the Workplace

I fear stereotyping [at work]...I don't wear short skirts and...low-cut [blouses]...I don't want the Brazilian stereotype, half-naked Carnival.

—Brazilian Woman Working in the United States

Expatriates (people born outside the United States) working in the United States may feel different from their workgroup based on their nationality. If they also feel like an “other” based on race/ethnicity or gender, any negative impact

may be compounded. In contrast, people born in the United States who don't feel different based on race/ethnicity or gender may benefit from unique advantages.⁴⁰

Expatriates Who Felt Racially/ Ethnically Different Lacked Access to Critical Development Opportunities, Including Line Responsibility and Visible Assignments

- Expatriates who felt racially/ethnically different from their workgroups had less line responsibility (49% of their job tasks) than expatriates who did not feel different (62%) or people who were born in the United States and either felt racially/ethnically different (61%) or did not (63%).⁴¹
- Expatriates who felt racially/ethnically different were most likely (24%) to report that they experienced “great” or “very great” limitation to their careers from a lack of access to visible assignments; people born in the United States who did not feel racially/ethnically different were the least likely (13%) to report this limitation.⁴²
- Women expatriates were most likely (24%) to report a limitation due to a lack of visible assignments, while men born in the United States were the least likely (13%).⁴³

Lesbian and Bisexual Women Were More Likely to Downsize Their Aspirations

Another way in which someone can experience otherness is to identify as LGBT.⁴⁴

- Lesbian and bisexual high-potential women were more likely to downsize their aspirations (42%) than gay and bisexual men (29%), straight women (36%), and straight men (21%).

CONSIDER THIS: VALUING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Becoming aware of the diverse experiences of expatriates in your company is the first step to addressing the disadvantages they face and ameliorating their feelings of otherness. The next step is valuing their cultural differences, which can provide new and constructive insights for your company.

- What steps can your organization take to mitigate the issue of stereotyping so that employees feel safe bringing their whole selves to work, and so that their potential is maximized by your organization?
- Expatriates must acclimate to not only a new home but a new country, and if they experience exclusion in the workplace it is likely to impede their ability to feel at home. How can you help your US-born employees understand the challenges that expatriates face so that they can avoid inadvertently excluding them?
- How can you help employees on international assignments mitigate some of these disadvantages while abroad?

Moving Toward Impact: Maximizing Your Talent Pool

The findings in this report suggest that high potentials who experience otherness on multiple dimensions have unique disadvantages in the workplace even when they do all the “right things.” Often, they are denied access to career-developing opportunities. This may prevent them from advancing to the top, ultimately lowering their aspirations and drive to play as large of a role as possible in growing your company. No two individuals are the same—in the makeup of their identities, their experiences as members of various identity groups, or the development of their careers. Different forms of inequity are maintained in different ways and for different reasons.⁴⁵ But bias is not insurmountable—anyone can be an agent of change.⁴⁶

The impact of otherness is likely to be disadvantageous regardless of its specific type. However, what works in terms of helping women who are in the racial/ethnic majority of their workgroup may not work for women who feel different based on their race/ethnicity, and whose needs and experiences are therefore different.

- How can your company leverage its current talent management efforts to create fair opportunities for everyone who walks through its doors?
- How can your company’s efforts be reshaped to harness the diverse talents of all your employees?
- How can your company’s approach to diversity, D&I initiatives, and practices reflect the fact that strategies that may work to overcome barriers for one group may not work for other groups?

Listening to the unique experiences of diverse employees and adopting inclusive approaches to talent management will confer benefits on your employees and your business. In addition, organizational leaders must be inclusive in their practices—and have metrics to ensure that their practices generate the desired outcomes. Implementing policies and formal mechanisms that ensure that people of all backgrounds are included in important assignments, mentorship opportunities, and hiring decisions will support the development of a strong pipeline of diverse talent.

CONSIDER THIS: DIFFERENCE AS AN ASSET

Feeling or being different does not have to mean feeling excluded. Differences can instead be viewed as valued opportunities for divergent perspectives to be brought to the table to inform policy and planning.

- How can you make diverse employees feel that their differences are an asset to your company?

