

# BEING BLACK IN CORPORATE AMERICA

---

An Intersectional Exploration

## Sponsors

Danaher | Interpublic | Group | Johnson & Johnson | KPMG | Morgan Stanley | Pfizer | Unilever |  
The Walt Disney Company

## Research Partner

Executive Leadership Council

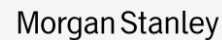
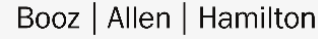
## Advisors

Dr. Ella J. Bell Smith, Dartmouth College | Trudy Bourgeois, Center for Workforce Excellence |  
Dr. Katherine Giscombe, Giscombe and Associates | Skip Spriggs, Washington Nationals |  
Dr. Adia Wingfield, The Washington University in St. Louis

ELC  
February 11, 2020



# CTI Task Force



## Why this study?

Low representation

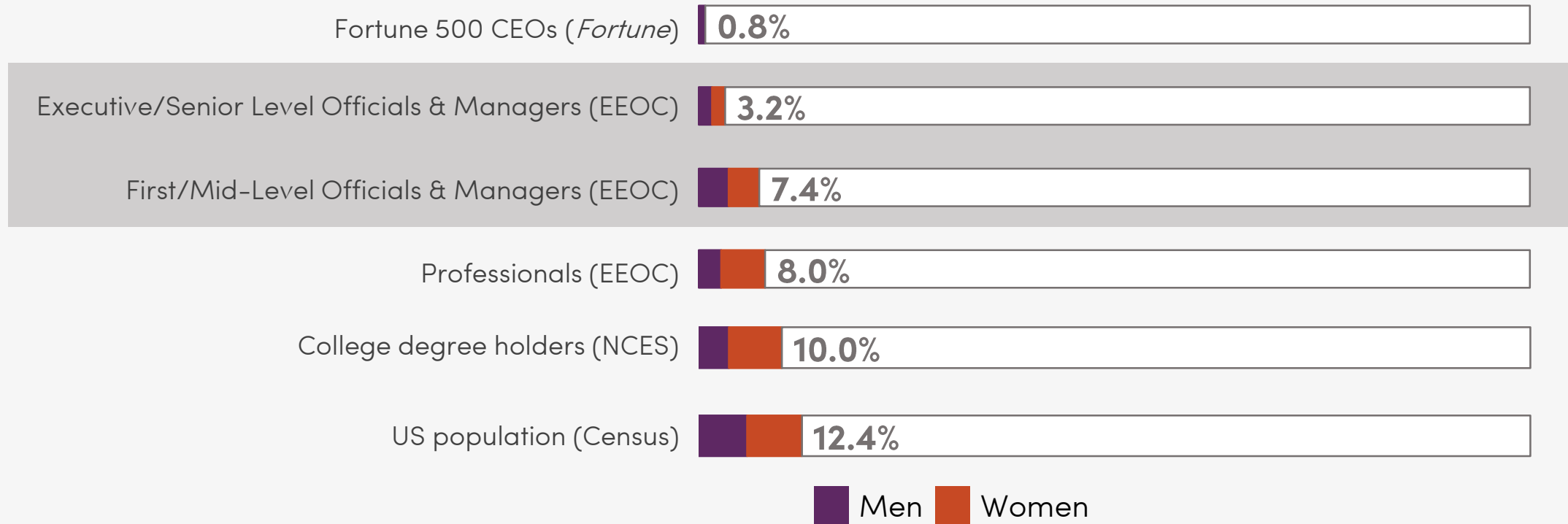
Corporate D&I yields limited progress

Conflation with other people of color

Systemic racism unaddressed

# Representation of Black professionals drops in upper ranks

## Representation of Black adults in the US



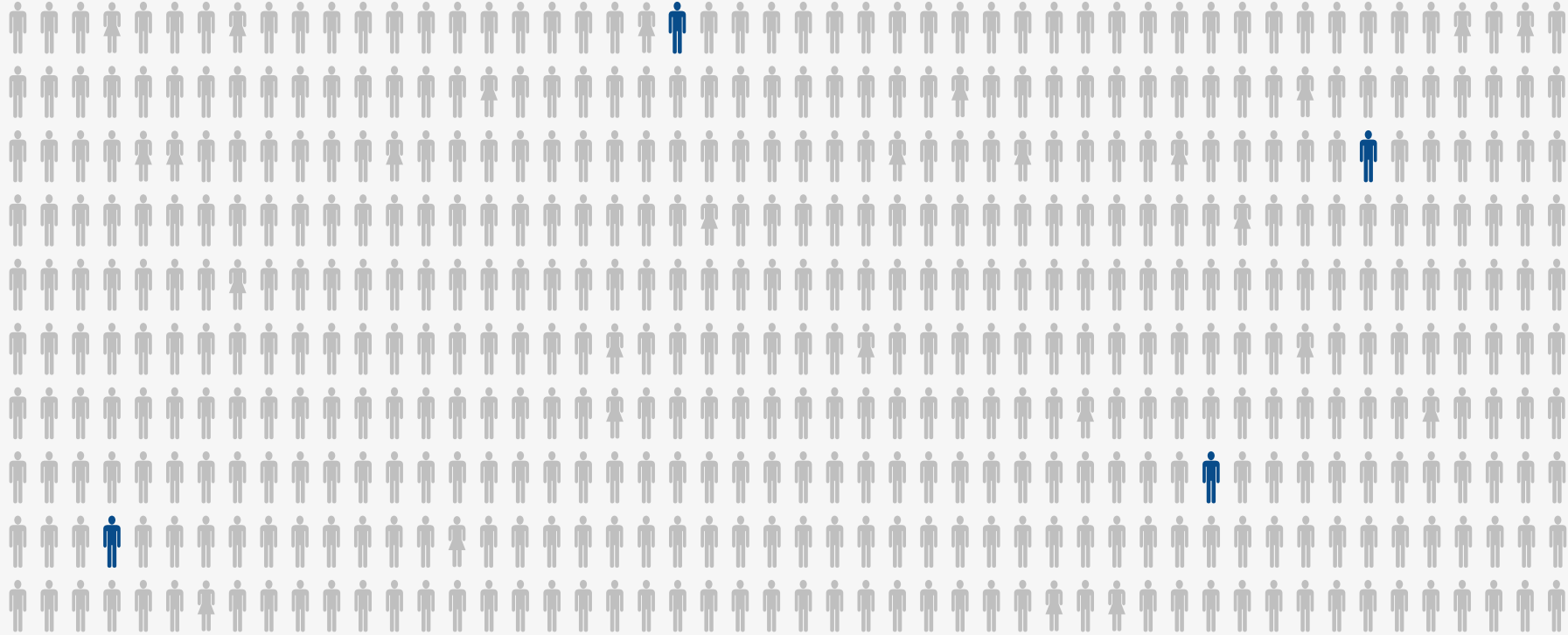
# Based on rates of degree completion, the Fortune 500 should have fifty Black CEOs

---



# Today, only four Fortune 500 CEOs are Black men

---



*“I’m surprised. I thought the cohort that came through in the mid-90’s—me, Ken Chenault, Stan O’Neal, Frank Raines— was just the beginning, and that there’d be a lot more.*

*“It just didn’t happen. There’s been dribs and drabs, but not a wave. And I’m not sure why that’s the case.”*

Richard D. Parsons, Former CEO, Time Warner Inc.

