Agenda

- Introduction

- Mind the (gender) gap!

- Unconscious bias

- How can companies take action? HR perspective

- An inclusive leader

- Summary

- Q&A

Menti Quiz

- Scan the QR code

- or join at menti.com, use code: **4703 0673**

Mind the (gender) gap!

A few words about the gender gaps

Gender Pay Gap

- Gap in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access, rights, remuneration or benefits. (European Commission, 1998).

Statistically, a woman performing the same or comparable work as a man, earns less.

What causes the pay gap?
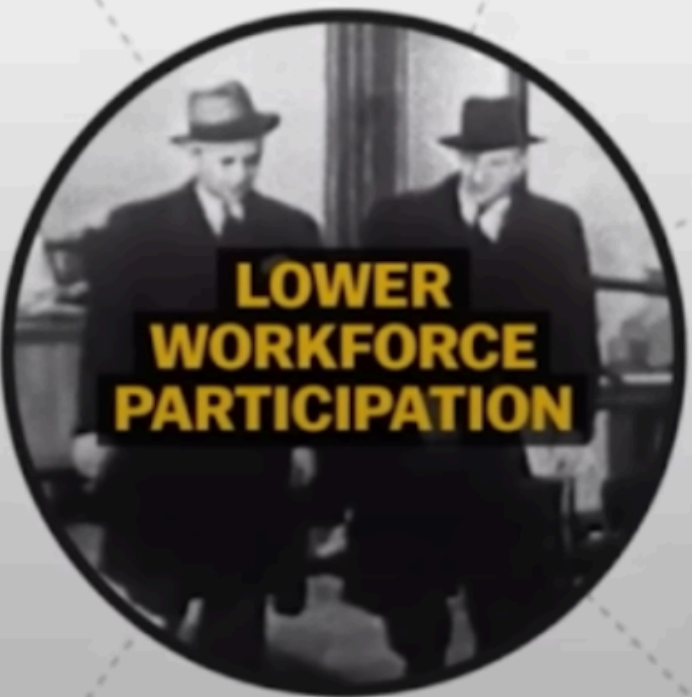
A quick history lesson

Back to 1950s

