Ascend
PAN-ASIAN LEADERS

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT:
Asian American Leaders in Silicon Valley

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the past year, Silicon Valley technology companies have focused even more on workforce diversity, and several companies have shown an increased transparency by disclosing previously confidential 2013 EEOC data. The EEOC data released by five large Silicon Valley companies (Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, and Yahoo) allow us, for the first time, to analyze the number of employees in the pipeline of management classifications by gender and race.

The popular news headlines that whites and Asians dominate Silicon Valley employment often overlook the fact that the EEOC data, while showing that Asian men and women are well represented in the non-managerial professional workforce, also show them to be severely under-represented at the executive levels. Using the EEOC definition, "Asian" includes any citizen or noncitizen having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent. As illustrated in the following figure, Asians were found to be 27.2% of the professional workforce, but only 13.9% of executives in the professional workforce at Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, and Yahoo.

Aggregate 2013 Management Pipeline by Race
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)

Professionals (n=117,354)   Managers (n=20,844)   Executives (n=1,172)

10.7%   62.2%   27.2%

7.3%   18.8%   72.7%

5.8%   13.9%   80.3%

■ White   ■ Asian   ■ Black, Hispanic, Other
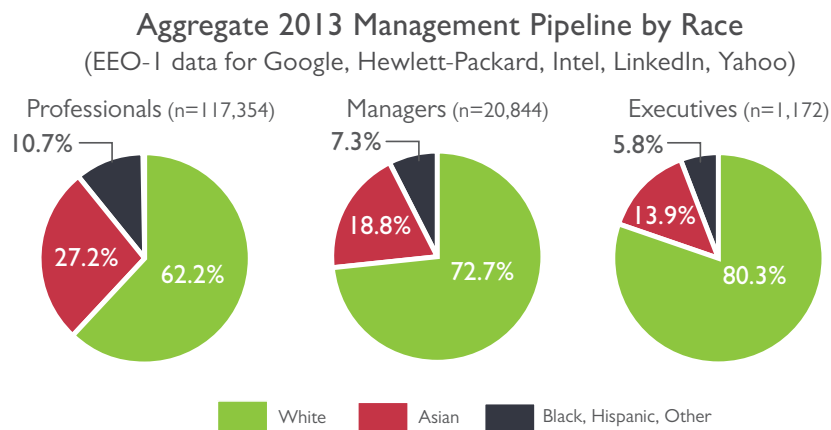
Using the new data (sample size = 139,370 professionals, managers, and executives), we measured the gaps between different cohorts of race and gender. We also evaluated the executive pipeline with an "Executive Parity Index™" (EPI™), comparing the representation of each group at the executive level to the group's representation at the non-managerial (or individual contributor) professional level. An index above 1.0 indicates that cohort is above parity at the executive level.

As illustrated in the following EPI figure, white men are above parity. White women are nearly at parity, while Asian men and women are below parity. Although we include the figures for black and Hispanic men and women, we do not use them for comparative purposes because EPI figures for those cohorts are highly sensitive to small changes.

Executive Parity Index by Cohort
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)
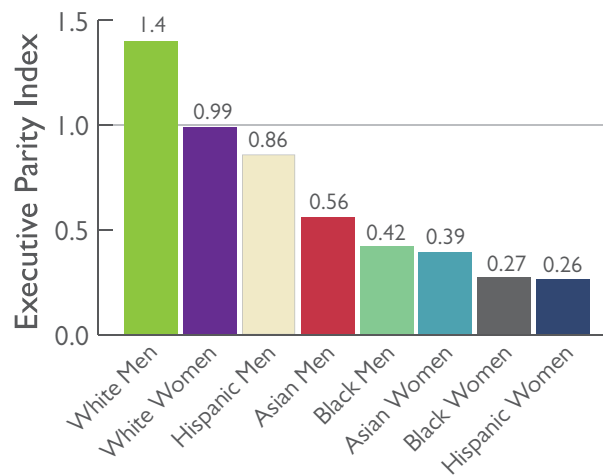
Key findings from our analysis comparing the Asian and white workforce data are as follows:

- Although there are nearly as many Asian professionals as white professionals in most of these five companies, white men and women are ~154% more likely to be an executive compared to their Asian counterparts.

- Asian women are the least represented as executives, relative to their percentage in the workforce. There are 9,254 Asian women professionals in our sample (13.5%), but only 36 Asian women executives (3.1%).

- In the aggregate, the data reflect that white women are 16.8% of professionals, well below their numbers in the U.S. population (40%), but also suggest that they are having success at reaching executive levels in Silicon Valley–based companies. White women have an EPI nearly at parity at executive levels, relative to their representation as individual contributors.

- The "Asian effect" is 3.7X greater than the "gender effect" as a glass ceiling factor. The Asian effect was measured at ~154% for both men and women. The gender effect was measured at ~42% for both whites and Asians.

Based on our cumulative experience as corporate executives, mentors, and leadership program facilitators to aspiring Asian professionals, we have observed cultural norms that have contributed to making Asians, by many measures, the most successful racial group in the United States. At the same time, those norms can create problems for many in reaching higher management levels.

We identify three major Asian leadership gaps: a gap in awareness and expectations, a gap in role models, and a gap in behavior. Although awareness and behavioral gaps are not unique to the Asian community, social science research and our personal observations find that traditional upbringing and cultural norms can hinder many in bridging those gaps. Social science research suggests that an Asian effect is rooted in a cultural mismatch between Asian and western leadership norms which feed the western implicit stereotype that Asians have poor leadership skills.

We have observed that the gap between the whites and Asians in the pipeline can be addressed with proper leadership training, visible Asian role models, and affirmative internal outreach to find high-potential Asian managers. During the past five years, we have reached over 1,000 Asian managers in the United States and Canada through our work in Ascend's "Executive Insight Series" and "Executive Insight for Women," as well as in Stanford's "Advanced Leadership Program for Asian American Executives." Participants often remarked how approaching the gap from a deep understanding of the role of cultural values helps them to better appreciate their own motivations and their needs to expand their skills portfolio.

We recommend that companies calculate Executive Parity Indices for the various demographic cohorts as we have done for the five companies. Companies should also consider, in their analysis, differences by function and region using in-depth internal data. If the analyses show large parity gaps among cohorts, the company should try to understand the dynamics that contribute to these gaps.

We also strongly recommend that companies with a large Asian professional workforce should incorporate components to address Asian leadership gaps into their standard management training process. In addition, for companies that have invested in initiatives to develop more women into leadership roles, we would recommend an evaluation of their outreach to Asian women. As the EEOC data point out, there are nearly as many Asian as white women in the professional workforce in many Silicon Valley-based companies, so such initiatives should consider the overlooked Asian women as the best near-term opportunity to leverage more women into management.

Finally, we ask that companies examine their investments in diversity programs to confirm that they are well aligned with their specific diversity problems. As former corporate executives, we are well aware of the complexity of workforce diversity. We believe that the EPI analysis can provide a simplifying metric and provide a good process to start asking questions to understand their issues in the employee population and leadership pipeline. Where is the fallout from the pipeline? Are there relevant differences in the workplace by region or functional areas? Are biases unwittingly and systematically built into talent assessment processes? What are the best practices?

When we began our review of the EEOC data, we expected the data to simply reinforce our own assessment of the Asian leadership gap, supporting earlier work using public information on corporate officers and board members. Indeed, as we anticipated, we found that Asian men and women are over-represented in the Silicon Valley workforce and under-represented as executives.

But we were surprised when the data led us to unexpected insights and important questions about the intersection of race and gender in the high-tech workplace. We are hopeful that those findings and insights will spur a broader conversation about management diversity, improve internal processes to find high-potential employees for leadership development, and finally close the Asian leadership gap.

INTRODUCTION

During the past year, diversity and inclusion have become a more pressing issue for many Silicon Valley companies. Urged by organizations such as the Rainbow Push Coalition, which attracted widespread attention with local visits by Reverend Jesse L. Jackson Sr., many Silicon Valley companies have offered to make their efforts more transparent and accountable. These efforts have resulted in increased attention to the dearth of under-represented minority, black, and Hispanic talent in Silicon Valley and have highlighted the need for more effective diversity programs to increase the numbers of women, blacks, and Hispanics in the high-tech workforce. Commentary from the national press, including Fortune magazine and The New York Times focus on those groups while categorizing white and Asian men as being over-represented.[1, 2]

Overlooked in the popular diversity discussion, however, has been the issue of an Asian glass ceiling at the highest management levels and the limited number of Asian men and women in the executive pipeline. Fortunately, as they adopt greater transparency, some Silicon Valley companies have released previously confidential data filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reporting management levels by race and gender, thus providing internal details of the executive representation for Asian men and Asian women.

Our analysis of the EEOC data for five major Silicon Valley-based companies has uncovered new insights about the glass ceiling in Silicon Valley. While both race and gender are factors in the Asian glass ceiling, our analysis shows that the impact of race is 3.7X the impact of gender. For Asian women, this translates into a double whammy race-plus-gender problem. There is only 1 Asian woman executive per every 285 Asian women in these companies, half the average ratio of 1 executive per 118 professional men and women of all races. For Asian men, the executive ratio also falls below average: 1 per 201 Asian men. White women were much more represented, with 1 executive per 123 white women. As expected, white men, with 1 executive per 87, had the highest executive representation.

Figure 1. Ratio of Executives for Asian/White Men and Women
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)

| 1 per 285 | 1 per 201 | 1 per 123 | 1 per 87 |
| Asian Women | Asian Men | White Women | White Men |
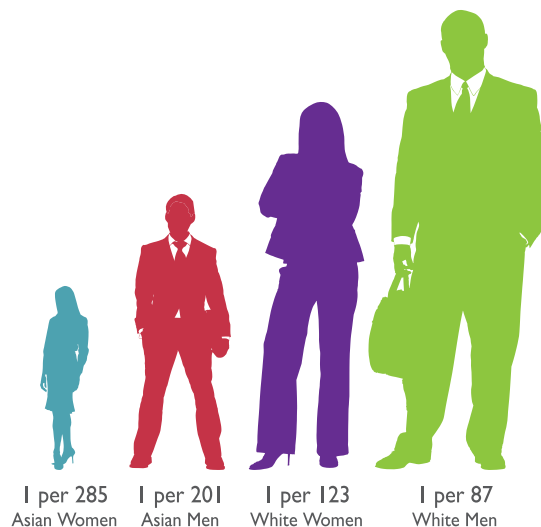
Although previous reports had already confirmed that there are few Asians in senior leadership roles[3], that research had no access to lower level employment data. Now, using the new EEOC reports with details at lower management levels, we can create a snapshot of an executive pipeline by race and gender to analyze and compare the workforce demographics in major Silicon Valley-based companies.