# Our methodology

---

1

Conducted an in-depth literature review

2

Held focus groups (in-person and online) with more than 150 people

3

Conducted interviews with more than 40 people

4

Surveyed 3,736 college-educated professionals



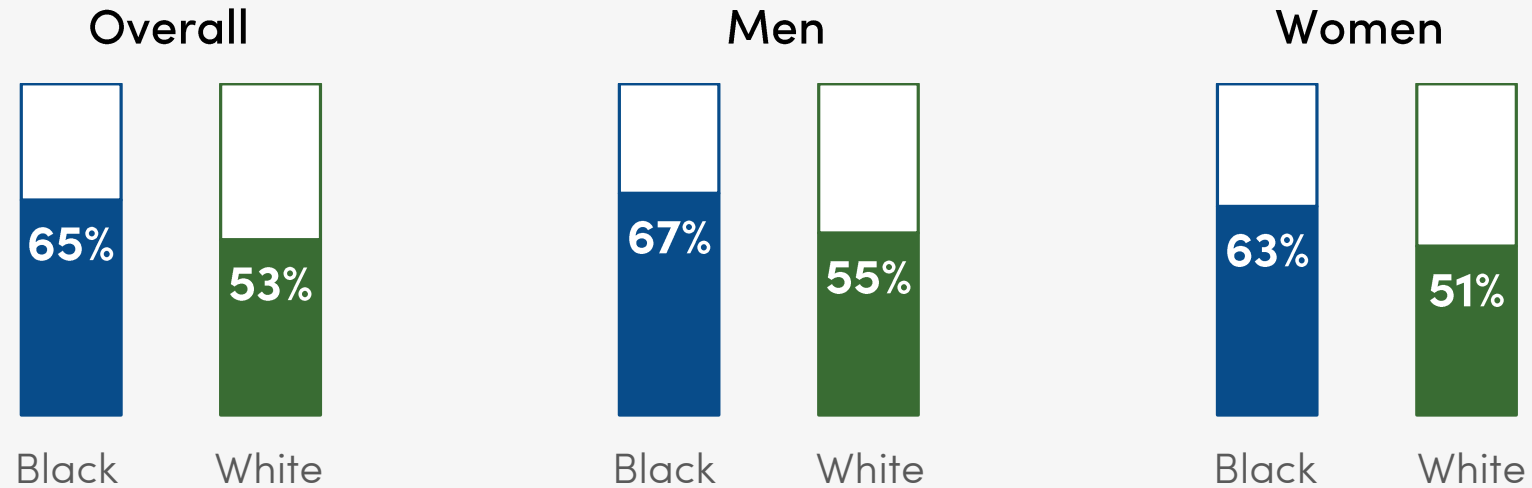
# A PORTRAIT OF BLACK PROFESSIONALS



# Black professionals are more likely than White professionals to be ambitious

---