Endnotes

1. Michelle LaVaughn Robinson, "[Princeton-Educated Blacks and the Black Community](#)," (Senior thesis, Princeton University, 1985), p. 2.
2. William J. McGuire, Claire V. McGuire, Pamela Child, and Terry Fujioka, "Salience of Ethnicity in the Spontaneous Self-Concept as a Function of One's Ethnic Distinctiveness in the Social Environment," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 36, no.5 (1978): p. 511-520.
3. Jane G. Stout, Tiffany A. Ito, Noah D. Finkelstein, and Steven J. Pollock, "How a Gender Gap in Belonging Contributes to the Gender Gap in Physics Participation," *AIP Conference Proceedings 1513* (2012): p. 402-405.
4. Robin J. Ely, Irene Padavic, and David A. Thomas, "Racial Diversity, Racial Asymmetries, and Team Learning Environment: Effects on Performance." *Organization Studies*, vol. 33, no. 3 (2012): p. 341-362.
5. Christine Silva, Nancy M. Carter, and Anna Beninger, *Good Intentions, Imperfect Execution? Women Get Fewer of the "Hot Jobs" Needed to Advance* (Catalyst, 2012), p. 15-17; Nancy M. Carter and Christine Silva, *Mentoring: Necessary But Insufficient for Advancement* (Catalyst, 2010), p. 4.
6. U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2011 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2011, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex* (2012); "[Wage Gap: Cents and Insensibility](#)," *National Partnership for Women & Families*, 2012.
7. Ibid.
8. Jeffrey A. Hayes, Caitlin Chun-Kennedy, Astrid Edens, and Benjamin D. Locke, "Do Double Minority Students Face Double Jeopardy? Testing Minority Stress Theory," *Journal of College Counseling*, vol.14, no. 2 (2011): p. 117-126.
9. Katherine Giscombe, *Navigating Organizational Cultures: A Guide for Diverse Women and Their Managers* (Catalyst, 2011), p. 2-3.
10. Katherine Giscombe, *Women of Color in Accounting* (Catalyst, 2008), p. 15.
11. Anne S. Tsui, Terri Egan, and Charles O'Reilly III. "Being Different: Relational Demography and Organizational Attachment," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 4 (1992): p. 549-579.
12. In this research, we categorized survey respondents based on whether they identified as male or female and whether or not they were born in the United States. Because the study was global, we could not ask for specific racial/ethnic information, which is prohibited in some countries, but we did ask respondents if they felt different from their workgroup based on their race/ethnicity. The findings discussed in this report are derived from a subset of the survey data that comes from respondents who indicated that they work in the United States. In the United States, employees at most companies are predominantly white and senior leadership teams are mostly white men. As such, employees who feel different based on race/ethnicity are predominantly non-white. For a portion of respondents born or working in the United States, we were able to ask explicitly with which race/ethnicity they identified. Analyses of these data confirmed that the "different from race group" question predicted white vs. non-white racial status (Pearson correlation of .74 among 288 respondents, $p < .01$), such that those who felt more different based on race/ethnicity were more likely to be non-white. However, the extent to which someone feels different based on race/ethnicity is only partially predicted by actual race (55% of the variance in feeling different is explained by actual race); it is also predicted by other, unknown factors. For example, a white person working in a predominantly non-white company may be included in the group that feels different based on race/ethnicity. Thus, it is important to distinguish between actual race and feeling different based on race/ethnicity. The variable of feeling different based on race/ethnicity does not distinguish between whites and non-whites per se; it simply compares those who feel different based on their race/ethnicity to those who do not.
13. Giscombe, *Navigating Organizational Cultures*, p. 3.
14. Participants completed a Catalyst survey in 2007 or 2008. The sample included 33% women and 67% men. The average age of the sample was 35.5 years old. The majority of the sample worked in corporate firms (79% in for-profit corporations and 15% in professional services/partnerships) with a fraction in non-corporate organizations (3% nonprofit, 2% education, and 1% government).
15. Catalyst conducted several qualitative interviews with women of various races/ethnicities and/or nationalities; several cited the difficulties of having to overcome stereotypes in their quest to "fit in" to their work environments. Quotations from these interviews are used throughout this report.
16. An ordinal regression (using an ordered logit model) adjusting for age, time in months since receiving one's MBA, and whether the job is corporate or non-corporate showed that gender and feeling racially/ethnically different both significantly predict job level, $ps < .05$. Men and those who did not feel racially/ethnically different were more likely to have higher-level jobs.
17. Pairwise comparisons between women who felt racially/ethnically different and other groups are statistically significant, $p < .05$.
18. Katherine Giscombe, *Career Advancement in Corporate Canada: A Focus on Visible Minorities—Workplace Fit and Stereotyping* (Catalyst, 2008).
19. An ANOVA was performed on the number of promotions with the time since receiving one's MBA in months, the time at one's current job in months, starting level at one's current job, and whether one's job was corporate or not as covariates. The main effects for gender and feeling racially/ethnically different were significant, $ps < .05$. Women who felt racially/ethnically different received on average 1.8 promotions, while women who did not received 1.96. Men who felt racially/ethnically different received on average 1.94 promotions, while men who did not received 2.06.
20. Again, this difference takes into account years of experience as well as years spent at their current job such that the difference remained among those with equal experience and is likely to have played a role in why fewer diverse women were at the top.
21. Katherine Giscombe, *Optimizing Mentoring Programs for Women of Color* (Catalyst, 2012), p. 7.
22. Ali Frick, "[McCain Dismisses Equal Pay Legislation, Says Women Need More 'Training and Education'](#)," *ThinkProgress*, April 23, 2008.
23. Carter and Silva, p. 5.