- It wasn't very long ago that most women, especially white women, didn't work outside the home at all.
It applies both to Europe and the US.

Caregiver Problem

- What has stayed is that women bear children. They are assumed to be the primary caregiver.

CAUSES FOR THE PAY GAP IN THE 50s & 60s

LOWER EDUCATION RATES

WOMEN CAN'T HOLD POWER

WOMEN LESS INTELLIGENT

DISCRIMINATION IS LEGAL

"FEMININE" JOBS

WOMEN SHOULD RAISE CHILDREN

LOWER WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

WOMEN SHOULD BE HOMEMAKERS

Source: Explained | Why Women Are Paid Less, Netflix
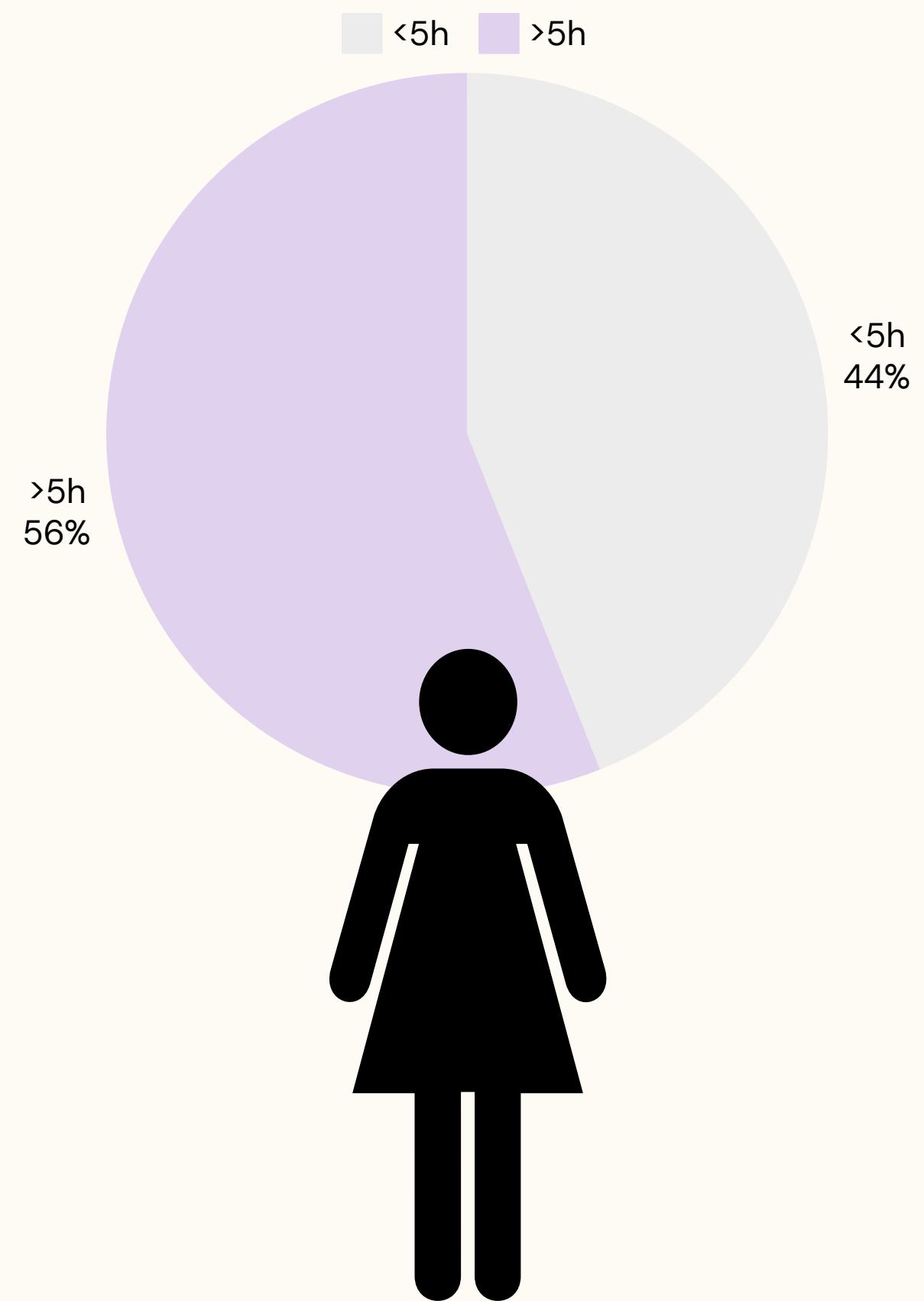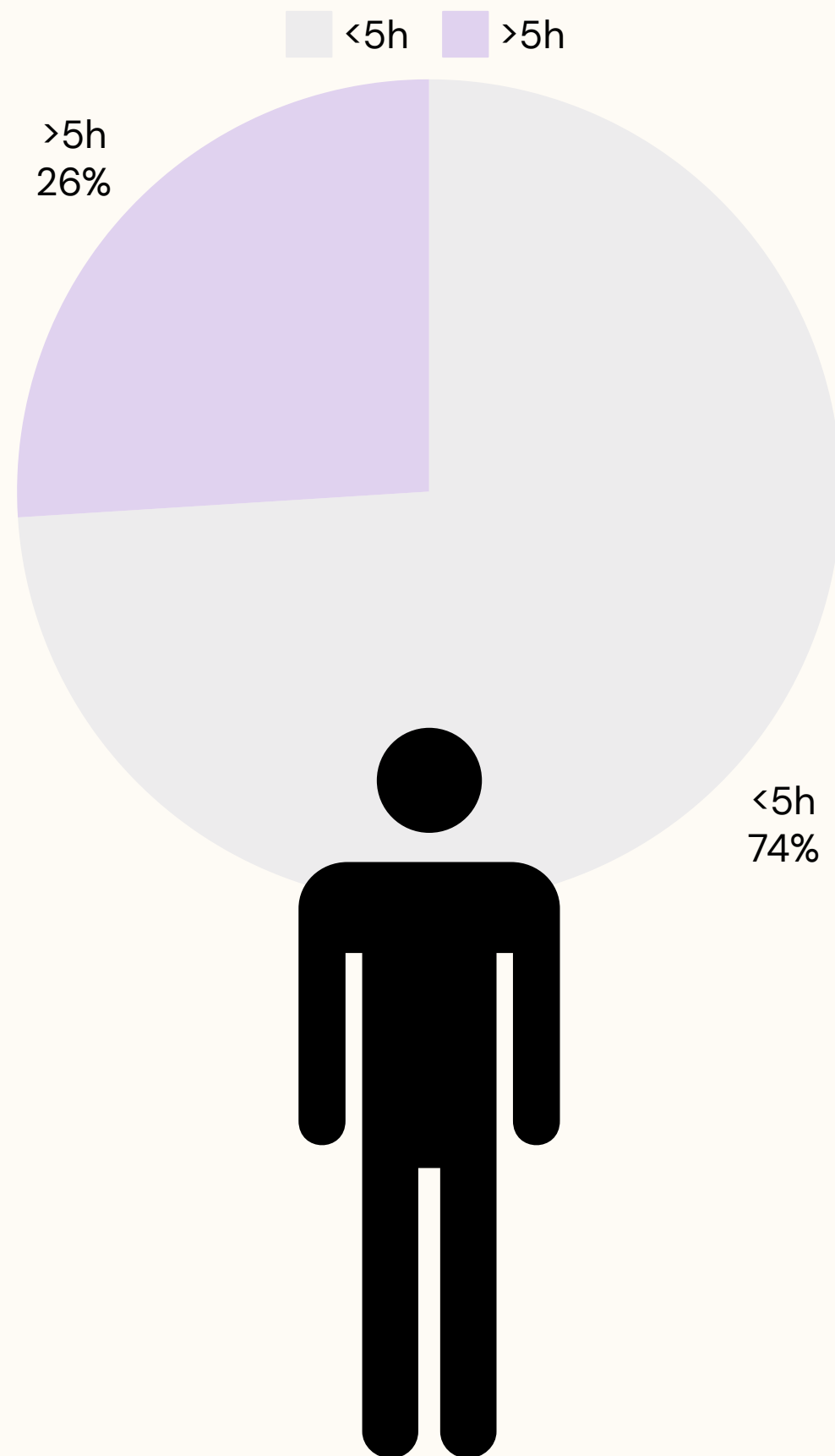
The Caregiver Problem

