

# Successfully Navigating Organizational Culture: What You Need to Know

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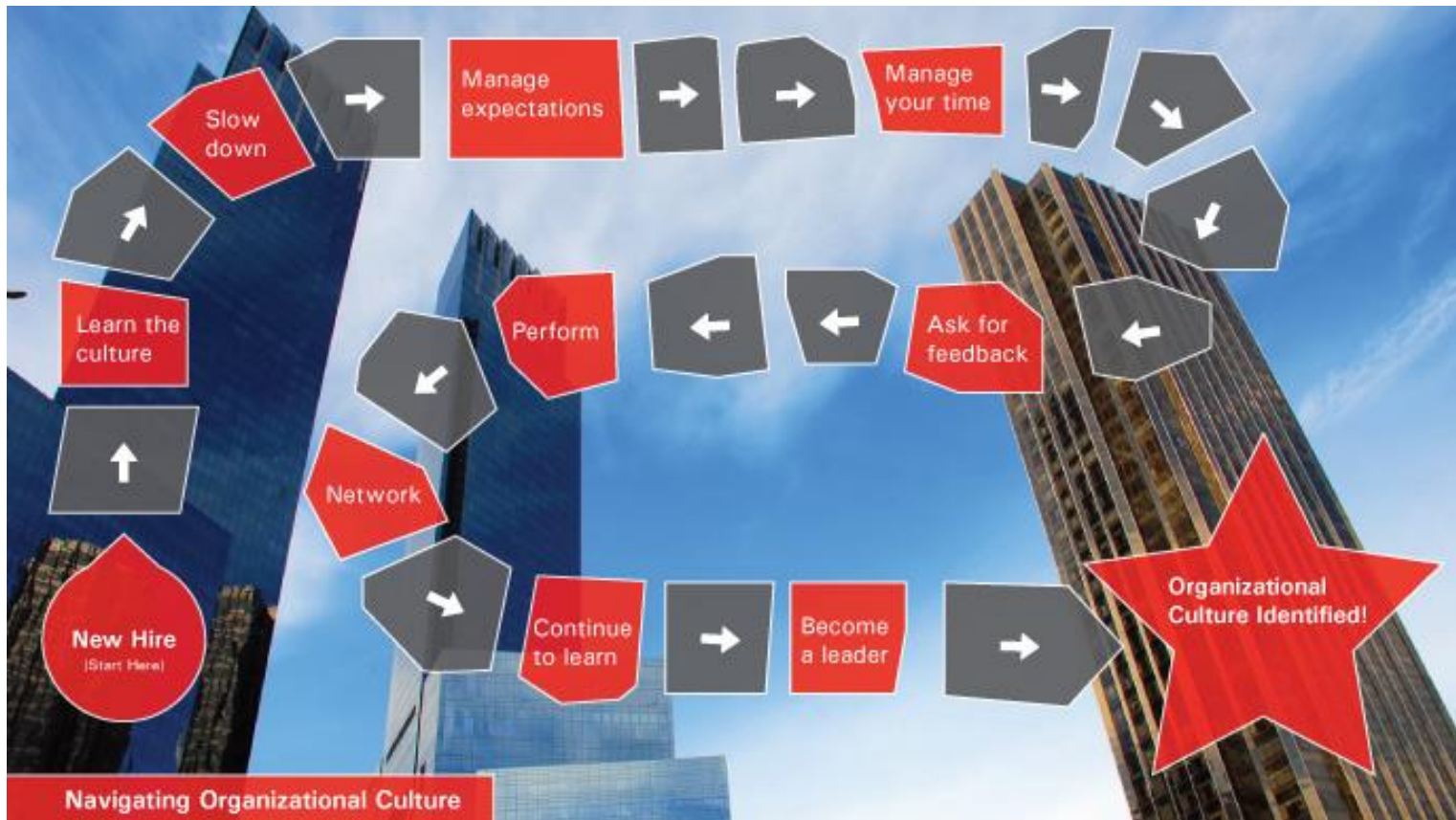
# Culture...

- A phenomenon that is difficult to define succinctly
- An elusive lever because much of it is anchored in unspoken behaviors, mindsets and social patterns
- It is the tacit social order of an organization
- In other words.....



