

# WHAT WOMEN WANT

Results from Our  
3% Community Survey

## Since 2011, The 3% Conference Has Evolved From a Single Event to a Thriving Community Comprised of Thousands of Women and Men Across The Advertising Industry.

As we move from a campaign focused on raising awareness to a movement committed to activation, we decided to conduct a baseline study of the women in the 3% community.



### The goals of the study were:

- ◆ To measure the “state of affairs” on a series of issues relating to recruitment and retention of female talent.
- ◆ To identify the areas in which 3% can shine a light and add value through specific programs and initiatives.

Ultimately, it boiled down to finding out how women in advertising feel about their careers, what they need to reach the next level, and how 3% and the industry overall can best support them.

In short:

## WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?

## The State of The Union

Here's what we already know.



### There is an abundant supply of talent:

- ◆ The majority of all college degrees – 57% of Bachelor's, 63% of Master's and 53% of Doctorates – are awarded to women<sup>1</sup> and portfolio schools report they are graduating more young women than men.
- ◆ Women account for 46.4% of the advertising industry.<sup>2</sup>

### But women aren't making it to the top:

- ◆ Just 11% of creative directors are female.<sup>3</sup>

### The result is a big miss with consumers:

- ◆ As much as 85% of consumer spending is controlled by women.<sup>4</sup>
- ◆ Yet most women (91%) feel that advertisers "don't understand them."<sup>5</sup>

## What's Working for Women in Advertising?



Many are making good money  
56% have an annual salary of \$100,000 or more



Most are happy at their workplace  
70% would recommend their current agency to a friend



Over three-quarters like their job  
78% say they are satisfied in their current role

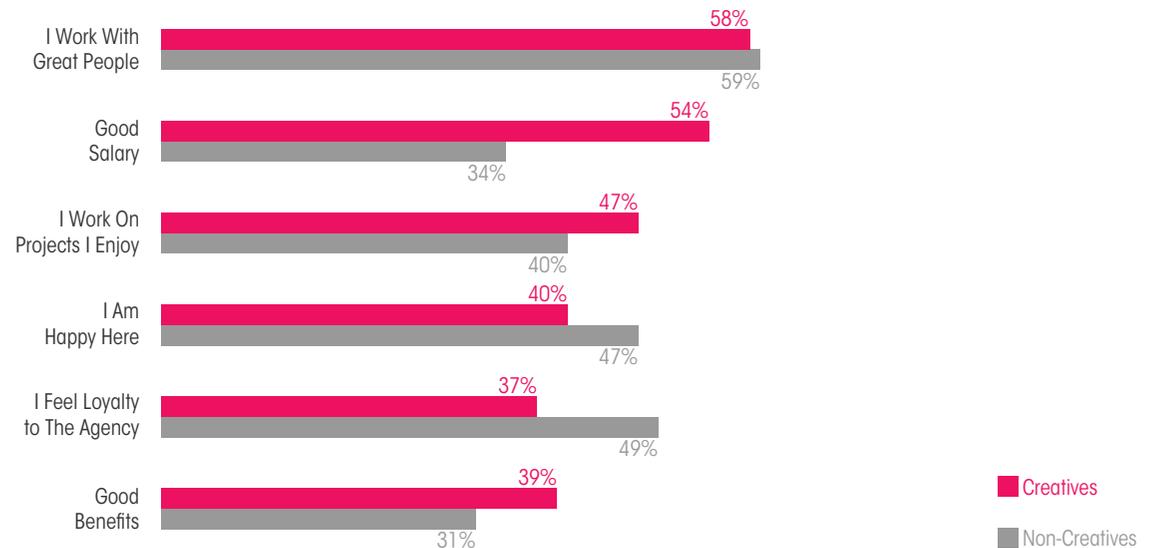


## Why are they staying?

We asked women who had been with their current agency for at least 3 years why they chose to stay:

For creatives it was about **salary, benefits and the quality of the work.**

For those in non-creative roles it was because they feel a sense of **loyalty to the agency.**