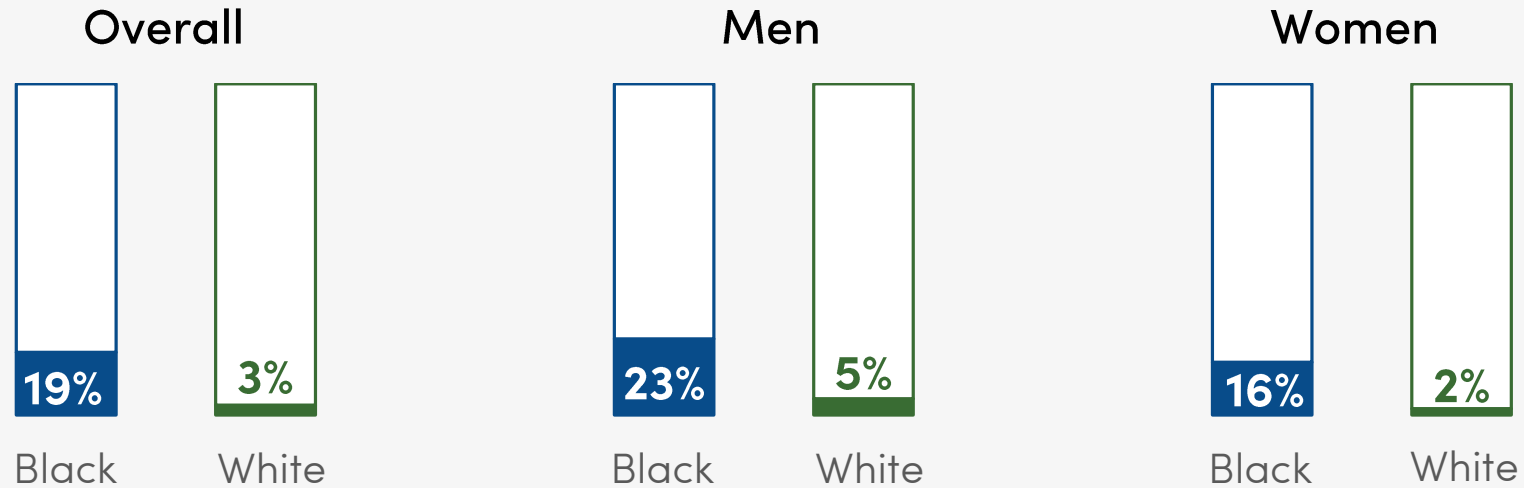
## Professionals who are very ambitious in their careers



# Many feel someone of their race/ethnicity would never achieve a top job at their companies

---

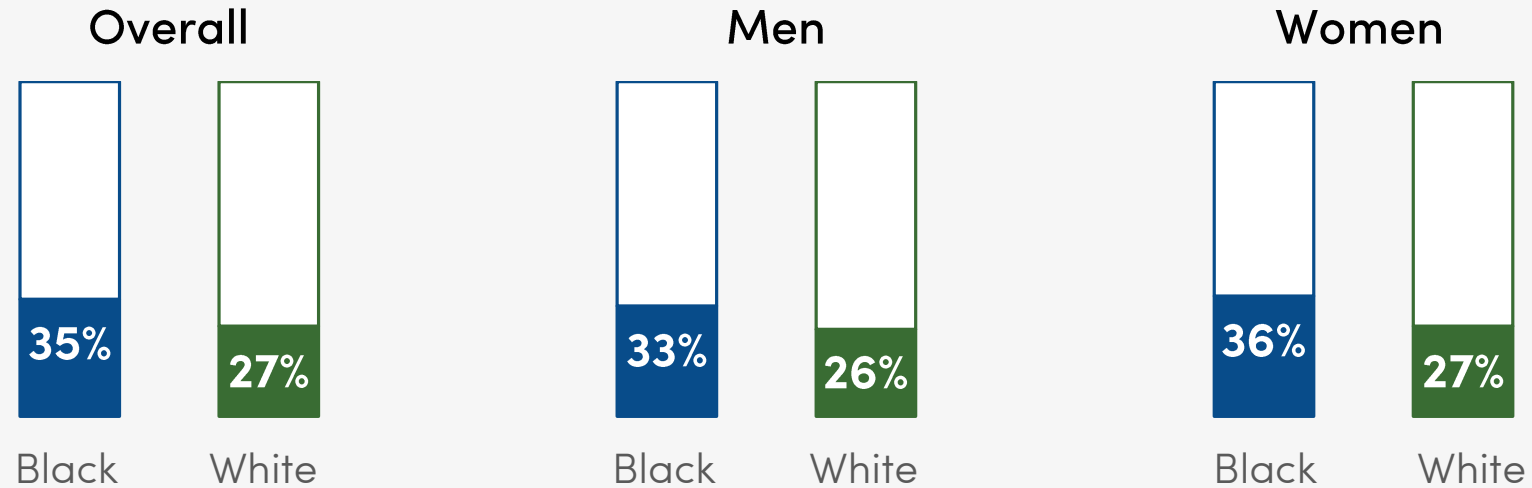
Professionals who feel someone of their race/ethnicity would never achieve a top position at their companies



