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**Companies with More Women in Corporate Leadership Have  
More Women-Friendly Benefits Packages  
But . . .  
Women in Communications Companies  
Made No Progress in Past Year  
in Breaking the Glass Ceiling**

Companies with more women on boards of directors also tend to have more women in executive positions, more women-friendly benefits packages, and better maternity leave, according to the third annual report on women leaders in communication companies conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC) of the University of Pennsylvania. The report also found that women still comprise just 15% of executive leaders and just 12% of board members in top communications companies – numbers virtually unchanged from the previous year.

“Companies that have fewer women in top positions also tend to have less women-friendly human resources policies,” said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. “That creates a self-generating cycle, making it less likely that women will be able to move their way up. A CEO committed to diversity will both invite women to serve on the boards of directors and create policies and opportunities for women to reach top executive positions.”

The study examined board members, top executives, and women-friendly benefits at the 57 *Fortune* 500 communications companies. It included 25 telecom, 18 publishing and printing, 11 entertainment, and 3 advertising companies.

In analyzing only the companies that appeared in the last two APPC reports (the companies on the *Fortune* 500 change from year to year and advertising companies had not been included in the past), the report found that the average percent of women executives dropped from 15% to 14%, while the average percentage of women board members remained stagnant at 13%.

For executive positions, this years report showed the percentage of women varied from 50% women (Scholastic Corporation) down to zero. Seven out of the 57 companies (12%) had no women. For boards the range was from 31% (New York Times Company) to zero. Ten of the 57 (18%) had no women on their boards. No company contained boards or executive teams that had a majority of women.

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“With few exceptions, we have not moved beyond tokenism in the number of women in top leadership positions or serving on the boards of communications companies. Men still hold the vast majority of positions,” said former FCC Commissioner Susan Ness. “The glass ceiling is firmly in place.”

**Other findings about women in corporate leadership:**

- Publishing companies (18%) edged out telecommunications (16%) and entertainment firms (12%) for the greatest average percent of women in executive positions. The advertising firms had the lowest average number of women in executive positions (3%).
- Publishing companies tended to have more women on their boards than others, with women comprising an average of 18%. That was followed by telecommunications, advertising, and entertainment, which averaged 10%, 9%, and 8% respectively.
- In comparing just the telecommunications and entertainment industries over the last three years (the only industries for which three years of data were collected), the percentage of women on boards moved from 10% to 11% then back down to 10%. Women in executive leadership increased from 11% to 12% and then to 15%.

**Other findings about women-friendly benefits:**

- Many human resources benefits were not offered to all employees. Some companies offer different benefits to different divisions (corporate jobs vs. manufacturing jobs) or based on the ranks of their employees.
- During maternity leave, only 50% of companies pay all employees at a minimum threshold of 100% of regular pay for 4 weeks (or the equivalent) for an employee who has been with the company for at least 1 year. Sixty-eight percent provide minimum pay to some employees.
- Paternity benefits that may allow mothers to go back to work while fathers stay at home, were relatively uncommon. Only 9% of the companies provided such a benefit to all employees.
- The great majority of companies (94%) offer maternity leave to all of their employees. Most companies (68%) allowed all employees to supplement their maternity leave with paid personal time off, vacation, or a similar program.

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- The New York Times Company was a leader for paid maternity leave. It offers 3 months off at a 100% of salary.
- A company that did not give us permission to name it, offers the most generous maternity benefit package. It provides child care leave for 8 weeks at 100% pay followed by transition leave for 8 weeks, where the parent works part-time but gets paid at 100% of their salary; both of these are in addition to the company's standard maternity leave policy.
- Pre-tax expense accounts for early education and care and annual gynecological exams were the benefits most likely to be offered to all employees (97% of companies for both). On-site early education and care was the benefit least likely to be offered to all (6% of companies provide this benefit).

The report is by Erika Falk, Ph.D., Washington Research Director and Erin Grizard, Research Assistant, Annenberg Public Policy Center. Executive and board data were collected from companies listed in the *Fortune* 500 under publishing and printing, advertising, telecommunications, and entertainment using 2002 annual reports and SEC filings. Human resources data were collected by questionnaires. Fox Entertainment Group and General Electric were included in the list of entertainment companies because of their ownership of Fox Network and NBC. For a full explanation of our methodology please see the report. The full report is available [www.appcpenn.org](http://www.appcpenn.org) or by calling 202-879-6700.

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*The Annenberg Public Policy Center was established by publisher and philanthropist Walter Annenberg in 1994 to create a community of scholars within the University of Pennsylvania that would examine the role of communication in public policy issues at the local, state, and federal levels. The Annenberg Public Policy Center conducts research and sponsors lectures and conferences. Visit [www.appcpenn.org](http://www.appcpenn.org).*