Our analysis of the pipeline raises new questions about the Asian leadership gaps, but a numerical analysis cannot provide an understanding of root causes. We submit that these leadership gaps can be narrowed, and suggest that a number of societal and cultural factors are relevant in explaining the gaps and developing solutions. We base these suggestions upon our personal experience mentoring high-potential Asian professionals, and upon recent social science research on Asian Americans. We also continue dialogues with dozens of other Asian executives in different business segments and industries across the country, and hear a number of recurrent themes.

As former Silicon Valley executives with experience in companies including HP, Cisco, and KPMG, we share an insider's view of the management and workplace culture. Collectively, we have 90+ years of experience and worked as executives in marketing, accounting, product development, and operations. We have been intimately involved with internal processes for talent evaluation and understand the required leadership skills needed to be successful as an executive in Silicon Valley. Moreover, we have served as sponsors of Asian employee resource groups and on corporate Diversity and Inclusion Councils.

Ascend, a Pan-Asian organization of business professionals, has sponsored much of our recent work on the Asian leadership issue. We have created and facilitated Ascend leadership workshops for Asian managers and helped launch an executive education program for Asian American executives at the Stanford Graduate School of Business. In addition, two of us recently created an Ascend leadership workshop designed for Asian women professionals specifically to respond to concerns from women raised in other programs.

For simplicity in this report, we will generally use the term "Asian" to refer to Asians and Asian Americans, both foreign-born and U.S.-born. As defined in the EEOC reports, "Asian" includes any person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. At the end of the report, we have attached Exhibits with the more detailed data tables and charts, as well as literature or source references.

DETAILED EEO-1 DIVERSITY DATA

All private employers with 100 or more employees are subject to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and are required to file a confidential EEO-1 report with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on an annual basis. Although disclosure is not required, a number of prominent Silicon Valley companies have recently released their EEO-1 reports to the public.

The EEO-1 report provides a racial and gender breakdown of all employees throughout the United States. As illustrated in the Yahoo EEO-1 report shown in Exhibit A, the employee workforce is further broken down by job categories:

- Executives and Officials and Managers
- First/Mid-Officials and Managers
- Professionals
- Technicians
- Sales Workers
- Administrative Support
- Craft Workers
- Operatives
- Laborers and Helpers
- Service Workers

Thus, for the first time, we are able to gain data-based insights into the executive pipeline of a company at the race and gender level by analyzing the U.S. workforce data in the three highest job categories:
(1) "Executives and Officials and Managers", (2) "First/Mid-Officials and Managers", and (3)" Professionals". For the remainder of this report, we shall use the terms "Executives", "Managers", and "Professionals" to refer to these categories defined by the EEOC.[4]

At the time of our analysis, we were able to locate 2013 EEO-1 data from five companies: Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, and Yahoo. In these five companies, we found 139,370 Professionals, Managers, and Executives, accounting for 81% of their total U.S. workforce, as would be expected in high-tech companies with mostly white-collar jobs in technology, marketing and sales.

The charts in Figure 2 summarize the racial breakdown of the Professional, Management, and Executive workforce using the aggregate data from these five companies.[5] Figure 2 shows that white workers are the largest contingent, comprising 62.2% of the Professional workforce and 80.3% of all Executives. Asians are 27.2% of all Professionals and 13.9% of Executives. The charts show that the other minorities are significantly under-represented at each level in these five high-tech companies.

Figure 2. Aggregate 2013 Management Pipeline by Race
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)

Professionals (n=117,354) Managers (n=20,844) Executives (n=1,172)

Legend: White | Asian | Black, Hispanic, Other
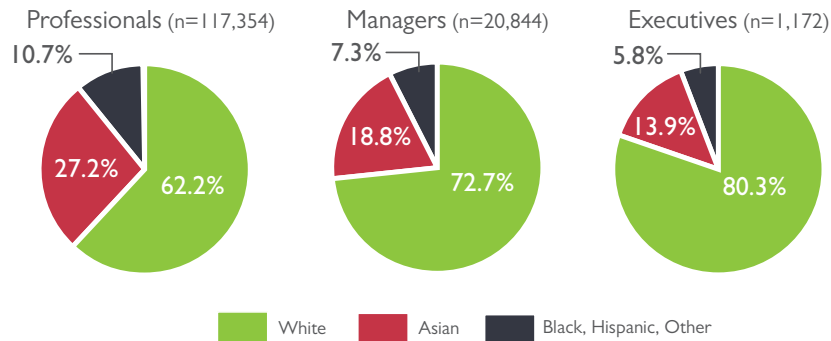
This data supports the popular news stories that whites and Asians dominate high tech employment in Silicon Valley, and that Asians in these companies are over-represented relative to their numbers in the local labor pool.[2] For context, Asians represented 34.1% of the 2013 U.S. estimate for Santa Clara County, the corporate headquarter location of these five companies (Exhibit E). According to the 2013 estimate, Asians are the largest racial group in the county, with the white population slightly less at 33.9%.

However, a more detailed comparison of the EEO-1 white and Asian data by gender yields additional insights not commonly cited in the popular press. Figures 3-1, 3-2 and 3-3 show the management pipeline for white and Asian men and women in these five companies, revealing a growing gap in each stage of the executive pipeline between white and Asians for both men and women.

As we turn to focus on the diversity issues for Asians, it is important first to note that Figure 2 shows that the other minorities, principally blacks and Hispanics, are under-represented as Professionals (10.7%), as compared to the representation of blacks and Hispanics receiving engineering college degrees (12%).[6] In addition, the data show that their representation declines in the higher management levels.

Figure 3-1 shows that for white men, their percentage representation at the Executive level is above their percentage representation at the Professional level. For white women, their Executive percentage representation is nearly the same as their Professional level. The charts show a different story for Asian men and women. In the aggregate for these five companies, while Asian men constitute 19.3% and Asian women 7.9% of Professionals, their representation percentage are significantly lower at Executive levels: 10.8% for Asian men and 3.1% for Asian women. Figure 3-1 also confirms that the percentage of white women Professionals (16.8%) still lag their numbers in the U.S. population and reaffirms the recognized need for more white women in technical fields.

Figures 3-2 and 3-3 are single gender comparisons of white and Asian cohorts to highlight the gap in representation between the two populations at each higher-management level. Figure 3-2 shows the gap between white and Asian men. Figure 3-3 shows the gap between white and Asian women.

Figure 3-1. 2013 Management Pipeline by Race: White and Asian
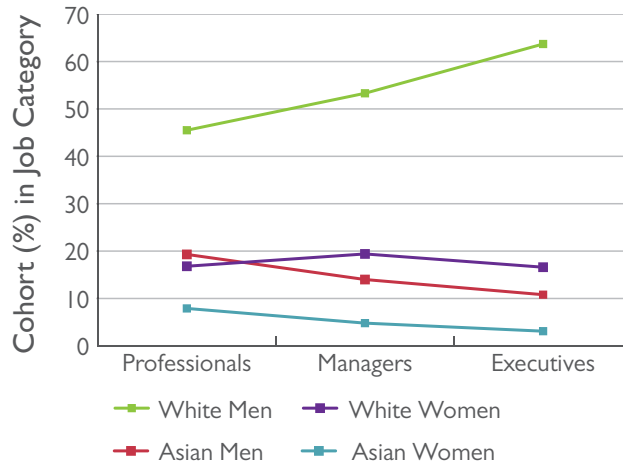(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)

Figure 3-2. 2013 Management Pipeline by Race: White and Asian Men
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)
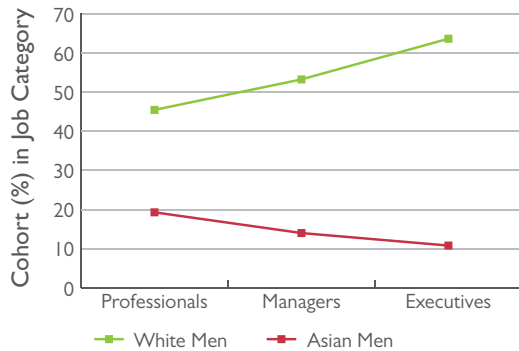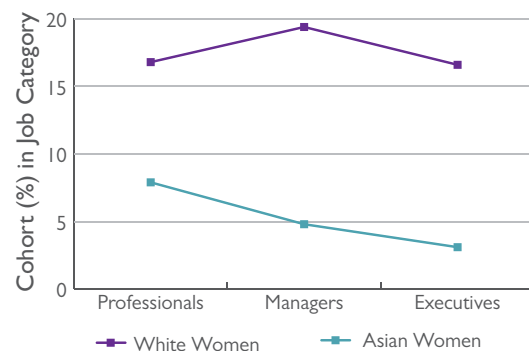

Figure 3-3. 2013 Management Pipeline by Race: White and Asian Women
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)

It is interesting to note that Figure 3-3 shows that white women Professionals in Silicon Valley are successfully reaching higher levels as Managers and Executives. As the data show, the percentage of white women as Managers (19.4%) is actually higher than Professionals (16.8%). The number of white women Executives (16.6%) nearly equals their Professional representation, reflecting the progress of corporate diversity programs to increase the number of women in management. In these figures, only the data for Asian men and Asian women reflect a significant declining representation in the management levels.

The leadership pipeline charts for the white and Asian cohorts in each company are included as Exhibit B for women and Exhibit C for men. The charts for each company illustrate a consistent pipeline gap between whites and Asians, regardless of gender.

Although Figures 3-2 and 3-3 only include Asians as a focus for our report, we also find that all minority men and women have declining representation through the pipeline. The complete data analysis is included as numerical tables in Exhibit D.

EXECUTIVE PARITY INDEX

Asians are 13.9% of Executives in our data set. Is that so bad? After all, Asians are 5.6% of the U.S. population.

In a hypothetical world where racial, cultural, or gender factors do not matter in the workplace, what would we expect for Asian representation at the Executive level in these Silicon Valley–based companies? With Asians representing 27.2% of Professionals, few people would agree that 5.6% of Executives is sufficient just because it matches the proportion of the U.S. population. Most people would find it more reasonable to expect that roughly 27% of Executives would be Asian, at parity with their Professional numbers.

The following analysis starts with that concept–that a cohort's representation as Executives is "at parity" if its percentage representation at the Executive level is the same as its percentage representation at the Professional level. We created a simple Executive Parity Index (EPI), to express that concept. EPI is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Executive Parity Index} = \frac{\text{Percentage of Executives}}{\text{Percentage of Professionals}}$$

The advantage of using an index of a cohort's percentage representation is that a simple comparison can be made independent of the absolute size of its population in any company's workforce.

