

Report

Systematic Efforts to Promote Development and Appointment of Women Managers

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Abstract

Promoting active participation of women is an important management issue. Since the implementation of the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace in September 2015, there have been increasing opportunities to tackle the issue. Two main issues in promoting active participation of women: (1) continued employment and (2) skill performance and career development. Companies have an increasing number of female employees who continue to work by utilizing programs that support work-family balance. For these companies, the next challenge is to promote women's skill performance and career development, especially, the development and appointment of women managers. The lack of female managers is sometimes attributed to issues on women's side, including issues with skills and attitudes toward work. However, women's skill development and willingness to move up the professional ranks are significantly affected by traditional employment management methods, as well as by the way in which tasks are assigned by superiors. This traditional approach is based on assumptions of full-time work, overtime, and men playing the central role. To increase the number of women managers, it is ideal to make systematic efforts that accelerate the trend of promoting women's active participation by providing them with various opportunities and to aim at organizational improvement by continuously offering a workplace where both men and women can perform to their full potential. Promoting active participation of women has long been a subject of debate in corporate management, and the issue requires a prompt response. Companies must swiftly take effective measures according to the challenges they face and develop the leaders that their future will depend on.

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The original report is available at https://www.murc.jp/report/rc/journal/quarterly/2017_04/.

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1. Introduction

Women's active participation is a core theme of Japan's growth strategy. The Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace (hereinafter, the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation), which was implemented in September 2015, requires that companies with more than 300 employees (1) understand the situation involving women's active participation and analyze relevant issues, (2) prepare, submit, and announce (both internally and externally) an action plan that includes both numerical goals consistent with addressing these issues and measures for achieving the goals, and (3) make information on women's active participation publicly available.

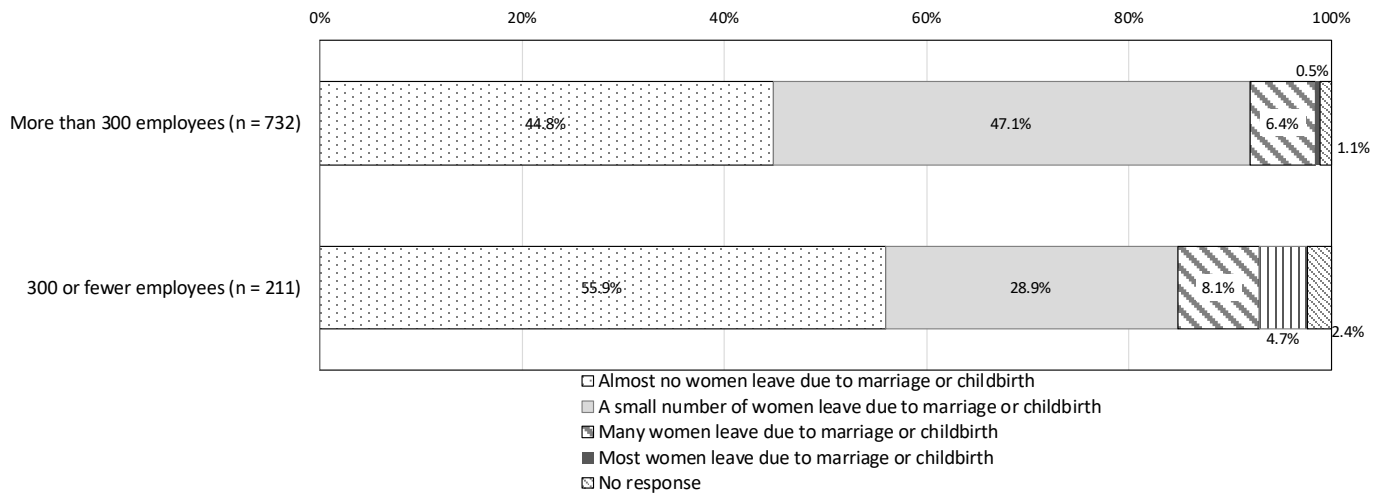
The law requires companies with 300 or fewer employees to "make efforts" to take these actions. However, regardless of size, companies seem to take women's active participation as an important management issue, as evidenced by the fact that, as of August 31, 2017, among 389 companies that were certified as Eruboshi certified company¹(a category of a certification system created based on the law), 55 were companies with 300 or fewer employees.

Two main issues involving women's active participation are (1) continued employment and (2) skill performance and career development. Japan has faced rapid population aging, and markets and workers' values in the country are becoming more diverse. In order to continue business operations such an environment, companies must shift away from traditional management, which assumes a male-centric workplace and full-time and overtime work, to a type of management that promotes female employment and accelerates measures that enable women to perform to their full potential.

As companies have established systems that help employees maintain work-family and work-life balance, an increasing number of women have chosen to continue working after marriage or childbirth. The Report on the Survey on Women's Active Participation (Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting, 2015) shows the extent to which female regular employees leave their jobs because of marriage or childbirth (Figure 1). According the report, a relatively high proportion of companies reported that almost no women leave due to marriage or childbirth, or that a small number of women do so.

