

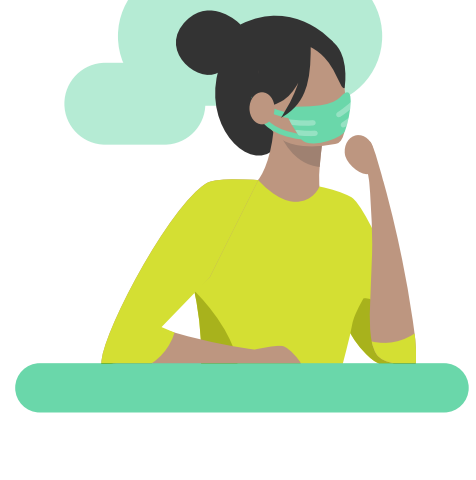
How Women Make It to the Top in Technology

Diversity drives performance; yet, in most industries, including technology, women are under-represented in leadership. BCG surveyed 457 female tech leaders and 300 of their male colleagues to understand how women make it to the top in the technology industry. One key takeaway: early career wins are critical for women.

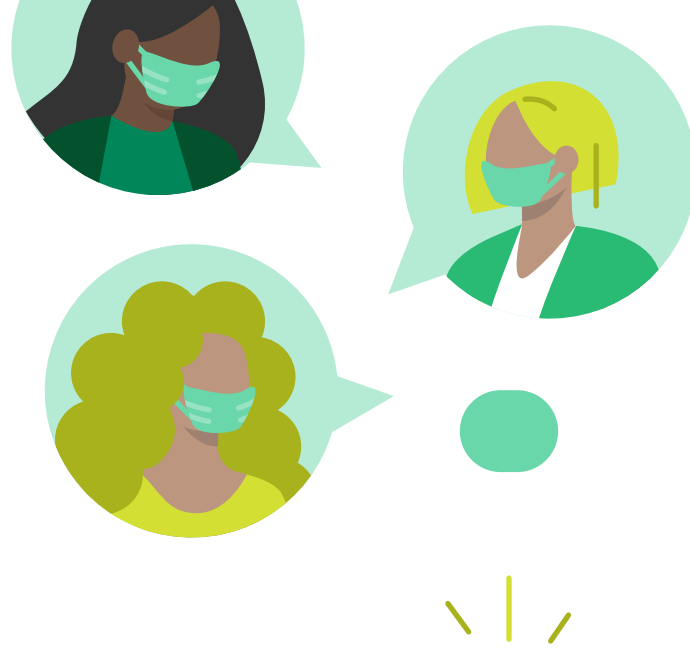


DIVERSITY IS GOOD BUSINESS

The verdict is in. Companies with diverse leadership outperform those with less diverse teams.



Adding one more woman to a company's board or senior management team, while keeping the overall size of the board unchanged, correlates with an increase in return on assets of **8 to 13 basis points**



Companies with at least three female directors had a median increase in ROE over five years that was **11 percentage points higher** than that of companies with no female directors



Firms where 30% of leaders are women have a **15% increase in profitability** (a net profit margin that is more than 1 percentage point higher) compared with similar firms with no female leaders