If the calculated EPI is equal to 1.0, then a cohort's percentage representation is the same at the top and bottom of the executive pipeline. If the EPI is less than 1.0, then there are fewer at the top relative to those at the bottom of the pipeline. An EPI greater than 1.0 means that there are more at the top relative to the cohort's representation at the bottom of the pipeline.

We would recommend EPI as a dashboard metric for any company because the required data already exist in its EEO-1 reports and the calculation is simple. An EPI substantially higher or lower than 1.0 should be considered a warning sign and raise a red flag about the dynamics of the executive pipeline with respect to diversity. Although the EPI concept is new, a chief diversity officer at an east coast Fortune 500 company is now using it to help evaluate her internal management pipeline. A former chief human resource officer at a Fortune 500 consumer goods company also validated the EPI analysis as an innovative approach.

Used as an internal dashboard metric, the EPI analysis can raise questions that should be followed up with additional inspection of differences between regions and functions. For example, the Asian representation in the Bay Area workforce is likely to be higher than in New York. In most Silicon Valley companies, women are likely to have a higher representation outside of engineering.

The numbers and percentages for each management category according to race and gender, as aggregated using 2013 EEO-1 reports from the five companies representing our information source, are detailed in Exhibit D. As expected, Exhibit D shows that the EPI for whites is above parity (1.29), while the EPI for all minorities is below parity (0.76). Also as expected, the EPI for men is above parity (1.11), while the EPI for women is below parity (0.74).

However, the additional EEO-1 detail with each race by gender allows a deeper level of comparison. Figure 4 summarizes the Executive Parity Index for each cohort based upon aggregate numbers for each job classification in further detail.

Figure 4. Aggregate 2013 Executive Parity Index
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)
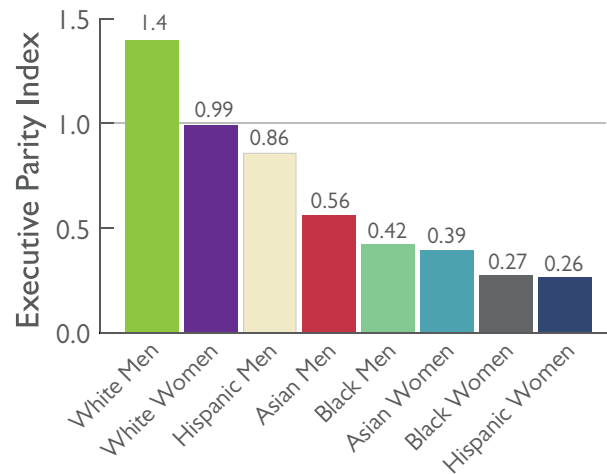
The EPI analysis in Figure 4 shows that the percentage of white men (EPI=1.40) exceed their representation as Professionals. White women nearly match their representation as Professionals. All other cohorts have an EPI less than 1.0, including Asian men (EPI=0.56) and Asian women (EPI=0.39).

For completeness, Figure 4 includes the EPI indices for black and Hispanic men and women that show that they are under-represented as a percentage as Executives. However, the absolute numbers for blacks and Hispanics in these five companies are too low to draw any further EPI-based comparative conclusions because there are woefully too few black and Hispanic Professionals or Executives in these companies to make comparisons meaningful.

Unlike the EPI calculations for 941 white and 163 Asian Executives, a small change in the absolute number of the 42 Hispanic and 16 black Executives would result in a material change in their EPI calculation. For example, while Figure 4 may imply that black men are doing slightly better than Asian women, one fewer black male Executive would move the EPI from 0.42 to 0.38 to lead to the opposite conclusion. Similarly, one more Hispanic woman Executive would move the EPI from 0.26 to 0.31 and change its relative ranking. Consequently, our remaining discussion will focus on the EPI analysis for the larger populations of white and Asian men and women.

DETAILS FOR ASIAN WOMEN

We have seen indications that Asian women have been left behind in Corporate America.

Catalyst, a leading research organization studying women's issues, released a 2003 report, "Advancing Asian Women in the Workplace," based upon their interviews with 413 Asian women, including entry- and mid-level women in focus groups and in-depth one-on-one interviews with senior Asian women. A key finding was that Asian women felt overlooked by corporate women's diversity programs.[7]

Another 2013 report provided evidence that progress for Asian women lagged other cohorts in reaching executive levels. The report found that, while the number of women grew from 14% to 20% of Bay Area executives from 2008–2013, the number of Asian women executives was essentially unchanged from 1.5% to 1.8%.[3]

Now, with our analysis of the EEO-1 reports, we demonstrate, in more detail, that the perception by that group of Asian women in the 2003 Catalyst report is still an unfortunate reality. The diversity programs' effectiveness gap is starkly illustrated by comparing the different trajectories for Asian and white women through the management pipelines in Exhibit B.

Our EPI analysis finds that the percentage of white women Executives, with an EPI of 0.99, almost matches their percentage as Professionals. By contrast, Asian women have an EPI of 0.39 and are under-represented, relative to their percentage as Professionals. In other words, white women are much more likely to be an Executive than Asian women.

But how much more likely? Using the EPI numbers, we can also understand the relative gap between cohorts. For example, if we want to compare the EPI for a hypothetical cohort A of 1.2 against another cohort B with an EPI of 0.4, we use the numerical gap between the two (1.2 - 0.4 = 0.8) to calculate that the EPI of cohort A is 200% greater (0.8/0.4 = 200%) than cohort B. Hence, cohort A is *200% more likely* to be an Executive compared to cohort B.

To examine the relative gaps in detail, we use the 2x2 matrix in Figure 5. Gender is used to define the horizontal axis and race to define the vertical axis. Each quadrant in the matrix contains the EPI for each race and gender in our study.

Figure 5. Aggregate 2013 Executive Parity Index
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)

	Women	Men
White	0.99	1.40
Asian	0.39	0.56

The upper left quadrant is the 0.99 EPI for white women. The lower left is the 0.39 EPI for Asian women. The gap between those two EPI numbers (0.99 - 0.39 = 0.60) suggests that white women in our sample are 154% more likely (0.60/0.39 = 154%) to be an Executive compared to Asian women. Quite unexpectedly, the same computation comparing the EPI white versus Asian men yields a very similar result of 149%.

Even more interesting is that the comparison of the effect of gender upon EPI also results in similar numbers for both white (42%) and Asian (44%) cohorts.

- white women versus Asian women; 0.99 – 0.39 (154% gap)
- white men versus Asian men; 1.40 – 0.56 (149% gap)
- white men versus white women; 1.40 – 0.99 (42% gap)
- Asian men versus Asian women; 0.56 – 0.39 (44% gap)

The EPI numbers in Figure 5 clearly reflect that Asian women are the least represented and least likely to be an Executive among the larger demographic groups found in the companies examined for our analysis. Our likelihood analysis using EPI ratios indicates that the racial effect (~154%) is a substantially bigger factor than the gender effect (~42%) in reaching Executive parity. We find the dual effects in the five companies, although the actual numerical effects in each vary. Hence, the analysis clearly shows that Asian women face a double whammy of being a woman and an Asian.

The key issue for the cohort of Asian women is different than for white women. While they both face the gender effect, increasing the number of qualified women graduates in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) to be recruited by Silicon Valley–based companies is a key focus for white women. Although white women are 40% of the U.S. population, they only represent 16.8% of our sample's Professional workforce. As Rosalind Hudnell, Intel's chief diversity officer, said, "We hire more engineers; we just do, and that pipeline [for women] is less."[8]

But additional recruiting of Asian women is less important. Asian women constitute 7.9% of the Professional workforce in our sample, yet only 2% of the U.S. population. The key issue for Asian women is advancement into management and executive levels as is evidenced by their status near the bottom of the EPI rankings.

We believe that our EEO-1 data represent a sufficiently large sample (n=139,370) of the management pipeline to reach the general conclusion that the Asian effect is a more significant negative glass ceiling factor than gender effect for Silicon Valley, as a whole.

However, our analysis finds that the specific magnitude of the effects varies from company to company, so we do not believe that we have a sufficient sample size to state that ~42% is the general gender effect or that ~154% is the general Asian effect across the remainder of Silicon Valley.

KEY ANALYTICAL INSIGHTS

Using the available EEO-1 data from the five Silicon Valley–based companies and our Executive Parity Index analysis, we provide several important observations:

1. Although there are nearly as many Asian Professionals as white Professionals in many companies, white men and women are, in aggregate, about 154% more likely to be an Executive compared to their Asian counterparts.

   a. The Asian Professional workforce is roughly the same as white Professionals at Yahoo (45% vs. 46%) and LinkedIn (46% vs. 47%), but white men and women are more likely to be an Executive than an Asian–382% more at Yahoo, and 205% more at LinkedIn.

   b. There are comparatively fewer Asians than white Professionals at Intel (38% vs. 52%), and Google (33% vs. 60%), but the same likelihood analysis finds a 417% white versus Asian Executive advantage at Intel, and a 34% advantage at Google.

   c. Hewlett-Packard (HP) appears to be an outlier. Only 16.5% of its Professionals are Asian, while Asians make up 37% of the Professionals at the other four companies. Excluding HP, the remaining population of 73,512 among the four companies has a smaller gender effect (14%) and a much larger Asian effect (206%), so that the Asian effect is 15X the gender effect. We do not have any data to explain these differences (i.e., with and without the HP data), but expect that it is related to the fact that HP has a large portion of its workforce outside Silicon Valley where the Asian population is significantly less concentrated.

2. In the aggregate, Asian women are the least represented as Executives. A comparison with black and Hispanic cohorts is not included because their numbers are too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

   a. As shown in Figure 5, Asian women have the lowest EPI (0.39) compared to other white and Asian cohorts. We exclude black and Hispanic cohorts because the low number of black women (5) and Hispanic women (5) Executives makes their EPI rankings sensitive to small numerical changes, so any comparison may be invalid.

   b. The EPI analysis finds that Asian men have a 44% advantage to be an Executive over Asian women. Similarly, white women have a 154% advantage over Asian women, and white men have a 260% advantage.

   c. Excluding HP as an outlier, we find that the remaining number of Asian women professionals (6,515) is close to the number of white women Professionals (7,060) in the other four companies. Despite similar numbers of the women professionals in the remaining companies, there were substantially fewer Asian women Managers (2,029 vs. 786) and Executives (83 vs. 25) than white women. In the smaller sample of four companies, the EPI for white women is 1.31, while the EPI for Asian women is 0.43.

