

# 54% of UK Women Experience 'Promotion Burnout' as Workplace Inequalities Persist

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[Robert Walters](#) has released new poll data revealing that over half (54%) of UK female professionals feel less motivated to pursue promotions compared to two years ago - in a trend the talent solutions partner coins as '*promotion burnout*'.

The research touches on persistent inequalities still present in today's workplace, with 81% of women feeling they are at a disadvantage to their male peers during promotion cycles. Additionally, 38% believe their work isn't equally valued, further fueling rates of diminished ambitions for female workers.

"The rise of 'promotion burnout' among women raises serious concerns about the progress of workplace equality," comments Lucy Bisset, Director at Robert Walters North.

"It's not a case of women lacking ambition. Rather, persistent challenges such as unrepresentative leadership, being overlooked for opportunities, and undervalued contributions continue to wear them down."

The issue is particularly pronounced among junior professionals. According to [research](#) from McKinsey while 80% of entry-level men said they wanted to advance, only 69% of women did.

Women's representation in the upper echelons of leadership is also stagnating. In 2025, the number of female FTSE 100 CEOs stalled at 9.

The lack of visible female role models is intensifying existing challenges, only a third (34%) of women report seeing inspiring female senior leaders within their current organisation, as many miss out on a critical factor in developing ambition and confidence.

Data from Robert Walters' Employee Benefits Guide paints a similar picture. While almost one-third (31%) of the male respondents held CXO / Director level posts, less than a fifth (16%) of women reached these positions. Meanwhile, over two fifths (43%) of the female respondents remained in non-managerial positions.

Lucy concludes: "As we approach the 115<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day, our findings should serve as a stark reminder to businesses that they must address the systemic and structural barriers that prevent women from advancing in their careers.

"Prioritising initiatives such as transparent promotion processes, fair recognition practices, and comprehensive mentorship programmes can help combat 'promotion burnout' and create an equitable workplace where everyone can thrive.

"Women bring immense value to organisations at every level yet if meaningful changes aren't made quick, we risk generations of talented professionals not reaching their true potential and a widening leadership gap."