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Untapped Potential: Stretching Toward the Future

International Women's Day 2009 Global Research Results

Research objectives



Accenture's global research study "*Untapped Potential: Stretching toward the Future*" was conducted for release on International Women's Day to help fuel the dialogue on key issues for working women. Among the areas of focus were:

- Exploring the concept of stretch roles—the idea that those who consider themselves successful are more likely to take on challenging roles and stretch themselves beyond their comfort zone in skills and abilities
- Examining the role of possible success enablers, including technology and mentors, and understanding whether those who consider themselves successful are more likely to be innovators or early adopters of these
- A comparison of responses of men and women and of different generations to these and other questions

Methodology



- Accenture conducted a global online survey of 3,600 professionals from medium to large organizations in 18 countries
 - Australia, Austria, Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States
- Respondents were split evenly by gender, balanced by age and level in their organizations
 - Just over one in three professionals works for a multinational organization
- The survey was conducted between November and December 2008; the margin of error is +/-2%

Respondents' profile



Generation

Baby boomers
born before
1964: 34%

Generation Y,
born after
1979: 32%

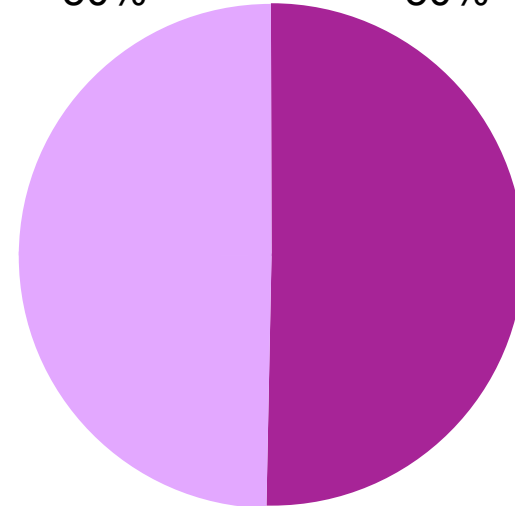


Generation X,
born 1965-1978: 34%

Gender

Female
50%

Male
50%





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Executive summary

Challenges, confidence and career success



- Almost half (46 percent) of female executives around the world—and a similar number of their male counterparts (49 percent)—believe they are insufficiently challenged
- Yet more than three-quarters (76 percent) of all respondents say they are confident of their skills and capabilities
 - These skills include the ability to manage their workload and deadlines, to delegate tasks and to negotiate (reported by 70 percent, 68 percent and 65 percent, respectively)
- At the same time, almost six in 10 women (59 percent) believe their careers are “successful” or “very successful”
- And, nearly half (46 percent) of women who consider themselves “very successful” report that they are in jobs that require them to stretch beyond their expected responsibilities

Stretching beyond a comfort zone



Yet these women are challenging themselves further:

- More than eight in 10 (81 percent) who consider themselves “very successful” said they take on additional responsibilities and complexity to advance their careers
- Three-quarters (75 percent) reported that they regularly stretch themselves beyond their comfort zone

Stretching beyond a comfort zone (cont'd)



- They also:
 - Are learning new skills that can help them move to the next level (reported by 78 percent)
 - Are willing to regularly consider a new position or role (76 percent)
 - Are willing to travel globally to conduct business or build relationships (68 percent)
 - Regularly ask their superiors for new challenges (65 percent)
 - Would consider relocating to another country if it were required to advance their careers (54 percent)

Success enablers: Technology



- Technology may be one success enabler: respondents who described themselves as “very successful” are significantly more likely than their counterparts to rely on technology
- More than three-quarters (79 percent) of respondents who identified themselves as “very successful” said they rely on technology, compared with just 56 percent of respondents who did not identify themselves as “very successful”
- Overall, men are more likely than women to identify themselves as “innovators” or “early adopters” of technology (70 percent versus 58 percent, respectively)

Success enablers: Mentoring programs



- For women, one highly touted but largely untapped resource is mentoring programs
 - When asked to whom they turn for career advice, just 14 percent of women cited a formal mentor at work
 - This compares with more than 50 percent of women who cited either family, friends and current or former colleagues (cited by 57 percent, 51 percent and 50 percent, respectively)
 - Yet women acknowledge the value of a mentor. They report that their mentors help:
 - Them think differently about certain situations (43 percent)
 - With their current roles (41 percent)
 - Them see more opportunities and possibilities (37 percent)
 - With identifying their skills and capabilities (34 percent)
 - Increase their confidence (34 percent)
 - Encourage them to stretch themselves (32 percent)

Other key findings



- The challenging economy has led some respondents—particularly those in emerging markets—to expand their skills and stretch their roles in order to remain competitive
 - For example, the majority of respondents in Brazil, China and India (86 percent, 79 percent and 70, respectively) said they have done so, compared with just 22 percent of respondents in the Netherlands and 35 percent in both Austria and Norway
 - One anomaly among more-developed economies is Italy, where 74 percent of the respondents said they have expanded their skills and roles to remain competitive

Other key findings (cont'd)