Source: Explained | Why Women Are Paid Less, Netflix

>5h
26%

<5h
74%

<5h   >5h

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44%

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56%
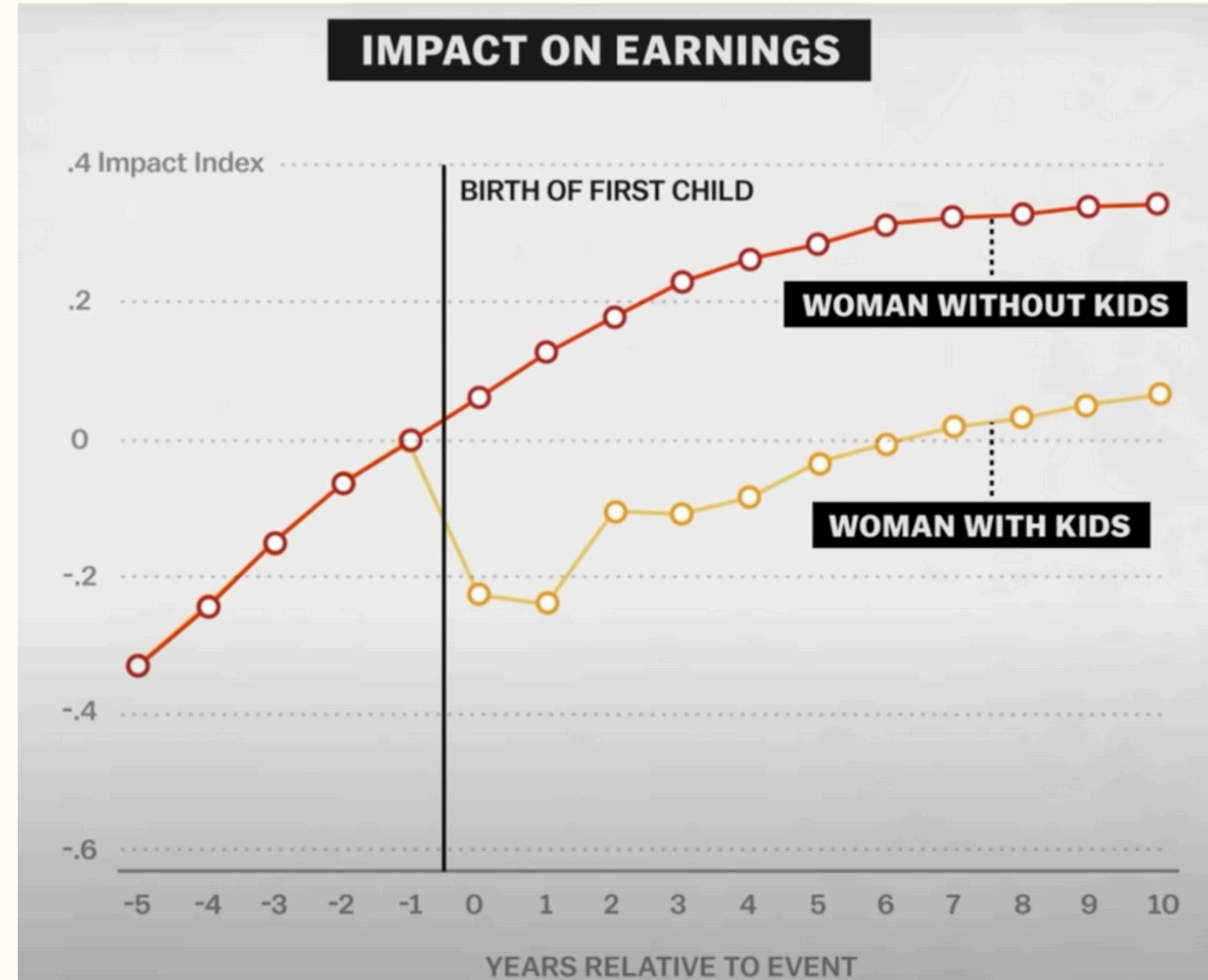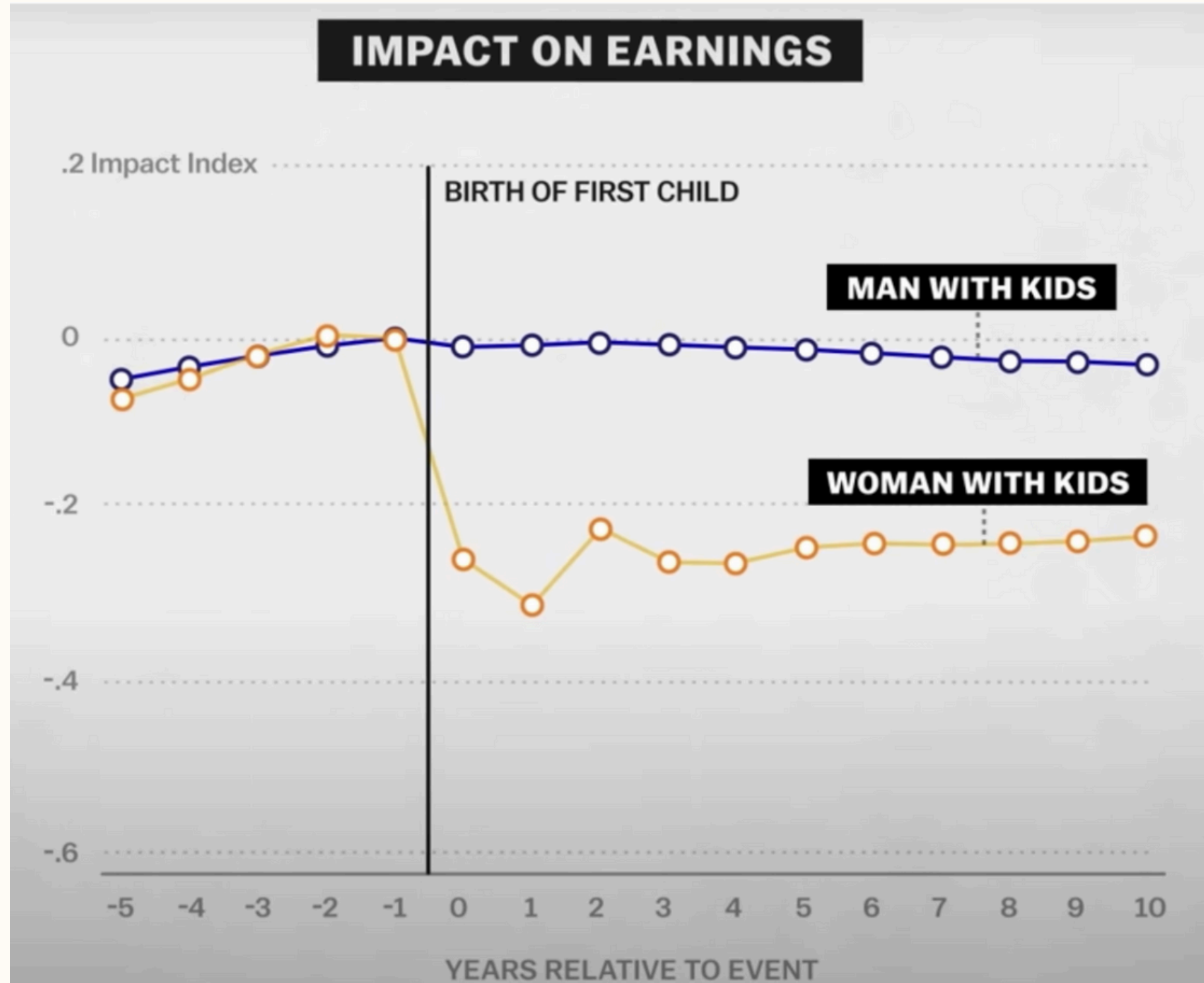
Share of parents spending at least 5 hours a day on childcare, by gender (%, EU–27, 2022)

Source: A Better Work–Life Balance: Bridging the gender care gap, EIGE

A few case examples from the world

Rwanda

Country rebuilt by women

Until a few decades ago, women in Rwanda were denied basic rights. After the 1994 genocide, which left 800,000 dead and the population 60–70% women, the government recognized the need to involve women in rebuilding the country.
New policies were quickly implemented to elevate women to positions of power.

Today, women hold 61% of parliamentary seats in Rwanda, the highest in the world. What began as a survival mechanism has led to significant progress in gender equality.

A few case examples from the world

Iceland

Power of the masses

In 1975, Icelandic women walked out of their workplaces to protest the gender pay gap, causing businesses to shut down. This strike sparked a wave of social change. In 1980, Iceland elected the world's first democratically-elected female president. Soon after, laws supporting women, like paid maternity leave, were introduced. However, these laws reinforced gender roles, so in 2000, Iceland introduced paternity leave to encourage men to share caregiving responsibilities.

This cultural shift helped narrow Iceland's gender pay gap, with women now earning about 90 cents for every dollar a man makes.

A few case examples from the world

Denmark

An incomplete success

Gender equality is a fundamental aspect of the Danish welfare state, where Denmark has been a leader in promoting gender equality for over a century. The percentage of women working outside the home in Denmark is one of the world's highest. Despite this, Danish men still earn 12.7% more than women, with 15% of the wage gap remaining unexplained.

The Danish government is working on identifying the root causes and finding ways to overcome the gender pay gap.

What does your life look like?

Enter your gender and country of birth to see how your life could turn out.

Link: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/game/PL/W

Authority Gap

- A gap concerning how much we (as a society) still take women less seriously than men.