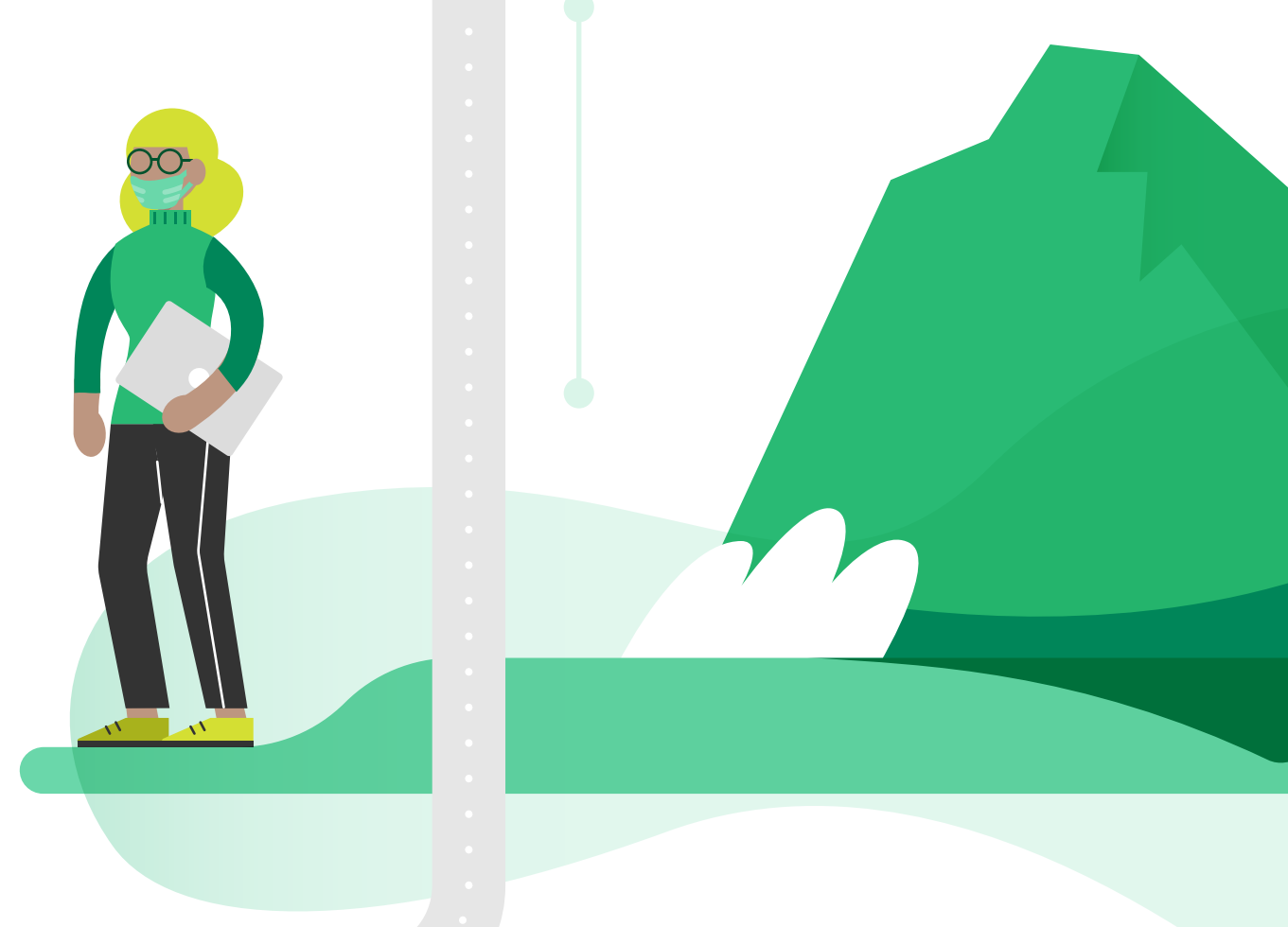
WOMEN ARE STILL UNDER-REPRESENTED IN THE TECH C-SUITE

While women make up almost **half (47%) of the US workforce**, they hold less than **one-third (28%) of the leadership positions in tech**. And that low level of representation predates COVID-19. With women shouldering a disproportionate share of the increased childcare burden, the pandemic could undermine their career gains down the road.

*The leadership gap has little to do with women's willingness to aim high. Women and men are equally ambitious: **62% of women surveyed were trying for promotion while 67% of men were.***