- In several countries, women were more likely than men to report that they regularly ask their superiors for new challenges. The disparity was the greatest in:
 - The United States (70 percent of women versus 48 percent of men)
 - Russia (57 percent of women versus 44 percent of men)
 - Austria (38 percent of women versus 26 percent of men)
- Men overall were more likely than women to say they have asked for pay raises (56 percent versus 48 percent) and promotions (42 percent versus 37 percent)

Other key findings (cont'd)



- Generational status does not appear to determine optimism about future job prospects. In the current economic climate:
 - 50 percent of Baby Boomer respondents (those born before 1964) feel secure about their future career prospects
 - 45 percent of Generation X respondents (those born between 1965 and 1978) feel secure
 - 48 percent of Generation Y respondents (those born after 1979) feel secure



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Stretch roles and career success

Almost half of all female respondents – and a similar number of their male counterparts – believe they are insufficiently challenged



Q. How much are you being challenged/stretched in your current role?

Showing significantly challenged + challenged

Country	Total	Men	Women
Overall	52%	51%	54%
Brazil	66%	67%	65%
Germany	66%	66%	65%
India	64%	62%	66%
Switzerland	62%	67%	57%
Austria	60%	60%	60%
Netherlands	58%	60%	56%
USA	57%	58%	56%
South Africa	56%	54%	59%
France	56%	58%	54%
Spain	55%	57%	53%
Norway	54%	51%	56%
UK	51%	47%	55%
Australia	51%	52%	50%
China	50%	53%	47%
Italy	41%	32%	51%
Ireland	41%	36%	47%
Russia	36%	32%	40%
Mexico	18%	5%	31%

Yet, three-quarters of all respondents express confidence in their skills and capabilities



Q. How confident are you that your current skills and ability allow you to take on new, expanded roles and tasks?

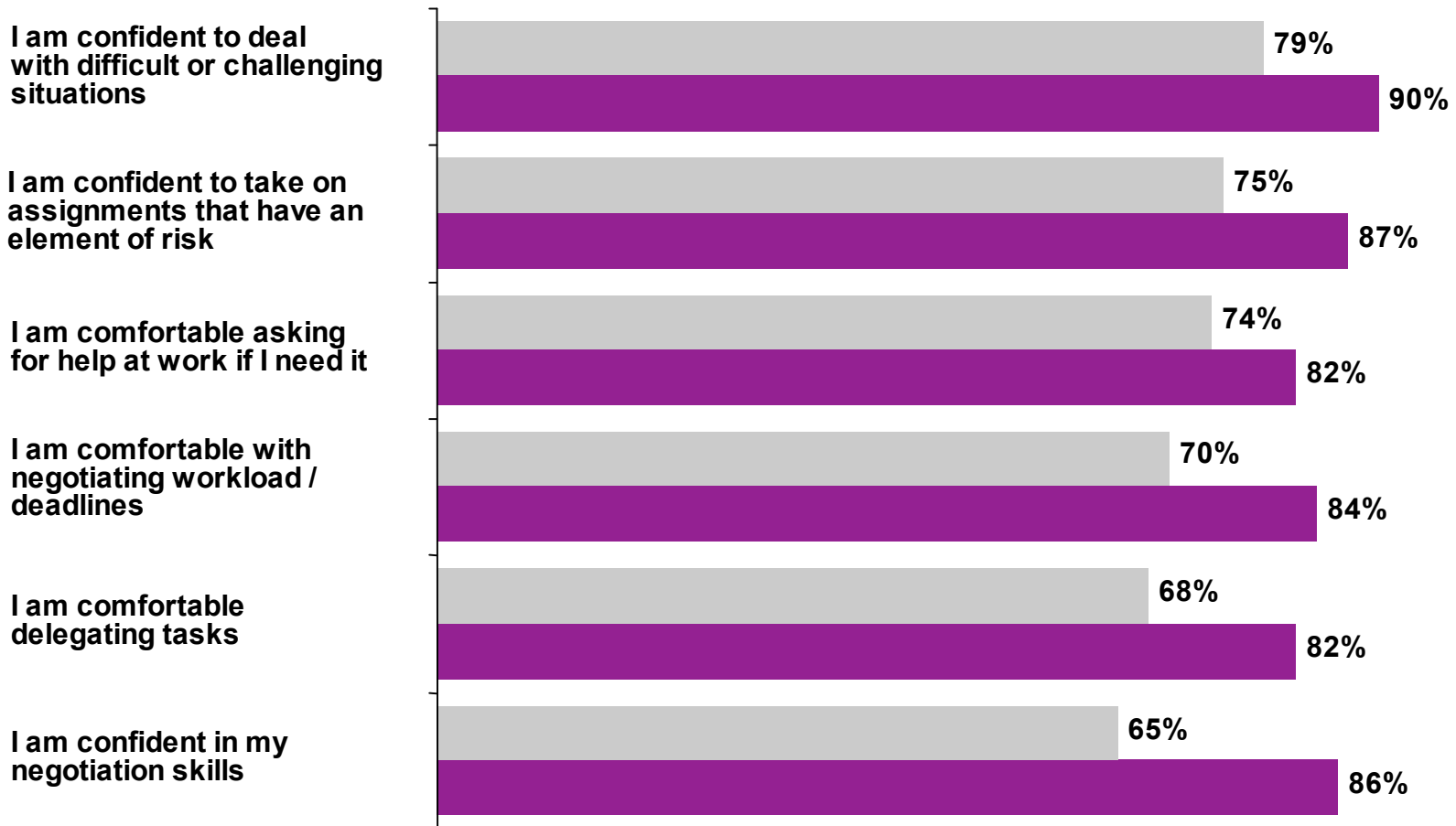
Showing somewhat confident and very confident