24. An ordinal regression (using an ordered logit model) adjusting for whether the job is corporate or non-corporate showed that gender and feeling racially/ethnically different both significantly predict mentor's job level, $ps < .05$. Men were more likely to have higher-level mentors as were those who did not feel racially/ethnically different.
25. An ANOVA was performed on the number of mentors with the time since receiving one's MBA in months, whether the job was corporate or not, and age as covariates. The main effect for feeling racially/ethnically different was not significant, but the main effect for gender was $p < .05$, $M(\text{men}) = 3.10$, $M(\text{women}) = 3.29$.
26. Giscombe, [Navigating Organizational Cultures](#), p. 4.
27. Giscombe, [Optimizing Mentoring Programs](#), p. 8.
28. Silva, Carter, and Beninger, p. 8.
29. Perceived limitation of a lack of visible assignments was measured on a 5-point scale where "1" meant "Not at all" and "5" meant "To a very great extent." An ANOVA was performed on the rating of how limiting a lack of visible assignments was to one's career with whether one's job was corporate or not as a covariate. The main effects for gender and feeling racially/ethnically different were significant, $ps < .05$. A complex contrast tested the female-racially/ethnically different group ($M = 2.66$) against the other three groups ($M_{\text{female dominant race}} = 2.20$, $M_{\text{male other}} = 2.45$, $M_{\text{male dominant race}} = 2.14$), and this difference was significant, $p < .05$.
30. Silva, Carter, and Beninger, p. 5-7.
31. Sonia Sotomayor, *My Beloved World* (New York, NY: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2013), p. 178.
32. Giscombe, [Optimizing Mentoring Programs](#), p. 1.
33. A chi-square test explored the association between gender and likelihood of downsizing aspirations, $p < .05$.
34. Chi-square tests explored the association between feeling racially/ethnically different and likelihood of downsizing aspirations separately by gender, $p(\text{women}) < .05$.
35. Chi-square tests explored the association between gender and likelihood of downsizing aspirations separately by whether or not participants felt racially/ethnically different, $p(\text{racial/ethnic others}) < .05$.
36. The United States is the only member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that does not offer any paid maternity leave. Under the Family and Medical Leave Act, new parents may take 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected leave. Sarah Jane Glynn and Jane Farrell, "[The United States Needs to Guarantee Paid Maternity Leave](#)," *Center for American Progress*, March 8, 2013.
37. "[The Harried Life of the Working Mother](#)," *Pew Research Center*, October 1, 2009.
38. Pairwise comparison was significant, $p < .05$.
39. This comparison is not significant because the number of women without a spouse working fulltime is too low for the analysis to have power. Only 10 women who felt racially/ethnically different and had children did not have a spouse working full-time.
40. To examine this possibility, we looked more closely at the expatriate portion of our sample—respondents who were born outside of the United States. There were 699 expatriates who work in the United States. Eighty-four attended business school in their country of birth. Seventy-two attended business school in a different country that was not the United States, while 543 attended business school in the United States. Thus, most of these expatriates are likely to have been in the United States since they entered business school.
41. An ANOVA was performed on percentage of line responsibility, adjusting for time since MBA, time at current job, job level, age, and whether one's job was corporate or not. Simple main effects tests revealed that there is a significant difference based on feeling racially/ethnically different only for expatriates and a significant difference based on nationality only for those who felt racially/ethnically different, $ps < .05$. While the main effects of feeling racially/ethnically different and nationality were significant, $ps < .05$, they are qualified by a significant interaction between feeling racially/ethnically different and nationality, $p < .05$. These simple main effects tests decompose and describe the interaction. A complex contrast also tested the expatriate-feeling racially/ethnically different group against the other three groups, and this difference was significant, $p < .05$.
42. An ANOVA was performed on the rating of how limiting a lack of visible assignments was to one's career on a 5-point scale with whether one's job was corporate or not as a covariate. The main effects for feeling racially/ethnically different and nationality were significant, $ps < .05$. The mean for expatriate racial/ethnic-others was 2.60, for US-born racial/ethnic-others was 2.45, for expatriate non-others was 2.36, and for US-born non-others was 2.09. A complex contrast also tested the US-born/non-other group against the other three groups, and this difference was significant, $p < .05$.
43. An ANOVA was performed on the rating of how limiting a lack of visible assignments was to one's career on a 5-point scale adjusting for feeling racially/ethnically different and whether one's job was corporate or not as covariates. The main effects for gender and nationality were significant, $ps < .05$. The mean for expatriate females was 2.52, for US-born females was 2.40, for expatriate males was 2.46, and for US-born males was 2.19. A complex contrast also tested the US-born male group against the other three groups, and this difference was significant, $p < .05$.
44. Gary J. Gates, [How Many People are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender?](#) (Williams Institute, University of California School of Law, 2011). The LGB community comprises 3.5% of the US population. Only 3% of our sample identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, so the conclusions we can draw are limited.
45. James R. Elliott and Ryan A. Smith, "Race, Gender, and Workplace Power," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 69 (June 2004): p. 365-386.
46. Nilofer Merchant, "[Is Bias Fixable?](#)" *HBR Blog Network*, August 28, 2013.