LESSONS FROM WOMEN WHO HAVE MADE IT TO THE TOP IN TECH

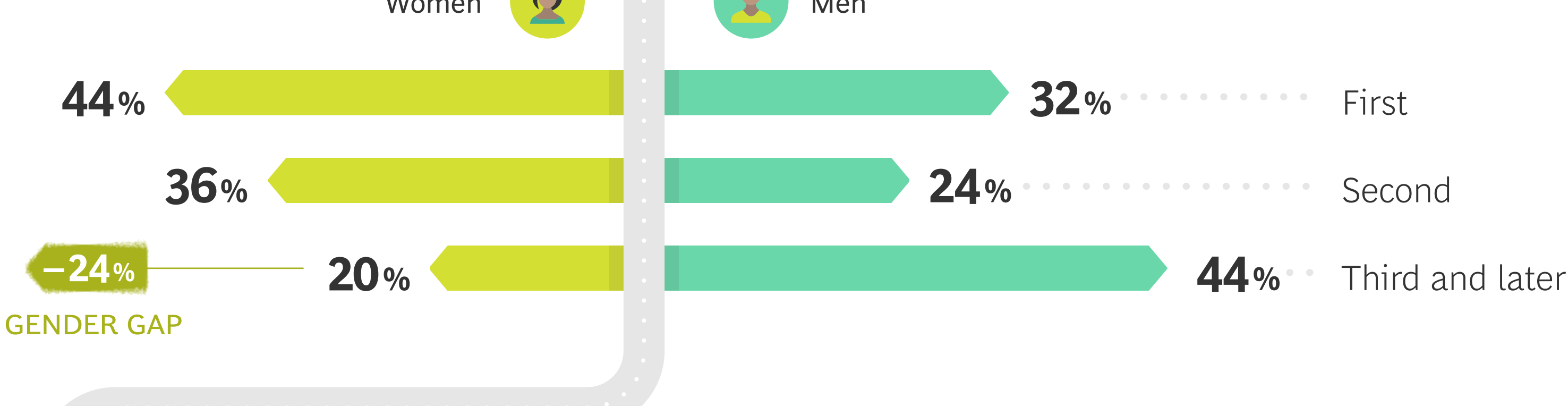
A look at the path of female leaders in tech reveals what helped power their ascent and what could be holding some of them back.



1 Promotion Timing

Female tech leaders indicated that early promotions were the most pivotal in catapulting them onto a leadership trajectory. Men had a different view; they indicated that later promotions were more critical.

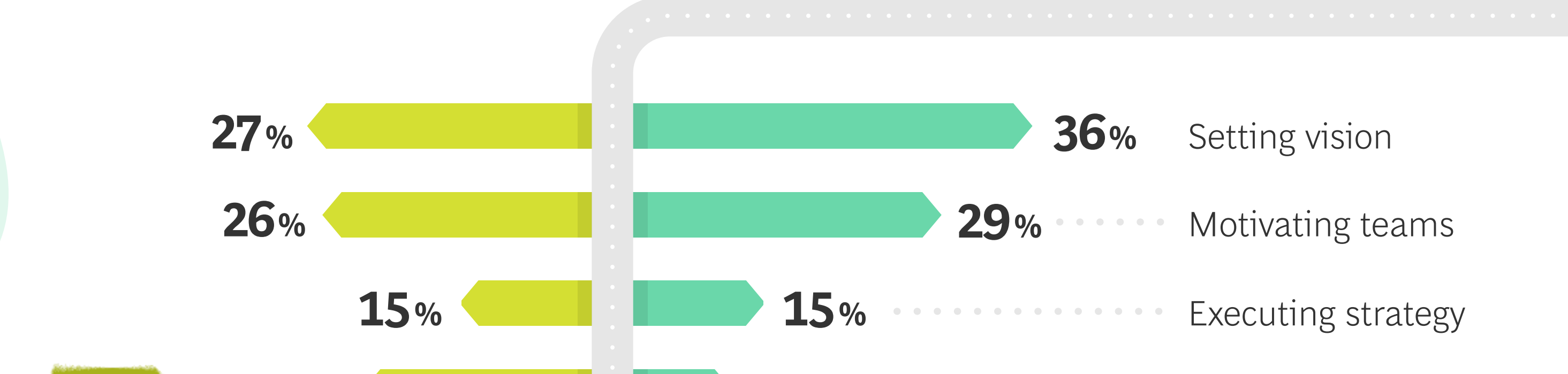
PROMOTION THAT RESPONDENTS SAID WAS THE MOST PIVOTAL IN THEIR CAREER



2 Technical Proficiency

More women than men reported that advanced technical skills were the most important factor in receiving promotions. This underscores the need for women to be more comfortable in touting their technical accomplishments and for those making promotion decisions to ensure that they are not placing a higher burden of proof on women's technical qualifications than on those of men.