# Scholars have proposed the following when defining culture:

- Observed behaviors that occur when people interact
- Norms that evolve within a working group
- The dominant values espoused by an organization
- The philosophy that guides an organization's policy toward employees and consumers
- The rules for getting along with other people in the organization
- The feeling or climate of a particular organization



# Culture is dynamic as it can evolve with new experiences such as:

A clear and present  
Crisis – The Burning  
Platform

*or*

Through a managed  
evolution under a  
skilled and  
sophisticated leader

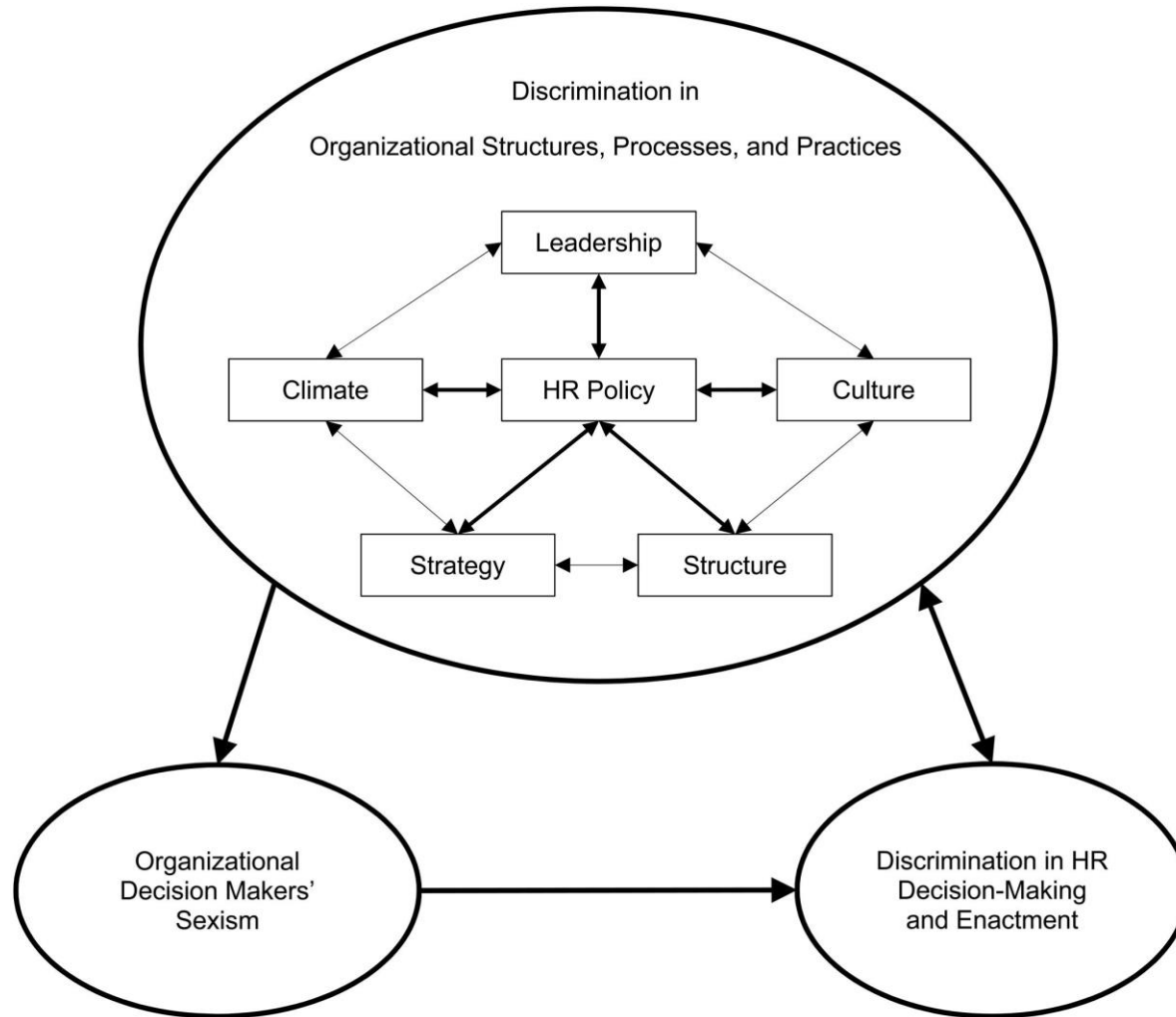
For better or for worse, culture is inextricably  
linked to leadership



Why is organizational culture so important?



