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TECHNISOURCE SURVEY SHOWS WANT FOR MORE WOMEN IN IT PROFESSION; CLOSING GAP IN GENDER DIFFERENCES

New survey discovers nearly all women in IT want to see more female colleagues and while many gender disparities are ending, compensation remains a tension point

BOSTON, Mass., November 28, 2011 – Years of hard work by dozens of notable groups seem to be having a positive effect on the longtime gender disparities that have existed in the IT profession. According to the 2011 Technisource Women in Information Technology Report, gender differences in overall career satisfaction and career progression have equalized over the previous year. However, significant variances still exist in how men and women view compensation equality and the belief that one gender has an advantage and/or faces differing challenges in their careers.

The new study continues the previous year's trend of men valuing compensation more and female IT pros valuing flexibility more than their male counterparts. However, the 2011 survey now shows that both sexes value being challenged more than any other factor.

Among the key findings:

Career Satisfaction

- Only 15 percent of women believe that compensation is equal between men and women; only 38 percent of the male respondents do perceive equality (down from 46 percent the previous year).
- When asked about the most important factors to men and women for career satisfaction, 28 percent of men chose compensation compared to 20 percent of women; whereas, 21 percent of women chose flexibility versus 14 percent of men. The biggest change over 2010 was that both sexes chose being challenged as the top factor at 34 percent and 33 percent, respectively.

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Career Progression

- A mere 13 percent of women working in IT believe there is not a “glass ceiling” that restricts their employment growth — down seven percentage points from 2010. Thirty-four percent of men believe there is no glass ceiling restricting women’s career growth in IT. When asked what the most important factors for career success were over the next five years, tech skills, relationship building and industry knowledge have been more important than tech experience for both 2010 and 2011.

Mentorship/Role Models

- The percentage of women who said they have or have had a mentor dropped six percentage points from 33 percent in 2010 to 27 percent in 2011.
- Seventy-seven percent of women do not believe there are enough role models for women (versus 60 percent of men).

Future of Women in IT

- Nearly all (84 percent) of women believe the IT field could use more women, compared to 67 percent of men.
- Both men (60 percent) and women (68 percent) believe that public campaigns highlighting IT as a good choice for women is the best way to convince young girls to choose technology as a career path.
- Twenty-eight percent of men believe that women have an advantage over men working in the IT field. At the same time, 16 percent of women would also agree with this statement.
- Only 20 percent of men and 18 percent of women believe that society encourages young women to study math and science. This is down by six percentage points for both demographics.
- According to respondents, 75 percent of women believe female workers face a different set of career challenges than their male counterparts (compared to 55 percent of men).

"It is very encouraging to see so many of the differing factors of how men and women view employment within the technology field starting to stabilize and reach equal levels," said Alisia Genzler, vice president of the Northeast Region of Technisource. "Yet, there is still a battle for perception of equality around compensation and the greater societal issue of promoting IT as a career path for young women. In the end, employers need to recognize that both men and women are not only looking to be fairly compensated, but also desire to be mentored and challenged in their career. Those that don't constantly strive to provide that challenge will end up losing top talent to the competition."

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