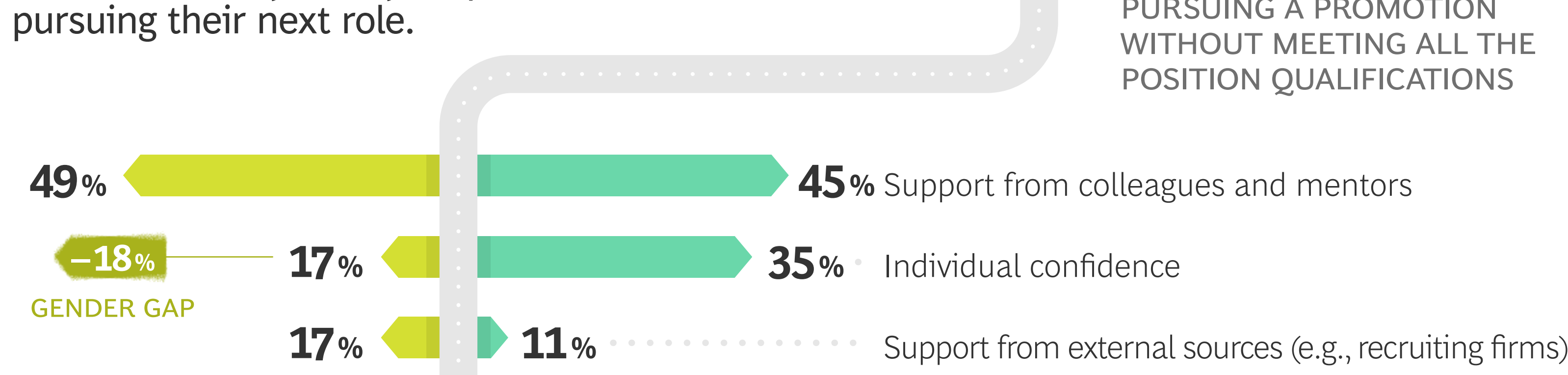
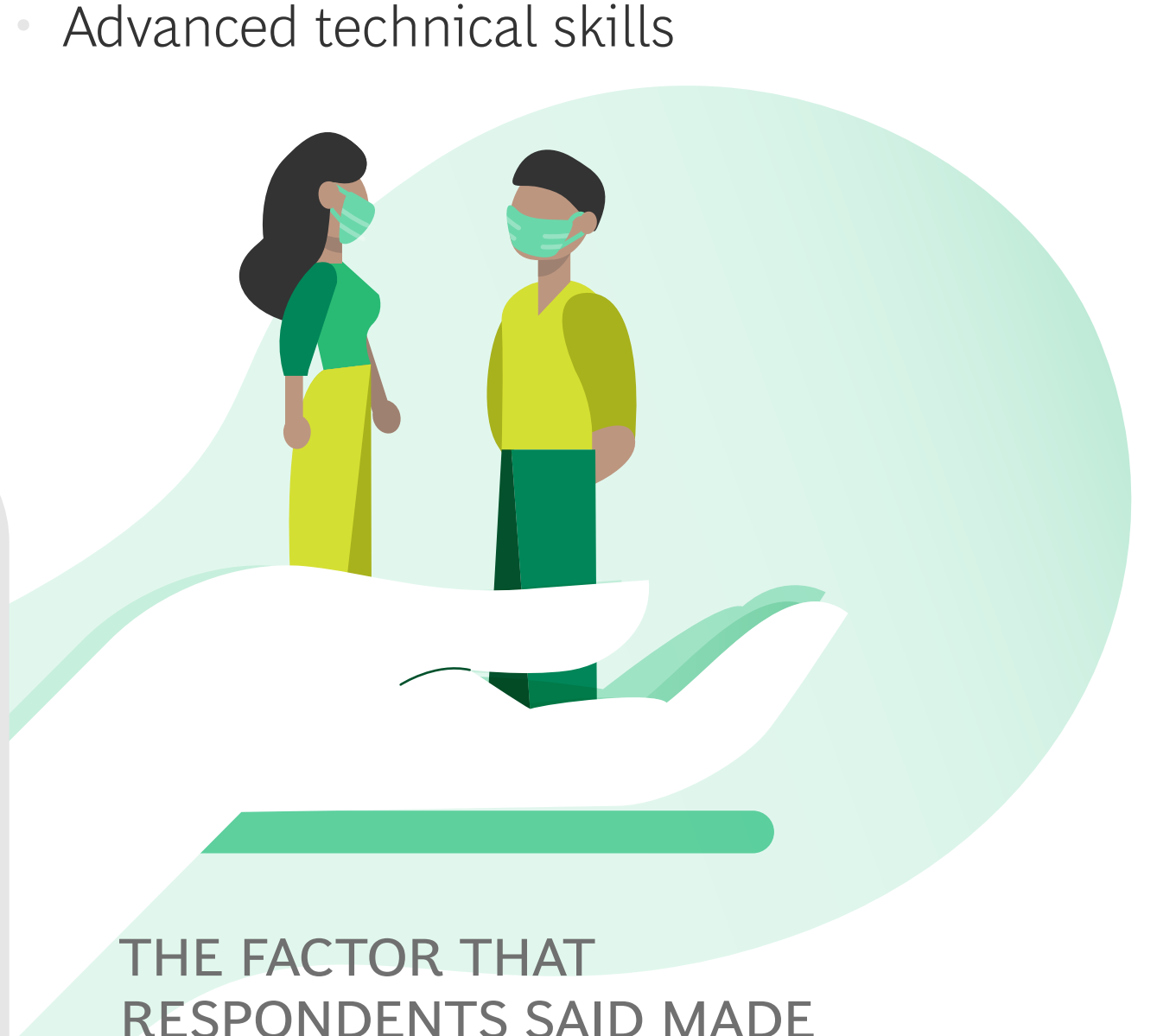
THE SKILL THAT RESPONDENTS SAID WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT IN REACHING THEIR SENIOR-LEVEL ROLE