# Culture is operationalized in HR Policies





# Power and Politics



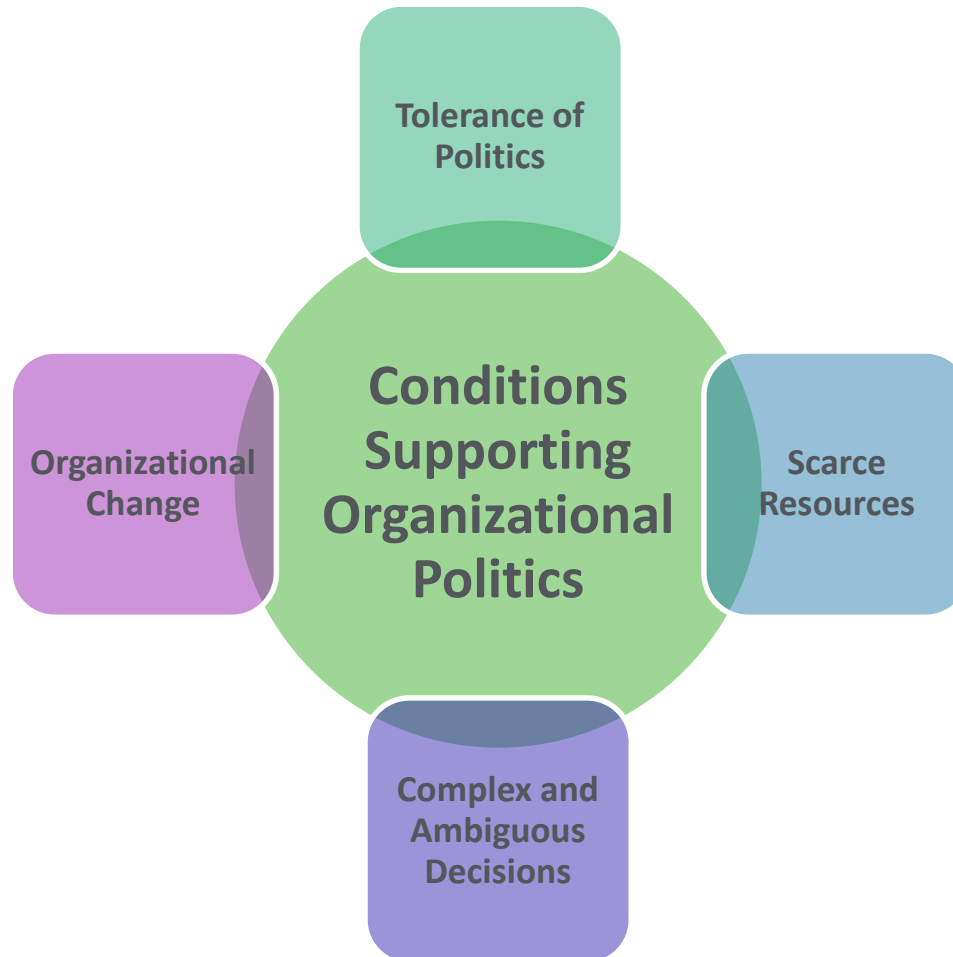
# The Good, The Bad and The Ugly about Politics in the Workplace

- While workplace politics can be potentially destructive, when deployed effectively it can help an organization reach its goals and live up to its values, especially during organizational change
- Workplace politics is the use of influential tactics to improve personal and/or individual interests
- Studies show that individuals with political skills tend to do better in gaining more personal power as well as managing stress, job demands and have a greater impact on organizational outcomes than their naïve counterparts