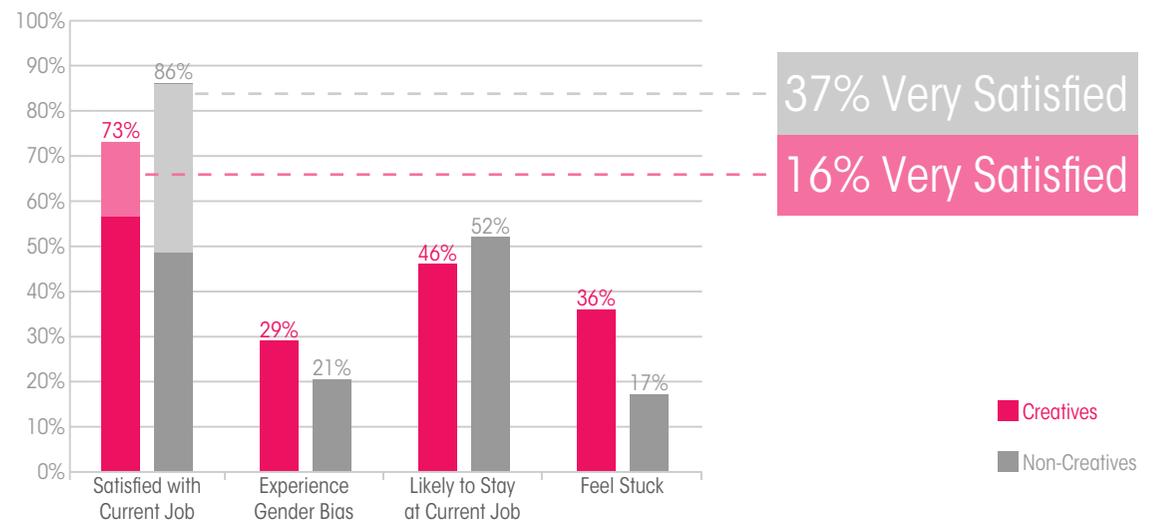


## Creatives are Different

Creative women are less loyal to agencies because they are less satisfied with where they are.

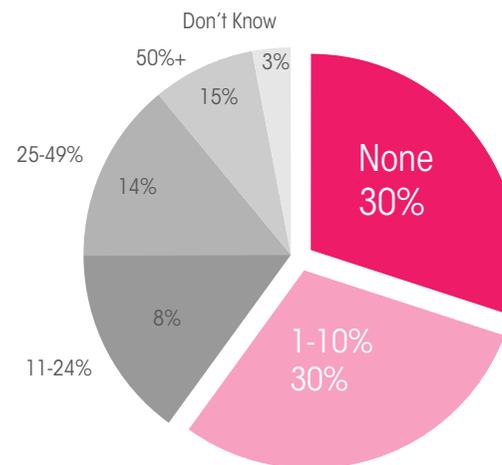
Just 16% of creatives say they are “very satisfied” with their current job; that number is more than double (37%) for those in non-creative roles.

Lower levels of satisfaction may be due to the fact that creative women report greater experience with gender discrimination. Also, creatives are not only less likely to want to stay where they are, but also more likely to say they feel stuck.



## Not-So-New Newsflash: We Need More Women in Creative Leadership

What percentage of the CDs at your workplace are women?



60% say their agency is below  
the industry mark of 11%  
*We know it can be better...*

## So Why Are There So Few Women in Creative Director Roles?

We know from qualitative research and years of collective experience in the industry that the climate for women at many agencies is often unsupportive and can even be outright discriminatory. Our data confirmed this.



### Gender Discrimination:

- ◆ 25% personally experienced

### Sexual Harassment:

- ◆ 23% personally experienced or witnessed

- ◆ Only 8% who experienced it said the responsible party was punished

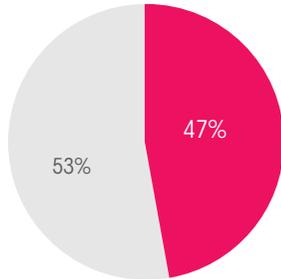
Many of those who have experienced sexual harassment say their perpetrators range from male peers to managers/direct bosses, executive level men, and male clients. The cases in which clients are the responsible party can be particularly challenging for women who do report the incident as they are often encouraged to keep it quiet, giving women the message that the account is more important than their personal safety and security.