Another issue faced by companies with an increasing number of women who continue to work is their skill performance and career development. This paper focuses on the development and appointment of women managers, which is one of the most important aspects of women's skill performance and career development, and examines measures that enable more women to unleash their skills and natural talents and play active roles as leaders.

Figure 1: Extent to which female regular employees leave their jobs because of marriage or childbirth (single response)



Source: Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting. FY 2015 Report on the Survey on Women's Active Participation. (Commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

2. Reasons for the Lack of Women Managers

Currently, the proportions of women in positions at the levels of section head, department head, and division head are 18.6 percent, 10.3 percent, and 6.6 percent, respectively, and the long-term trend is upward.² However, the proportion of women in management positions in Japan is 13.0 percent, which is lower than the 30 to 40 percent in other countries.³

Why is the proportion of women in management positions low in Japan? According to a result from the Basic Survey of Gender Equality in Employment Management for FY 2013 conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, companies reported that the top reasons why no women or a small number of women were in management was that they currently do not have female employees with the necessary knowledge, experience, or decision-making skills (47.7 percent) and that they do not have female employees who seek management positions (22.6 percent). These results suggest that companies attribute a lack of women managers mainly to the level of women's skills or desire for promotion.

In the Results of the Survey on Careers and Work-Family Balance of Male and Female Regular Employees (The Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training, 2013), data are provided on workers' desire for promotion to management positions (Figure 2). According to the data, the proportion of female general employees who want to be promoted to department head or higher is less than the proportion of male general employees with the same interest in promotion. Compared with this result, the proportion of section heads who want to be promoted to department head or higher is higher for both men and women; however, the gap between the two genders is not smaller.

Table 1: Non-managers' desire to be promoted to department head or higher

	Male			Female		
	General employees	Section head	No response	General employees	Section head	No response
300 or more employees						
Fine with non-management position	25.7%	11.0%	25.0%	68.9%	23.3%	42.9%
Section head	13.9%	16.9%	-	19.7%	46.6%	28.6%
Department head	23.3%	30.2%	-	7.9%	23.4%	14.3%
Division head	20.5%	27.5%	50.0%	1.9%	4.7%	-
Executive or higher	16.0%	13.3%	-	1.0%	1.3%	14.3%
Department head or higher	59.8%	71.0%	50.0%	10.9%	29.4%	28.6%
No response	0.6%	1.1%	25.0%	0.4%	0.8%	-
Total	(1,508)	(1,652)	(4)	(2,238)	(932)	(7)
100 to 299 employees						
Fine with non-management position	31.6%	14.9%	-	74.7%	25.6%	57.1%
Section head	15.0%	19.7%	-	17.8%	46.0%	14.3%
Department head	19.7%	26.9%	-	5.3%	22.0%	-
Division head	19.3%	22.9%	-	1.2%	5.1%	-
Executive or higher	13.3%	15.3%	100.0%	0.5%	0.6%	14.3%
Department head or higher	52.3%	65.0%	100.0%	7.1%	27.8%	14.3%
No response	1.2%	0.4%	-	0.4%	0.6%	14.3%
Total	(865)	(1,054)	(1)	(1,388)	(472)	(7)

Note: The percentage for "department head or higher " is the sum of the percentages for "department head," "division head," and "executive or higher."

Source: The Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training. (2013). Results of the Survey on Careers and Work-Family Balance of Male and Female Regular Employees.

For a long time, human resource development at Japanese companies has been based on the accumulation of employees' work experience within an organization. A company typically has an employee experience a wide range of positions for about 15 years after he or she starts working at the company and judges whether the employee is suitable for a management position. Also, it has been assumed that such a career track requires full-time and overtime work. Therefore, for women to become management candidates in spite of life events such as childbirth and childrearing, they have had to meet the condition of continuing to work full-time and overtime over a long period, even before their skills and natural talents are taken into account.