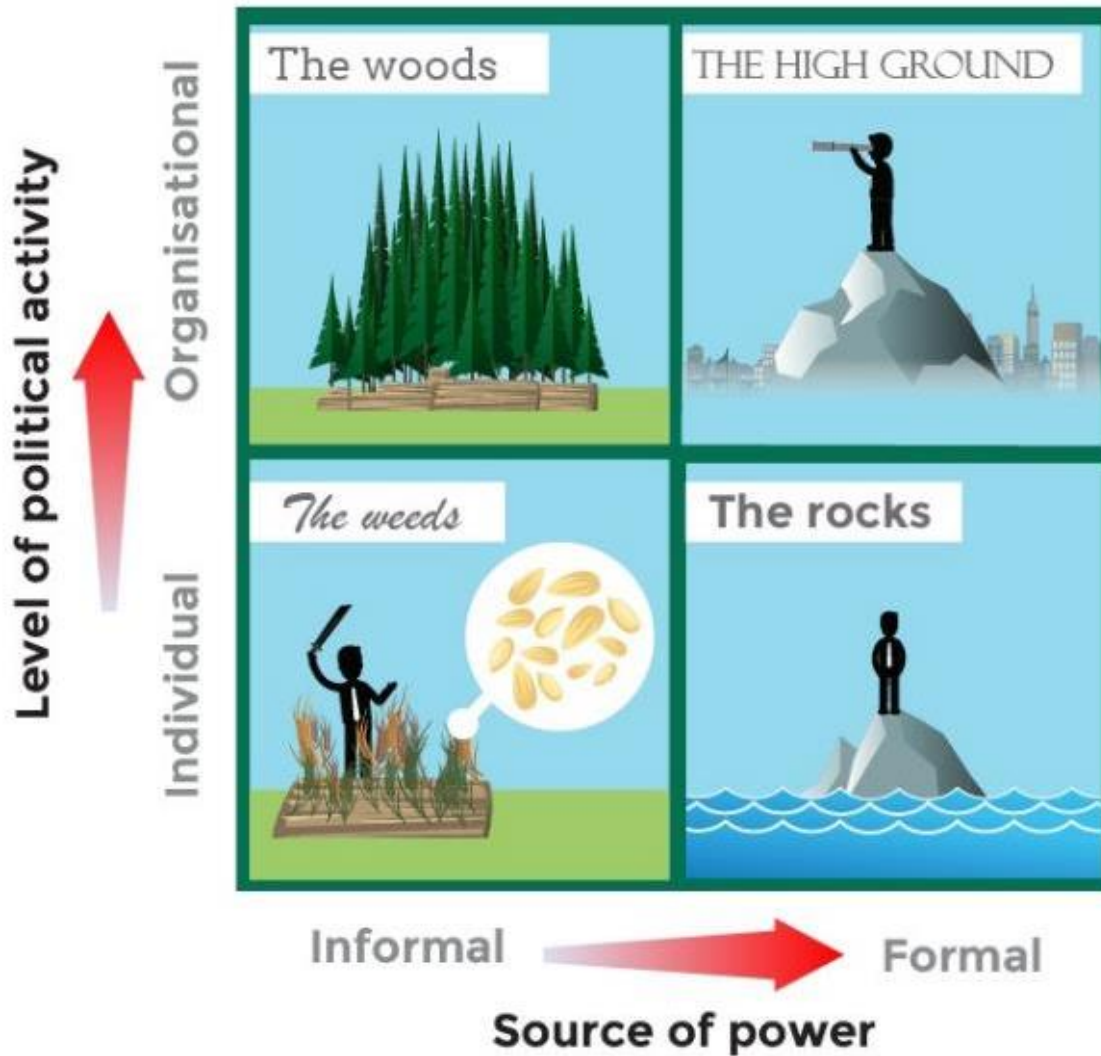
# Power Differences and Workplace Politics

- Ethical leaders can mitigate power differences through frequent communication with workers
- Organizational politics is often perceived as trying to achieve one's own ends even if it means harming others in the organization
  - Gossip, manipulation, playing favorites, and taking credit for another's work
- There is a difference between having a high degree of office politics and having good political skills
  - Political skills can be used to promote organizational goals and help rather than hinder other employees