# Black employees are more likely than White employees to intend to leave

---

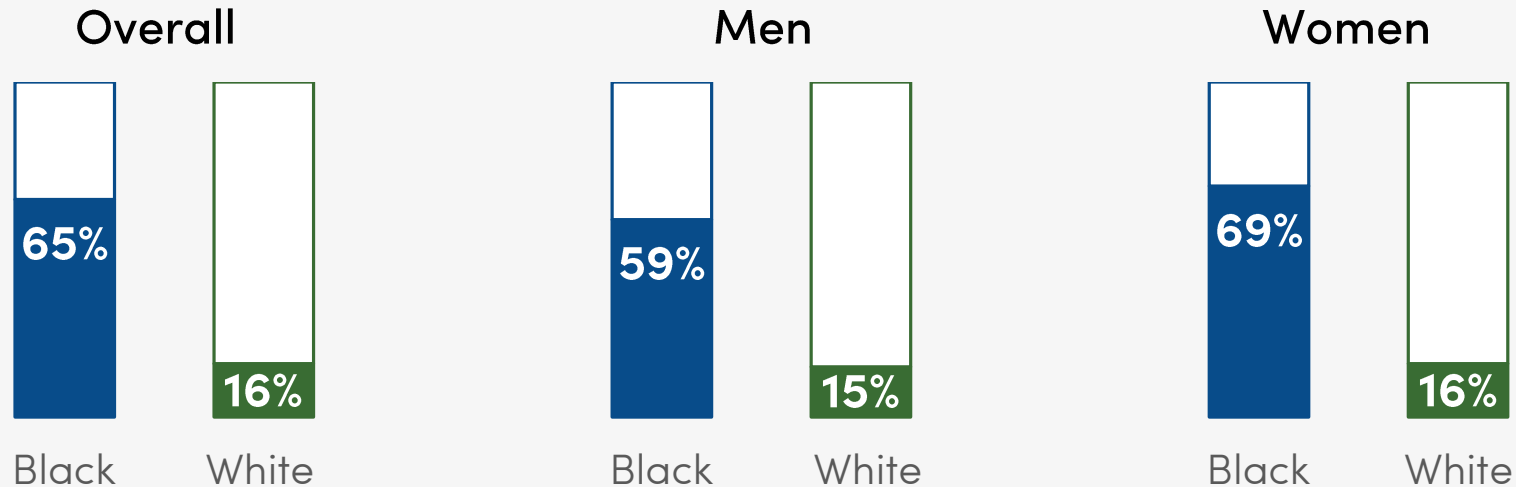
Professionals who intend to leave their current companies within two years



# Black professionals see barriers to advancement that are largely invisible to White professionals

---

Professionals who feel Black employees have to work harder to advance



# Dr. Katherine Giscombe

Founder, Giscombe & Associates



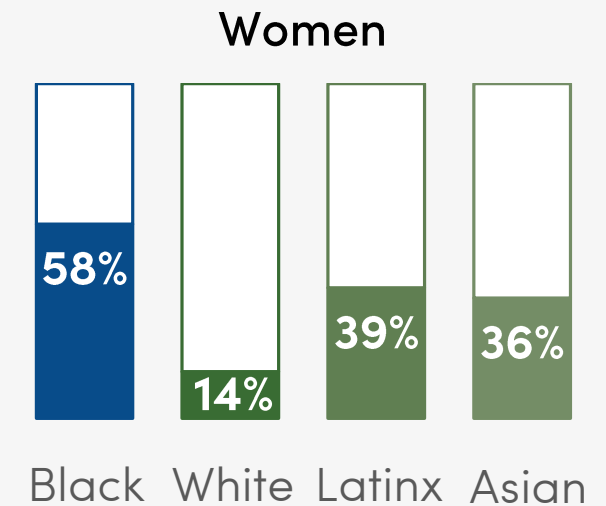
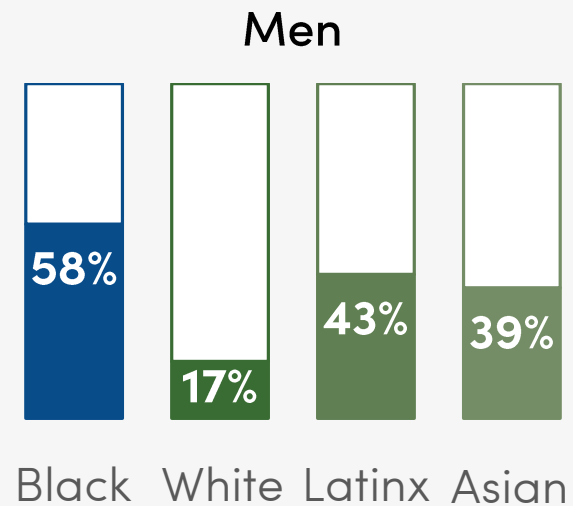
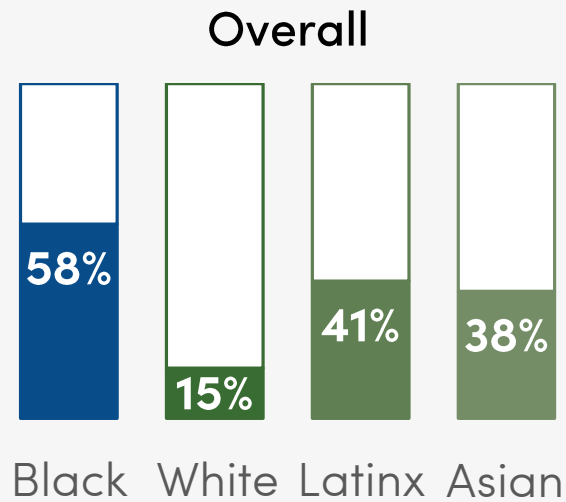
# BARRIERS TO ADVANCEMENT