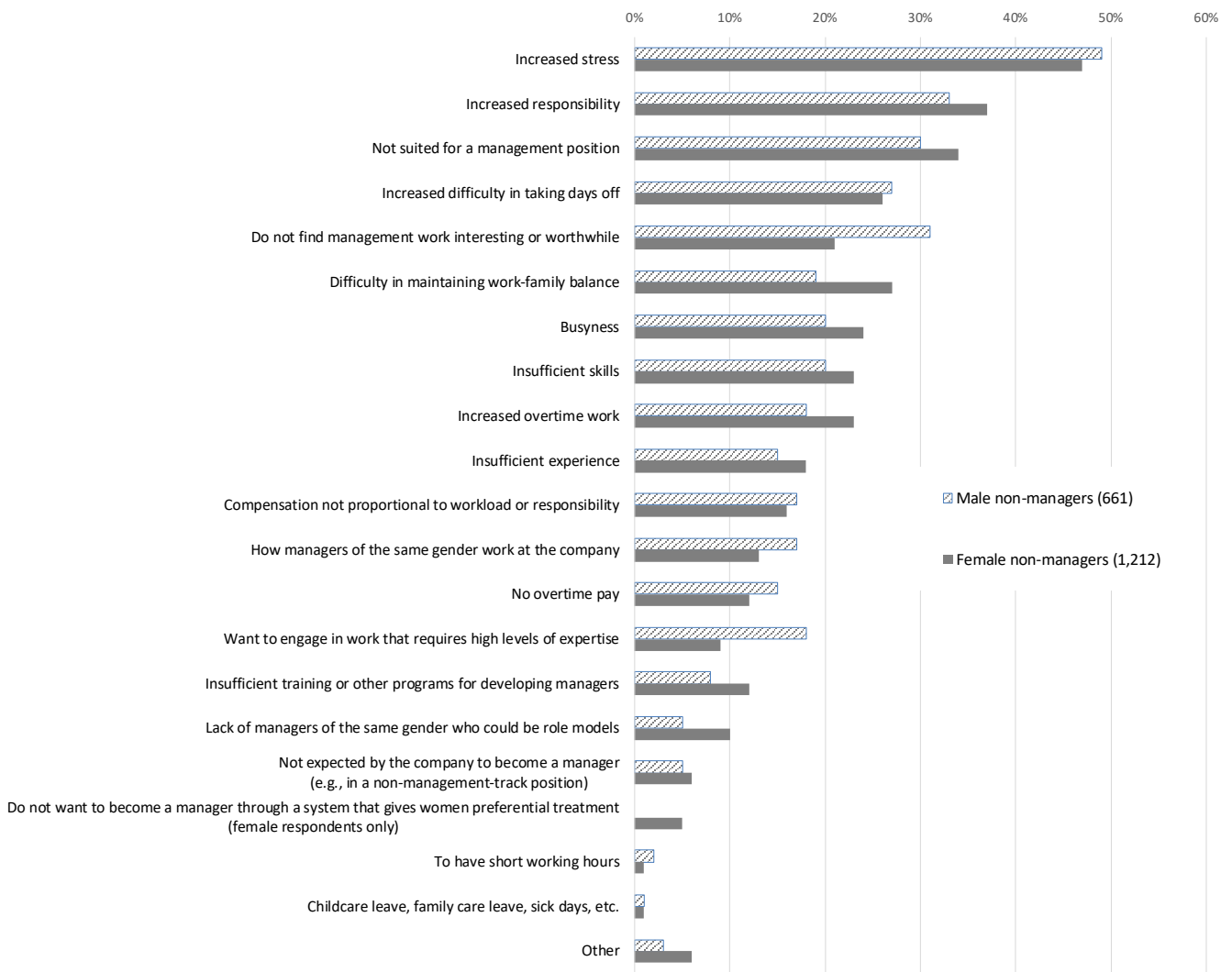
Gender gaps still remain at companies in terms of personnel assignment and human resource development. While men are assigned to various divisions and can gain a wide range of professional experience related to the core of the company's business model, women's divisional assignment is limited and biased.⁴ Even if women are in the same position at the same division as men, women tend to spend a number of years as operational employees in limited areas, whereas men are gradually assigned to management-related tasks, starting with business data management and assistance for superiors.

The gender gaps in employment management described above are typical examples of statistical discrimination. In this type of discrimination, superiors or companies consider, regardless of individual employees' skills and motivation, that providing women with the same training opportunities that men receive tends to be wasteful because women are more likely than men to quit their jobs, and put limits on women's divisional assignment and training.

If companies do not offer, without gender discrimination, work experience and training opportunities that lead to long-term career prospects, it is difficult for women to gain satisfaction from their work. In such a situation, the occurrence of a life event, such as childbirth and childrearing, women might waver in their resolve to continue working, rather than pursue their career prospects. Career-oriented women would quickly abandon companies with few opportunities to utilize their skills and natural talents because they see their positions as dead-end jobs with no long-term career prospects, and would move to other companies where they can expand their possibilities.

According to a survey conducted by Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting (2014), high proportions of both men and women point to increased stress and increased responsibility as reasons for not wanting promotion to management positions (Figure 2). One characteristic of women's responses is that women are particularly more likely than men to point to the difficulty in maintaining work-family balance.

Figure 2: Non-managers' reasons for not wanting promotion to management positions (multiple responses allowed)



Source: Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting. (2014). Survey on Female Managers: Training and Appointment.

Women may consider that the way in which managers work makes it difficult to maintain work-life balance. The difficulty, however, is not limited to women. Both women and men over 40 years old face the possibility of needing to maintain balance between work and family caregiving or treatment of a disease. Although not addressed by the survey, unless there are changes in how managers work, more men will be reluctant to be promoted to or remain in management positions because of problems involving work-family balance.

It is true that there are currently fewer women than men who become management candidates. Maintaining motivation for work and improving skills is not easy for women in an environment where childbirth, childrearing, or another life event can easily put constraints on their work. An examination of reasons why women face difficulties

in improving skills necessary to become management candidates or becoming willing to be promoted shows that their attitudes are not the only problem.

