



Inspiring Inclusion to Close the Digital Gender Gap

How the Kyocera Philosophy cultivates a company culture that bridges the digital gender gap and empowers future leaders.



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Why we need to inspire inclusion



We can only close the gender gap by taking action today. And there's no time to waste.

The current state of affairs has left one thing clear – we are far from achieving true gender equality. According to UNWomen, a UN organization and “the global champion for gender quality”, we are far from close to reaching gender parity.

In their most recent Global Gender Gap Report, the World Economic Forum paints an even bleaker picture as, according to their research, it will take us **131 years** to reach full gender parity across the globe¹. When we center in on North America, their data shows that it will take **95 years** to reach equality in this continent.

Although slightly more promising than the global average, this figure is still an astonishing number that sheds light on how much work we have ahead of us.

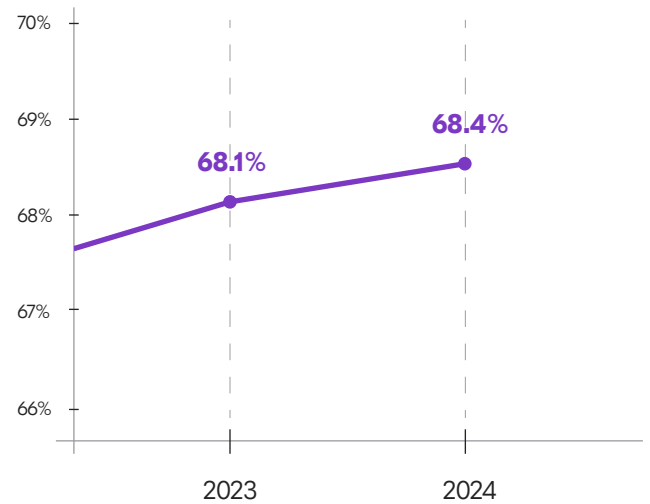


95 years

to reach equality in North America.

¹World Economic Forum: Global Gender Gap Report 2023.

These century-long wait times stem from the World Economic Forum's comparisons of how, little by little, countries across the globe are closing the gender gap year after year. However, with their current assessment pitting the global gender gap as only **68.4% closed**, a meager **increase of 0.3%** compared to the previous year, it is unsurprising that so many decades of progress remain.



We all need to do our part to create a more inclusive, equal world in which women can reach their full potential. It is time to eliminate, once and for all, the barriers and obstacles that have long stood in their way.

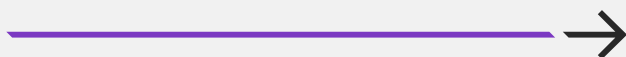
One of the areas in which these barriers and obstacles are particularly powerful is in the accessibility of **leadership positions** and in the field of **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)**.

At Kyocera, we want to make the world a better place. One of the ways we hope to achieve this goal is by recognizing where progress remains to be made. When faced with staggering statistics, such as those reported by the World Economic Forum, it is clear that we must shine a light on this disparity and reflect on how we can empower women within our organization and motivate our employees to become future leaders.

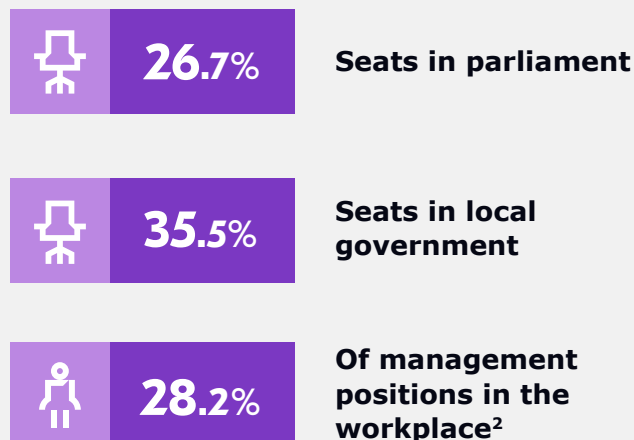
Inspiring tomorrow's leaders

To create change, we need women to hold positions in which they can influence and implement this change.