# Conditions for Organizational Politics

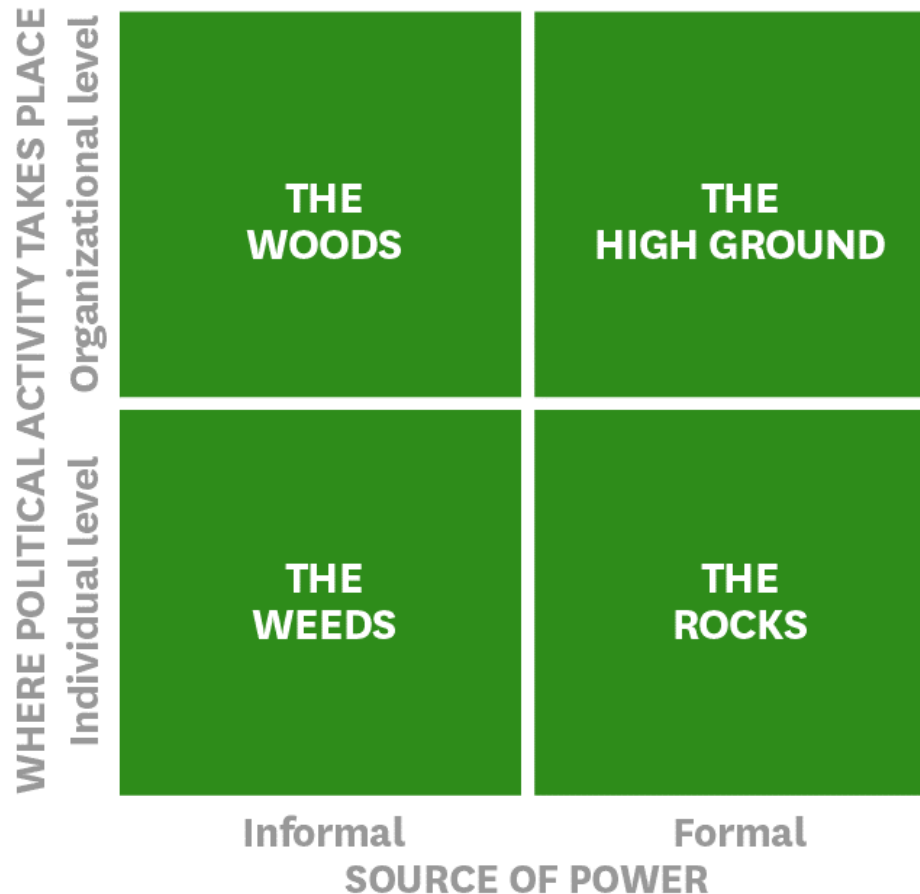


# Navigating the Political Terrain



# The 4 Metaphors of Organizational Politics

To have influence, you need to understand the terrain



# The Weeds

THE  
WEEDS

- Personal influence and informal networks rule
- It is called “the weeds” because it’s a dynamic that grows naturally, without any maintenance. It can be a good thing
- If left unchecked, can also form a dense mat through which nothing else can grow. In these circumstances, informal networks can be a countervailing force to legitimate power and the long-term interests of the organization. For instance, they can thwart legitimate change efforts that are needed to put the organization on a sounder long-term financial footing. Barrier to change
- To deal with the weeds, get involved enough to understand the informal networks at play. Identify the key brokers, as well as the gaps — if you can fill the gaps — or ally with the brokers, so that you can increase your own influence. Conversely, if the brokers are doing more harm than good, you can try to isolate them by developing a counter-narrative and strengthening connections with other networks

# The Rocks

THE  
ROCKS

- Power in “the rocks” rests on individual interactions and formal (or “hard”) sources of authority such as title, role, expertise, or access to resources
- “The rocks” rocks can symbolize a stabilizing foundation that keeps an organization steady in times of crisis, but conversely, the sharp edges of hard power can wreck a plan
- May also include political capital that arises from membership of or strong ties to a high status group such as the finance committee, a special task force, or the senior management team
- Relies on drawing on formal sources of power, rather than fighting against them
- Best bet is to redirect the energy of a dysfunctional leader, either through reasoned argument or by appealing to their interests



# The Woods

THE  
WOODS

- In addition to their formal processes and guidelines, organizations also have implicit norms, hidden assumptions, and unspoken routines — and that’s where we get into “the woods”
- Some organizations get lost in their woods. They focus on the presenting issue rather than the unspoken ecosystem of habits and practices that remain unseen. The challenge here is to make the implicit explicit. Ask the stupid question, bringing implicit organizational routines and behaviors to the surface.
- Ask clients, recent hires, or temporary contractors about their observations and experience of how the company works; a fresh pair eyes will often identify things that incumbents are blind to seeing. Get benchmark information from surveys and specialist experts. Once the implicit assumptions are out in the open, ask your team to reflect on whether they’re helping your company or hindering it

# The High Ground

THE  
HIGH GROUND

- The high ground combines formal authority with organizational systems; the rules, structures, policy guidelines, and procedures that form the basis of political activities. The benefits of these rules and procedures are they provide a check against the whims of individual level, charismatic or autocratic individuals
- The ‘high ground’ provides guide rails for the rocks. It’s a functional political process that uses structures of control systems, incentives, and sanctions that keep the organization in compliance. However, as many executive know, rules and procedures can also lead to the organization becoming overly bureaucratic, where rules are used as a political device to challenge interests not aligned with the bureaucrats, or to prevent innovation and change