3. In the aggregate, the data reflect that white women are only 16.8% of Professionals, well below their numbers in the U.S. population (40%), but also suggest that they are having success at reaching Executive levels in our study of these five Silicon Valley companies. At the Executive levels, white women have an EPI nearly at parity, relative to their representation in the Professional workforce. Both white men and white women outnumber Asian men and women as Executives.

   a. The aggregate Executive Parity Index is 1.40 for white men and 0.99 for white women. Moreover, for white men, an EPI > 1.0 appears to be true in all five companies, showing that white men are consistently over-represented as Executives in proportion to their Professional workforce. White women have an EPI > 1.0 at Intel, LinkedIn, and Yahoo, but an EPI < 1.0 at Google and HP.

   b. There are 285% more white men than white women Executives (747 vs. 194), and the comparison of the white men versus women EPI show that white men are 42% more likely than white women to be an Executive.

c. There are 52% more white women than Asian men Executives (194 vs. 127) although Asian men outnumber white women in the Professional level by 15% (22,596 vs. 19,659). The comparison of the white women versus Asian men EPI show that white women are 75% more likely than Asian men to be an Executive. There are 438% more white women than Asian women Executives (194 vs. 36), and the comparison of white versus Asian women EPI show that white women are 154% more likely than Asian women to be an Executive.

4. The Asian effect is much more significant than the gender effect as a glass ceiling factor.

a. The EPI analysis shows that whites are ~154% more likely to be an Executive than Asians of the same gender. It also shows that men are ~42% more likely to be an Executive than women of the same race. Hence, the effect of race (~154%) is 3.7X the effect of gender (~42%) in our sample of Silicon Valley-based companies.

b. The similarity of the two gender effects (42% and 44%) and the two Asian effects (148% and 154%) suggests that the gender and Asian effects may be uncorrelated.

c. The difference between the impact of race and gender is also observed in a comparison of the number of a cohort's Executives versus the cohort's total workforce of Executives, Managers, and Professionals. These comparisons detailed in Figure 6 show that there is 1 white male Executive for every 87 white men, yet only 1 white female Executive for every 123 white women. Both white men and women are substantially more represented as Executives than Asian men (1 per 201) or Asian women (1 per 285).

Figure 6. Executives versus Total Workforce by Race and Gender
(EEO-1 data for Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, Yahoo)

	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	All Race/Gender
Executives	747	194	127	36	1,172
Total: Executives, Managers, and Professionals	65,161	23,902	25,634	10,286	139,370
Executives per Total in each cohort	1 per 87	1 per 123	1 per 201	1 per 285	1 per 118

Although the data is sufficient to support the general findings about the Asian and gender effects, observed variation from company to company suggests that the specific factors of ~150% and ~42% would change with more data from other Silicon Valley companies.

EARLIER DATA FROM OTHER COMPANIES

In addition to 2013 EEO-1 reports, we also located 2010 EEO-1 data for Cisco and eBay from a 2013 CNN Money diversity report.[5] We did not include the 2010 data (n=36,657) with the 2013 aggregate analysis, but have included a separate computation of the EPI for these two companies in Exhibit F.

We found that the results of analysis of the 2010 Cisco and eBay data were consistent with all of the key findings using the 2013 data from Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, and Yahoo.

The EPI matrix, in Figure 7, again demonstrates that the Asian effect is much more significant than the gender gap. The data suggest that white men and women in the workforce at Cisco and eBay are successful at reaching executive levels, while Asian men and women are lagging.

Figure 7. 2010 EPI for Cisco and eBay

	Women	Men
White	1.25	1.99
Asian	0.28	0.43

Using the same analytical methodology outlined earlier, we find that white men are 53% more likely to be an executive than white women, and that Asian men are 60% more likely to be an executive than Asian women. White men are 360% more likely to be an executive than Asian men. Finally, white women are 342% more likely to be an executive than Asian women.

Once again, the similarity of the two gender effects (53% and 60%) and two Asian effects (342% and 360%) even across different data years and companies suggests that the gender and Asian effects may be uncorrelated.

In this smaller two company sample, we use the calculation =342% / 60% to suggest that the impact of race is > 5.7X more significant than gender as a glass ceiling factor. There were actually more Asian women than white women Professionals in 2010 working at Cisco and eBay (3,558 vs. 3,380), but far fewer executives (10 vs. 42).

THE ASIAN GAPS

The general nature of the failure of Asian men and women to reach executive levels in the Bay Area has been well documented.[3, 9, 10] We have previously noted that our observations of under-developed leadership skills in much of the Asian community as factors that hinder access to executive leadership levels.[7] These issues include the following:

- Cultural deference to authority and the reality that deference often implies weakness
- Ineffective communications and influencing skills
- Political naiveté/dexterity–understanding how organizational business decisions are made
- Aversion to risk-taking in business and career

Asia includes a wide spectrum of ethnicities from South Asia to East Asia; and distinct differences exist among them. However, in traditional Asian cultures as a whole, there are values commonly identified as traditional Asian cultural values such as deference to authority, preference for social harmony/conflict avoidance, and conformance to social norms, among others.[11]

We acknowledge that our formal training lies in business and management, not in social science. Our backgrounds do not include academic expertise on Asian ethnic cultures. However, with our Asian backgrounds and experience as corporate executives in high-technology and professional services, we have taught or mentored hundreds of Asian managers in the past 10 years and share common observations learned from that work.

First, we have observed that the ethos of excellence and hard work characterizes most successful people in Silicon Valley, not just Asians. We also know that teamwork and collaboration are the accepted norms in most companies so that the Asian tradition of harmony and collectivism are very positive attributes in the high-tech work culture.

But we have further observed that some behaviors based on Asian cultural values, while positive for the collective whole, may obscure individual leadership potential in Western companies. As Dr. Thomas Sy at University of California, Riverside noted in a new research paper on Asian leadership, "Individuals have schemas about leaders which vary and are influenced by culture…. Western societies and Asian societies differed on their endorsement of effective leadership styles."[11]

We do not imply that one management culture is better than the other. In fact, an Asian company such as Samsung can successfully compete with an American company like Apple. But our common sense tells us that it would be unlikely for executives in each company to switch places and expect to be effective without adapting to the other's management culture.

Our observations of Asians that we have managed or mentored in Silicon Valley fall into three themes:

- A Gap in Awareness and Expectations
- A Gap in Role Models
- A Gap in Behaviors

We observe that these gaps are not unique to Asians and that an individual of any race, ethnicity, or gender who has these gaps will find it difficult to rise to leadership roles. And we would caution anyone from taking our observations to assume that every Asian has a gap. Nevertheless, a wide array of social science research suggests that these gaps are more common in the Asian workforce.[11]

Although we discuss general observations of Asian men and women, we place a particular emphasis on our work with Asian women. The EPI analysis shows that Asian women have the lowest EPI of the larger demographic groups and suffer from the dual penalties of being an Asian and being a woman. As previously noted, the workforce representation for blacks and Hispanics in these five companies is too low to draw meaningful comparisons.

The Gap in Awareness and Expectations

With many of the professionals we have taught and mentees we have coached, we observed their tendency to underappreciate the importance of personal and organizational leadership skills as requisites for higher management roles. For example, a common complaint heard during the Stanford program for Asian executives is that Asians are not promoted because "meritocracy ends at the executive level." They observe that many Asians, despite demonstrating functional excellence as middle managers, are not promoted as often as others they deem less capable.

We do not believe that their complaint is generally valid. Although their observation is correct, we attribute the root cause to gaps in awareness and expectation rather than a failure of meritocracy. On the one side of the gap, we see a lack of awareness or a resistance to accept among many Asians that advancement to higher levels is not solely dependent upon technical excellence. On the other side of the gap, we see an implicit and often misguided expectation of many non-Asian managers that most Asians, by demonstrating technical excellence, prefer technical roles and do not aspire to leadership levels.

A gap in awareness causes many Asian men and women to seek work that highlight technical competence. They do not understand that they also need opportunities to demonstrate business vision and soft skills, often called emotional intelligence quotient, or EQ. Soft skills are needed because the more common western management culture heavily relies upon cross-organizational collaboration and distributed decision-making. An executive depends upon interpersonal skills and personal influence within a peer network outside of his/her span of control to be effective. Hence, beyond a formal education and technical credentials, western companies look for business, social, and people skills as the building blocks for successful leadership.

Most Asians in the Bay Area are first or second generation immigrants[12] and have parents who have raised them to seek careers perceived to be of high status. This upbringing leads many Asians to successfully pursue degrees in technical, financial, or scientific fields leading to highly regarded knowledge-based professions such as medicine, law, engineering, accounting, or scientific research. Consequently, it is understandable that 15% of Asian college graduates are in STEM fields, as compared to the national average of 6% of all graduates.[13] Traditional Asian parents view these careers as safe because they will enable their children to produce a good income within a respectable profession.

The strong Asian tradition of profession-oriented education helps explain the widespread perception of Asian achievement. Asians are the most educated—49% of Asians in the U.S. have college degrees, compared to a national average of 28%. Asians have the highest median income of $66,000, compared to a national median of $49,800.[14]

The traditional Asian belief of safety in a respectable profession too often carries over into risk-aversion in career development. Many Asians may not take the visible roles or projects within their organizations because of the fear of failure or "loss of face." Research on the concern over loss of face has found that it affects all people, but it is more likely to be a significant factor in decision making among Asians.[15] As a result, many Asians are less likely to seek roles that provide challenge and visibility such as leading a new initiative, taking on a failing product line, or becoming an official public spokesperson.

Moreover, traditional Asian parenting promotes individual knowledge and talent. Many may recall Amy Chua's book *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, a controversial memoir of a Yale law professor raising a child with a traditional Chinese approach. In the book, Ms. Chua, a second generation Chinese-American, recounts her battles with her older daughter to spend more time studying or practicing solo piano pieces. Her book makes no mention of any activities intended to develop her daughter's adolescent social or interpersonal skills. While some consider Ms. Chua's approach and tactics a bit extreme, they nevertheless reflect many Asian parents' drive and focus on personal excellence and performance.

Another gap in awareness is a common expectation that promotions are an automatic reward for good work. We have talked to many Asians who grew up with the ideas embedded from their Asian parents that if they do good work and keep their "heads down," they will be rewarded and tapped on the shoulder to move ahead as it should be given automatically without asking. However, as former corporate executives, we can attest that the quality of one's work was only one of several factors assessed when we evaluated personnel for promotions. In most cases, we had a choice among several candidates, all doing good work. We would confer with others who were knowledgeable with the candidate's work. Thus, candidates who develop a strong network with multiple advocates would have greater advantages. But just as important was whether we knew that a candidate actually desired or asked for the promotion.