# Black professionals are more likely than any other group to encounter racial prejudice at work

---

## Professionals who have experienced racial prejudice at work





# Microaggressions framework

---

MICROASSAULTS

---

MICROINVALIDATIONS

---

MICROINSULTS

---

Framework by Derald Wing Sue, Ph.D.

# Racial microaggressions pile up

Black professionals experience these microaggressions at a significantly higher rate than other professionals:

## MICROASSAULTS

Colleagues have used racially insensitive language around me

## MICROINVALIDATIONS

Colleagues have asserted that they are color blind (e.g. "I don't see race")

Colleagues have told me they have friends of my race/ethnicity

Colleagues have asserted they're not racist

I have to explain what it's like to live as a person of my race/ethnicity

I have been mistaken for someone else of the same racial background

## MICROINSULTS

Colleagues have touched my hair without my permission

Others have regularly taken credit for my ideas in meetings

I have been told I'm "not like others" of my race/ethnicity

I have been excluded from meetings relevant to my job

I have repeatedly been told that I'm "articulate"

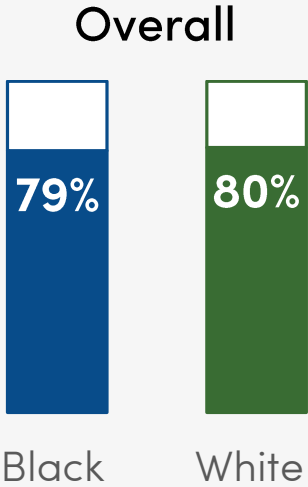
Others have mischaracterized me as "angry"

My manager has met one-on-one with others on my team, but not with me

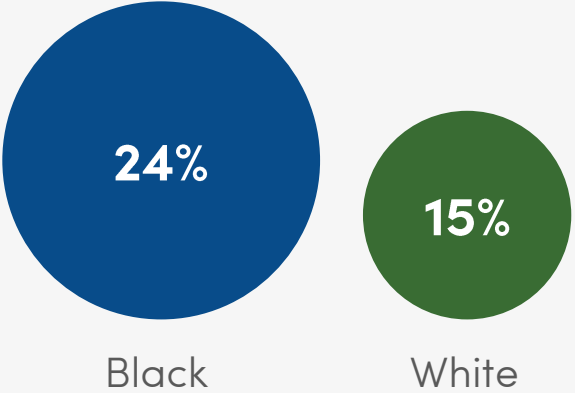
I have been excluded or passed over for growth opportunities

# Authenticity takes energy for Black professionals

Professionals who are very authentic at work



Of these, professionals who spend a great deal of energy to be very authentic at work



# Millennials are particularly frustrated

Black Millennials are more likely than older black professionals to say...

“It takes a great deal of energy to be authentic at work”

**31%** of Millennials  
**20%** of older professionals

“I am planning to leave my job to start my own venture”

**38%** of Millennials  
**17%** of older professionals

“I am expected to be a representative for my entire race/ethnicity”