However, women today hold only:



² UNWomen: Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals – The Gender Snapshot 2023, <https://www.unwomen.org>



These statistics, which have come to light due to meticulous research carried out by **UNWomen**, highlight how a great disparity continues to exist in positions of power.

With women not having a seat at the table or, in the event that they are present, being significantly outnumbered by their male counterparts, they lose visibility. When the time then comes to implement policy changes, there is a high risk that women are left out of the picture, as issues that commonly affect women will not be considered.

In addition, women in positions of leadership have the ability to **inspire future leaders**, causing a domino effect that motivates the next generation to step into their shoes. However, with so few women at the helm of vital bodies that hold the power to implement change, it is unlikely that great change will be enacted.

For that reason, inspiring inclusion and ensuring there is gender parity in positions of leadership is a crucial obstacle we must overcome in our pursuit for gender equality.



Closing the digital gender gap

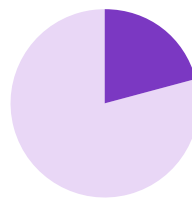
While many people discuss the gender gap at a surface level, at Kyocera we are deeply concerned about the digital gender gap.

Also known as “the digital divide”, this disparity highlights how women are underrepresented in technology.

Technology may be advancing, but gender **equality** is certainly not advancing alongside it.



WomenInTech, an organization based in the United Kingdom that helps women launch their career in technology, **traces this gender disparity back to the classroom.** They have found that, in the final years of education, **35% of girls choose to study STEM subjects,** compared to 80% of boys⁴. Such a disparity creates fewer young women who are eligible to pursue STEM subjects in higher education, with their research also finding that **only 25% of STEM graduates were female.**



Women hold only 21% of STEM jobs globally³.

³ UNWomen: Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals – The Gender Snapshot 2023, <https://www.unwomen.org>

⁴ Women in Technology, <https://www.womenintech.co.uk/small-amount-of-women-in-stem/>

Making the digital revolution more accessible



Young girls should be **encouraged to study** subjects in school that have long been considered "masculine".



Girls must have **visible role models** show that women can succeed in technology.



This will **raise awareness** that technology is not an alien space dominated by men.

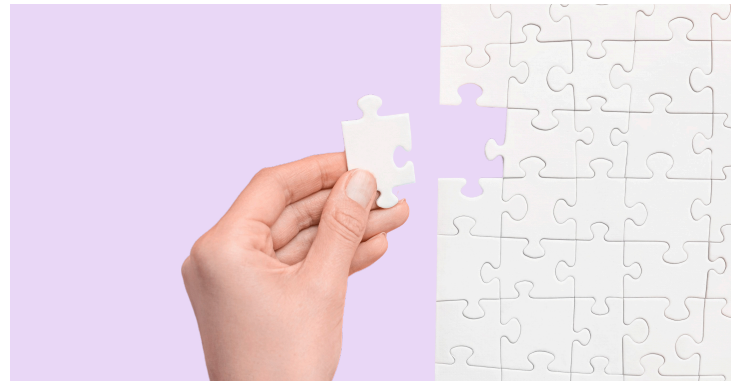


If we are all to reap the full benefits of digital transformation, **we need all hands on deck**. A gender-diverse workforce not only ensures an organization is drawing inspiration from a wide range of skills and perspectives, but it also inspires more creativity and ensures that the products created meet the needs of a varied and complex customer base.

As a pioneering company in the technology sector that seeks to inspire all of its employees, regardless of their background, to embrace a 'management for all' philosophy, we want to do our part to close the digital gender gap. In addition, we hope to inspire others to take action so we can seal the digital divide shut to prevent women from being excluded from future technological advancements.

Stepping up to the challenge:

closing the gender gap together



We all have a role to play in closing the gender gap. However, not knowing where to start can be a formidable roadblock that prevents businesses from taking their first step.

Identify your own gaps

Making a change begins with identifying the change that needs to be made. To do so, we recommend looking inwards and having honest conversations to uncover how your organization can improve its current situation and inspire more future leaders.

One of the ways you can do this is by providing a platform for individuals to **make their voices heard** and share their opinions and experiences in a respectful manner. Not only does this show that your organization truly values the lived experience of its employees, but it will also encourage a sense of **unity and empathy among colleagues**.