Country	Total	Men	Women
Total	76%	76%	77%
Mexico	90%	91%	88%
Brazil	89%	95%	83%
USA	85%	84%	85%
India	83%	84%	81%
Russia	81%	81%	80%
South Africa	80%	82%	78%
Germany	76%	78%	74%
China	76%	77%	75%
Austria	74%	74%	73%
Australia	74%	73%	75%
Switzerland	74%	70%	78%
Spain	73%	66%	80%
Ireland	71%	67%	75%
Netherlands	70%	69%	71%
Norway	70%	69%	71%
UK	69%	62%	76%
France	68%	69%	67%
Italy	65%	65%	65%

Specifically, respondents are confident about a variety of areas



■ % of men and women agree and are very successful ■ Overall % men and women agree



Almost six in ten women believe their careers are successful or very successful

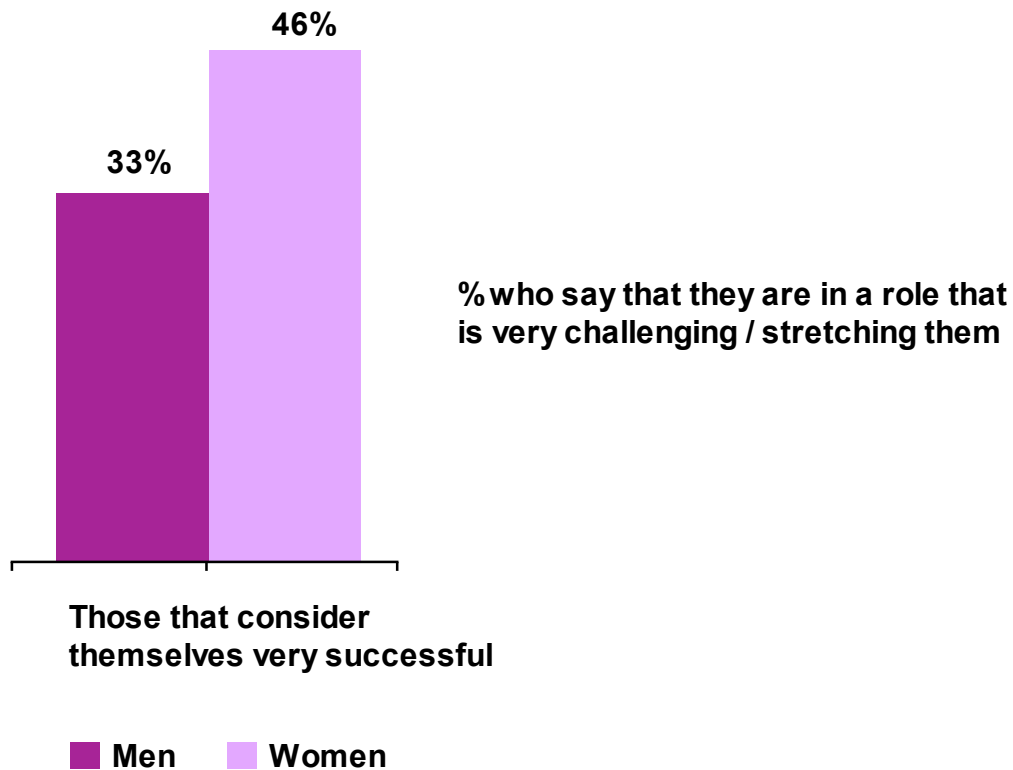


Q. How successful do you feel your career is currently?

Showing successful and very successful

Country	Total	Men	Women
Total	61%	62%	59%
Mexico	79%	77%	81%
Brazil	74%	76%	72%
India	72%	75%	68%
USA	71%	69%	72%
Australia	66%	63%	68%
China	65%	66%	63%
Spain	64%	66%	63%
Germany	62%	67%	57%
South Africa	61%	55%	67%
Switzerland	60%	68%	52%
Italy	59%	65%	54%
Austria	59%	60%	57%
Netherlands	57%	58%	56%
France	52%	55%	49%
Russia	51%	54%	48%
UK	50%	49%	52%
Ireland	47%	49%	46%
Norway	44%	46%	42%

Nearly half of women who consider themselves *very successful* have jobs requiring them to stretch beyond expected responsibilities



Successful women are more likely to stretch themselves...