- Can be considered in terms of expertise or in terms of power.

Power | **Authority** | Expertise

- When it comes to expertise, women are much more likely to have to provide evidence of their competence. This leads to the fact that women are much more likely to be patronised, interrupted, talked over or have their, expertise challenged.

- When it comes to power and leadership, to have their authority resisted. Based on research, a woman seeking power tends to be perceived as something negative, whereas a man seeking power is seen as the one taking responsibility and about to make a change.

Source: The Authority Gap: Why women are still taken less seriously than men, and what we can do about it, Mary Ann Sieghart

The Reykjavik Index for Leadership (2022)

Measuring perceptions of equality for men and women in leadership

Type of research	• Survey
Dissonance	• Dissonance between men and women, age groups 18–34, 35–54- and 55–65–year old
Scale	• 10 000 people questioned
National level	• 14 different countries (G7+Kenya, India, Nigeria)
Sector differences	• 23 sectors, including: Engineering, Healthcare, Education, Politics etc.
Question	• "For each of the following sectors or industries, do you think men or women are better suited to leadership positions?"

Key findings (2022)

45% ...

of people felt comfortable with women leading their countries.

Younger people...

are even more reluctant to feel comfortable than older people.

People are uncomfortable...

with women being power-seeking and see it as something to be disliked.

This can easily be shown by how female politics are portrayed and mentioned by the media.

Real stories

**Mary Ann Sieghart,
journalist, author of "The Authority Gap",
British politics expert**

"At a conference a few years ago, a man asked me what I did.
And I led a portfolio life, so I just rattled off a list and I said, "Well,
I write a political column for 'The Independent' newspaper. I
make radio programs for the BBC. I chair a think tank. I sit on a
couple of commercial boards. I'm on the council of Tate Modern,
and I am on the content board of Ofcom, our broadcasting
regulator."

To which he replied, "Wow, you're a busy little girl." I was about
50, older than our Prime Minister."

Real stories

Mary McAleese,
former President of Ireland

Mary McAleese revealed how Pope John Paul "ignored her" and instead reached for her husband's hand before her own when the two met in 1999.
McAleese says that the Pope, addressing her husband Martin, said, "Would you not prefer to be the president of Ireland instead of your wife?" McAleese recalled she quickly interjected: "You would never have done that to a male president. I'm the elected president of Ireland whether you like it or not."

The Pope later claimed it was a joke but if so, it was in poor taste. He also said that he tried to joke because he heard she has a good sense of humour.

Real stories

Hillary Clinton,
American politician and diplomat

Hillary Clinton in her memoir, "What Happened", reflected on her lengthy beauty routine and the pressures she felt to look a certain way.

"I've never gotten used to how much effort it takes just to be a woman in the public eye," Clinton wrote. "I once calculated how many hours I spent having my hair and makeup done during the campaign. It came to about 600 hours, or 25 days. I was so shocked, I checked the math twice."

Confidence Gap

- Confidence does not equal competence.

- It's commonly accepted that female workers lack the self-confidence of their male peers and this hurts their chances at success.

Confidence DOES NOT equal competence

Popular advice encourages women to "lean in" and assert themselves to overcome confidence barriers. However, recent research challenges this idea, showing no consistent gender differences in self-confidence. Studies reveal that even when women appear self-confident, it doesn't translate to influence as it does for men. Instead, women tend to be judged on warmth and prosocial behaviour.