# Culture, Politics and Gender Inequality



MEDICINE AND SOCIETY

Debra Malina, Ph.D., Editor

**Men's Fear of Mentoring in the #MeToo Era  
— What's at Stake for Academic Medicine?**

**Time's Up  
Tackles  
Gender Bias  
and  
Harassment  
in Health Care  
-Scientific  
American**



**Vitality**  
Volume 5 | Number 3

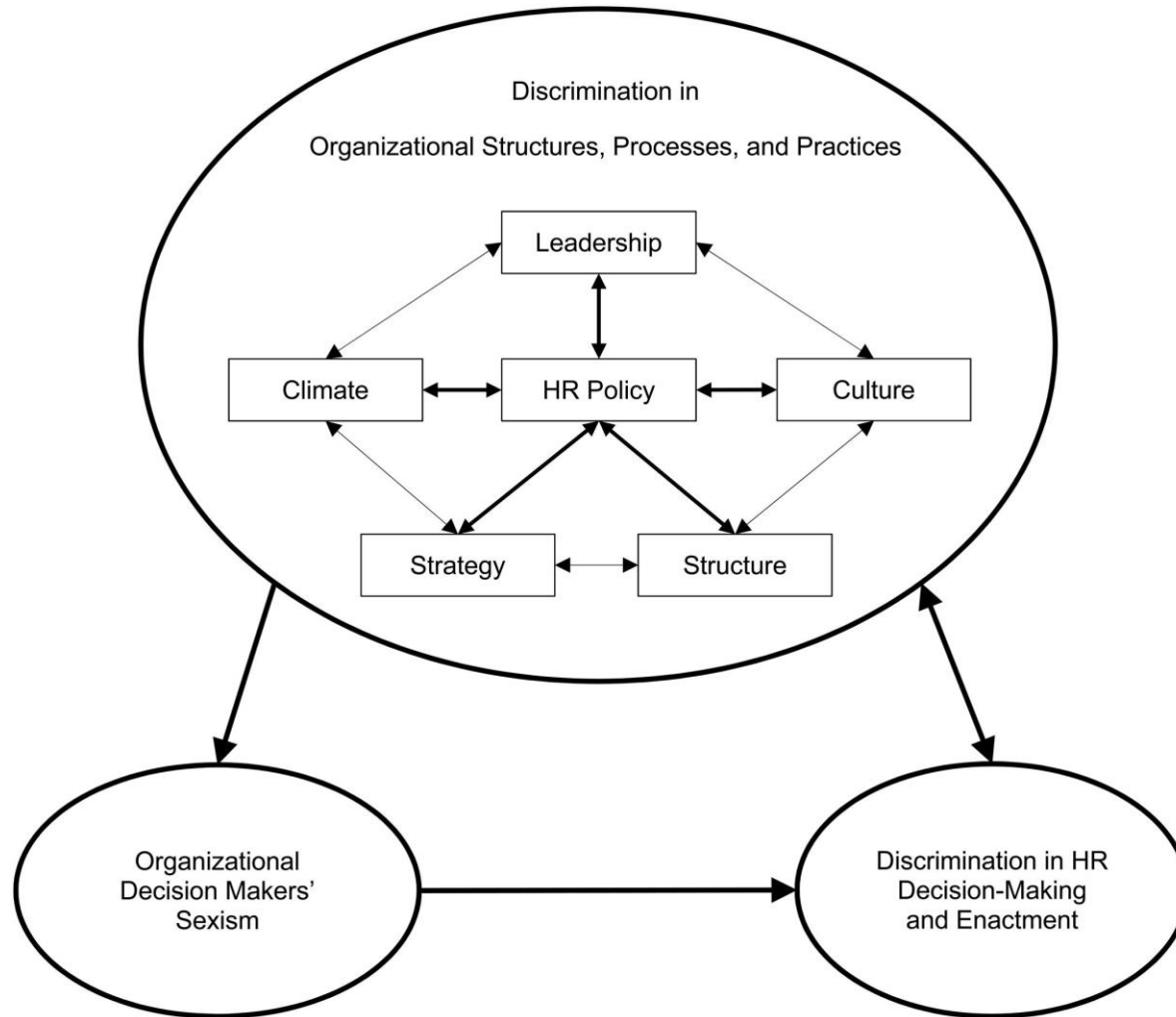
**Gender Inequality in the Workplace**



**THE LANCET**

**From #MeToo to #TimesUp in health care: can a culture of  
accountability end inequity and harassment?**

# Root Cause of Gender Discrimination in HR Policies



# Gender Inequalities and Organizational Culture

- Gender inequality in organizations is a complex phenomenon that is operationalized in structures, processes, and practices
- These structures, processes, and practices are housed in Human Resources (HR)
- HR-related decision making and in the enactment of HR practices stems gender inequities in **broader** organizational structures, processes, and practices such as:
  - Leadership
  - Structure
  - Culture
  - Organizational Climate

# Gender Inequalities and Organizational Culture

HR Practices are critically important because they determine the *access* employees have to valued reward and outcomes within an organization, and can also influence

**WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH HR  
POLICES AND PRACTICES?**

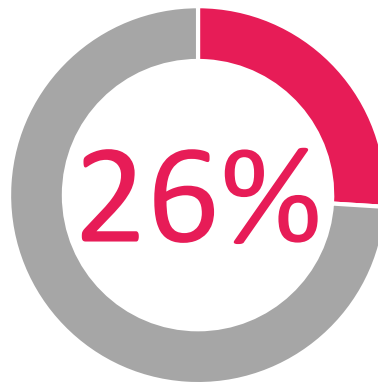
# The Real Issue

- Over 70% of the healthcare workforce are women
- However, the number of women in leadership positions is pathetically low
- The evidence is clear - there is no issue with recruiting women
- The *Real* issue is in retention and a pathway to advancement