I am learning new skills to move to the next level



I take on additional responsibilities and complexity to advance



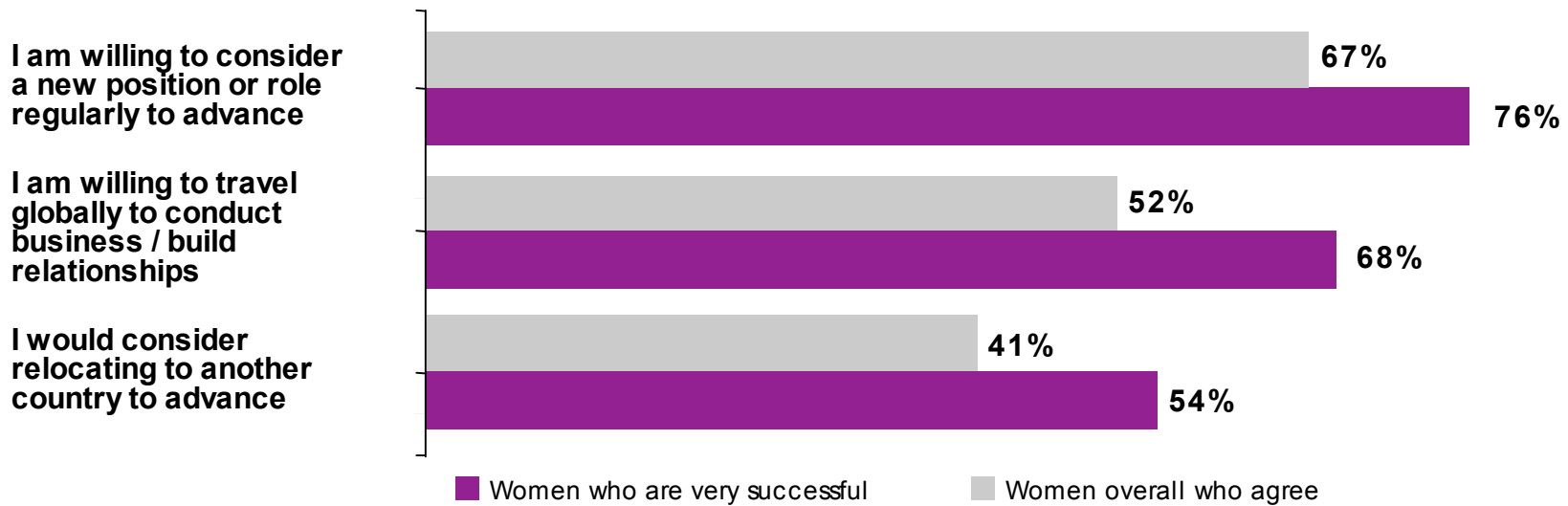
I stretch myself beyond my comfort zone regularly



I regularly ask my superiors for new challenges



...and to be agile





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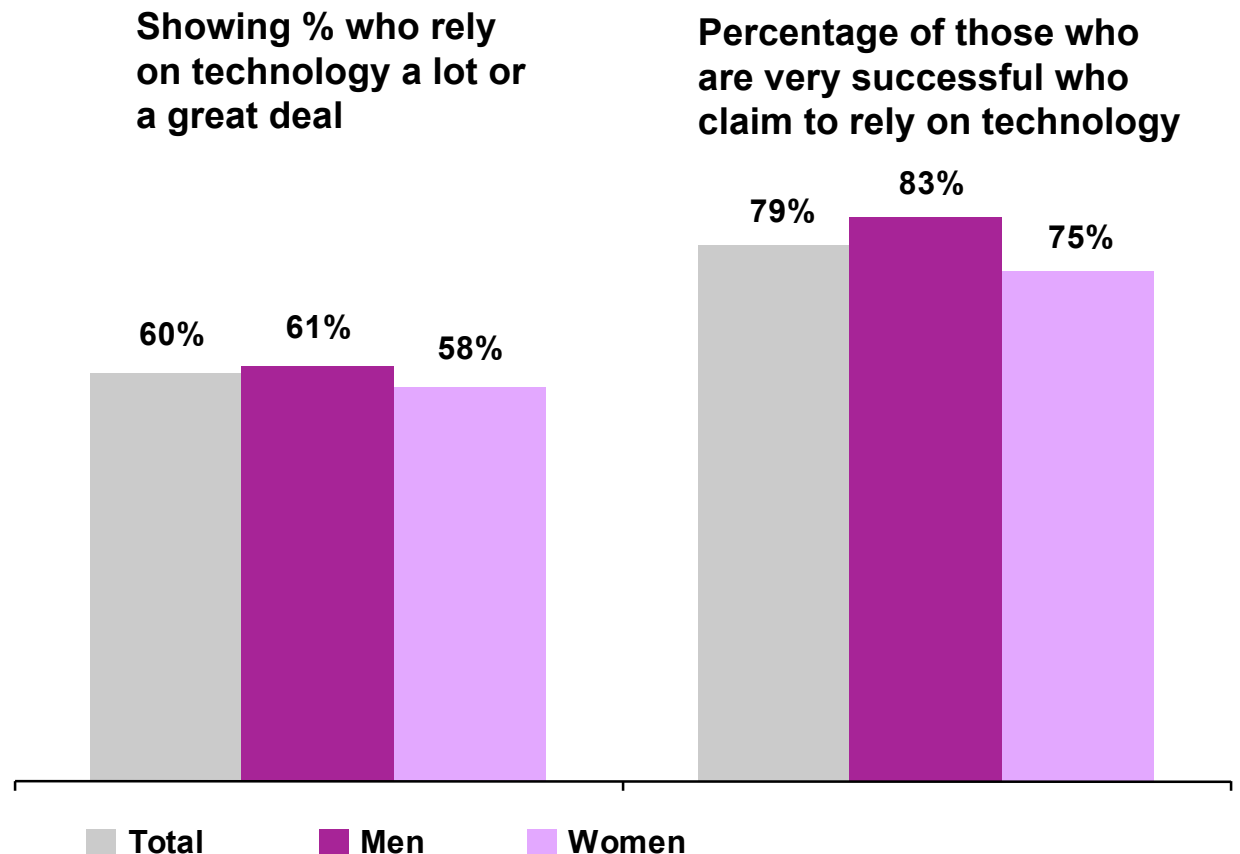
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Success enablers