The problem may lay not only in women's confidence but also in organizational systems that need to evaluate all employees equally, where talents and skills are rewarded fairly, regardless of gender.
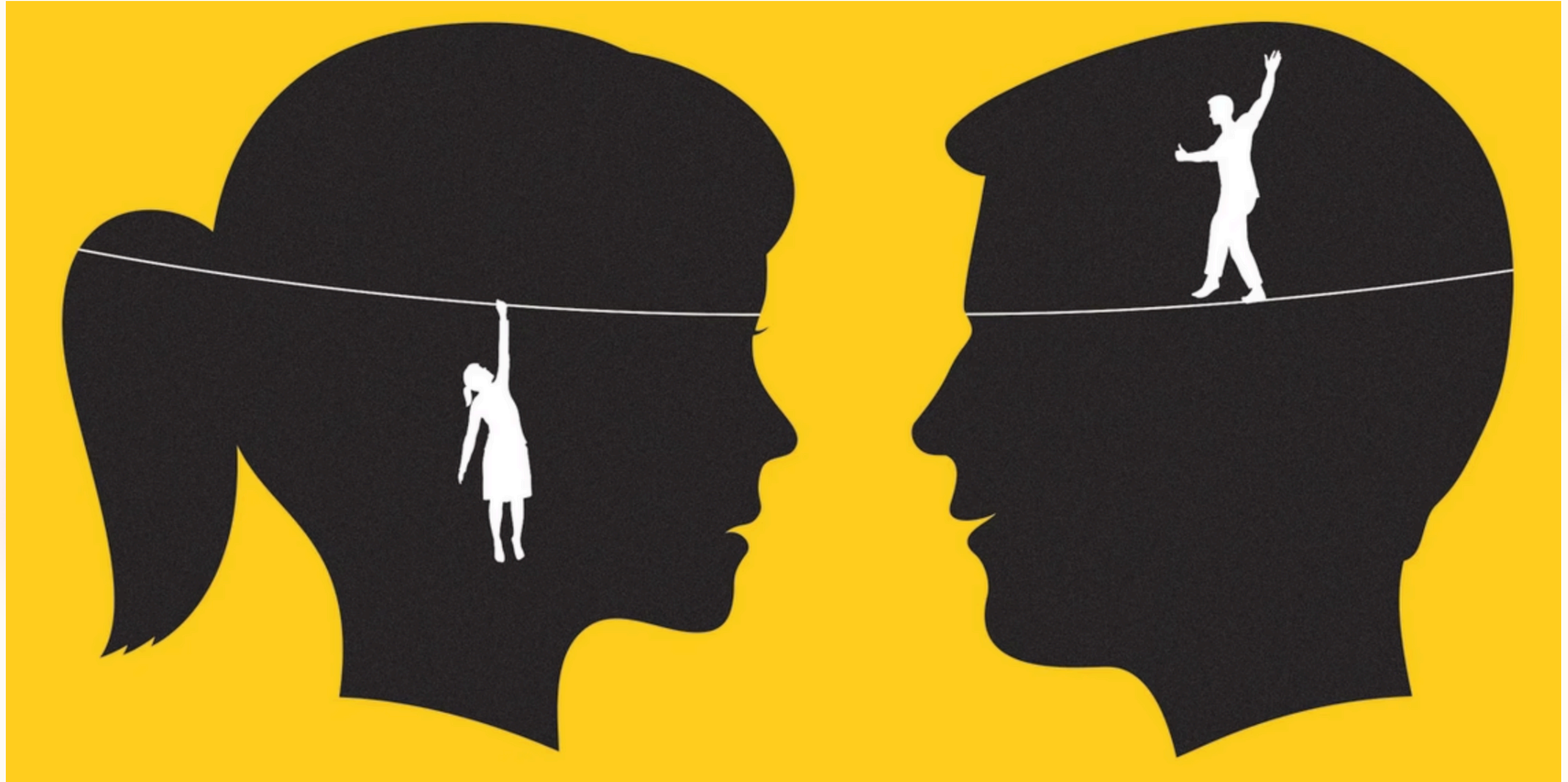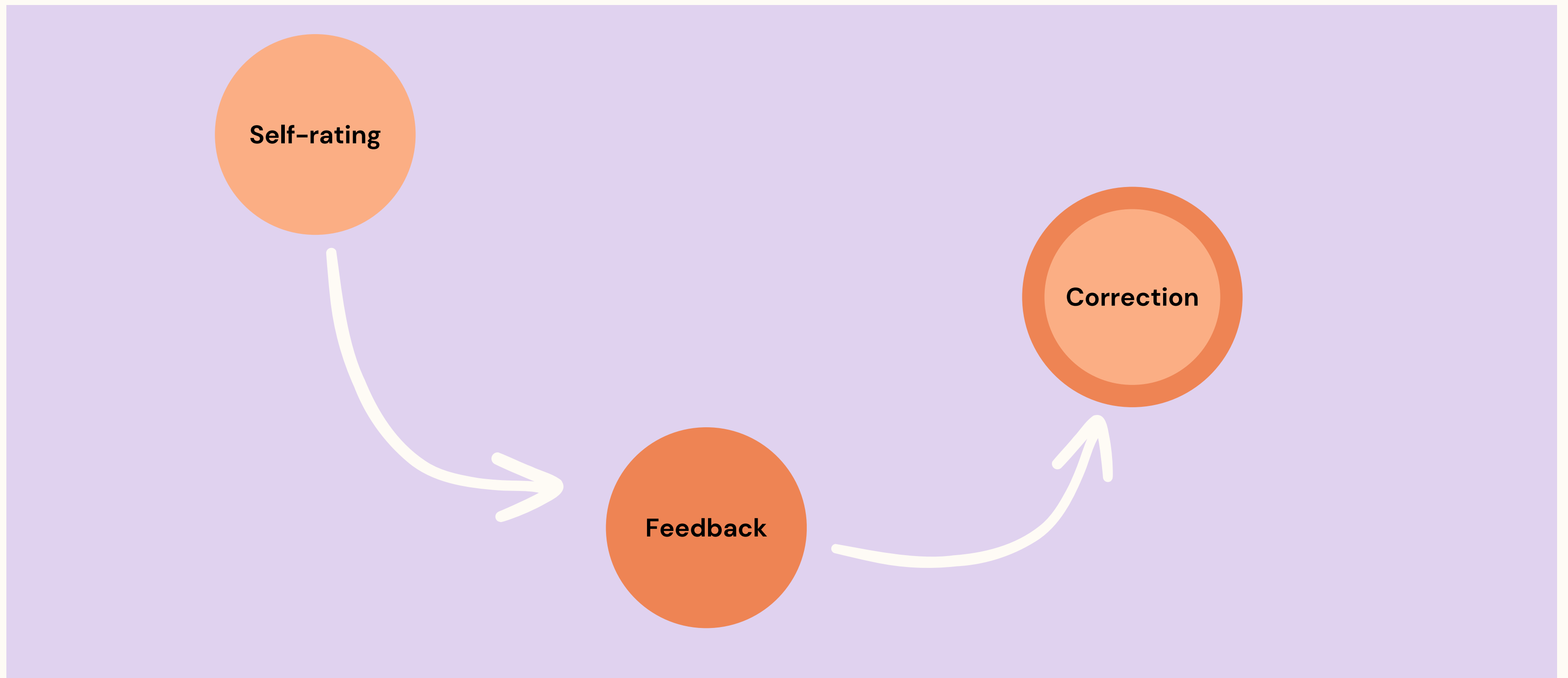
The researchers suggest that women are socialised to be more sensitive to other people's opinions. While this can have a downside, it also increases their self awareness.

The unconscious bias

....that everyone has

Daniel Kahneman: the two modes of thinking

Daniel Kahneman, a Nobel Prize-winning psychologist, explored how people make decisions, particularly about money. In his book "Thinking, Fast and Slow" he introduced the idea that we have two modes of thinking: fast and slow.
Fast thinking is automatic, subconscious, and helps us make quick decisions, like avoiding a moving car. It's based on past experiences and is difficult to change.

Slow thinking, on the other hand, requires effort and energy, but it's crucial for solving technical and creative problems. This deliberate thinking helps with innovation, learning, and overcoming unconscious biases.

It is also something that helps us overcome unconscious bias.
Maybe we should not believe everything that we think?