3 External Support

The female and male tech leaders we surveyed took different approaches to pursuing promotions that stretched the bounds of their qualifications and experience. As they made such a career leap, women were more likely to take into consideration external sources of support and input, including members of their household, colleagues, and mentors, while men were more likely to rely on personal confidence in pursuing their next role.

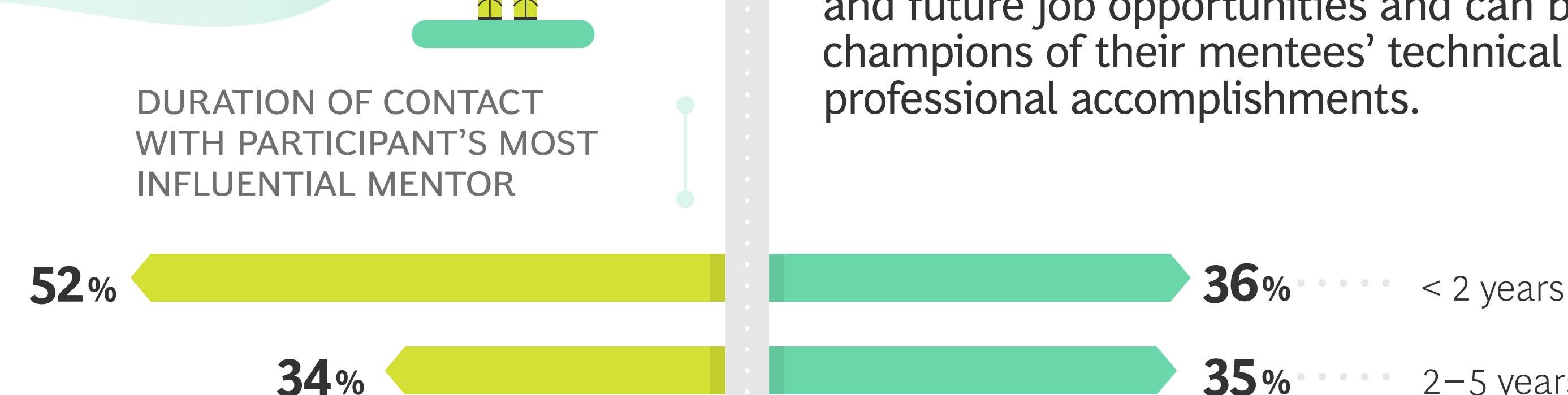
THE FACTOR THAT RESPONDENTS MADE THEM FEEL COMFORTABLE IN PURSUING A PROMOTION WITHOUT MEETING ALL THE POSITION QUALIFICATIONS



4 Long-Term Mentors

Our findings show that women were less likely than men to stay connected with mentors over a prolonged time period. This difference could be a disadvantage for women as long-term mentors are great resources for networking and future job opportunities and can be vocal champions of their mentees' technical and professional accomplishments.