Last year, in response to a question at the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing conference about asking for a raise or a promotion, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella famously made the remark, "It's not really about asking for the raise but knowing and having faith that the system will actually give you the right raises as you go along. And that I think might be one of the additional superpowers that, quite frankly, women who don't ask for a raise have. Because that's good karma. It'll come back, because somebody is going to know that is the kind of person that I want to trust".[16]

Following a firestorm of indignant responses, Nadella quickly tweeted with an apology, saying he was "inarticulate." Then he sent a more extensive apology e-mail to the employees at Microsoft, which read in part, "I answered the question completely wrong.... And if you think you deserve a raise, you should ask." Although he was quick to realize his mistake and addressed it, Nadella's initial off-the-cuff response demonstrated a common notion that an employee does not need to openly ask for promotions, and that doing so could dampen any "good karma" with his/her manager.

As aptly expressed in the popular Japanese proverb, "the nail that sticks out will be hammered" and "the quacking duck gets shot", Asian culture is more concerned with the dangers of speaking out. By contrast, in Western cultures, we are advised that "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." In short, we were more likely to give a promotion to someone who had actually asked for it. In our experience, a certain level of directness in asking for what an individual aspires to is not only tolerated, but expected and necessary.

In fact, one Asian woman contacted us recently to discuss leaving a Big Four accounting firm because she did not feel she was in the promotion pipeline. After we counseled her to be open about her career goals, she met with her partner-in-charge who, upon hearing about her unspoken aspirations, gave her a raise, committed to coach her, and agreed to sponsor a promotion in the next cycle.

As another example, this time from our personal lives, each of our respective parents instilled in us their belief that studying hard in school and making good grades are the key factors to getting a job in a good profession. And by working hard and keeping our heads down, we would be recognized and get ahead. It is interesting that while the three of us represent first, second, and third generation Asian immigrants, our parents taught each of us similar life lessons, reflecting enduring Asian cultural roots. Those core values account for much of our personal success. But for each of us, it took several years in the workforce to become aware of the value of asking for what we wanted before we could reach higher executive levels.

For many Asian women, another factor involves the long-held expectations of their parents that daughters should be the primary caregivers to children, husbands, parents, and even parents-in-law. In fact, a 2014 research report concluded that caregiving for family members was "so embedded in the life experience" among Asian Americans that "the decision to give or not give care was irrelevant; caregiving was something that was done without question." In contrast, "caregiving was not embedded in the life experience of the European Americans and was thus unexpected."[17] Hence, many Asian women face both the classic gender issues as well as the Asian cultural issues, resulting in the double whammy effect that we found in our EPI analysis.

With such expectations, both implicit and explicit, some Asian parents, husbands, and elders may not actively encourage, or may even actively discourage, their daughters to take on career roles that are more demanding of their time or take them out of their safety or caregiver zone. This factor in effect "self-handicaps" some Asians to lower their natural ambition to aspire to leadership roles and keeps them in roles that are "good enough." But even for many ambitious and talented women who have vaulted to the very top, they continue to be judged by their expected duties and performance of their many family roles at home, creating additional pressures to the typical work-life balance challenge.

Indra Nooyi, CEO of PepsiCo, recounted a story in which she was harshly reminded by her own mother of the important domestic roles as wife, mother, daughter, and daughter-in-law when she stepped inside her home from work, on the very day Indra was told by the CEO of her appointments to become the president of the company and a member of its board of directors. Instead of celebrating Indra's exceptional news, her mother insisted that Indra go out and buy milk for the family because no one had bothered to go to the store, despite the presence of her husband and household help at home.

Indra's talent, ambition, and Asian upbringing had just led her to the ultimate moment of business success. Yet the CEO of a $66 billion company ventured out in the late evening and bought milk "like a dutiful daughter."[18]

Finally, Asian men and women may lack awareness of the informal, unwritten "rules of the game" of how organizational leadership and influence is developed, which people are selected for development and promotion, and what social and work interactions can help build positive, substantive relationships with others in their organization. The soft skills necessary for leadership roles such as interpersonal relations, team management, assertive negotiations, and organizational collaboration are not typically taught nor emphasized in an Asian upbringing. These unwritten rules of the game are taught and learned through social networks. Thus, with the existence of exclusion dynamics and without good networking skills, many Asians may not be aware of these rules.

A former colleague at a global professional services firm learned about unwritten rules early in his career when he was overlooked for promotion to manager. When he asked why he wasn't promoted, he learned that he was not visible at meetings, had not developed relationships with the partners in the local office, and had been branded a "techie" and slotted for an internal IT role versus a client-facing role. Once he became aware of the rules of the game, he began networking, building relationships with key partners throughout the firm, and learning how to "ask." His career accelerated and he became a successful partner at his firm.

The other side of the expectation gap is the effect of implicit bias, certain beliefs that unconsciously and consciously affect decision making by non-Asians in the workplace. In this case, many managers expect Asians to be good workers but do not expect them to be potential leaders. This phenomenon was demonstrated in a 2010 study conducted by Dr. Thomas Sy.[19] In one experiment, participants received identical information about an employee's expertise and were asked to evaluate the employee for an engineering or sales position. In a different experiment, participants evaluated leadership potential. In each experiment, some participants were told the employee was Asian while others were told that the employee was white.

Despite the fact that the employee was always presented with identical qualifications, study participants perceived the Asian engineer as more capable than a white engineer. The Asian salesperson was judged as less capable than the identical white salesperson. And leadership perceptions were higher for whites in both cases. In short, decisions are made based upon what is known and what is expected. Because Asians are known to be great technologists, but expected to be uncertain business leaders, aspiring Asian leaders must bridge that external expectation gap.

The Gap in Role Models

As the EEO-1 data indicate, there is a lack of Asian men and women executives to serve as role models, mentors, and sponsors. The lack of role models in many organizations makes it even more difficult for Asians to see themselves at the executive levels so perhaps it is not even on their "radar screen" as an achievable goal.

In focus groups and workshops we conducted in the past two years with aspiring Asian women professionals, many participants told us that the few women senior executives in their own companies, if they even existed, didn't seem relatable role models. The Asian women also found that the women executive role models often profiled in the media, such as Sheryl Sandberg and Marissa Mayer, did not feel relevant to them because they themselves had not enjoyed the same perceived advantages (e.g., American-born native, Ivy League education, upper-middle class family background, family connections, etc.).

In our leadership workshops for Asian women, we tell intimate and detailed stories of our own career journeys as Asian women in becoming business leaders. The women in the workshops have told us that the stories about our modest backgrounds, overcoming and learning from challenges, progressively taking greater risks in life and career, and constantly navigating multiple cultures to reach and succeed as executives are an inspiration and have encouraged them to aspire higher. After one workshop, a woman wrote, "Now I know I can make it as an Asian woman."

That experience has convinced us that regular exposure to accessible and relatable Asian role models to whom these Asian men and women can relate makes a huge difference in unleashing repressed aspirations and ambitions that provide the motivation and force to develop the necessary skills to ascend higher.

The Gap in Behavior

There is an old business leadership axiom, "what got you here won't get you there," used to emphasize the point that additional skills must be learned and mastered at each level up the management ladder. At the lowest level, an individual contributor moving to first-level management needs to become a team leader and manage subordinates. Some subordinates are more capable and need little direction, while others are less capable and need more coaching. At the higher levels, executives need to achieve organizational goals using resources within the company. Some resources are within his/her span of control and just need direction while others are not in his/her control. In the latter case, an executive will need a willingness to assert personal power and an ability to influence cross-functionally throughout the company.

Sometimes, this means learning that there are unwritten rules of success for different management levels that are not easily aligned with many Asian behavioral norms. This lesson was made evident early in the career of one Asian operations director during an annual performance review. While he had previously been praised for decisions made for the overall benefit of the company, his general manager took the opportunity to make the point that, as a critical leader in the division, he was too willing to forfeit the needs of the division for the corporate good. This Asian director learned that his rules had changed and that, although collectivism and self-sacrifice are virtuous, he had to learn how to navigate a balance between collective and individual good.

Because organizational power and influence generally require strong personal relationships across the organization, executive leaders must be socially adept with peers and senior clients. They must also be comfortable with asserting internal power and interacting, sometimes in conflict, with mostly white male peers. Openly dealing with conflict is difficult for anyone, but it is especially difficult for many Asians if they have not learned how to reconcile a bias for social harmony with conflict management.

Assertive and direct social behavior may be a stretch beyond the comfort zone of many Asians, as suggested by a study on shyness among Asian college students.[20] As part of the study on self-reported shyness, researchers asked the participants whether shyness was "very much" a problem, comparing a social setting of all Asians and another with a mixed race setting of Asians and whites. The responses, as illustrated in Figure 8, showed that while shyness in Asians and whites are similar in a single race setting (49% vs. 47%), the rate of Asian shyness jumped from 49% to 78% while the white rate was virtually unchanged from 47% to 49% in a mixed-race setting. In a follow-on experiment on mixed race settings, they found that class participation by white students was double that of Asian students, confirming that the self-reported behavior was consistent with empirical observation that shyness in the presence of another racial group substantially affects more Asian than white students.

Figure 8. Self-Reported Shyness in Social Settings

	Same Race	Mixed Race
White	0.47	0.49
Asian	0.49	0.78

For women and especially for Asian women, there is a gap in social behaviors perceived as properly feminine versus appropriately masculine. In research on how men and women are viewed differently, Dr. Deborah Gruenfeld at Stanford University found that people "possess entrenched cultural ideas that associate men with leadership qualities like decisiveness, authoritativeness, and strength, and women with nurturing qualities like warmth, friendliness, and kindness. Consequently, when women behave in dominant ways, they are seen as unlikable because they violate norms of female niceness. Alternatively, women displaying feminine behaviors are judged as less competent and capable. Women, then, face a kind of trade-off: competency versus likability. Men do not face this trade-off."[21]

For some Asian women, especially East Asian women, the specter of being called a "dragon lady" can discourage many from being assertive or overtly exercising power and influence. The "dragon lady" label is a negative stereotype of Asian women, generally used to describe a woman who is strong and willful. In contrast, a man with similar behaviors can often be described as powerful and confident.

A few years ago, a South Asian marketing manager working for one of us confided that, even though she was a young, attractive, active, affluent single woman and knew many single South Asian men, none would date her because she was too successful. Many men still believe that a wife being more successful than her husband would create problems.

Whether unfounded or not, these fears, sometimes subconscious, can preclude Asian women professionals from having executive career aspirations or asserting themselves and being direct in the corporate world. Though these fears and concerns affect all women, many Asian women also share cultural values that constrain acceptable behaviors for women. In some traditional Asian cultures, girls are socialized not to speak first and that proper behavior means deference to males and elders.