3. Systematic Efforts to Promote the Development and Appointment of Women Managers

What kinds of measures should be taken in order to change the situation that is hindering women's active participation, to make improvements, and to promote the development and appointment of women managers?

Many action plans that companies prepare as required by the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation set numerical goals (e.g., increasing the number of women managers twofold in five years or increasing the proportion of women managers to 7 percent or more) and specific measures (e.g., organizing career seminars for women).⁵ These plans reflect companies' intention to actively provide opportunities to women and increase the number of women managers in a short period of time in accordance with the government goal of increasing the proportion of women in leadership positions to at least 30 percent by 2020 in various areas of society.

A company's measures to actively provide opportunities to women can easily have an impact on workers at the company and tend to produce positive short-term results. However, since such measures target only women, some might object that these measures are implemented just to comply with the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation, and others might complain that training needs are not limited to women and question why men are not targeted by these measures. Also, it should be noted that measures to actively provide opportunities to women are temporary measures that are in place until gender inequality is effectively eliminated, but that obtaining expected results may be difficult if these measures are not properly administered according to the company's human resource strategies and policy on women's active participation.

Companies should make systematic efforts in order to change the situation that is hindering women's active participation, make improvements, and ultimately realize a workplace where various workers, be they male or female, can continuously perform to their full potential. Such efforts should achieve organizational improvement by accelerating women's active participation through various opportunities provided to them and by continuously offering a workplace where both men and women can play active roles.

3.1 Efforts to Actively Provide Opportunities to Women

There are various ways to actively provide opportunities to women: (1) creating a goal or plan to promote women's active participation (based on the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation); (2) soliciting women for job application in hiring new graduates and mid-career workers (for example, through corporate public relations to attract women and efforts to increase the number of women pursuing studies in science, engineering, civil engineering, architecture, etc.); (3) supporting women's training and careers (through training sessions for women, mentoring or role model programs, creation of an in-house network of women, etc.). This section discusses measures to support women's training and careers, on which the author is often asked for advice in her consultation work.

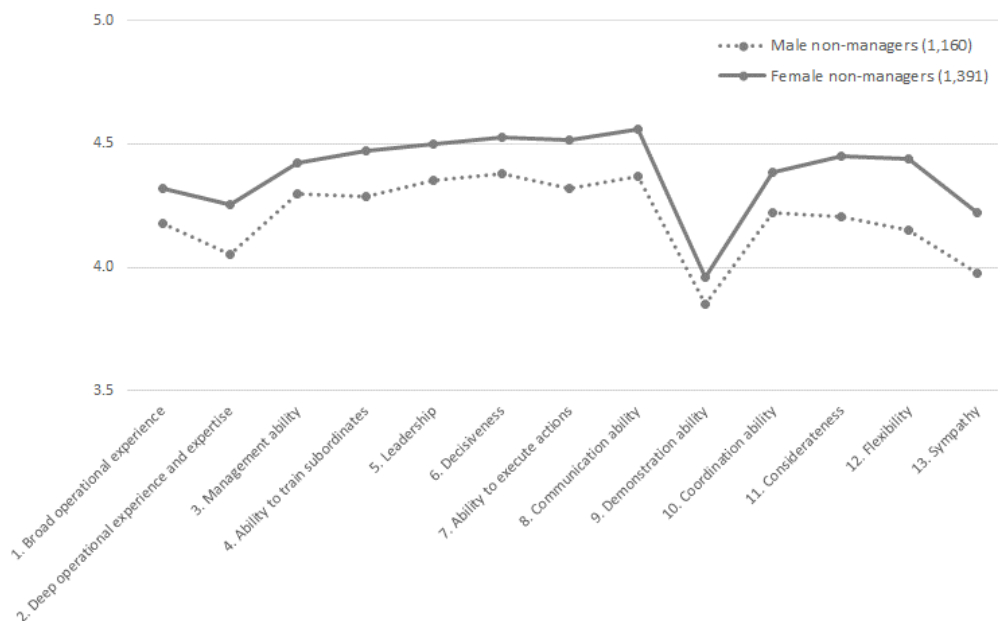
In asking for advice on supporting women's training and careers, human resources officers express their concern that women often decline a recommendation to take a management promotion examination because of

their lack of confidence, or request consultants to organize training sessions that would motivate women to seek promotion to management positions.

In general, women who are close to management positions have long worked in an environment that has hindered women from becoming managers and tend to think that, compared with men, they have gained less experience that would expand skills and possibilities. While some women positively respond to the offering of training sessions for developing women managers, others have a negative opinion that it is too late for them. Supporting human resource development requires not only the efforts of the support provider, but also the efforts and willingness to participate of the support recipient. It is therefore important for companies to listen to women's concerns about their skills and management promotion, implement training programs that meet their needs, and demonstrate to them the significance of participating in such programs.