### Want more women in leadership?

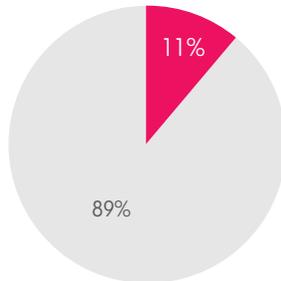
Then the culture of advertising agencies must change.

- Women
- Men

Advertising Industry



Creative Directors



*Where have all the women gone?*

## There's Something Deeper Going On

We know the advertising industry is nearly 50%<sup>6</sup> female and that there is an ample supply of female talent<sup>7</sup> capable of wearing the Creative Director hat. And yet, there are still only 11% of women leading creative efforts. While a number of women report being satisfied in their current roles, many women have simply adjusted to the culture of 60+ hour work weeks, unmanageable project loads, and lack of personal time. Those that refuse to adjust, leave. The result? Deep voids in the pipeline to the top.

If they love the work, they believe they are well paid, and generally enjoy the people they work with, then why are they leaving?

**In our study of 3% women:**

- 38% have children
- 46% of those with children under 18 are the primary breadwinner for their household.

**In the general population:**

- 80% of American women have children<sup>8</sup>
- 48% of American women with children under 18 at home work full-time<sup>9</sup>
- In 40% of households with children under 18, women are the primary breadwinners<sup>10</sup>

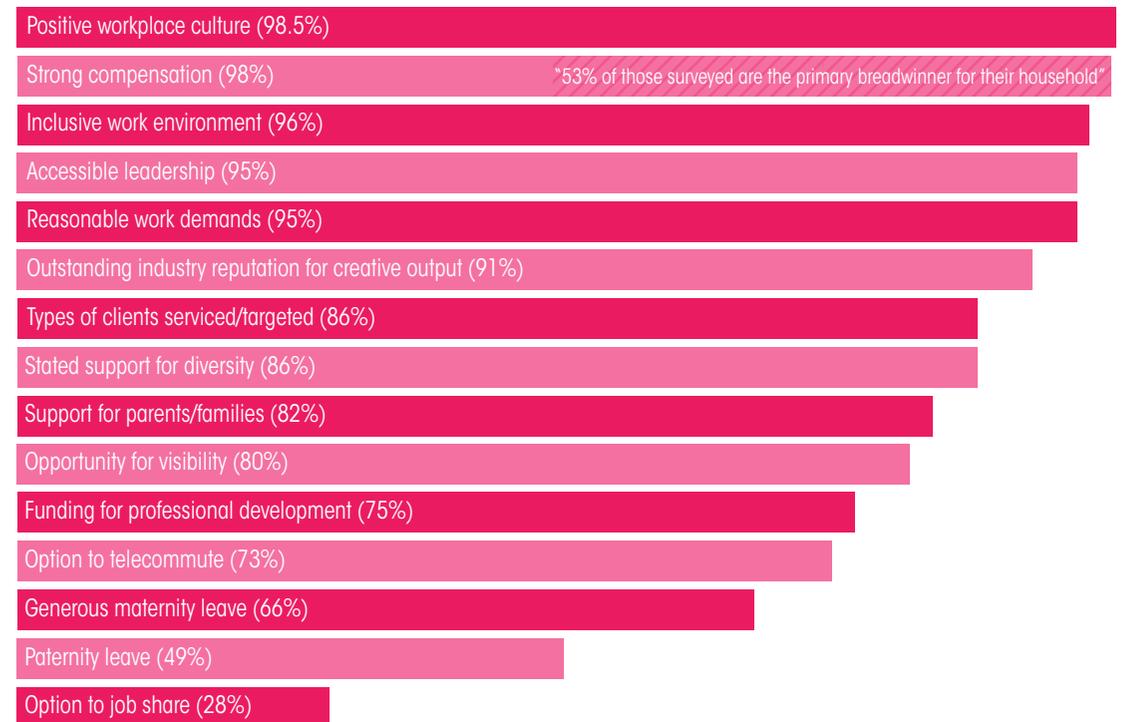
So women in advertising are less likely to have children than other working women and are more likely to be the primary breadwinner.

