



Women in Leadership: Insights to Impact

Survey Summary 2026

We know a lot about the challenges that women face on the path to leadership roles, but we know very little about the solutions or what will have the most impact on women's careers.

The Women in Leadership: Insights to Impact Survey 2026 gives workplaces critical insights into where to best focus their attentions and resources to improve the representation of women in leadership and close their gender pay gaps.

This research employed a quantitative survey to capture the experiences of women in leadership roles (or aspiring to be) across New Zealand.

Women were asked what had had the most positive impact on their careers into leadership and what their workplace was currently doing to support women's careers.

410 women completed this survey.

We're pleased to share the Four Factors® having the most positive impact on women's careers into leadership.

Contact us for more information on the insights and opportunities for workplaces.



The top Four Factors having the most positive impact on women's careers into leadership.

Supportive Managers (48%)

1.

For the second year manager support was the top Factor positively impacting women's careers. The opportunity for workplaces is to ensure that managers - at all levels of the organisation - are aware of the barriers women face, accountable for actively working to provide opportunities for women, and have the skills to have effective conversations with women about their careers.

Flexible Work Arrangements (36%)

2.

Work arrangements that enable women to navigate leadership responsibilities alongside life commitments ranked as the second most impactful Factor. This includes flexible, part-time or hybrid work arrangements. The opportunity for workplaces is to recognise flexible work as a critical tool in recruiting and retaining key talent, and approaching it with this in mind - strategically with clear systems and tools.

Partner Support (36%)

3.

Leadership advancement cannot be separated from family dynamics. Who you marry, have kids or cohabit with, is critical to your career. While workplaces aren't responsible for these individual choices, they can provide greater opportunities for men to actively engage in care-giving and domestic labour through gender-neutral parental leave, extending return-to-work support for all parents, and role-modelling work practices that include leadership and life.

Leadership Development Programs (32%)

4.

Women don't need fixing, the system does. But women still need support within that system. Formal leadership development remained in the top Four Factors® positively impacting women's careers - demonstrating the importance of supporting women at key transition points, and providing practical skills, self-awareness and networks. The opportunity for workplaces is to approach leadership development as part of a broader strategy to support women's careers - rather than a stand alone initiative.

From insights to impact



Work with Dr Amanda Sterling to explore the insights from the 2026 Women in Leadership survey, understand the opportunities in your industry - and workplace - and put the Four Factors for Women® into practice.

Dr Amanda Sterling

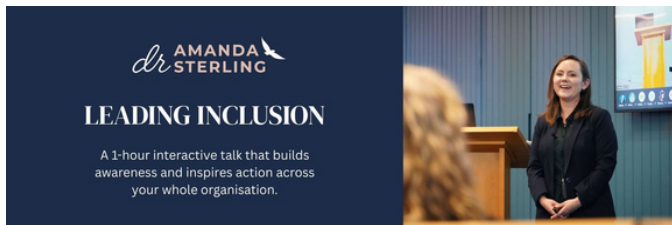
Dr Amanda Sterling is a principal Director and an award-winning consultant who partners with organisations to remove barriers for women into leadership and create inclusive workplaces where people and businesses thrive.

She combines decades of experience in corporate leadership development with groundbreaking PhD research on what actually works to support women's careers into leadership.



Working together

Talks or workshops to take the Women in Leadership survey results from insight to impact.

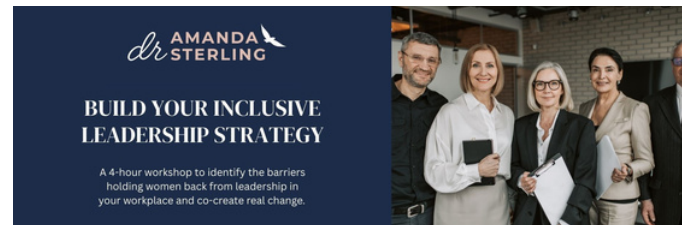


Explore the insights for your industry, link them to critical business outcomes, and build awareness and inspire action around better support for women's careers - especially into leadership roles.

This talk will help your people:

- Understand why diverse leadership is critical for business performance.
- Recognise the challenges women still face advancing into leadership roles and why they persist.
- Learn what the Four Factors for Women® reveals about what actually works to support women's careers.
- Identify the leadership capabilities your organisation needs to create genuinely inclusive teams.

This talk is designed for a broad audience (think your all-hands meetings, employee resource groups, leadership conferences or team development days)



This strategy session helps senior leaders and people and culture professionals identify the specific barriers preventing women from advancing into leadership in your organisation and develop a clear action plan to address them.

What we'll work through in this session:

- Identify your organisation's barriers. Explore where women drop off in your leadership pipeline and what might be driving this.
- Understand what the Four Factors for Women® research reveals about what actually works. Get deeper insights into where you can focus for maximum impact.
- Recognise your personal leadership power. Explore how you currently use your power and how you can create more inclusive teams.
- Build psychological safety. Understand what creates environments where diverse voices are genuinely heard and valued.
- Create your action plan. Leave with clear next steps tailored to your organisation's context and priorities.

Contact Us

Get in touch with Amanda to explore how these insights can be applied in your organisation.



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