The aforementioned survey conducted by Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting (2014) asks the respondents to evaluate the necessity of attributes for managers (Figure 3.1) and to evaluate their own attributes (Figure 3.2) on a scale of one to five. The most notable characteristic of women's responses is the large gap between the level they considered necessary for managers and their self-evaluation for a given attribute for three attributes: management ability, ability to train subordinates, and leadership.

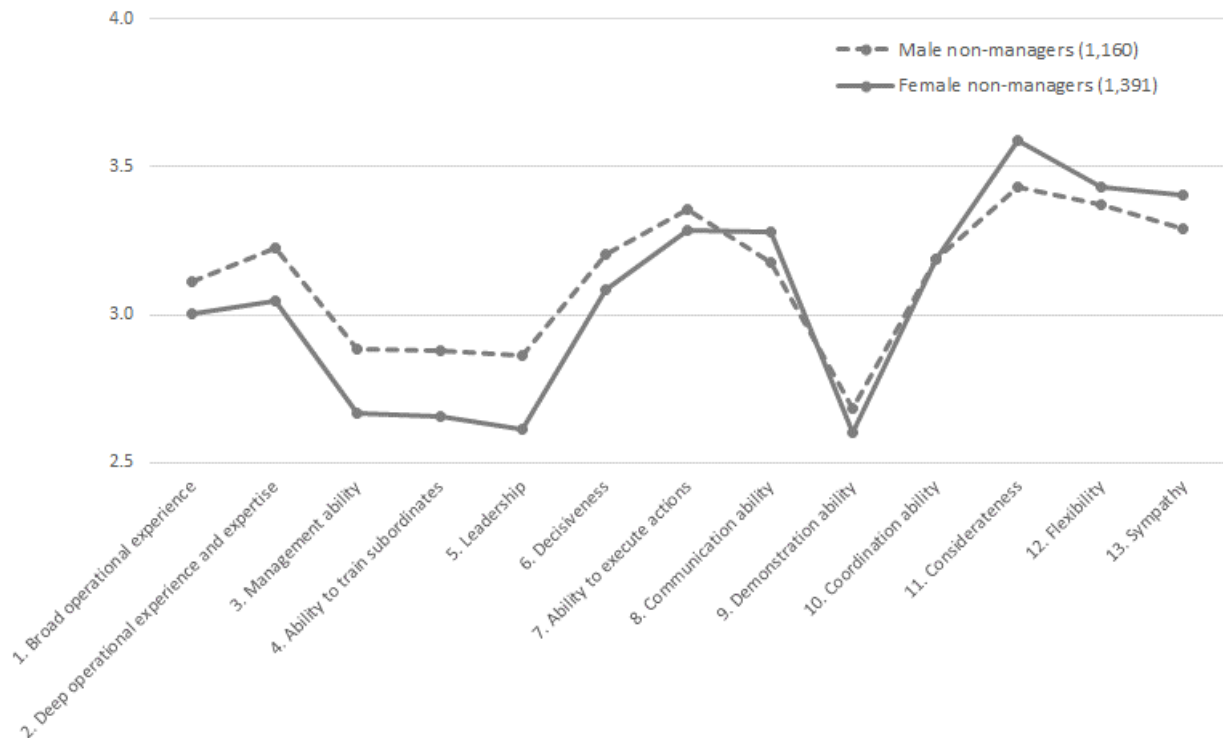
Figure 3.1: Attributes necessary for management positions according to non-managers (average score)



Note: The score is a weighted average based on the responses to each attribute: "necessary" (5 points); "somewhat necessary" (4 points); "don't know" (3 points); "somewhat unnecessary"

Source: Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting. (2014). Survey on Female Managers: Training and Appointment.

Figure 3.2: Non-managers' self evaluation of attributes (average score)



Note: The score is a weighted average based on the responses to each attribute: "high ability" (5 points); "somewhat high ability" (4 points); "don't know" (3 points); "somewhat low ability" (2 points)

Source: Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting. (2014). Survey on Female Managers: Training and Appointment.

In supporting women's training and careers, it is important to take measures that change the traditional workplace environment, where women have had fewer opportunities than men have had to be trained as management candidates, and that give women confidence in their skills.

For example, for women management candidates, the author organizes action learning seminars that provide opportunities to exercise leadership in identifying and solving workplace issues and managing projects. Such opportunities have been difficult to gain through on-the-job training.

The female participants are those who are close to management positions, have substantial skills and experience as operational employees, are considerate to superiors and junior colleagues, and are willing to contribute to the workplace. Seeing things only through operational employees' perspective, workers can conceptualize only situations surrounding their tasks in identifying issues and therefore can only devise measures as an extension of their daily work. For this reason, their on-the-job experience is not sufficient for gaining the skills and experience necessary for management candidates.

