



the one hundred percent project



# MEN AT WORK

## WHAT THEY WANT & WHY IT MATTERS FOR WOMEN

September 2011

The 100% Project is a not for profit organisation that wants to see 100 percent of Australia's leadership talent, female and male, equally contributing to our social and economic future. We exist because women are under-represented on most Boards and in the senior management teams of most Australian organisations.

We have to engage men if we are to achieve meaningful change - because men run most of the businesses and organisations where change is required and organisational culture is generally defined in male terms.

But what do men actually think about their role at work and at home? Do they want the work-life balance more often seen as something women want? Do they feel they can take advantage of flexible working? And if they don't, will women continue to miss out on their fair share of senior positions?

These are questions The 100% Project set out to explore in its latest research report, 'Men at Work: What they want and why it matters for women' published in September 2011. Here's what we found:

### MEN ARE NOT GETTING WHAT THEY WANT...

#### Men want to spend time and energy on their family life

■ 75 percent of men surveyed expect to devote a significant amount of their time and energy to rearing their children.

#### And family is more important to them than their career

■ 68 percent of men are willing to accept costs to other areas of their life so they can be involved in the day-to-day care of their children.

#### They want a rewarding career - but they won't sacrifice everything for it

■ 83 percent of men expect to devote significant time to building their career - but only 29 percent of men expect to make as many sacrifices as necessary to advance their career.

#### Men want work-life balance - and say their life as a whole is better if they get it

■ 62 percent of men who are satisfied with their life as a whole agree that their work-life balance is right for their current situation. Only 14 percent of men who are not satisfied with their life think that their work-life balance is right.

## ...AND WOMEN PAY A PRICE BECAUSE MEN AREN'T GETTING WHAT THEY WANT

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**They work harder if their employer encourages work/family balance – even if they themselves don't take advantage of work/life balance programs**  
■ 79 percent of men who say they are engaged at work agree that their employer encourages employees to strike a balance between their work and family lives. Only 49 percent of non-engaged men agree with the same statement.

**Men don't ask for greater work-life balance, even if they have children, because they think asking will harm their career**  
■ Only 39 percent of men have asked for greater work-life balance at some time in their career. The top reasons for this include the belief that such a request would have negative effects on their career and that employers look negatively on employees who take advantage of work-life balance initiatives.

The women we surveyed are just as committed to their careers as men. But if men don't feel they can request the work-life balance they want, then women will continue to carry most of the burden of maintaining a home and raising the children.

As they can't share this burden, more women than men will continue to ask for flexible working arrangements such as part-time work.

This will perpetuate the inaccurate view that these initiatives are only for women who are not committed to their careers.

Working long hours in full time jobs with little flexibility may not be what all men want, but it gives them an advantage over many women in winning appointment to senior positions. It also contributes to the unhealthy culture of long working hours with rigid role structures in many Australian organisations.

We can see the price that women pay for this in not making it into senior leadership roles.

Giving men real opportunities for flexible working will:

1. Enrich their work and family life
2. Improve their job satisfaction and engagement at work
3. Enhance their overall sense of well-being, and
4. Help open up opportunities for women as well.

Failing this, the leadership opportunities open to Australian women will not improve, remaining significantly lower than in other developed nations - and men will continue to miss out on meaningful time with their families.

Download the full report at [the100percentproject.com.au](http://the100percentproject.com.au)

The 100% Project  
253 Moray Street  
South Melbourne Victoria 3205  
Tel +61 3 9645 7981  
[the100percentproject.com.au](http://the100percentproject.com.au)