Acknowledgments

Feeling Different: Being the “Other” in US Workplaces, part of Catalyst’s longitudinal project *The Promise of Future Leadership: A Research Program on Highly Talented Employees in the Pipeline*, examines the experience of otherness, including race/ethnicity, gender, nationality, and sexual orientation, in the workplace and how those with multiple sources of otherness are impacted in terms of their opportunities, advancement, and aspirations. Its creation reflects the ongoing teamwork and dedication of many individuals. Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, Director, Panel Management, Research; and Alixandra Pollack, Senior Associate, Research conceptualized the study, conducted data analysis, and authored the report.

We wish to extend our thanks to the many Catalyst subject matter experts and team members who contributed to this research and the production of this report.

Specifically, thanks goes to Katherine Giscombe, Vice President and Women of Color Practitioner, Global Member Services, who conducted one-on-one interviews with key respondents for additional insights on their career experiences and played an important role in the initial conceptualization of the report. Thanks also goes to Dnika Travis, Senior Director & Center Leader, Catalyst Research Center for Corporate Practice; Jeanine Prime, Vice President & Center Leader, Catalyst Research Center for Advancing Leader Effectiveness; and Anna Beninger, Senior Associate, Research for providing invaluable feedback on various drafts of the report.

Finally, we extend our gratitude to the study participants, whose insights informed the research, and to Catalyst’s Research Partners, whose membership enables us to generate new ideas and approaches to advancing women in business.

Board of Directors

Chair

Peter Voser
Retired Chief Executive
Officer
Royal Dutch Shell plc

Secretary

Maggie Wilderotter
Chairman & CEO
Frontier Communications
Corporation

Treasurer

Thomas Falk
Chairman & CEO
Kimberly-Clark Corporation

John Bryant
President & CEO
Kellogg Company

Ursula M. Burns
Chairman & CEO
Xerox Corporation

Ian M. Cook
Chairman, President & CEO
Colgate-Palmolive Company

Mary B. Cranston, Esq.
Retired Senior Partner
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw
Pittman LLP

Michael S. Dell
Chairman & CEO
Dell Inc.

David B. Dillon
Chairman
The Kroger Co.

Jamie Dimon
Chairman & CEO
JPMorgan Chase & Co.

William A. Downe
Chief Executive Officer
BMO Financial Group

Joe Echevarria
Chief Executive Officer
Deloitte LLP

Deborah Gillis
President & CEO
Catalyst

Jacqueline Hinman
Chief Executive Officer
CH2M HILL Companies Ltd.