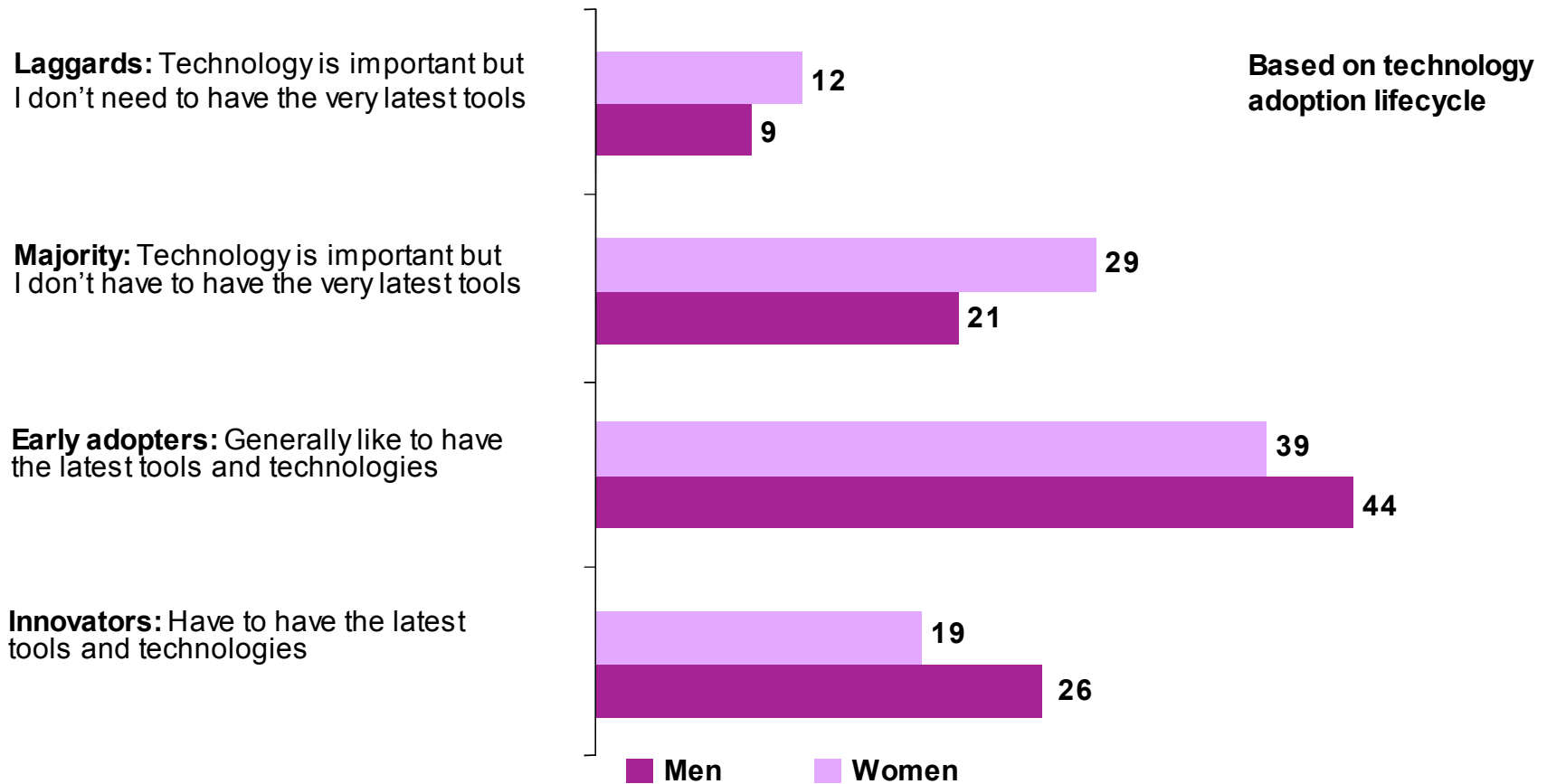
Respondents who say they are *very successful* are significantly more likely to rely on technology



Q. How much do you rely on technology to be successful in your current role?



Overall, men are more likely to identify themselves as *innovators* or *early adopters* of technology



An untapped resource for women is mentoring programs: just 14 percent ask formal mentors for career advice