**25%** of Millennials  
**12%** of older professionals



# Differences arose among other identities we explored

---



First to attend college

Gender

Generation

HBCU attendance

Heritage

Job level

Region

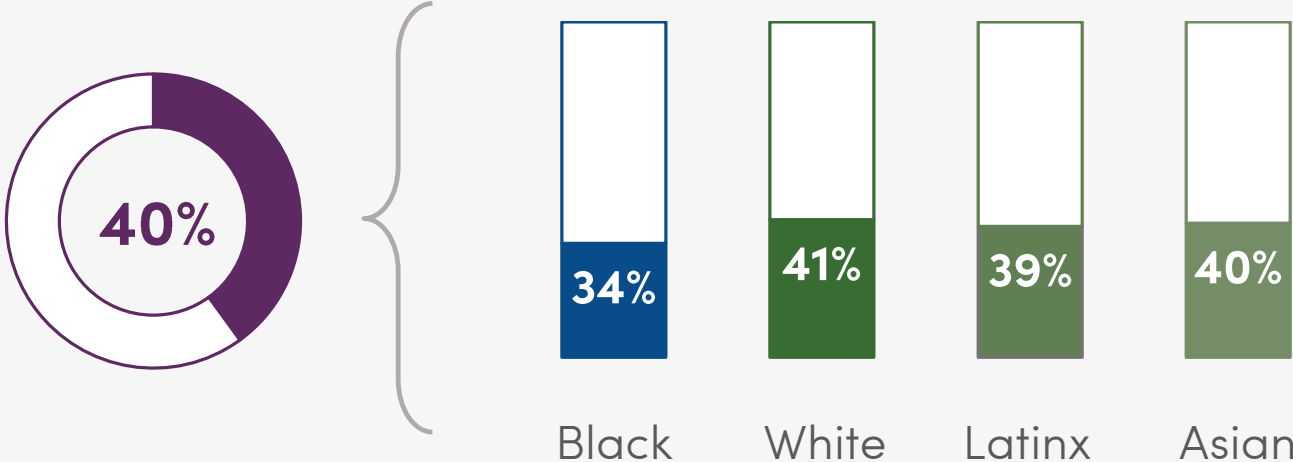
Sexual orientation

# REDESIGNING D&I FOR BLACK PROFESSIONALS



# A minority of *all* professionals think their companies have effective D&I efforts

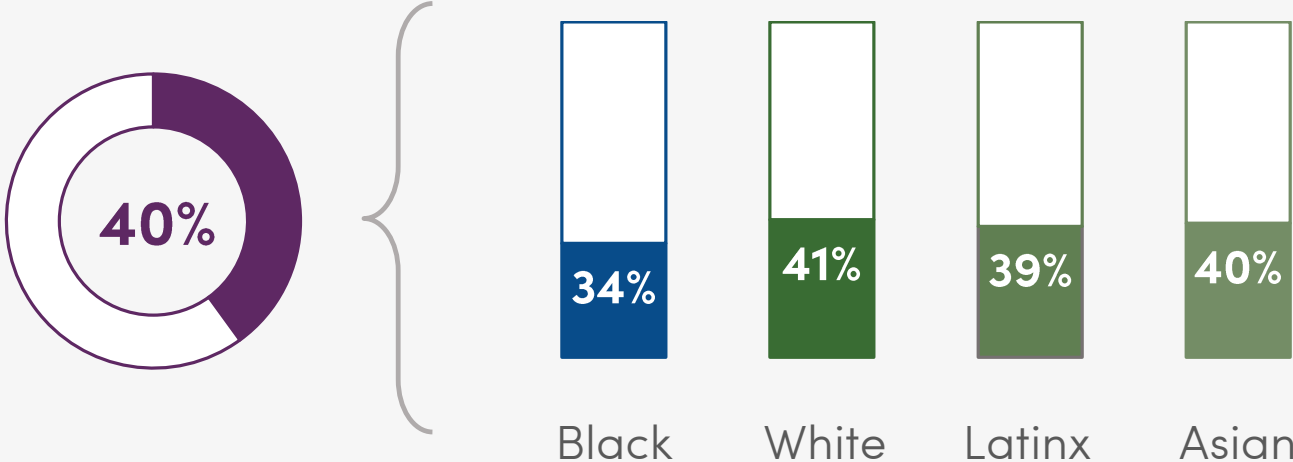
Professionals who say their company has effective D&I efforts\*