Mary Beth Hogan, Esq.
Co-Chair of the Litigation
Department
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP

Jeffrey R. Immelt
Chairman & CEO
General Electric Company

Antony Jenkins
Group Chief Executive
Barclays

Muhtar Kent
Chairman & CEO
The Coca-Cola Company

Ellen J. Kullman
Chair & CEO
DuPont

A.G. Lafley
Chairman, President & CEO
The Procter & Gamble
Company

Michel Landel
Group CEO
Sodexo

Gerald Lema
Chairman and President, Japan
Baxter International Inc.

Sheri S. McCoy
Chief Executive Officer
Avon Products, Inc.

Liam E. McGee
Chairman, President & CEO
The Hartford Financial
Services Group, Inc.

Beth E. Mooney
Chairman & CEO
KeyCorp

Denise Morrison
President & CEO
Campbell Soup Company

Joseph Neubauer
Chairman
ARAMARK

Indra K. Nooyi
Chairman & CEO
PepsiCo, Inc.

Kendall J. Powell
Chairman & CEO
General Mills, Inc.

Stephen S. Rasmussen
Chief Executive Officer
Nationwide

Ian C. Read
Chairman & CEO
Pfizer Inc

Feike Sijbesma
CEO & Chairman Managing
Board
Royal DSM

Stephanie A. Streever
Chief Executive Officer
Libbey, Inc.

Richard K. Templeton
Chairman, President & CEO
Texas Instruments Incorporated

Don Thompson
President & CEO
McDonald's Corporation

John B. Veihmeyer
Chairman & CEO
KPMG LLP

Mark Weinberger
Chairman & CEO
EY

Thomas J. Wilson
Chairman, President & CEO
Allstate Insurance Company

Historic List of Board Chairs

Thomas C. Mendenhall
(1962–1976)
President
Smith College

Donald V. Seibert
(1977–1980)
Chairman of the Board
J.C. Penney Company, Inc.

Lewis H. Young
(1981–1984)
Editor-in-Chief
Business Week

Charles W. Parry
(1985–1986)
Chairman & CEO
Aluminum Company of
America

Richard E. Heckert
(1987–1988)
Chairman & CEO
E.I. du Pont de Nemours
& Company

Reuben Mark
(1989–1990)
Chairman & CEO
Colgate-Palmolive Company

John H. Bryan
(1991–1995)
Chairman & CEO
Sara Lee Corporation

J. Michael Cook
(1996–1997)
Chairman & CEO
Deloitte & Touche LLP

John F. Smith, Jr.
(1998–2001)
Chairman & CEO
General Motors Corporation

Thomas J. Engibous
(2002–2005)
Chairman, President & CEO
Texas Instruments Incorporated

Charles O. Holliday, Jr.
(2006–2008)
Chairman & CEO
DuPont

James S. Turley
(2009–2013)
Chairman & CEO
Ernst & Young

Honorary Directors

Tony Comper
Retired President & CEO
BMO Financial Group

Michael J. Critelli
Retired Chairman & CEO
Pitney Bowes Inc.

Thomas J. Engibous
Retired Chairman & CEO
Texas Instruments Incorporated

Ann M. Fudge
Retired Chairman & CEO
Young & Rubicam Brands

Charles O. Holliday, Jr.
Retired Chairman & CEO
DuPont

Karen Katen
Retired Vice Chairman
Pfizer Inc

Ilene H. Lang
Former President & CEO
Catalyst

Reuben Mark
Retired Chairman & CEO
Colgate-Palmolive Company

Anne M. Mulcahy
Retired Chairman & CEO
Xerox Corporation

Barbara Paul Robinson, Esq.
Partner
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP

James S. Turley
Retired Chairman & CEO
Ernst & Young

G. Richard Wagoner, Jr.
Retired Chairman & CEO
General Motors Corporation

CATALYST

120 Wall Street, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10005
T +1 212 514 7600
F +1 212 514 8470

CATALYST CANADA

8 King Street East, Suite 505
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1B5
T +1 416 815 7600
F +1 416 815 7601

CATALYST EUROPE AG

c/o KPMG AG
Landis+Gyr-Strasse 1
6300 Zug, Switzerland
T +41 (0)44 208 3152
F +41 (0)44 208 3500

CATALYST INDIA WRC

B-601, Ivy Tower
Vasant Valley
Goregaon (E)
Mumbai 400 097
T +91 22 6700 0785

CATALYST AUSTRALIA WOMEN RESEARCH AND CONSULTING LIMITED

Level 23
525 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
T: +61 03 9823 6600
F: +61 03 9826 3642