	Q. Who do you turn to for advice about work and	Q. Who provides the best advice?
Family	53% (women 57% men 48%)	25% (women 28% men 22%)
Colleagues/former colleagues	50%	20%
Other professionals in my field whom I do not work directly with	30%	13%
Friends	48% (women 51% men 44%)	12%
Superior at work	27%	11%
Professional network	17% (men 21% women 14%)	6%
Formal mentor at work	13% (women 14% men 13%)	5%
Mentor outside of work	10%	3%
Career counselor/advisor	8%	3%
Professor, teacher etc.	6%	1%

Mentors/advisors add value in a variety of ways



Q. How has having a mentor helped you?

	Total	Male	Female
Helped me think differently about certain situation	41%	39%	43%
Helped me with my current role	41%	40%	41%
Helped me see more opportunities and possibilities	35%	32%	37%
Identified my skills and capabilities	34%	33%	34%
Increased my confidence	32%	30%	34%
Encouraged me to stretch myself	30%	28%	32%
Helped improve my communication style	29%	29%	29%
Helped improve my negotiation skills	24%	24%	24%
Created a wider professional network	22%	24%	21%
Helped me get a promotion or better role	18%	18%	18%
Other	5%	5%	5%

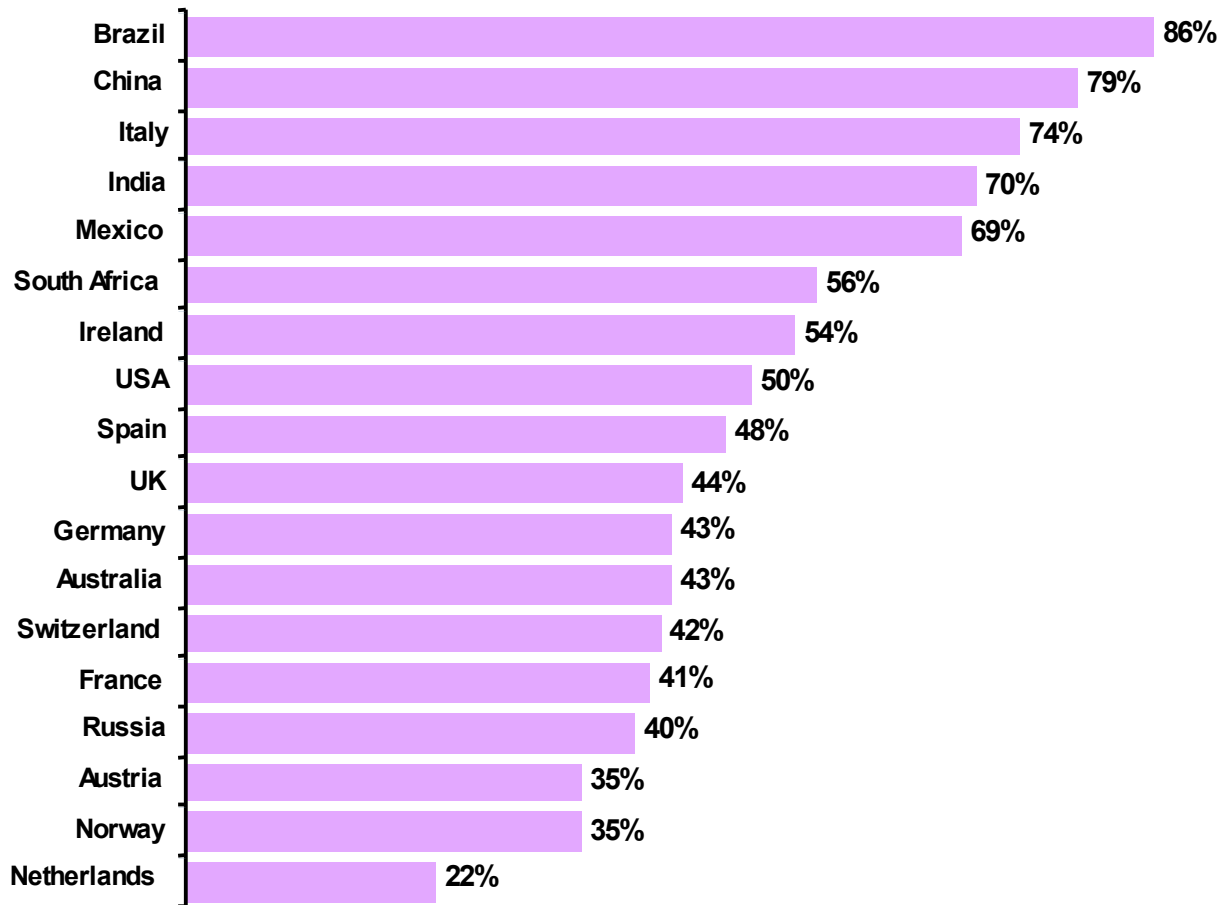


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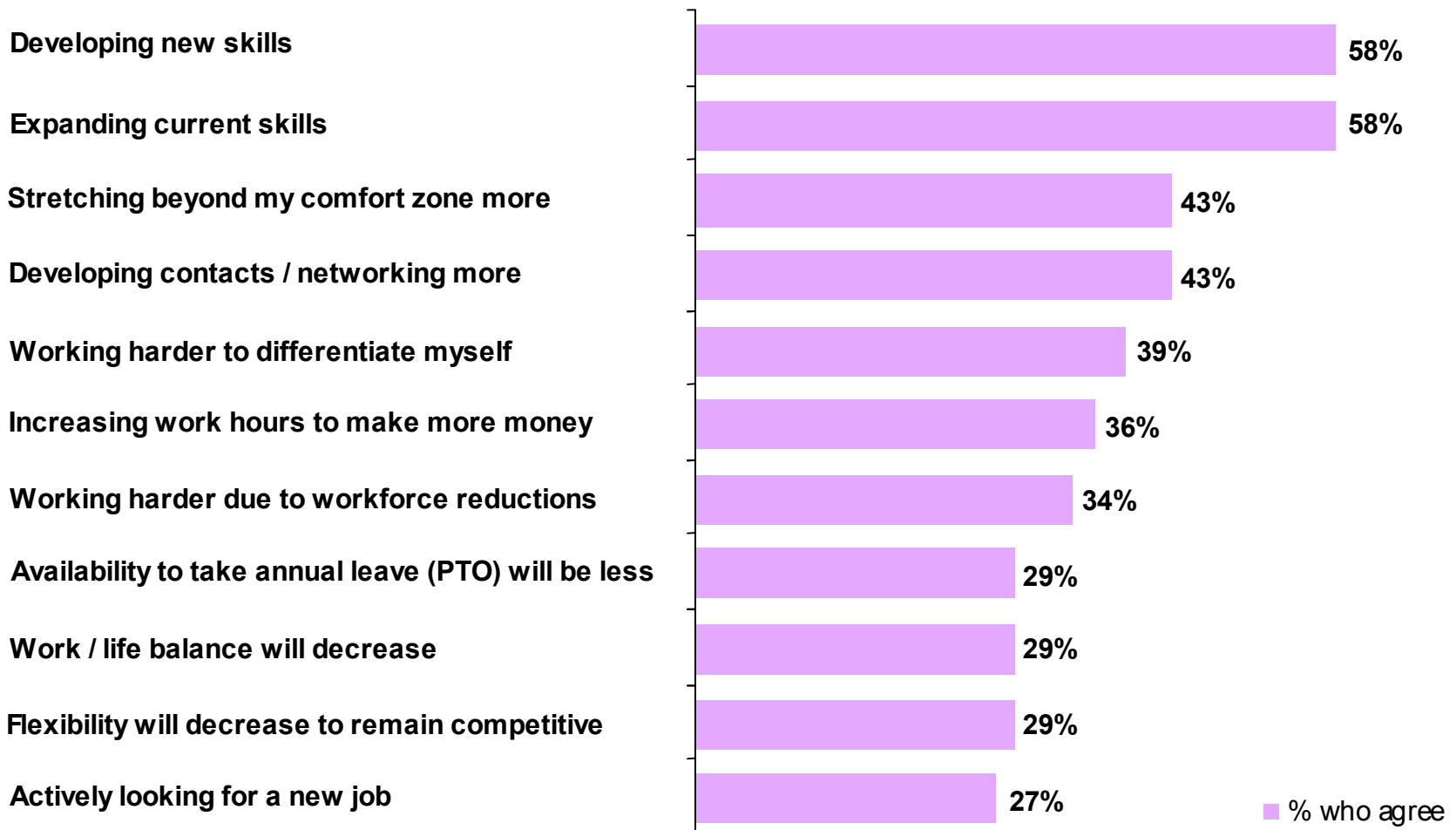
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Other key findings