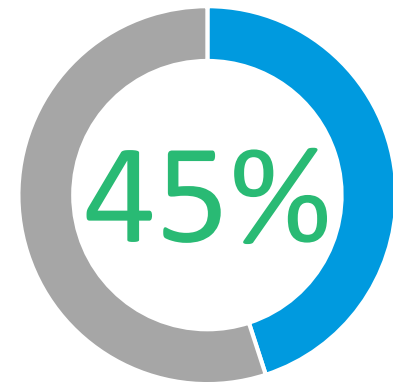
# Companies with above-average diversity have higher innovation

Companies with **below-average** diversity scores



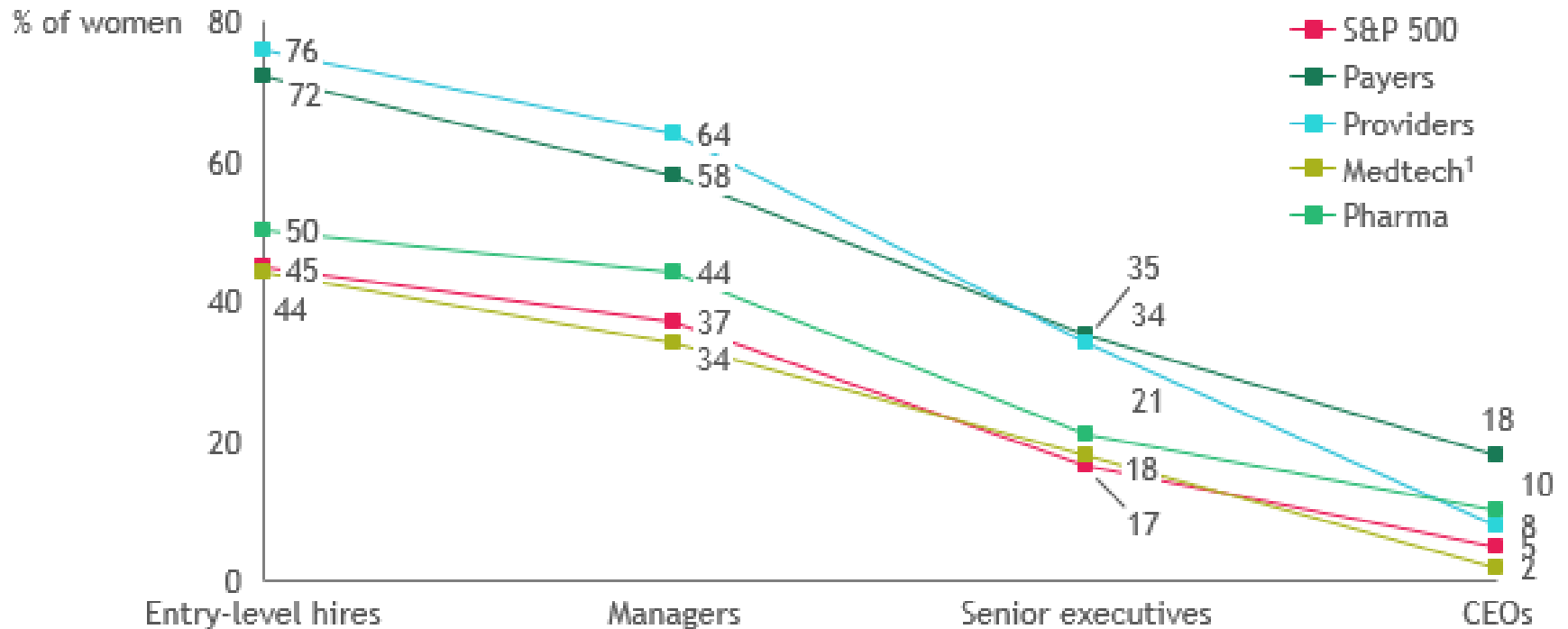
average innovation revenues reported by companies