# Daniel Kahneman: the two modes of thinking
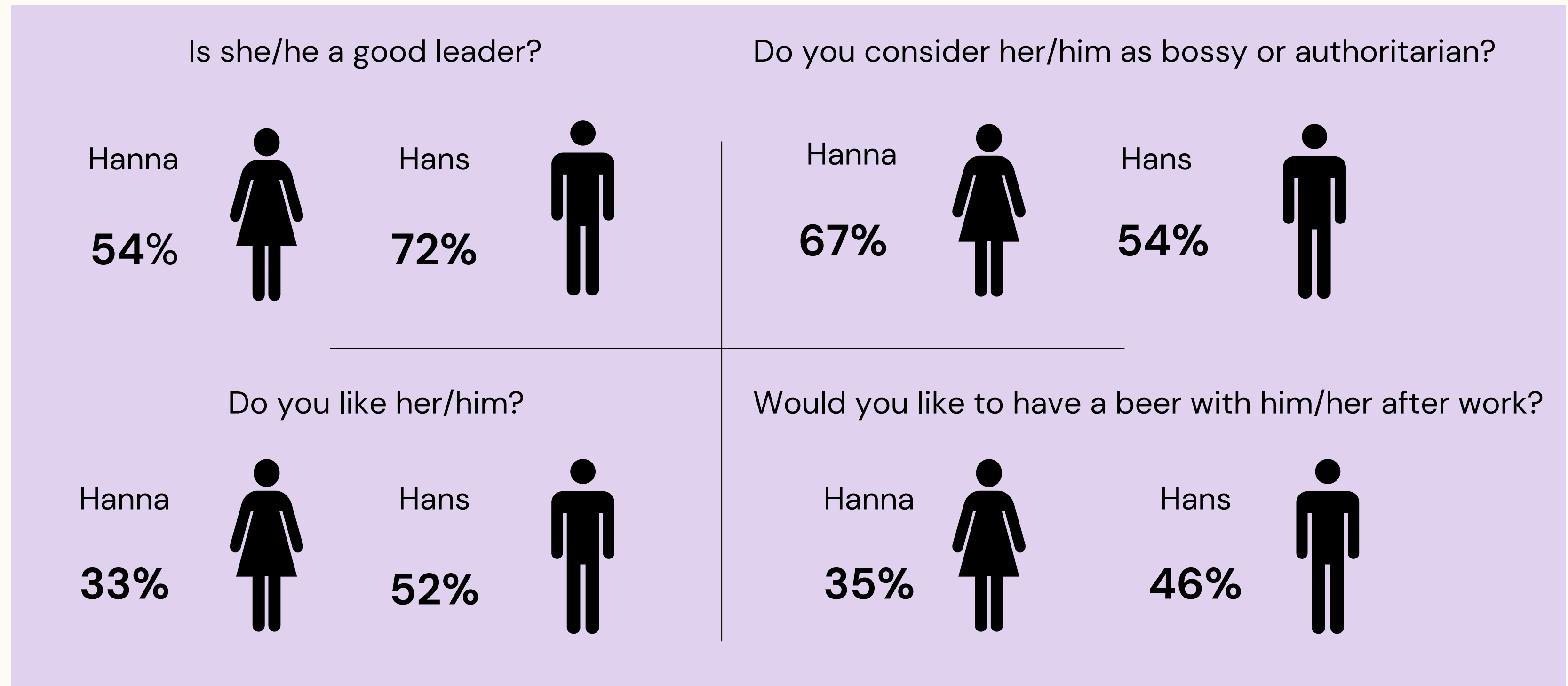
FAST
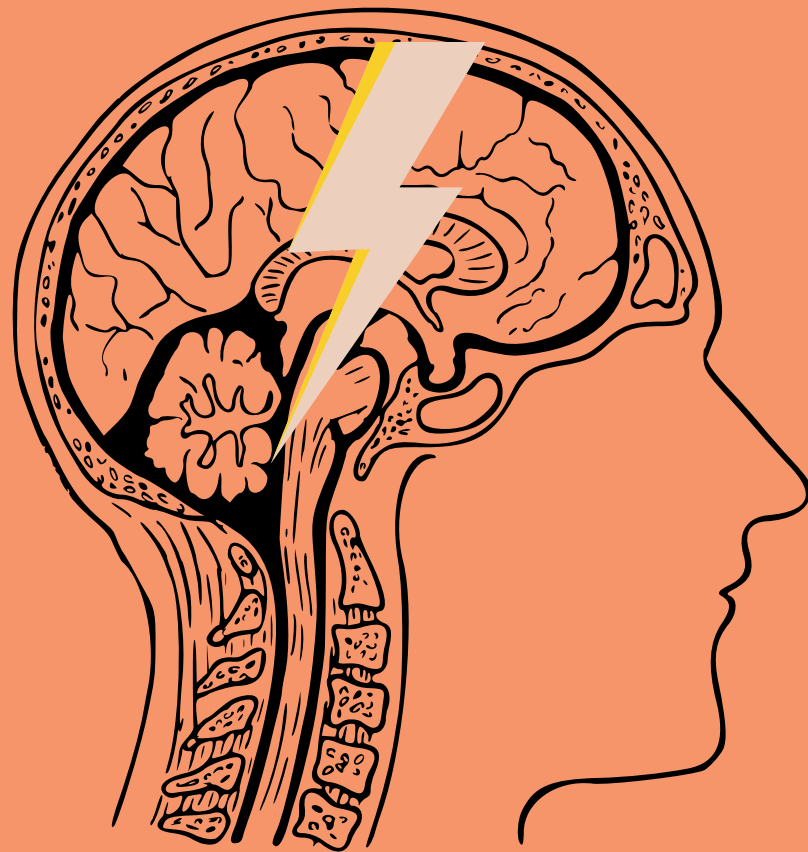
SLOW

Bias – a psychological pattern that can affect a person's subjective understanding to deviate from reality. Can be called a survival mechanism.

Bias is a natural, normal human tendency. People are biased because that is how we are hard-wired. If our brains could not tell in a split second the difference between an angry lion and a harmless gazelle, we would not have lasted long as a species and so our brains has evolved to make snap decisions based on making sense of what we see in a blink of an eye.
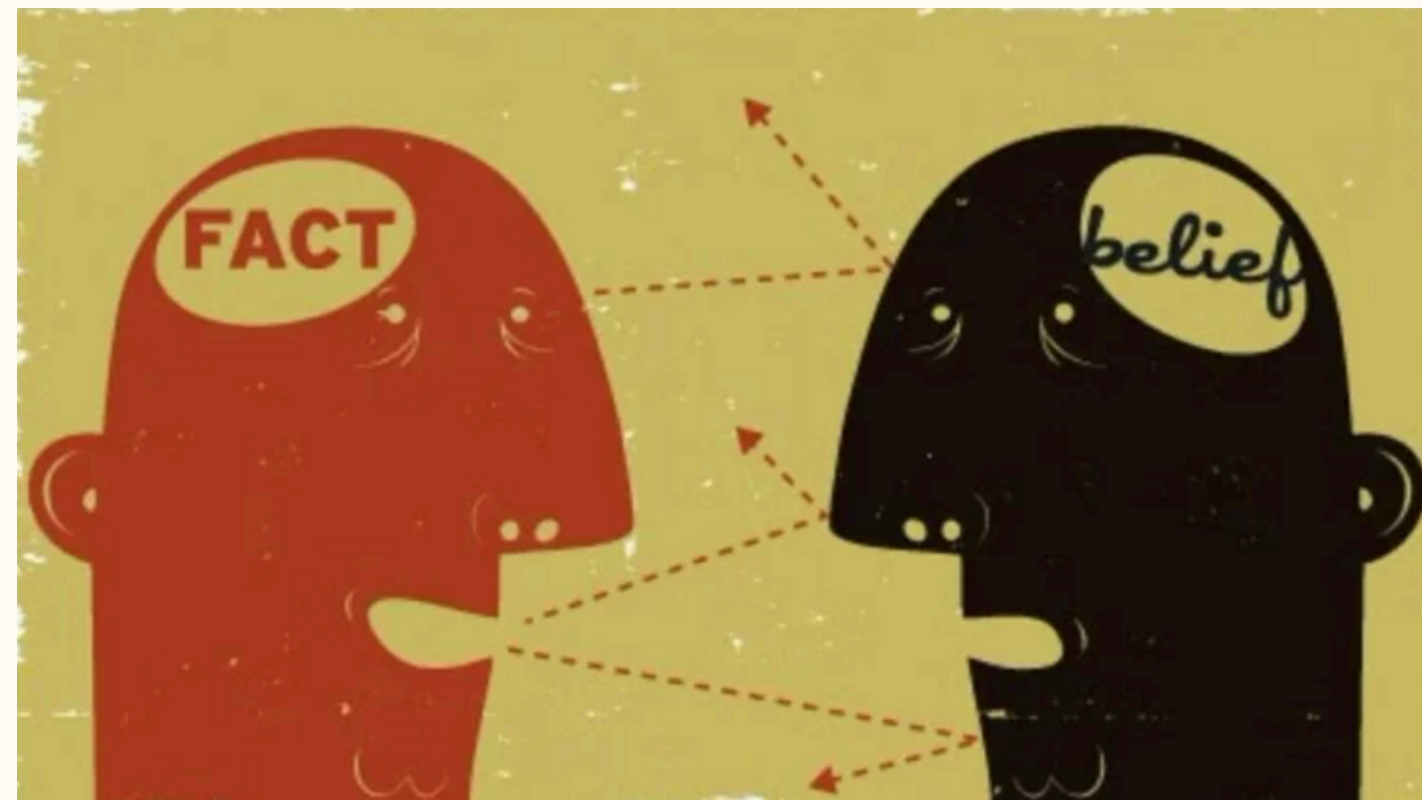
A 2015 Norwegian study used the examples of "Hanna" and "Hans" to show how reactions varied based on gender. Over 100 students read a text about a successful business person, with half being told the person was a woman (Hanna) and the other half a man (Hans). The students then answered identical questions, with the only difference being the perceived gender of the subject.
Here are the study's results:

Is she/he a good leader?

Hanna **54%** Hans **72%**

Do you consider her/him as bossy or authoritarian?

Hanna **67%** Hans **54%**

Do you like her/him?

Hanna **33%** Hans **52%**

Would you like to have a beer with him/her after work?

Hanna **35%** Hans **46%**

Check your own bias

IAT Bias TEST

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/Study?tid=-1

Project Implicit

How can companies take action?

HR perspective and business cases

It is easier to change processes than people

Recruitment

Thinking about how the recruitment approach can skew who even applies.

Behavioral design works.

Structured interviews and data-based approach are one of the first steps to effective talent aquisition.

To overcome possible biases in hiring, most orchestras in the U.S. revised their audition policies in the 1970s and 1980s. A major change involved the use of blind' auditions with a screen to conceal the identity of the candidate from the jury.

A simple design change led to a significant increase in female musicians, now making up nearly 40% of orchestras. This shift didn't result from changing mindsets but from altering the audition process.

Good practices

Examples of good behavioral design in organizations include using software tools to blind hiring managers to applicants' demographic details, focusing only on talent.

Structured interviews, where all candidates are asked the same questions in the same order and scored in real time, are more effective than unstructured ones.

Additionally, organizations should carefully craft job ads to avoid language that may unconsciously discourage certain genders from applying. For instance, terms like "nurturing" or "competitive" can skew who applies, so being mindful of recruitment language helps access the full talent pool.

Good practices

Data-based tools
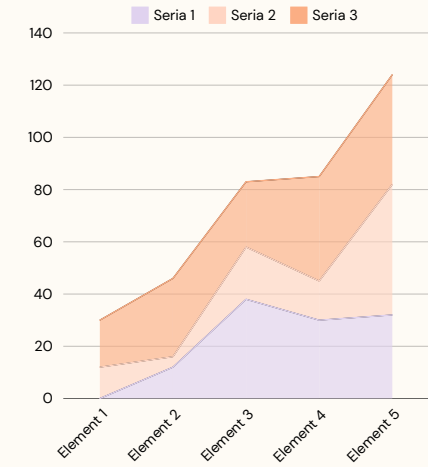
Behavioral design

Proper wording
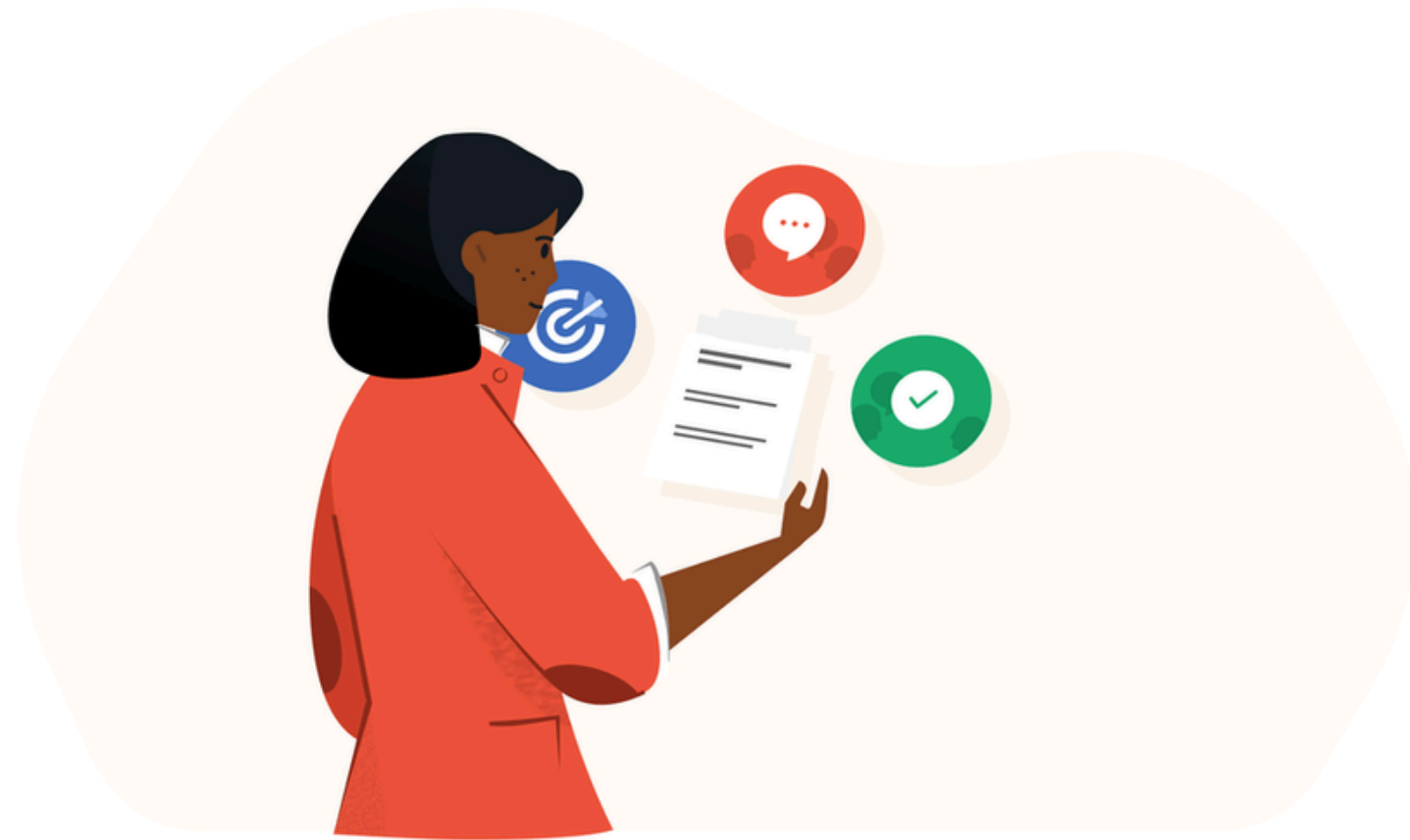
Focus on relevant information