\*This question was only asked of full-time employees

# A minority of *all* professionals think their companies have effective D&I efforts

Professionals who say their company has effective D&I efforts\*

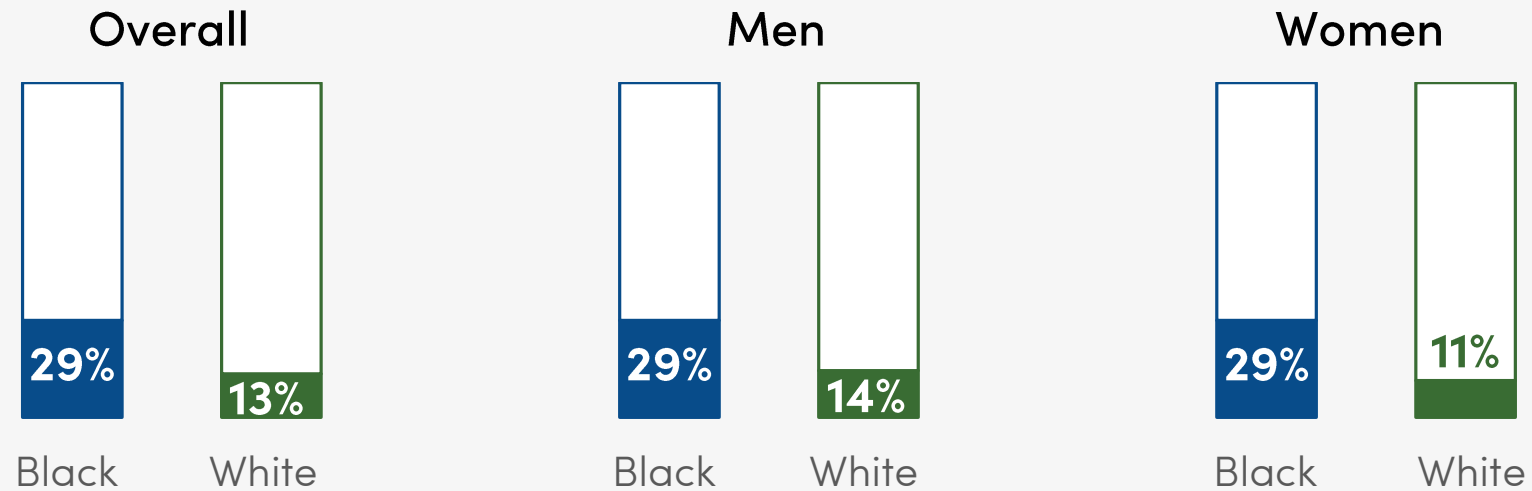


\*This question was only asked of full-time employees



# Black professionals are more likely than White professionals to see White women as the primary beneficiaries of D&I efforts

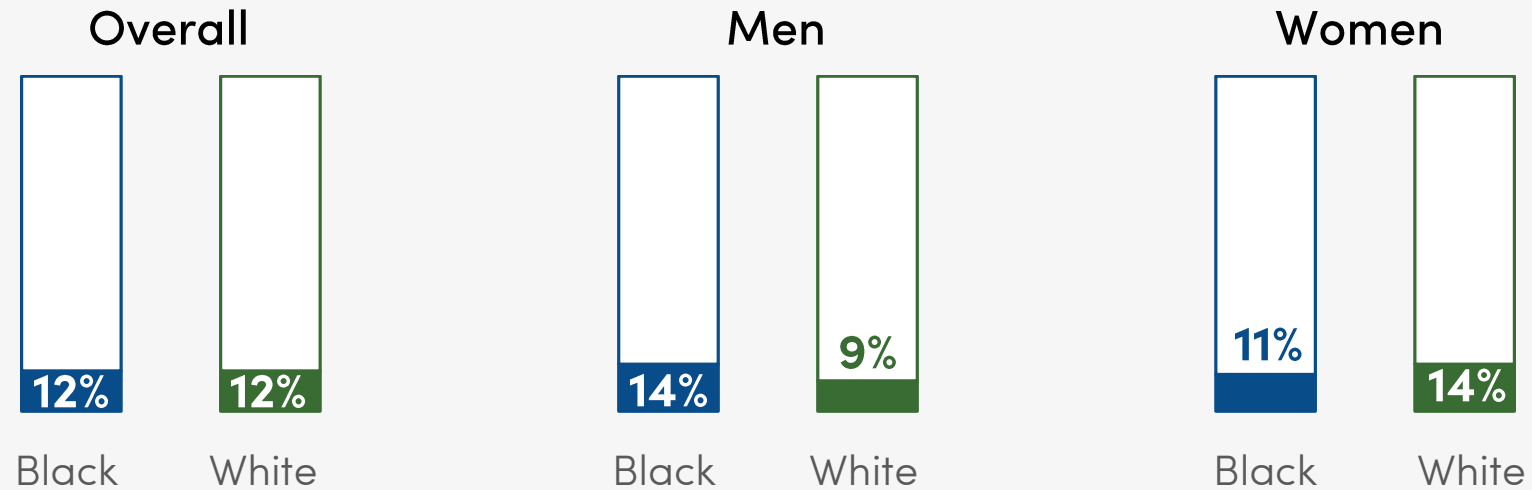
Professionals who believe White women are the primary beneficiaries of diversity and inclusion efforts at their companies\*