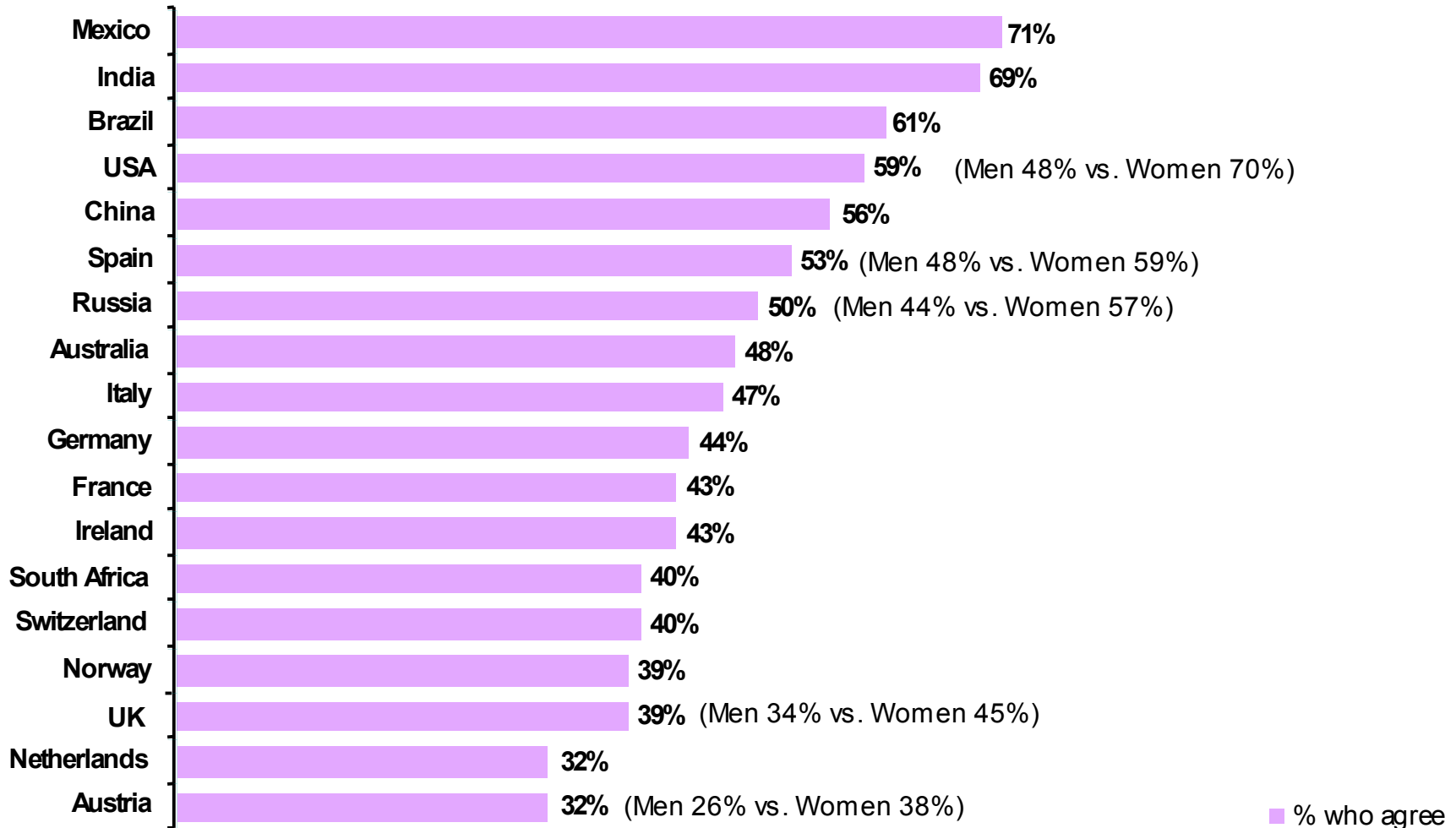
In the challenging economy, respondents in some markets said they have expanded their skills and/or stretched their roles to remain competitive



Over half report that they are currently expanding or developing new skills to stay competitive in this economy



In several countries, women were more likely than men to report that they regularly ask their superiors for new challenges



Men overall were more likely than women to say they have asked for pay raises...



Q. Have you ever asked for or negotiated a pay raise?

Results by country

Country	Total	Men	Women
Total	52%	56%	48%
Russia	69%	68%	70%
Mexico	65%	70%	60%
India	55%	57%	53%
Australia	55%	64%	47%
Brazil	59%	54%	64%
USA	53%	54%	51%
Austria	52%	56%	48%
Germany	52%	56%	49%
France	52%	52%	51%
South Africa	51%	54%	48%
Spain	51%	53%	48%
Italy	50%	63%	36%
China	49%	52%	46%
Norway	49%	51%	47%
Switzerland	47%	49%	45%
Ireland	47%	55%	37%
Netherlands	47%	52%	42%
UK	33%	39%	26%

...and to ask for promotions



Q. Have you ever asked for a promotion?

Results by country

Country	Total	Men	Women
Total	40%	42%	37%
China	52%	59%	45%
Brazil	51%	51%	51%
India	50%	50%	51%
Mexico	49%	51%	46%
France	46%	43%	48%
Russia	46%	45%	48%
Ireland	45%	55%	35%
USA	44%	47%	41%
Italy	42%	46%	39%
Spain	40%	47%	33%
Australia	37%	41%	33%
Germany	35%	35%	36%
UK	33%	34%	32%
Switzerland	31%	31%	31%
Netherlands	31%	39%	22%
Austria	30%	33%	27%
South Africa	28%	30%	26%
Norway	23%	26%	19%

Generational status does not appear to determine optimism about future job prospects



Q. In the current economic environment, how are you feeling about your future career prospects?

Showing those that feel secure and very secure

Country	Total	Gen Y	Gen X	Baby boomers
Total	48%	48%	45%	50%
Brazil	66%	62%	66%	69%
India	59%	52%	57%	67%
Australia	58%	59%	56%	60%
China	56%	48%	56%	67%
Mexico	54%	53%	47%	64%
Spain	51%	51%	50%	52%
Netherlands	50%	68%	39%	52%
Norway	49%	48%	42%	56%
Switzerland	48%	47%	56%	41%
South Africa	45%	39%	49%	46%
USA	44%	49%	34%	48%
Austria	43%	47%	38%	43%
Russia	43%	46%	41%	40%
Ireland	42%	39%	33%	56%
UK	41%	47%	39%	38%
Germany	38%	38%	38%	38%
France	39%	49%	32%	37%
Italy	35%	38%	32%	36%



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