One hypothesis we at 3% are exploring and are planning to investigate with further research is whether women are being forced out of the advertising industry by the double duty of managing kids and careers.

Agency culture must be reinvented to support women (and men!) who want better work/life integration.

## So How Do We Break Down What Women in Advertising Really Want?

We tackled this question by asking about the importance of several factors in choosing a workplace where women want to stay.



*In an industry where women are forced to choose between advancing their careers and having a family, few prioritize family-friendly HR programs and policies. Why? Perhaps, because those who stay are less likely to have children.*

*What if advertising made itself more family-friendly and could attract and retain all women — not just those who choose not to have children? That would change the entire game.*

## In Her Words

We asked women: what is the ONE THING your agency could do to increase your satisfaction and loyalty?

Honor my work by giving me a better title/salary.

Say, "Thank You".

Provide career plans to all employees so I have a path to work towards instead of feeling like I have to fight for myself.

Balanced workload, fewer OT hours, fewer responsibilities that are outside of my role.

Recognize my accomplishments.

Give me more projects that I can take ownership of.

Pay and promote women based on their skills and experience.

Offer women a place to rise. Currently there is a glass ceiling when it comes to women rising to executive levels.

Trust women more by not assuming that they don't want to present the work.

As a woman and a mom I needed flexibility...you were expected to stay until 7-11pm and you were frowned upon if you left around dinner time. Wish they could realize that they could retain more female talent if they got their thinking out of the dark ages.

Be more supportive of work-life balance.

Give me the promotion I've earned and asked for.

More women in leadership.

Actually admit that there is gender disparity. Most men at agencies can't even recognize that there is unconscious bias in addition to outright sexism... they refuse to acknowledge you might be seeing something they, as men, are not.

Pay me in an equitable way for what I deliver to the agency. I don't make the same as my male counterparts.

Provide flexible time for parents with children.

## What It Really Boils Down To Is The 3Rs: Recognition, Respect, Raise.



### Recognition

Many women say they are not recognized (formally or informally) for the quality of their work, big wins, or even just time put in on a project. They also report frustration with the unwillingness of agency management to acknowledge or face issues such as gender discrimination or sexual harassment. Male allies in agency leadership have an opportunity to make a big impact by celebrating the work of their female creatives and acknowledging the challenges they may be facing.

### Respect

Yes, women want to eradicate gender discrimination and sexual harassment as a way of life in the advertising industry. They also want leadership to celebrate the importance of work-life balance, to not look at family as a distraction or barrier to success, but instead offer support for working families. When women feel respected and supported as a person/mother/caregiver by their agency, they do better work and have a greater sense of loyalty to the agency.

### Raise

This one is pretty straightforward – money is important to women. They want equal pay, reasonable promotions, and salary increases. Several have gone years without a promotion despite glowing performance reviews. Others tell us they have not even received a cost-of-living increase in years.

## Women At The Top Matter

At agencies where women account for 25% or more of creative leadership, the impact on the 3Rs is clear.

Recognition  
72.5%

of women say that the most desirable work is equally distributed between men and women at the agency (**compared to just 47%** of those at agencies with fewer women in leadership). Talent is also more likely to be recognized when there are more women in positions of leadership that can develop female talent through mentorship, etc.

Respect  
82.5%

of women say they have not experienced discrimination at the workplace (**compared to 66%** of those at agencies with fewer women in leadership). Reported discrimination goes down when there are more women in leadership.

Raise  
64.0%

of women at agencies with high percentages of female leadership make over \$100,000 per year, **compared to 54%** of those at agencies with fewer women at the top.