Initiatives such as **roundtables** and **panel discussions** also serve to dismantle the barriers that often exist between members of senior leadership teams and their employees. If people from all walks of life can come together to discuss issues such as gender inequality and how female employees can be better supported, executives will be greater equipped to implement policy changes that address their employees' real needs.

At our own organization, we celebrate these meetings as opportunities to **avoid becoming complacent** and instead pinpoint **how and where we can do better**. By holding regular awareness-raising activities, we are able to ensure that every Kyocera employee feels heard, seen, and respected.

1 Empower your people

In addition to identifying your own gaps, we are also enthusiastic advocates of empowering people. Information is certainly powerful, but female employees should also feel like they can put themselves forward for promotions and leadership positions, especially in the STEM sector where they may feel outnumbered due to the digital gender gap. These are just some of **the ways** you can empower employees:



In addition to creating future leaders, these activities ensure that men in the workplace are aware of the obstacles their colleagues may face. It will also make it easier for many men to show their support for their colleagues and speak up when they feel something isn't right.

Leadership training

Why wait until someone becomes a manager to give them leadership training? Not only will leadership training provide many employees with interpersonal skills that can help them with their routine tasks, but it will also prevent a lack of training from becoming a barrier to a potential female leader.

Workshops

These fun, yet structured, educational events allow employees from multiple departments to come together and improve their shared knowledge and strengthen their professional relationships.

Lectures

Slightly more formal and less interactive than workshops, lectures also have the potential to empower employees. If your company were to organize a lecture series with expert external speakers, employees will learn from fresh perspectives and additional insights. At Kyocera, we are particularly proud of our **Corporation's Female Leaders' Training and Lecture Meetings**, which allow for valuable knowledge exchange and networking.

2 Support a work-life balance

Unfortunately, many professionals still struggle to balance the exciting challenge of being new parents with their career. For many female employees, becoming parents may lead them to believe that certain leadership positions are out of reach.

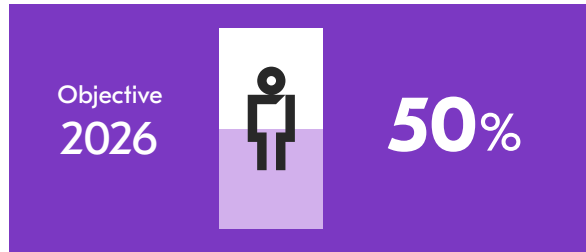
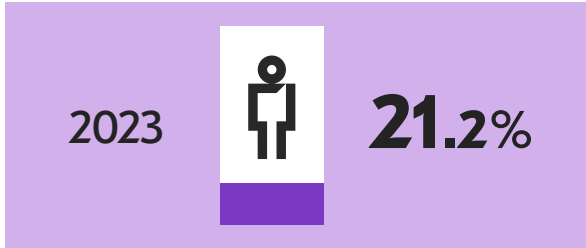
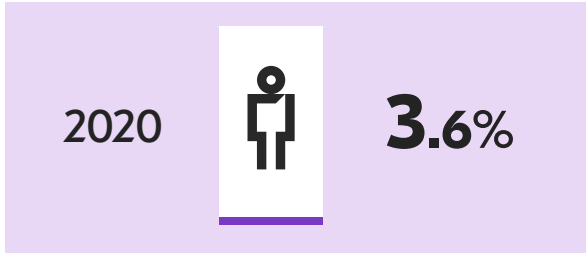
We recommend **supporting a healthy work-life balance** that values talent and merit over the ability to operate within a traditional working model that doesn't bend to childcare needs.

Parental leave programs, shortened workdays for parents, and **accommodations for nursing care support**, can go a long way to ensure employees can balance their personal responsibilities with a promising professional career. An additional benefit of this is the loyalty and gratitude it creates; employees are more likely to feel valued by their company if they are given these considerations.

One of the ways we strive to support working parents at Kyocera is by encouraging all eligible employees to take childcare leave. We firmly believe that providing childcare should not be limited to women alone, and we encourage male employees to enjoy invaluable bonding time with their little ones by taking childcare leave.