ADDRESSING THE GAPS: A CALL TO ACTION

All the gaps we have described, from expectations to role models to behavior, are not unique to the Asian community. An individual of any race or ethnicity or gender who has these gaps will generally find it difficult to rise to executive ranks in their companies. As importantly, we reiterate that it would be inappropriate to ascribe such gaps to each and every person of Asian descent. We also know that the gaps are not unique to Asians in Silicon Valley and high-tech companies. We see many of the same gaps in Asian managers and executives from across the country in banking, insurance, consumer, energy, and medical industries who have attended Ascend and Stanford programs.

Nevertheless, available behavioral research and our own observations in the workplace lead us to conclude that many aspects of traditional Asian cultures exacerbate these behaviors and make the problem more difficult for many Asians, especially Asian women.

Fortunately, we have seen that although our culture, education, and life experience define who we are, they do not limit who we can be or what we can achieve.

While we have discussed the gaps that are primarily linked to Asian cultural norms and practices, we believe the solutions to address them reside with both the Asian professionals and the companies that employ them. We will offer general solutions, but it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide comprehensive answers to address all the gaps described in this paper. Instead, we touch on those solutions that we have seen most effective in our experience as executives, mentors, and sponsors of Asian talent.

Mind the Gap

We have outlined the many gaps in expectation and awareness among some Asians as they move from early career professionals to mid-level managers to executives. For an aspiring Asian professional, it is critical to be keenly aware of and understand the changes in expectations as the professional grows from individual contributor to leadership roles at different levels of the company. An examination of the expectations of American corporate culture, compared against the individual's own beliefs and behavior, can lead to a development plan that begins to close these gaps in awareness.

In our workshops for Asian women professionals, we have found it useful to compare certain work expectations and behaviors to many traditional Asian cultural values. We have found that many people finally realize for the first time how traditional Asian values can be an advantage up to a point, but can become a hindrance to getting ahead in a different corporate culture. Similarly, in our executive programs with Asian men and women, a common conversation among participants is a new awareness of self-imposed limitations to further career growth.

For most, that is the first step. If Asian professionals are able to close the expectation gaps, then it becomes possible to begin to bridge the behavioral gaps. As one Fortune 100 factory manager wrote in a closing exercise to summarize his experience at the Stanford leadership program, "ignorance to knowledge in just five days." And he added, "but now [that] I know what I didn't know, I need to learn more." In other words, his increased awareness was necessary, but only part of the solution.

Without bridging the behavioral gaps, it can be difficult for many Asian professionals to succeed. In one case, a young Asian engineer showed good technical skills and promised to become an excellent manager, but when asked why he was not taking more initiative, his reply reflected a traditional Asian norm, "I don't have the title, and it is not my place to do so." Subsequently, the engineer was promoted to give him an opportunity. Unfortunately, he struggled because he expected his team to accept his decisions with the same deferential behavior he had learned in Asia. Despite coaching, he could not adapt and eventually left the company.

Bridge the Gap

Once aware of the need for soft skills, Asian professionals should seek out their corporate training organizations, which must start to support and provide the training and tools required to develop the skills and behaviors required for Asian executive leadership.

If requisite internal training is not available, the Asian community and companies that employ them may want to take advantage of the unique leadership programs focused specifically for Asians working in corporate business. For example, companies including Boeing, Cisco, HSBC, Pfizer, Intel and the Big 4 accounting firms have sponsored workshops for Asian managers offered by Ascend, a national Pan-Asian professional organization. We have also participated in similar programs offered by other Asian professional development organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles region.

We have reached over 1,000 Asian managers in the United States and Canada in our work in Ascend's "Executive Insight Series"[22] and "Executive Insight for Women,"[23] as well as in Stanford's "Advanced Leadership Program for Asian American Executives."[24] Participants often remarked how approaching the gap from a deep understanding of the role of cultural values helps them to better appreciate their own motivations and their needs to expand their skills portfolio. One participant openly credits his experience at the Stanford program as the inspiration to break out of his comfort zone and seek, then subsequently get, a higher position as deputy general counsel at a Fortune 100 software company. Another became chief accounting officer at a major Canadian bank and helped bring leadership training workshops for the bank's Asian managers.

Just as important as training, though, is the need to secure several executive mentors as role models for ongoing support. These mentors can be executives from any racial group, but having an Asian executive among them who has experienced these changes would be most useful.

Mentors can be very valuable in providing personal feedback, helping to navigate the organization, and acting as a candid sounding board for career advice. Many companies have an in-house mentoring program, and we encourage Asian professionals to take advantage of these even if the mentors assigned to them are not Asian. In fact, having both Asian and non-Asian mentors would help round out and accelerate learning from diverse perspectives.

It is advisable that prospective mentees find a mentor inside the company, but they also can search for outside mentors through their social or business networks. In fact, mentees would be encouraged to complement internal viewpoints and seek out a few external mentors, commonly found through mentoring programs offered by Asian professional organizations.

It is extremely important that the community of Asian managers and executives, both actively working and retired, become mentors. We would encourage them to seek opportunities and help the community, both informally within their corporate Asian networks and formally through external mentoring programs. As we discussed earlier, the presence of more visible Asian role models gives many the confidence that they can make it to executive levels.

What Companies Can Do

Having served on corporate diversity and inclusion councils in our respective companies, we believe that companies can also be proactive in addressing these gaps.

First, if they haven't already done so, companies can augment their current diversity analysis by calculating their internal EPI's for the various demographic cohorts as we have done for the five companies. Companies should also consider, in their analysis, differences by function and region using in-depth internal data. If the analyses show large parity gaps among cohorts, the company should try to understand the dynamics that contribute to these gaps.

We would encourage companies to reach out to their Asian employee resource networks (ERN) for candid discussions. A few years ago, upon becoming an executive sponsor of the Asian ERN, one of us met with its leadership team to discuss their objectives for the ERN. Instead of a review of goals and priorities, most of the hour was used by the group to express their frustration that few Asians were being promoted through middle management. "We want a seat at the table," the ERN president said.

Candid discussions can advance the internal conversation about Asian leadership gaps and help define appropriate strategies for leadership development. The potential value of the Asian network to the corporation is untapped if it is simply viewed as, and mostly budgeted to fund, an annual celebration of the diversity of Asian food and culture.

Further, we would challenge companies to examine their hiring and promotional processes for any unintended but embedded implicit biases. An example is to review the nomination process to assure that diverse candidates that proportionately represent the company's employee base are considered to attend leadership development programs. Unfortunately, we have seen that the implicit and often unconscious bias in not recognizing Asians as potential leaders, combined with the Asian awareness gap, results in too few Asians being assessed as high-potential leaders designated for mainstream leadership development.

Several years ago, when one Silicon Valley company developed leadership training specifically for its promising Asian senior managers, the organizers discovered too few Asians assessed as high potential to launch the program. However, the company decided to reach beyond its official "high-potential" pipeline and to find high-achieving Asian senior managers who had been overlooked in the normal leadership evaluation process. Although many of the participants had not initially been assessed as good candidates for leadership development, half were subsequently promoted to higher-management levels within two years of completing the leadership program.

As described earlier, many Asians expect that, if they do good work, the company would tap them on the shoulder and promote them as leaders. Instead, we propose that companies tap their high potential Asian men and women on the shoulder and *challenge them to become leaders*. We know that not all will respond.

But many will. Contradicting a widely held opinion that Asians are less ambitious in corporate management, the Center for Work-Life Policy reported in a national survey that Asians (64%) were more likely to aspire to higher management than whites (52%).[25]

One young Asian woman's ambition was clear when she paid out of her own pocket to attend the "Executive Insight for Women" seminar after her employer declined to cover the program expense. After the seminar, she told us how valuable it was for her to participate and learn what was holding her back. A few months afterwards, she wrote, "I am working toward bettering my communication skills, speaking up (sooner) and with clarity and confidence." While we admire this Asian woman's proactive step in taking charge of her career by personally investing in it, we believe that companies should also take responsibility for reaching out to the cohorts to support their leadership development.

For companies that have a large Asian professional workforce, it is important to incorporate components to address Asian leadership gaps into their standard management training process. Individuals should not need to depend upon their own initiative to locate and incur the expense for their own leadership training. This in-house training may also include seminars for managers and upper-level executives to help people on their teams who need coaching to overcome issues related to ethnicity or gender. We know this need exists because, in the past, we have been asked by non-Asian executives to coach Asian employees when those executives had expressed discomfort in doing so. We have also been asked by diversity leaders to coach non-Asian executives on recognizing and helping Asians to overcome these obstacles.

In addition, for companies that have invested in initiatives to develop more women into leadership roles, we would recommend an evaluation of the outreach to Asian women. As the EEOC data point out, there are about as many Asian as white women in the professional workforce in many Silicon Valley-based companies, so such initiatives should consider the overlooked Asian women as the best near-term opportunity to leverage more women into management. As illustrated in the earlier story about finding enough high-potential Asians to fill a training class, it may take an affirmative search to find those potential Asian women leaders.

Finally, we ask that companies examine their investments in diversity programs to confirm that they are aligned with their specific diversity problems. As former corporate executives, we are well aware of the complexity of workforce diversity. We believe that the EPI analysis can provide a simplifying metric and provide a good process to start asking questions to understand their issues in the employee population and leadership pipeline. Where is the fallout from the pipeline? Are there relevant differences in the workplace by region or organizational structure? Are biases unwittingly and systematically built into talent-assessment processes? What are the best practices?

The EEO-1 data highlighted in this report make it clear that the Asian leadership gap has been a problem hidden in plain sight. But we are confident that, after understanding the problem, corporate leaders will do the right thing and develop the potential of their best employees, regardless of race or gender, to optimize the leadership strengths in their talent pool.

CONCLUSION

When we began our review of the EEO-1 reports, we expected the data to simply reinforce our own assessment of the Asian leadership gap, supporting earlier work using public information on corporate officers and board members. Indeed, as we anticipated, we found that Asian men and women are over-represented in the Silicon Valley workforce and under-represented as executives.

But we were surprised when the data led us to unexpected insights and important questions about the intersection of race and gender in the high-tech workplace. We are hopeful that those findings and insights will spur a broader conversation about management diversity, improve internal processes to find high-potential employees for leadership development, and finally close the Asian leadership gap.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank those who provided their input and guidance on our paper including the support of Ascend, its Board and other key leaders. We also acknowledge the assistance of board member Anna Mok in facilitating our Ascend partnership. Finally, we extend much gratitude to Caroline Simard, Director of Research at the Clayman Institute for Gender Research at Stanford University, for her wisdom and insight.