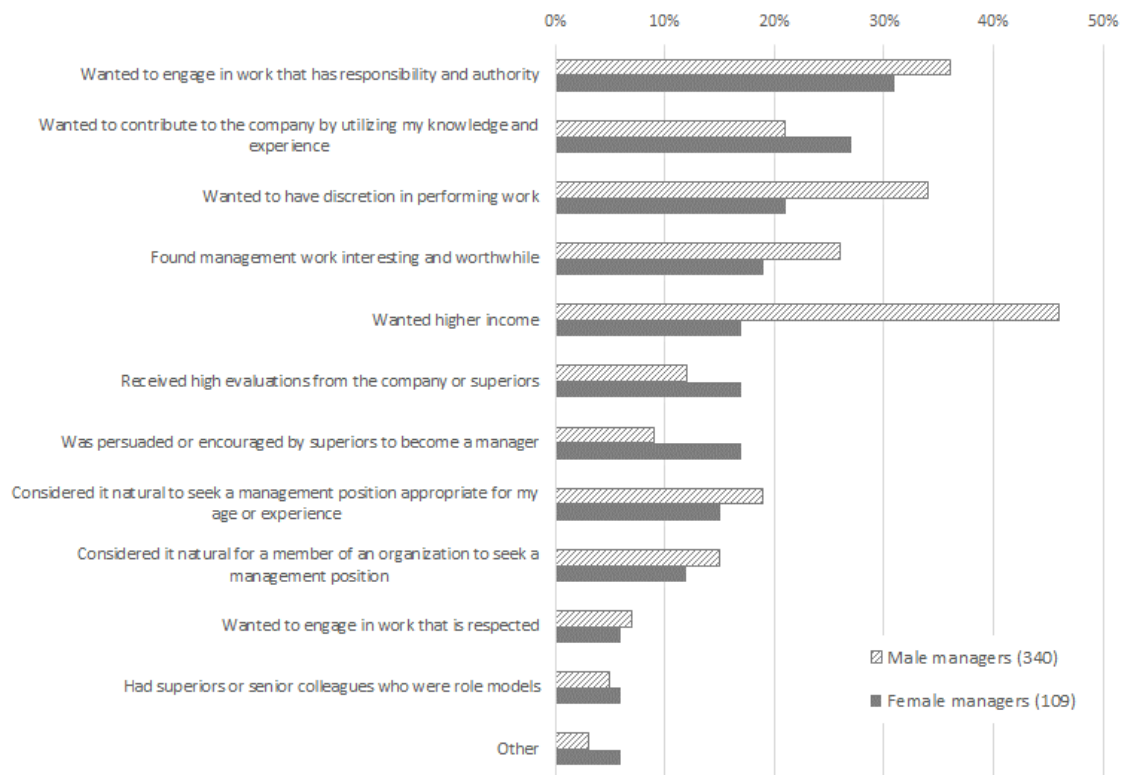
The author therefore reminds the seminar participants, in lectures or individual follow-up sessions, to identify issues by shifting focus from their assigned work to the operation of their division and solve issues not by tackling them alone, but by involving others including superiors.

If the task is simple problem solving, the female seminar participants, who have substantial know-how and experience, can perform it more quickly than their junior colleagues. In fact, seminar participants occasionally mention inefficiency and inconvenience in passing tasks to junior colleagues. However, by overcoming such

disadvantages and thoroughly playing the role of leaders, female participants gain skills necessary for management positions, which leads to their increased confidence.

The survey also asked male and female managers why they decided to seek a management position (Figure 4). The result shows that women are more likely than men to point to wanting to contribute to the company by utilizing their knowledge and experience, receiving high evaluations from the company or superiors, and being persuaded or encouraged by superiors to become a manager. It seems that women are more likely than men to become motivated for promotion if their work is highly evaluated by superiors or the company in a concrete manner or if they are expected by superiors or the company to become managers.

Figure 4: Managers' reasons for seeking a management position (multiple responses allowed)



Source: Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting. (2014). Survey on Female Managers: Training and Appointment.

In organizing seminars for women management candidates, the author invites their superiors to participate. One reason is that superiors are a key to increasing women's willingness to be promoted. Another reason is that superiors often have concerns because they lack experience in training women to become managers. The important goals of the seminars therefore include not only deepening superiors' understanding about factors that have hindered women from becoming managers through lectures and group discussions, but also improving the abilities of superiors (as managers) in human resource development through exercises in which they support the professional growth of female subordinates.

3.2 Creating a Workplace Where Both Men and Women Can Perform to Their Full Potential

By offering not only career design seminars and action learning seminars, but also positive opportunities for women (e.g., active hiring of women managers from outside the company), companies can increase the number of women managers in the short run and can create further movement within their organization to promote women's active participation.

Many current women management candidates may be those who have been able to work full-time and overtime regardless of whether or not they have children. If most of the women appointed to management positions have worked in such a manner, other women following their footsteps may consider them to be special cases. This would make it difficult to sustain an increase in the number of women managers.

Companies will have to aim at not simply increasing the number of women managers, but developing and appointing women managers based on employment management that enables women to continue working, perform to their full potential, and develop their careers. This goal requires the creation of a human resource pipeline that continuously produces management-caliber female workers. Through such a pipeline, both men and women at each occupational rank are trained without gender distinction, and high-potential workers are then appointed to higher positions. An important factor in this process is the creation of a workplace where both men and women can perform to their full potential.