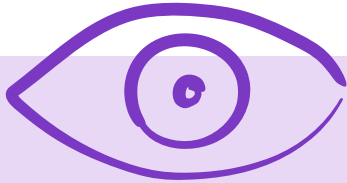
We are thrilled that this policy has received a positive response, with the proportion of eligible male employees taking **childcare leave increasing**.

Male employees taking childcare:



3 Putting words into action

It all comes down to if you can answer the following question:



“Have we put our words into action?”

A public statement about empowering employees to become future leaders and eliminating the barriers that stand in their way must be followed by active change. If your organization has implemented such changes, you’ll be one step closer to promoting diversity and inclusion and cultivating an environment based on respect and equality.



Finding inspiration in our people



At Kyocera Document Solutions America, Inc., we strive to inspire our employees and create safe spaces in which everyone, regardless of their background can thrive. A group company of the Kyocera Corporation, we embody these same values of inclusion and empathy established by Dr. Kazuo Inamori.

Inspiring inclusion with visibility

A lack of visible role models is one factor that often discourages women from pursuing a career in technology. If young women and girls have real role models they can look up to and view as inspiration for their own future success, they will be more likely to see STEM subjects as areas in which they can thrive.

At Kyocera Document Solutions America, Inc., we are proud to have celebrated the visibility and success of two of our own leaders.

As a document solutions company, we are aware of the gender disparity that exists in the technology sector. We are therefore conscious of our responsibility to close this gap within our own organization and inspire future pioneers to see technology as an accessible field.

The Cannata Report, one of our industry's main analysts and sources of news, has selected our Chief Financial Officer, **Leonie Forristal**, and our Vice President of Human Resources, **Natalie Cumberbatch**, as Women Influencers.

Read our influencers





Leonie Forristal

Kyocera’s inquisitive Chief Financial Officer

It was the vision of Kyocera Document Solutions America, Inc.’s management team, led by Oscar Sanchez, the President and CEO, that motivated Leonie to make a career change from pharmaceuticals to document solutions.

Once she had joined the organization, her impact was felt instantly. Shortly after her arrival, she established a pioneering financial planning and analysis team that helped Kyocera tackle the operational challenges of a post-COVID-19 landscape.

Leonie’s inquisitive, forward-thinking mindset complements the unique blend of perspectives on Kyocera’s management team. If the last few years are anything to go by, Leonie’s dynamic approach is set to push Kyocera towards prosperity for many years to come and continue to inspire future leaders.



Natalie Cumberbatch

Kyocera’s Vice President of Human Resources

People are what makes Kyocera great. Not only is Natalie an outstanding person and a champion of Kyocera’s people-centric philosophy, but she also inspires those around her to reach their full potential.

Serving as Kyocera Document Solutions America, Inc.’s Vice President of Human Resources, Natalie values diversity at Kyocera and attests to its vital role in successful organizations.

By combining years of experience in the field of human resources with a firm commitment to helping every one of Kyocera’s employees to aim high, Natalie’s organizational-wide strategy has helped Kyocera to usher in a new era of change.

These two members of our senior leadership team have driven powerful and important change at Kyocera and upheld Kyocera’s values as role models, inspiring future executives to take the reins of leadership, regardless of their gender.

Creating a culture that inspires



We are also proud to have created a thriving company culture that inspires every employee and prioritizes their well-being. For that reason, Kyocera Document

Solutions America, Inc. has been named a **Great Place To Work** for three consecutive years.

With a score that puts Kyocera **19% ahead of the average company in the US**, we are proud to stand out from the crowd as an organization that truly puts its people first.

At Kyocera, employees are made to feel valued and inspired. Our company's management philosophy also resonates with our entire staff, with many employees using words such as **"philosophy", "people", "right", "team", "care", and "respect"** when describing Kyocera.

These sentiments are a testament to how we have put our founder's philosophy into practice. By creating a workplace that prioritizes well-being and celebrates the success of its employees, we hope to inspire inclusion and equal opportunities for all.