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DENISE PECK is currently an advisor to start-ups in Silicon Valley. Denise spent fourteen years at Cisco Systems, during which she held vice president positions in marketing, operations, engineering services, and IT, in both San Jose and Shanghai, China. Denise was an executive sponsor and advocate of Cisco's diversity initiatives, particularly on behalf of women and Asian employee networks. Prior to Cisco, Denise held senior marketing management positions over thirteen years at Sun Microsystems. She has a BA degree in economics from U.C. Berkeley and an MBA from Stanford University.

JANET WONG serves as a non-executive director and consultant. She is a CPA with thirty years of experience in public accounting. She is a retired partner with KPMG where she spent twenty years of her career based in both the Silicon Valley and San Francisco offices. While at KPMG, Janet co-chaired the Silicon Valley office's Network of Women, helping women with their leadership development. Janet held several leadership positions while at KPMG. She holds a master's of professional accountancy from Louisiana Tech University and a master's of taxation from Golden Gate University.

MS. PECK AND MS. WONG serve as executive advisors to Ascend. In 2013, they co-developed a two-day course for Ascend, "Executive Insights for Women," which is targeted at helping mid-level Pan-Asian women professionals to become more successful in their careers. In addition to teaching this course, they continue to mentor many professionals at different stages of their careers.

ABOUT ASCEND FOUNDATION AND ASCEND

Ascend Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to educate, advocate and enable Pan-Asian business leaders to reach their full potential. Through its research and thought leadership activities, the Foundation's goal is to help Pan-Asian leaders make greater impacts in business. Ascend is the largest, non-profit Pan-Asian membership organization for business professionals in North America. Established in 2005, Ascend's network includes 60,000+ senior executives, professionals, and MBA/undergraduate students involved in its 40+ chapters. As a career lifecycle organization, it offers robust leadership and professional development programs designed to cultivate Pan-Asian talent by supporting its members in reaching their career potentials and by supporting its corporate partners to develop a strong, diverse, and inclusive workforce to achieve business growth.

Visit www.ascendleadership.org for more information.

EXHIBIT A
Yahoo 2013 EEOC Report

co= L313291
u= L313291

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
2013 EMPLOYER INFORMATION REPORT
CONSOLIDATED REPORT - TYPE 2

SECTION B - COMPANY IDENTIFICATION

1. YAHOO! INC
701 FIRST AVENUE
SUNNYVALE, CA 94089

2.a. YAHOO! INC
701 FIRST AVENUE
SUNNYVALE, CA 94089

c. Y

SECTION C - TEST FOR FILING REQUIREMENT
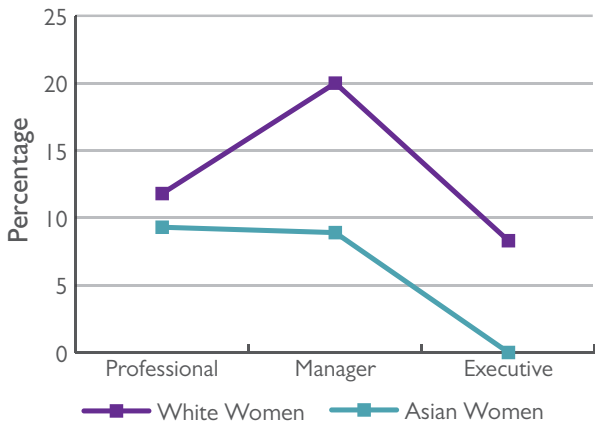
1-Y 2-N 3-Y DUNS NO.:158329859

SECTION E - ESTABLISHMENT INFORMATION

NAICS:

SECTION D - EMPLOYMENT DATA

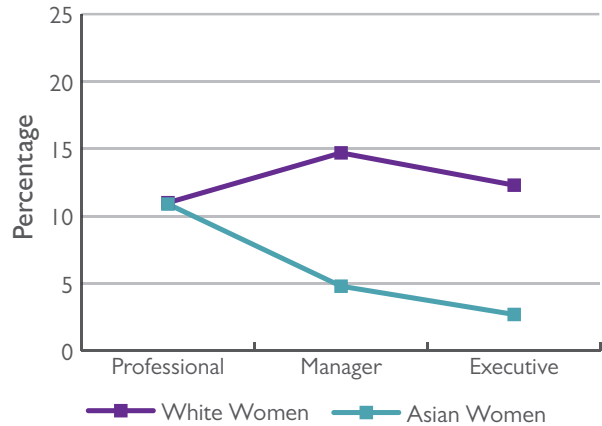| JOB CATEGORIES | HISPANIC OR LATINO | | NOT-HISPANIC OR LATINO | | | | | | | | | | | | OVERALL TOTALS |
| | | | MALE | | | | | | FEMALE | | | | | | |
	MALE	FEMALE	WHITE	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	ASIAN	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE	TWO OR MORE RACES	WHITE	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	ASIAN	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE	TWO OR MORE RACES	
EXECUTIVE/SR OFFICIALS & MGRS	5	0	98	0	0	18	0	0	27	3	0	7	0	0	158
FIRST/MID OFFICIALS & MGRS	19	16	340	7	1	194	0	4	158	9	0	67	0	2	817
PROFESSIONALS	120	67	1336	56	6	1274	9	39	556	29	1	549	4	27	4073
TECHNICIANS	6	0	39	3	1	9	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	64
SALES WORKERS	8	28	239	7	1	23	1	6	239	9	0	42	1	7	611
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	20	24	147	6	1	49	0	2	125	7	1	25	0	8	415
CRAFT WORKERS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OPERATIVES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LABORERS & HELPERS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SERVICE WORKERS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	178	135	2199	79	10	1567	10	51	1109	59	2	690	5	44	6138
PREVIOUS REPORT TOTAL	166	138	2203	75	9	1502	9	58	1090	53	1	712	7	45	6068

SECTION F - REMARKS
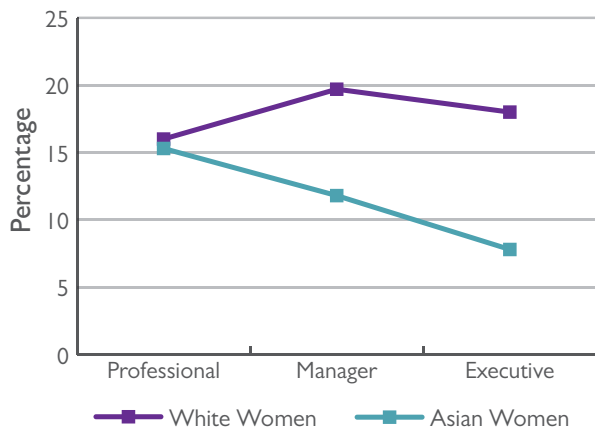
EXHIBIT B
2013 Management Pipeline in Selected Companies: White Women vs. Asian Women

Google (2013) EEO-1 Data

Intel (2013) EEO-1 Data

LinkedIn (2013) EEO-1 Data

HP (2013) EEO-1 Data

Yahoo (2013) EEO-1 Data

Corporate Workforce:
All Races and Both Genders

	Professionals	Executives
Cisco (2010)	24,100	225
eBay (2010)	3,977	55
Google (2013)	18,717	36
Intel (2013)	36,057	187
Linkedin (2013)	2,046	167
HP (2013)	56,461	624
Yahoo (2013)	4,073	158
TOTAL	145,431	1,452

EXHIBIT C
2013 Management Pipeline in Selected Companies: White Men vs. Asian Men
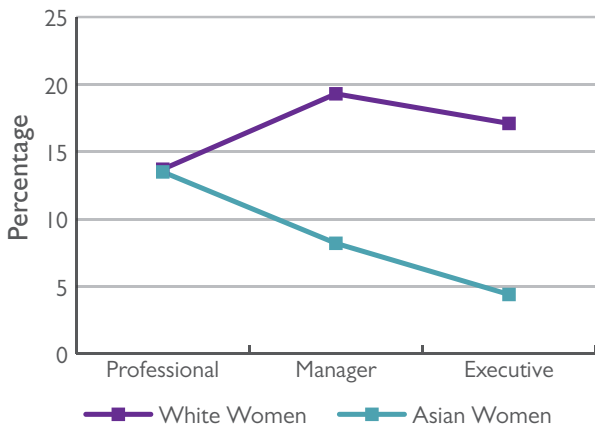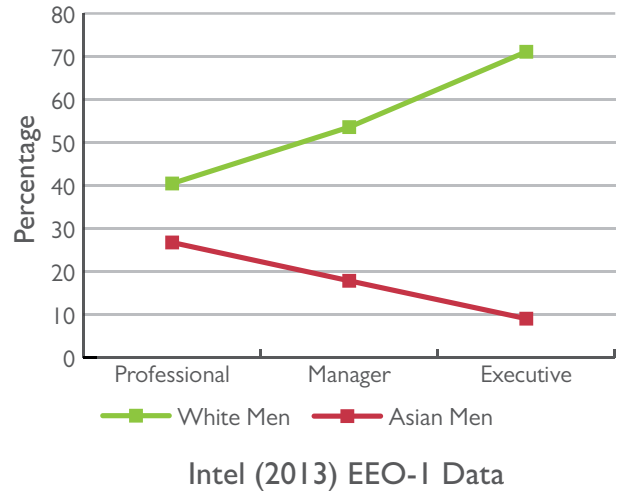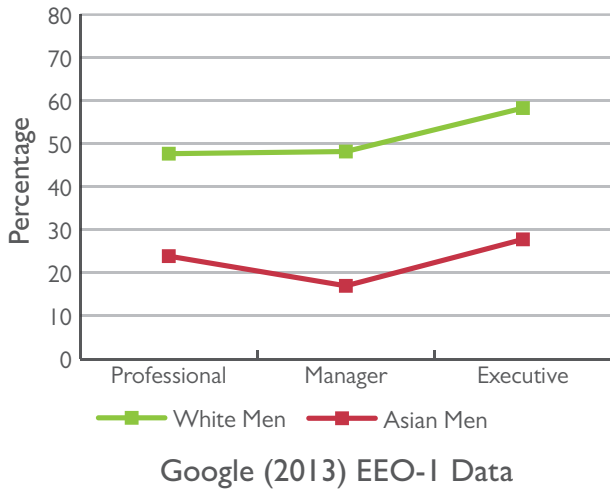