\*This question was only asked of full-time employees

# White women fail to pay forward their gains

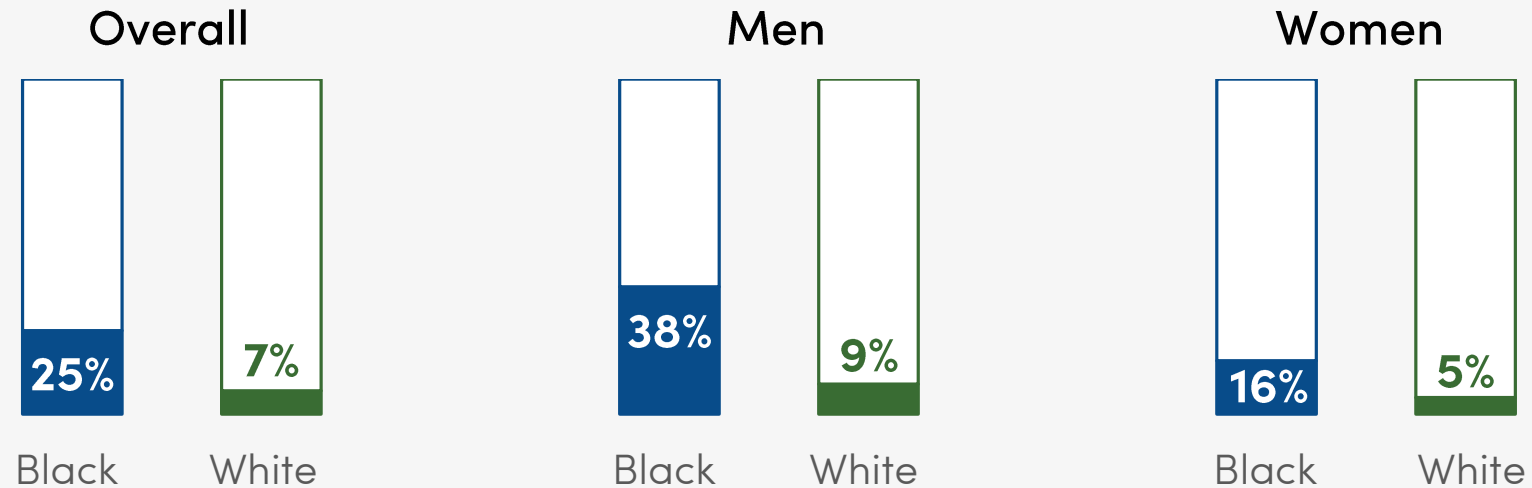
Professionals who believe White women use their power to advocate for other underrepresented groups at their companies\*



\*This question was only asked of full-time employees

# Black professionals—especially men—are most likely to be interested in starting their own ventures

Professionals who are planning to leave their jobs to start their own ventures\*



\*This question was only asked of respondents who are not currently business owners

# Small companies deliver belonging, trust, and respect

---

## Top 5 advantages for Black professionals at small companies over large ones\*

- 1 A sense of belonging
- 2 Ability to implement your ideas
- 3 Trust with colleagues
- 4 Respect for your contributions
- 5 Direct access to clients

## Top 5 advantages for Black professionals at large companies over small ones\*

- 1 Good benefits
- 2 High income
- 3 Opportunities to travel
- 4 Stable income
- 5 Amenities (e.g. dry-cleaning)

\*These questions were only asked of those who have worked at both large and small companies. Small companies have fewer than 100 employees and large companies have 100 or more employees.

# Quick wins with established solutions

## TOP SOLUTIONS FOR BLACK MEN

- Provide funding to attend external conferences for people of color
- In-person bias awareness training
- Moderated forums for conversations about race
- Hire diverse suppliers
- Senior leaders who are people of color



## TOP SOLUTIONS FOR BLACK WOMEN

- Clear expectations for inclusive behavior
- A positive reputation around diversity and inclusion
- Clear communication of how promotions work
- The CEO/President is committed to diversity and inclusion
- Accountability for harassment regardless of an employee's seniority or performance

# Journey toward transformation

---



## AUDIT

Understand the current state of Black employees at the company



## AWAKEN

Reflect and absorb. Begin learning and awaken through conversation



## ACT

Armed with findings from audit, leverage awakening and build solutions



## AUDIT

Identifying the factors that create barriers to success is critical.

Culture audits provide a view into employee experiences that gets to the bottom of workplace dynamics, uncovers perception gaps, and diagnoses systemic weaknesses.

- Executive interviews
- In-person focus groups
- Online focus groups
- Traditional static surveys
- Robust analysis & output



**AWAKEN**

**Empathy is key to addressing the bias that prevents talent advancement.**

Accepting the reality of systemic racism takes time, space, and energy.

Awakening through introspection and then through conversation will gain buy-in for programs that support Black professionals.

- Presentation of internal audit findings
- Workshops & experiential forums
- Moderated forums for conversations about race
- External speakers and education on wider Black Talent research
- Resources, guides, and toolkits



# Trudy Bourgeois

Founder and CEO, The Center for  
Workforce Excellence





**ACT**

**Now it's time to collaboratively create solutions and achieve outcomes.**

Gain the competitive advantage of an inclusive workplace.

- Strategy sessions
- Design thinking & innovation labs
- Accelerated work experiences
- Repository of industry-wide best practices and sector-specific recommendations

# Journey toward transformation

---



## AUDIT

Understand the current state of Black employees at the company



## AWAKEN

Reflect and absorb. Begin learning and awaken through conversation



## ACT

Armed with findings from audit, leverage awakening and build solutions

Deepening relationships and complementing powerful research with advisory services

ANY QUESTIONS?