There are three key elements in creating such a workplace: (1) various ways of working and taking leave in accordance with life events, (2) work reform that increases productivity per unit of time, and (3) professional experience and superiors' actions that promote employees' personal growth. Needless to say, various types of harassment must be prevented.

3.2.1 Various Ways of Working and Taking Leave in Accordance with Life Events

Many companies have introduced and developed programs that support work-family balance. There are also companies, mainly large ones, that have further expanded such programs. However, both companies and employees will have to pay attention to utilization of the program, not expansion of the program.

The ability to flexibly choose from various ways of working and taking leave according to life events helps employees to continue working. However, with the utilization of programs (e.g., working short hours for childrearing) for longer periods, program users gain less professional experience and training opportunities than full-time employees. Such disadvantages affect program users' career development.

Women's work is more likely to be affected by childbirth, childrearing, and other life events than men's work. Oftentimes, women have no choice but to maintain work-family balance. It is crucial for companies to (1) provide program users and their superiors with training for returning to work after childcare leave and training for supporting subordinates' return to work, respectively, so that employees can wisely utilize a support program, focus on work-family balance, and perform to their full potential even during the period when their working hours are constrained and (2) encourage dialogue between program users and their superiors regarding intended future program use and details of work.

Another issue is that as the number of program users increases, the resulting burden on full-time employees can become excessive. Consequently, some short-hour employees may have concerns about returning to full-time work or may become distressed as they are unable to gain the understanding of colleagues regarding their use of a support program. To eliminate such situations and facilitate employees' use a support program as deemed necessary, companies need to consider work reform that increases productivity per unit of time.

3.2.2 Work Style Reform That Increases Productivity per Unit of Time

Traditional corporate management has required regular employees to work full-time and overtime and has centered on male employees who can continuously handle this way of working. Despite daily overtime work, these employees have kept spending a substantial amount of time, as if an unlimited amount of time existed, to handle large quantities of work rather than improving operational efficiency or solving the issue of excessive product quality.

As workers' circumstances and values have diversified, a growing number of employees, be they male or female, have juggled work with childrearing, family caregiving, or self-improvement. Also, given that the negative health effects of working long hours have become issues, there must be a shift in the assumption of work and time management from employees having to work full-time and overtime to employees not having to work overtime.

Work and time management that is based on the assumption that employees do not have to work overtime is aimed not at increasing the total amount of work performed, but at generating maximum value added for a given amount of time. To achieve this goal, it is important for employees to share necessary operational information with others in the workplace and perform work while taking the priorities of tasks and time management into consideration.

When providing consultations on work style reform, the author recommends that companies utilize scheduling software that is already installed at the companies as a way to efficiently share operational schedules. Each division is advised to set a method for entering schedules and identifying events (e.g., meetings, appointments with representatives from external organizations, and work plans) for specific tasks. In addition, employees are asked to learn time management techniques, be aware of time available in a day, a week, and a month, and plan tasks backwards, starting from goals to be achieved at the end of a work day or various deadlines.

In the case of telecommuting, employees can share the status of their work progress (along with information on hours worked, tasks performed, etc.) with their superiors and colleagues as they would at the workplace. Also,

utilization of the telephone and Internet-based communication services enables telecommuters to participate in meetings from home and therefore mitigates the potential lack of communication associated with telecommuting.

To sustain work style reform measures as opposed to briefly implementing them, the employee evaluation system must reward ways of working that increase productivity per unit of time. Even if there is no issue with evaluation standards themselves, evaluators who consider longer working hours as a greater contribution to the company would give low ratings to time-constrained employees, regardless of the quality or results of their work, for the unfair reason that they work short hours. Work reform would end up being a temporary action if employees who can contribute to the process of producing good results with a small input of resources are not properly evaluated and compensated.

The term work style reform might invoke an image of large-scale measures. However, small-scale measures, if continued, can realize work-life balance for all employees, including those in management positions, and encourage women to continue working. Companies where women still tend to leave because of childbirth or childrearing should engage in work style reform before expanding programs for supporting work-family balance.

3.2.3 Professional Experience and Superiors' Actions That Promote Employees' Personal Growth

Issues involving training women to become management candidates include those related to employment management (e.g., broadening the scope of women's jobs) and those related to on-the-job training (e.g., assignment of tasks and roles by superiors).

Many companies have reexamined their employment management systems for different career tracks as a measure to broaden the scope of women's jobs. Some companies have abolished the career-track system. However, even if companies retain the system, they often expand the roles that fixed-region management-track employees and clerical-track employees are expected play, broaden the scope of their jobs, and make it possible for them to be promoted to management positions.

Companies with regional branches may require managerial-track employees to relocate. Since it is often difficult for married women to relocate, they may hesitate to shift from the clerical track to the management track even if they have necessary skills and abilities. If employees' inability to relocate prevents them from growing professionally and performing to their full potential, companies cannot effectively utilize their human resources. Also, as the number of two-income households and the number of workers who face the issue of maintaining balance between work and family caregiving have increased, there have been cases in which not only women but also men are reluctant to relocate.