Companies with **above-average** diversity scores



average innovation revenues reported by companies

# Most entry level health-care workers, but few health care leaders, are women

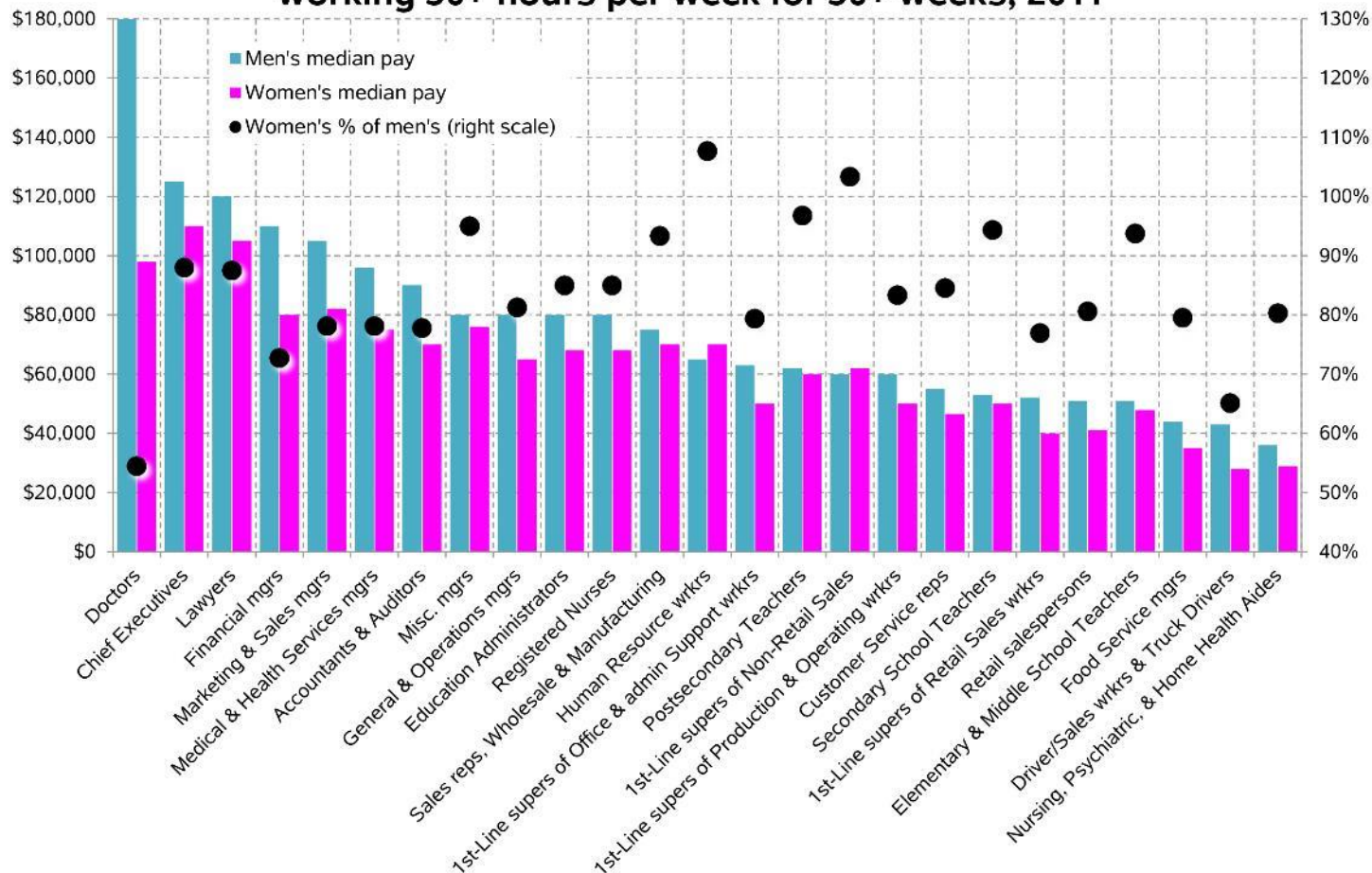


# Female Executives are Most Likely to Run Support Functions

Percentage of senior executive positions held by women<sup>1</sup>

	Providers	Payers	Pharma	Medtech
Nursing	96			
HR	49	60	55	56
Marketing and communications	52	52	46	34
Risk	36	45	29	42
Legal	23	45	29	29
Strategy	40	38	14	18
Operations	26	39	7	10
Medical departments	19	23	19	20
Business units	24	31	19	7
IT	19	21	20	13
Finance	19	15	10	10

## Men's and women's annual earnings: Workers usually working 50+ hours per week for 50+ weeks, 2011



# Blind Auditions



## Changes in organizational culture can foster gender equality by achieving the following:

- Hold leadership accountable for structure, processes, and culture effecting workplace environment
- Developing HR policies which focus on recruitment from non-traditional sources
- Utilize “blind” interviewing techniques
- Standardize performance reviews
- Create work environments that do not derail women or give men an advantage
- Address home and family responsibilities such as child and elder care
- Provide career advancement pathways that result in gender equality

# KEY TAKE AWAYS

- Navigating organizational culture is a complex and vital part of each individual's workday
- Understanding the drivers of organizational culture are essential to one's success
- Mapping the political terrain is equally as important
- Utilizing political skills to optimize organizational performance is a win-win for the employee and organization
- Participate and be engaged in initiatives to positively change the culture

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# Thank You