In a poll taken by employees of all genders, we were thrilled to receive the **following results**:

89% 

Of employees felt that they could take time off work when necessary.

88% 

Stated that they were made to feel welcome when they first joined the team.

83% 

Felt proud to tell people they worked at Kyocera.

82% 

Said that they felt like they made a difference at Kyocera.

We're always keen to welcome new team members who share our human-centric values. If you'd like to join our efforts to close the digital gender gap and work somewhere that puts people first, we recommend browsing our open positions [here](#).

A legacy of doing the right thing as human beings

Doing the right thing as a human being is more than just a powerful motto. It is a **state of mind**, and a pillar upon which our organization and its values were constructed.

Part of this belief is our concern for issues that exist both beyond and within our walls. One of these issues is the digital gender gap – a side to technological advancement that we cannot ignore.



Doing the right thing as a human being.

Dr. Kazuo Inamori

Our Story

We can trace today's prosperity back to 1959, the year in which our founder, **Dr. Kazuo Inamori**, established a fine ceramics company. With 28 employees and a pioneering spirit, Dr. Inamori sought to innovate and inspire innovation in those around him.

Over the years, this small ceramics company evolved into a multinational organization spanning numerous areas of expertise. From mobile phones to cutting-edge kitchen knives and document solutions, the Kyocera Corporation began to expand and put its knowledge to work.

The decades passed, the turn of the 20th century took place, and Kyocera grew across the globe. But even as times changed, Kyocera remained true to the guiding principles established by its founder in his early days managing a growing business.

敬天愛人

Respect the Divine and Love People

“Aiming high and raising our fighting spirit.”

“Acting responsibly for others and the environment.”

“Everyone is a manager.”

Another way we act by considering the world around us is by turning our attention to issues such as the digital gender gap. **Doing the right thing as human beings** stretches further than technology; it also inspires us to consider how we can help those around us inspire equality within their own walls.

That is a core tenet of the Kyocera Philosophy; a set of principles that inspires inclusion and prosperity for everyone.

Not only does the Kyocera Philosophy inspire us to seek areas where we can make improvements and introduce smarter ways of doing business, it also pushes us to ensure we have a positive impact on the world around us.

For example, we have spent decades innovating eco-friendly solutions that enable businesses to reduce their environmental impact without compromising their productivity and efficiency.

With a worldwide **Environmental Action Plan** firmly in place since 1991, our organization strives to do what is right as a human being and ensure the planet is left intact for the generations that are yet to come.



Our vision for the future

To avoid standing still, we must look towards the future and set company goals that bridge the digital gender gap and inspire inclusion.

For the Kyocera Corporation, one of those goals is for more women to hold management positions within our own organization. We hope to achieve this by empowering our employees through numerous initiatives and ensuring we create equal opportunities for all.

At the end of FY2023, the Kyocera Corporation had 143 female managers within its executive team, one female director, and two female executive officers. This was already an increase on the previous year, FY2022, in which there were 131 female managers, one female director, and two female executive officers.

This represents an ongoing trend of the ratio of women to men in management positions within the Kyocera Corporation growing smaller, as in 2019 only 71 women had reached these high-ranking positions.



With an increase of **101.41%** in just four years, **the future looks bright.** We hope that, by inspiring inclusion throughout our business, we can close this gender gap and empower more women to claim leadership positions to which they have the same rights as their male counterparts.

And, with regards to Kyocera Document Solutions America, Inc., we hope that our organization's people-centric philosophy and business practices will set an example for fellow technology companies to follow.

We also hope that fellow organizations in the technology sector will feel inspired to give their employees the tools they need to climb to positions of leadership. If we all make a commitment towards bridging the digital divide, **we can create real change.**

By remaining wary of the growing digital gender gap and constantly reflecting on how we can motivate future generations of female leaders, we hope to inspire inclusion within our corporation and throughout our wider community.

Kyocera Document Solutions has championed innovative technology since 1934. We enable our customers to turn information into knowledge, excel at learning and surpass others. With professional expertise and a culture of empathetic partnership, we help organizations put knowledge to work to drive change.



[kyoceradocumentsolutions.us](https://www.kyoceradocumentsolutions.us)