Performance management

Annual evaluations may be subjective, which opens the door to gender bias.

These biases can lead to double standards, in that a situation can get a positive or a negative spin, depending on gender.

Content analysis of individual annual performance reviews (Dr P. Cecchi Dimeglio, Harvard Law School), shows that women were 1.4 times more likely to receive critical subjective feedback.

Feedback was vaguer, more attributed to characteristics such as luck or their ability to spend long hours in the office, perceived as real commitment to the firm, rather than their abilities and skills.

Good practices

Using objective criteria, broader reviewer groups, and more frequent reviews can reduce biases and highlight different leadership styles. This system results in more accurate, gender-neutral assessments that better recognize diverse strengths.

Incorrect data can be as detrimental as no data.
Self-evaluations, often used in performance appraisals, can introduce bias due to differences in self-confidence. To avoid bias, managers should not see self-evaluations before finalizing their assessments, as sharing these ratings can distort the appraisal process.
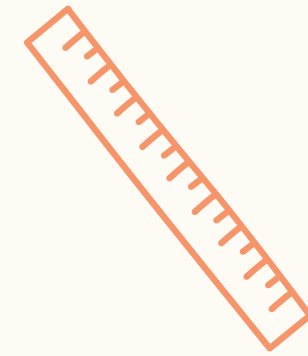
Calibration sessions after performance management rounds may also ensure the lowering of the bias as they provide consistency (alignment on evaluations across teams and departments), fairness (equitable assessments and accuracy (correct inaccuracies in performance ratings).

Good practices

Continuous feedback
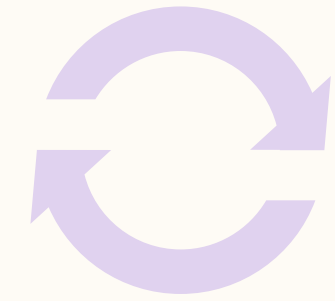
Calibrating sessions

Crowdsourcing performance data

Transparent and clear rating scale

Education & Training

Why do diversity programs fail?

How to make them actually work?

For beliefs to change, people's experiences have to change first.

It turns out that while people are easily taught to respond correctly to a questionnaire about bias, they soon forget the right answers.

Good practices

Many companies struggle with diversity training due to:
- **Negative Messaging:** negative incentives often backfire and don't foster genuine commitment to diversity.
- **Mandatory Training:** Enforcing compulsory training, based on outdated advice, can lead to resistance and minimal improvement in diversity metrics.
- **Voluntary Training:** Training that employees choose to attend yields better results, increasing minority representation in management.
- **Perception Issues:** Training perceived as remedial or targeted at managers can lead to resistance and backlash.

Research shows that choice and positive reinforcement in training produce more effective and supportive outcomes.
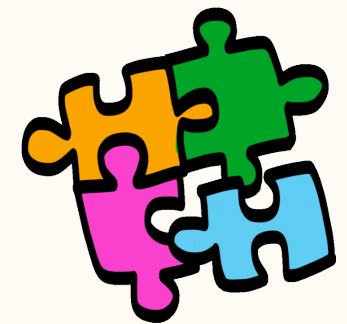
Good practices

Positive association

Voluntary trainings and DEI task forces

Relevance of the training

Open discussions and allowing people to speak

Grievance procedures

Employee surveys show that most people don't report discrimination.

Good practices

To ensure fair and unbiased grievance procedures, companies should aim for:

- **Clear Procedures:** Define and communicate a transparent grievance process.
- **Confidentiality:** Handle all complaints confidentially to protect privacy and avoid retaliation.
- **Training:** Train managers and HR on fair handling and bias recognition.
- **Documentation:** Keep detailed records of grievances, investigations, and resolutions.
- **Non-Retaliation Policy:** Enforce a strict policy against retaliation.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Collect and act on employee feedback about the process.

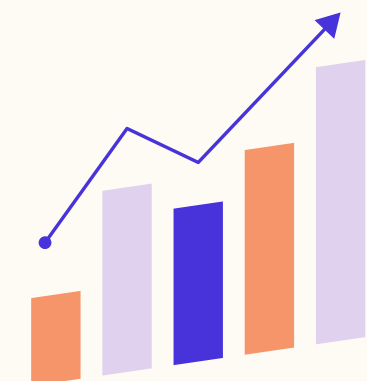# Good practices

Walk the talk

Accessible and visible tools

Environment of trust

Question the statistics

An inclusive leader

and how to become one!

Overcome bias

Shift to data and evidence

- Rely on objective metrics and analyze them consciously.

Distrust your gut

- Dare to question your fast thinking.

Establish objective criteria and demand accountability.

- Clarify objective criteria, and rate using the same rubric. Waive criteria rarely, and require an explanation for those exceptions; then keep track of long-term waiving trends.

Overcome bias

Mindfully assign people to high-value projects.

- Reconsider who is capable of doing what the jobs or projects require.

Walk the talk

- Example goes top-down.

Respond to double standards and stereotyping

- Pay attention to what the narration in your team is like.

Develop your team

Focus on performance, not potential

- Think about what predetermined benchmarks are used to give a rating.

Separate performance from potential and personality from skills

- Beware of the benefit of the doubt, assess potential separately, avoid personality–based ratings.

Navigate self–promotion.

- Provide employees with tools to evaluate their own performance.

Develop your team

Be transparent on how training, promotion, and pay decisions are made

- Set a clear outline of what is needed to advance in one's role and who is eligible to get promoted, get a raise etc.

Be consistent and take accountability

- Once the outline is there, practice it when taking decisions.

Create psychological safety

- Create space for new ideas, promote dialogue, establish norms for how failure is handled.

Thank You for your attention!