

# WCT Survey Shows Career Strategy is Key to Women's Advancement in Technology

**Ottawa, April 5<sup>th</sup>** Being-outnumbered three to one by male colleagues presents many challenges to women who work in information and communications technology, but a new study released by Canadian Women in Communications (WCT) today shows that there is cautious optimism that conditions are improving.

Fifty-five per cent are satisfied with their progress toward their career goals and nearly 65 per cent feel their organization's values reflect their own. Most respondents expressed a desire to stay in their current organization.

Joanne Stanley, Executive Director of WCT believes that this wave of optimism is powered by leadership initiatives some of the prominent employers in technology. "Finding top talent is absolutely critical to the competitiveness of technology companies," she said. "Smart companies recognize that diversity improve their capacity for innovation and for the best governance of their organizations. Smart companies are taking measures to make their workplaces more welcoming to women. Attracting, keeping and advancing women helps them beat their competition."

In spite of the optimism women are clear-eyed about the need for effective strategies for advancing their careers. The top three strategies identified were:

- Exceeding performance expectations (83%)
- Gaining more experience in the current position (62%)
- Networking with influential colleagues (59%)

Sixty-three per cent of respondents reported that they had a mentor and the vast majority of these (93%) indicated that having a mentor assisted in their advancement. "Executive sponsorship, mentorship, active networking, continuous education in soft and hard skills, self-advertisement and taking cross-functional assignments are all important tools to accelerate advancement," Ms. Stanley said. "We've found that many of the women in senior roles in tech today have used all of these."

The under-representation of women in technology places the onus on employers and organizations like WCT to develop new ways to enable women to make an optimum contribution to tech organizations. WCT's Protégé program, for example, is a cross-company executive sponsorship program for women who are C-suite ready. After only two years in operation we already have evidence that it is helping women to crack the executive ranks of the industry," she said.

The study Strategies for Career Advancement: A Summary Needs Assessment, was conducted for WCT by Dr. Catharine Elliott of the Tefler School of Management at Ottawa University with funding from Status of Women Canada. It is based on an online survey sent to 8,000 members of the WCT community in February of 2016.

--30--

### **About WCT**

Women in Communications and Technology (WCT) is a nation-wide not-for-profit dedicated to the advancement of women in Canada's information, communications, media and technology sectors. For over 25 years, WCT has been inspiring and engaging women through professional development programming, networking and opportunities to recognize achievements in diversity, representation and innovation in Canada.

Contact:  
Mathea  
Manager, Marketing & Communications  
[mstevens@wct-fct.com](mailto:mstevens@wct-fct.com)  
613-706-0607 ext. 103