Google (2013) EEO-1 Data

Intel (2013) EEO-1 Data
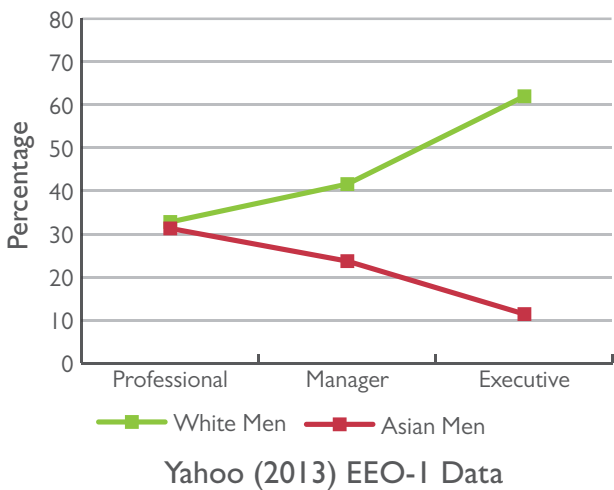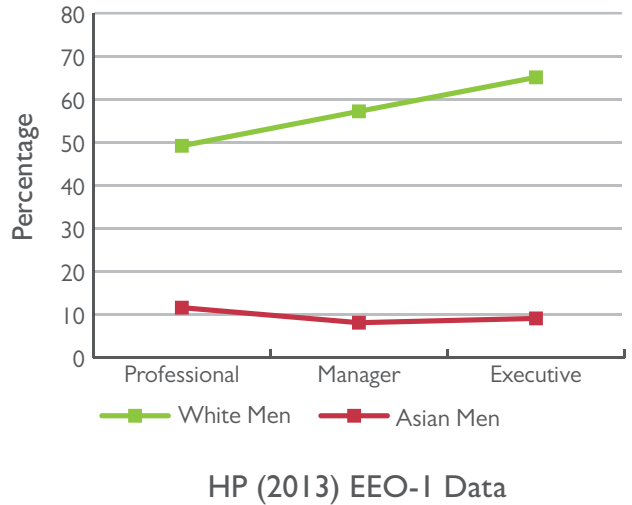

LinkedIn (2013) EEO-1 Data

HP (2013) EEO-1 Data
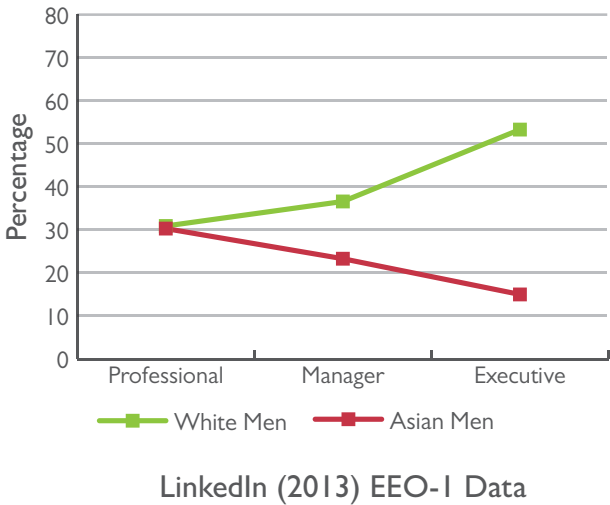

Yahoo (2013) EEO-1 Data

Corporate Workforce:
All Races and Both Genders

	Professionals	Executives
Cisco (2010)	24,100	225
eBay (2010)	3,977	55
Google (2013)	18,717	36
Intel (2013)	36,057	187
Linkedin (2013)	2,046	167
HP (2013)	56,461	624
Yahoo (2013)	4,073	158
TOTAL	145,431	1,452

EXHIBIT D
2013 EEO-1 Data and Executive Parity Index
Google, Intel, LinkedIn, HP, and Yahoo

AGGREGATE	White Men & Women	Minority Men & Women	All Men	All Women	Asian Men & Women	Black Men & Women	Hispanic Men & Women
Executives	941	231	922	240	163	16	42
Professionals	72,956	44,398	82,817	32,676	31,850	4,486	6,201
Professionals (%)	62.2%	36.0%	70.6%	27.8%	27.1%	3.8%	5.3%
Managers (%)	72.8%	33.4%	72.3%	26.5%	18.7%	2.7%	4.6%
Executives (%)	80.3%	27.4%	78.7%	20.5%	13.9%	1.4%	3.6%
Executive Parity Index	1.29	0.76	1.11	0.74	0.51	0.36	0.68

AGGREGATE	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
Executives	747	194	127	36	37	5	11	5
Professionals	53,297	19,659	22,596	9,254	4,293	1,908	2,631	1,855
All Employees	79,667	31,201	27,800	11,609	7,442	3,385	4,798	3,428
Executives (%)	63.7%	16.6%	10.8%	3.1%	3.2%	0.4%	0.9%	0.4%
Professonals (%)	45.4%	16.8%	19.3%	7.9%	3.7%	1.6%	2.2%	1.6%
Executive Parity Index	1.40	0.99	0.56	0.39	0.86	0.26	0.42	0.27

EXECUTIVES	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
Google (2013)	21	3	10	0	0	0	1	0
Intel (2013)	133	23	17	5	5	1	2	0
Linkedin (2013)	89	30	25	13	2	2	2	0
HP (2013)	406	111	57	11	25	2	6	2
Yahoo (2013)	98	27	18	7	5	0	0	3
TOTAL	747	197	127	36	37	5	11	5

PROFESSIONALS	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
Google (2013)	8,932	2,205	4,469	1,737	369	141	174	115
Intel (2013)	14,617	3,972	9,662	3,915	1,654	663	762	331
Linkedin (2013)	632	327	620	314	43	26	17	13
HP (2013)	27,780	12,599	6,571	2,739	2,107	1,011	1,622	1,367
Yahoo (2013)	1,336	556	1,274	549	120	67	56	29
TOTAL	53,297	19,659	22,596	9,254	4,293	1,908	2,631	1,855

EPI SUMMARY	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
Google (2013)	1.22	0.71	1.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.99	0.00
Intel (2013)	1.75	1.12	0.34	0.25	0.58	0.29	0.51	0.00
Linkedin (2013)	1.73	1.12	0.49	0.51	0.57	0.94	1.44	0.00
HP (2013)	1.32	0.80	0.78	0.36	1.07	0.18	0.33	0.13
Yahoo (2013)	1.89	1.25	0.36	0.33	1.07	0.00	0.00	2.67

These tables do not include categories "Two or more races", "Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander", and "American Indian or Alaskan Native". These categories account for 1.5% of the Professionals.
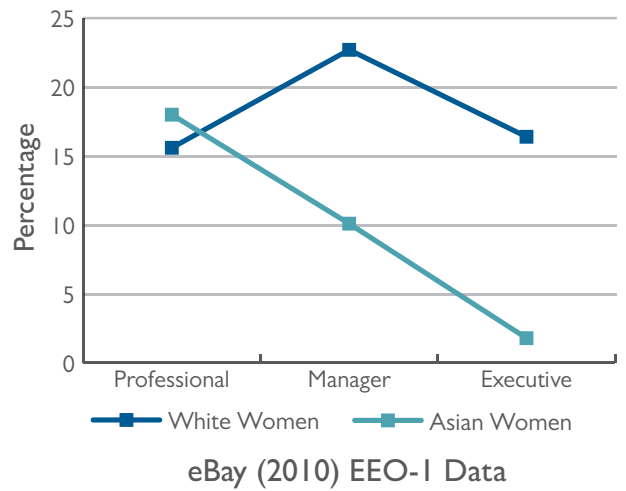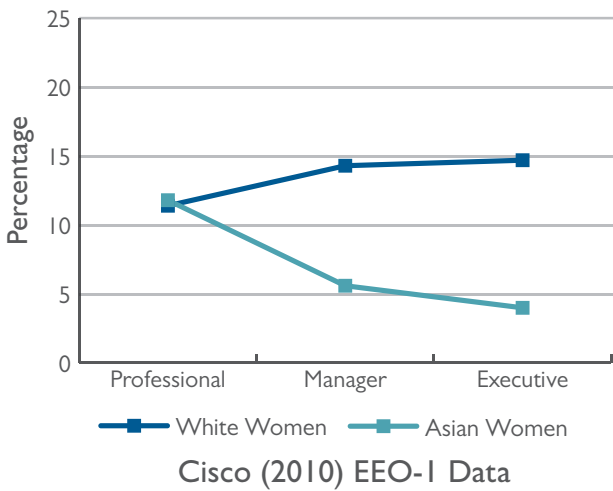
EXHIBIT E
Racial Demographics: Santa Clara County

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Santa Clara	33.9%	2.9%	26.8%	34.1%	2.3%
United States	62.6%	13.2%	17.1%	5.3%	1.8%

Santa Clara County 2013 Racial Demographics
Source: US Census Bureau: State & County QuickFacts.
http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06085.html

EXHIBIT F
2010 Management Pipeline in eBay and Cisco
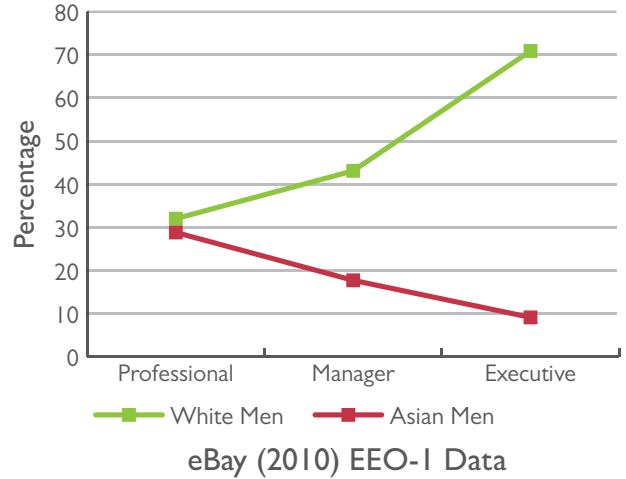
Cisco (2010) EEO-1 Data

eBay (2010) EEO-1 Data

Cisco (2010) EEO-1 Data

eBay (2010) EEO-1 Data

EXECUTIVES	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
Cisco (2010)	167	33	32	9	8	1	3	1
eBay (2010)	39	9	5	1	1	0	1	1
TOTAL	206	42	37	10	9	1	4	2

PROFESSIONALS	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
Cisco (2010)	9,118	2,758	7,433	2,841	745	358	507	247
eBay (2010)	1,273	622	1,146	717	73	48	48	31
TOTAL	10,391	3,380	8,579	3,558	818	406	555	278

EPI SUMMARY	White Men	White Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
Cisco (2010)	1.96	1.28	0.46	0.34	1.15	0.30	0.63	0.43
eBay (2010)	2.22	1.05	0.32	0.10	0.99	0.00	1.51	2.33
TOTAL	1.99	1.25	0.43	0.28	1.10	0.25	0.72	0.72

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