An increase in the number of employees who cannot relocate makes it difficult for companies with branches in distant regions to open more branches, secure necessary personnel, and effectively perform organizational management. However, if companies expand operational fields in which fixed-region management-track employees and clerical-track employees can play active roles, employees with various personal and family backgrounds can work at the current location, and their contribution and loyalty to their company may increase.

Broadening the scope of women's jobs often involves the issue of whether or not they can relocate. Issues related to relocation policies cannot be solved immediately. However, as workers' values have diversified, the time has come for companies to examine how to handle employee relocation in the future from the standpoint of employee retention and employees' active participation.

In on-the-job training, superiors' discretion plays a significant role. If superiors assign tasks based on the idea of gendered division of labor, women will have fewer opportunities to exercise leadership and perform work. As discussed above, women's desire for promotion is more likely than men's to be influenced by superiors' or the company's expectations or approval. In order to provide comprehensive on-the-job training to both men and women, top management must present policy on women's active participation and provide managers with guidelines so that they can assign tasks and roles to men and women according to their individual abilities without gender distinctions and check the status of each employee's professional development as deemed necessary.

The author previously conducted interviews with women executives and managers about their career history. What was remarkable was the impact of their superiors on their continued employment and career development.

These women started working around the time when the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was implemented; however, women at that time had difficulty actively working while experiencing life events. The interviewed women said that they had planned to quit their jobs after getting married. However, because of the way in which their superiors assigned daily tasks and provided opportunities to work on challenging tasks, they became interested in their work, recognized their contribution to the company, and started to want to continue working even after marriage or childbirth.

The women talked about things they learned from their superiors and about their superiors' encouragement to tackle challenging tasks. One woman said that she was thankful to her supervisor because even though she had gotten frustrated at his repeated orders to rewrite a single-page document, she had learned how to convey her main points in writing in a short amount of time. Another woman said that when she had become a skilled operational employee her supervisor had recommended her to take a promotion examination, saying, "There is a limit to what one person can do, and it's time for you to take on bigger jobs by leading subordinates."

As the above episodes imply, superiors' actions play an important role in women's continued employment and career development. The interviews revealed another fact: The women did not passively accept the daily tasks assigned or opportunities provided by their superiors, but instead actively contemplated the significance of the tasks and opportunities, devised ways to meet expectations, and put ideas into action.

In discussions on developing women managers, many women raise the concern that they do not know how to approach their career design since they do not have role models. But, does the absence of role models really make it difficult for women to examine their own careers? Every woman has different values and a different life background. Even if women follow the footsteps of successful forerunners, they do not necessarily obtain the same results.

Women can build careers that suit them by being aware of a wide range of issues, actively learning from others around them and from daily tasks, and internalizing the lessons learned. This way of building a career is probably better than one that is based on searching for and following preeminent role models. Managers supervising female subordinates who have concerns about their future careers and future promotion to management positions should provide them with advice and follow-up consultation while keeping in mind the relevant issues discussed above.

4. Conclusion

This paper argues that the lack of female managers is attributable not only to women's attitudes toward work, but also largely to employment management methods that are based on the idea of full-time work, overtime, and men playing the central role and to the way in which tasks and responsibility are assigned by superiors. These factors are the product of long-lasting organizational culture and affect workers' views on employment. Therefore, it is not easy to immediately resolve relevant issues and create an environment where women can become managers without facing unnecessary obstacles.

As the number of two-income households have increased along with the likelihood of facing the issue of maintaining balance between work and family caregiving, even men are becoming no longer able to spend as much time and energy at work as they used to. Making efforts to promote women's active participation and develop and appoint women managers would produce a workplace where both women and men can easily continue working and gain satisfaction from their work.

Different companies have different issues involving women's active participation and the development and appointment of women managers. However, listing excuses and doing nothing would make it difficult for companies to secure human resources that contribute to their value creation.

The issues of promoting women's active participation and developing and appointing women managers require prompt action by management. Companies must swiftly produce substantial results by accelerating women's active participation through various opportunities provided to them and by changing their organization into one where both men and women can perform to their full potential.

The author hopes that the content of this paper will be helpful in creating organizations that promote the development and appointment of women managers and enable every employee to play an active role.

Endnotes

1. Companies that prepared and submitted their action plans and are successfully promoting women's active participation can apply to a prefectural labor bureau to receive certification from the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare.
2. Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. (2016). Basic Survey on Wage Structure.
3. Cabinet Office. (2017). Whitepaper on Gender Equality.
4. Industry-Specific Visualization Tools for Promoting Positive Action, which are provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/topics/koyoukintou/2012/03/13-01.html>), show trends in employment management, including information on salary management, hiring, personnel assignment, and compensation, for 12 industries.
5. One can search the Database of Companies Promoting Women's Active Participation (<http://positive-ryouritsu.mhlw.go.jp/positivedb/>) for companies' published information and action plans.

References

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