

# Can we increase women's and minorities' applications for job promotions?

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SODI 2018  
September 18, 2018

## Why do women apply for promotions less than men?

- ▶ Women make up 40% of global workforce but only hold 24% of senior management roles
- ▶ Many explanations:
  - ▶ Demand side: discrimination, implicit bias, etc.
  - ▶ Supply side: career preferences, dislike competition, risk averse, etc.
- ▶ Two ideas:
  - ▶ Women may have incorrect perceptions of how well qualified they are for a job
  - ▶ Women react more negatively than men to negative feedback
- ▶ Result: Pool of applicants considered for promotion may not be the best possible

## Step 0: What does your company already know?

1. Does your company already know:
  - ▶ Average level of qualifications of promotion applicants
  - ▶ Number of attempts at a promotion
2. From simple surveys we can find:
  - ▶ How well qualified they feel they are for a promotion
  - ▶ Have they been discouraged from previous failure
  - ▶ Other factors: preferences (higher positions require more hours), sense of belonging

## Idea 1: Provide feedback on qualification's level of past applicants

- ▶ Can we provide timely information so they can compare themselves to previous promotion applicants?
- ▶ For example: Send messages to potential applicants giving information about previous applicants for this promotion regarding:
  - ▶ Average performance ratings
  - ▶ Average number of attempts at a promotion
  - ▶ Any other characteristic that may be of interest for the company
- ▶ Intervention: randomly select who will receive the message(s) among employees who may be qualified for a promotion. Based on survey responses, see who is more persuaded.

## Idea 2: Can we improve grit among women and minorities?

- ▶ **Grit:** Important non-cognitive skill related to perseverance and the mindset that ability is malleable
- ▶ Two studies:
  - ▶ Women say are less likely to apply for executive roles if they've been rejected before (Brands & Fernandez-Mateo, 2017)
  - ▶ Elementary-school girls are less likely to give up and more likely to succeed when receiving a grit intervention (Alan, Boneva & Ertac, 2016)
- ▶ Intervention: Incorporate grit training in company's current set of trainings, case studies, etc. Randomize who has to complete the grit training