The Gender Gap in the Technology Industry is Worrying—and Telecom Is Lagging Even Further Behind!
**Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter**

Companies with the highest number of female board directors achieved:
- **53%** higher returns on equity
- **42%** higher returns on sales and
- **66%** higher returns on invested capital than those with lower representation, according to a study by Catalyst.¹

85% of CEOs whose organizations had a diversity and inclusion strategy in place said it had improved firm performance.²

75% of male millennials placed a high importance on an employer’s diversity, equality and workforce inclusion policy when deciding where to work.³

From 2010 to present, just 8% of Mobile World Congress’ keynote speakers were female.⁴

Fewer than 25% of telecommunications companies track gender diversity in their applicant pools.⁵

**Gender diversity in telecom is even worse than in the technology industry more broadly**

Only 12% of executives in leading telecom companies are female.⁶

Only 19% of board members in leading telecom companies are female.⁷
There is quite good diversity at junior ranks in telecom, with some regional variations. This talent is unfortunately not being developed and retained to an executive level.

Percentage of females occupying junior roles in telecom across regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia Pacific</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears to take a combination of industry breadth and outstanding qualifications for female executives to rise to the top in telecom.

Female leaders in the telecom industry typically have multi-industry experience

1.9 Average number of industries worked in throughout career.

Female leaders in telecom are typically highly academically qualified

56% Percentage of female executive telecom leaders with an advanced degree.

Russell Reynolds Associates analyzed leadership across a cross-section of global telecom and technology companies.

ENDNOTES
1. Why Diversity Matters, Catalyst Information Center, 2013
2. 18th Annual Global CEO Survey, PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2016
4. Russell Reynolds Associates analysis, 2017
5. Accelerating the Digital Economy: Gender Diversity in the Telecommunications Sector, GSMA-AT Kearney, 2015
6. Russell Reynolds Associates analysis, 2017
7. Ibid.
9. Russell Reynolds Associates analysis, 2017
10. Ibid.
About Russell Reynolds Associates

45+ Years of firm experience
3,500+ Engagements Annually allow us to see critical patterns in the market
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