*Just imagine how these numbers would look if 50% of the Creative Directors were women...*

“  
*Oh, I get it!  
The key to having  
more women is  
... having more women.*

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- Kat Gordon  
Founder & CEO  
The 3% Movement

## What Can Agencies Do?



- ◆ It starts with awareness. Unconscious bias exists and even well-intentioned male leadership can fall victim to it. Get trained. Act on the new awareness by calling out bias when you see it.
- ◆ Transparency around pay is key to workplace satisfaction so agencies should conduct a wage audit, equalize pay where necessary, and publicize the results.
- ◆ Evaluate policies and workloads to identify ways in which the agency can be more family-friendly and human-focused.
- ◆ Enforce a No-Tolerance Policy on sexual harassment. Stick to it. The existence of policies is not what creates change — enforcement is.
- ◆ Offer "returnships" to women who have paused their careers to provide care for those they love. Great talent is ready to come back to work.
- ◆ Regularly evaluate your teams, accounts and award show entries to ensure that all employees are given a fair share of high-visibility work opportunity.
- ◆ Include women and people of color in the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring process.
- ◆ Take at least one microaction each day. To get started, download our [\*\*100 Things You Can Do Right Now To Help Drive the 3% Number Upward.\*\*](#)

## What Can 3% Do?

After analyzing the data from the 3% community survey, compiling qualitative insights gleaned by our founder, Kat Gordon and her team over the past 5 years, and evaluating agency capabilities and roadblocks, we are introducing exciting new initiatives set to kick-off in 2016. These include:



- ◆ **Launch of 3% Certified.** This independent auditing system will support agencies in their effort to retain and promote women into leadership. The auditing process will utilize our proprietary FORE™ algorithm to analyze agency data and will evaluate agencies on several criteria within 3 key areas:
  - Female Leadership
  - Workplace Equality & Culture
  - Equal Creative Opportunity
  
- ◆ **Create The 3% Club.** Our exclusive member-only platform will include:
  - Webinars & e-courses
  - Portfolio reviews
  - One-to-one mentoring
  - Networking opportunities
  - Strategic insights with thought leaders
  - Job postings
  
- ◆ **Deliver the Best Conference Ever!** Scheduled for November 3-4 in New York City, our revamped themed-track conference format will offer attendees more opportunities for:
  - Focused learning via master classes from industry legends
  - Professional development
  - Powerful, motivating, and inspirational keynotes
  - Networking with 1,000 of the industry's most dedicated, forward-thinking people

*We vow to continue to partner with our community and agencies so that together we can disrupt the industry and... change the ratio.*

## In Partnership With You...



Since its founding, The 3% Movement has been dedicated to supporting female creative talent and the agencies in which they work in order to support greater creativity and profitability through diversity. We are taking that commitment to a new level in our 5th year. As we roll out each of our new initiatives, we will count on you – our community – to tell us what you think and what more you need from us.

If you'd like to give us feedback on the research covered in this paper or if you have a brilliant idea for a topic we should study in the future, please let us know! Send your thoughts and suggestions to our Chief Knowledge Officer, Erin St. Onge-Carpenter at: [erincarpenter@3percentconf.com](mailto:erincarpenter@3percentconf.com)

*"We, at 3%, are committed to your excellence."*

- Kat Gordon  
Founder & CEO  
The 3% Movement

# Onward!

## Methodology

The survey was conducted online over a 2-week period in September 2015.

1. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2012.
2. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Table 18: Employed persons by detailed industry, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity; Advertising, public relations and related industries, 2014.
3. 3% Conference, "Female CDs on the Rise," 2014.
4. She-conomy, Marketing to Women Conference, Chicago, 2012.
5. She-conomy, "Marketing to Women Quick Facts," 2012.
6. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
7. We know this anecdotally from multiple sources over 20+ years in the industry. Additionally we know that 11% of CDs are women and yet women comprise nearly half of the industry (according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics).
8. U.S. Census, 2010 Fertility Data.
9. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Statistics, 2013.
10. Pew Research Center, "Pew Social Trends" reports that in 40% of all U.S. households with children under age 18, the mother is the primary or sole breadwinner. Analysis based on Census data from 1960-2000 and American Community Survey data 2010-2014.

A majority (60%) of respondents fell between the ages of 35 and 54 (Generation X), a third were under age 35 (Millennials), and just 7% were age 55 or over (Baby Boomers).

Survey participants were recruited via email (to the 3% newsletter mailing list) and via social media. This study was aimed at understanding the needs and priorities of women who work for agencies in either creative or non-creative roles. A total of 328 women completed the survey.