DURATION OF CONTACT WITH PARTICIPANT'S MOST INFLUENTIAL MENTOR

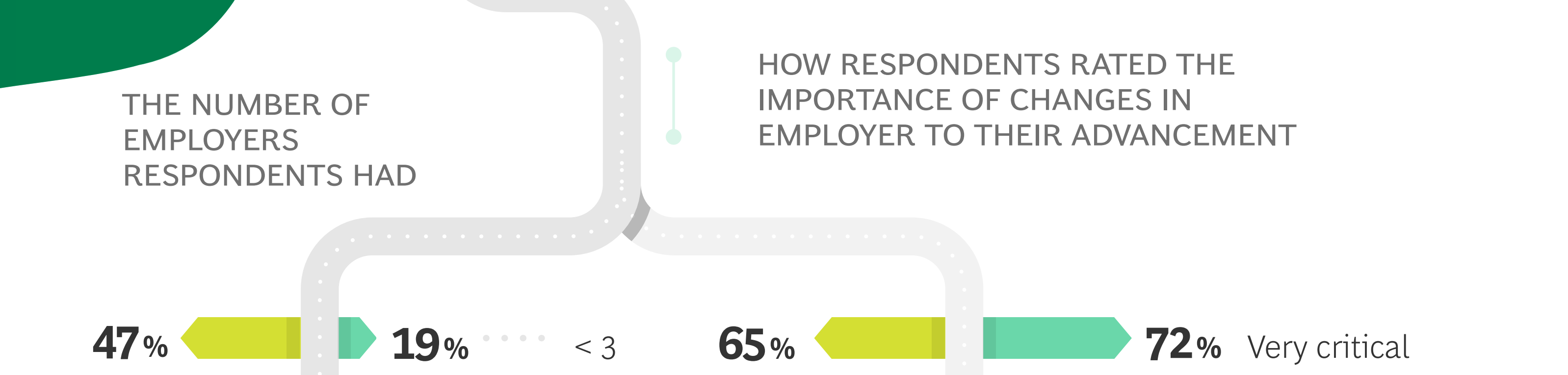


5 Changing Employers

While roughly two-thirds of respondents agreed that in order to move up you have to move on, the women reported that they switched employers less frequently than the men did. This may be due, in part, to the lack of long-term mentors—external opportunities often surface thanks to a mentor (and former colleague) who has landed at a new company.

THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS RESPONDENTS HAD

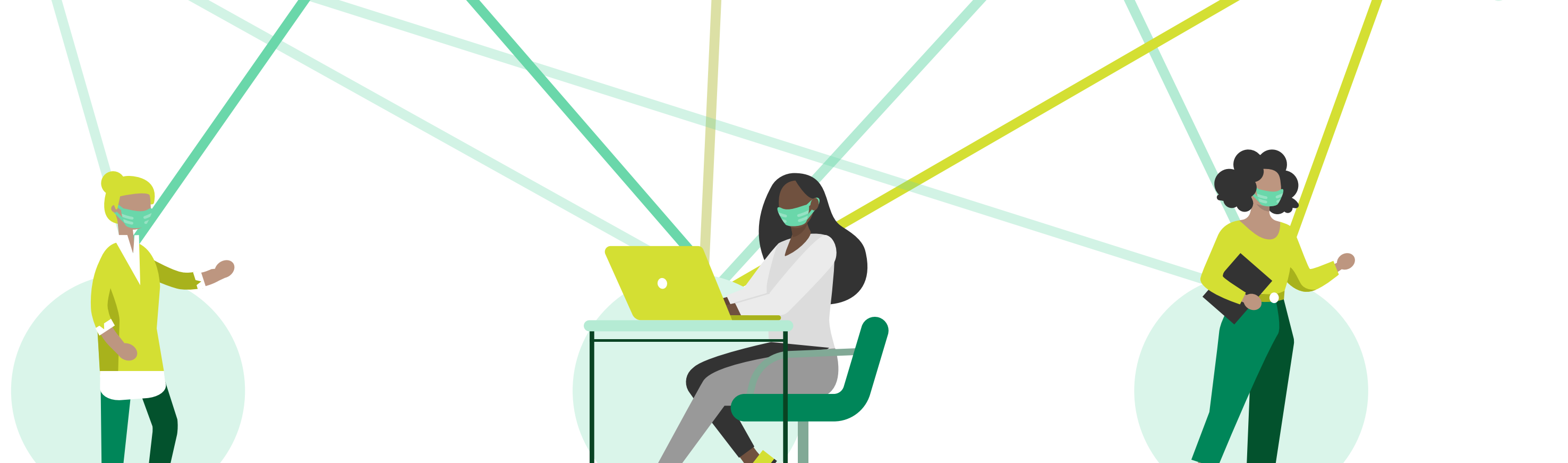
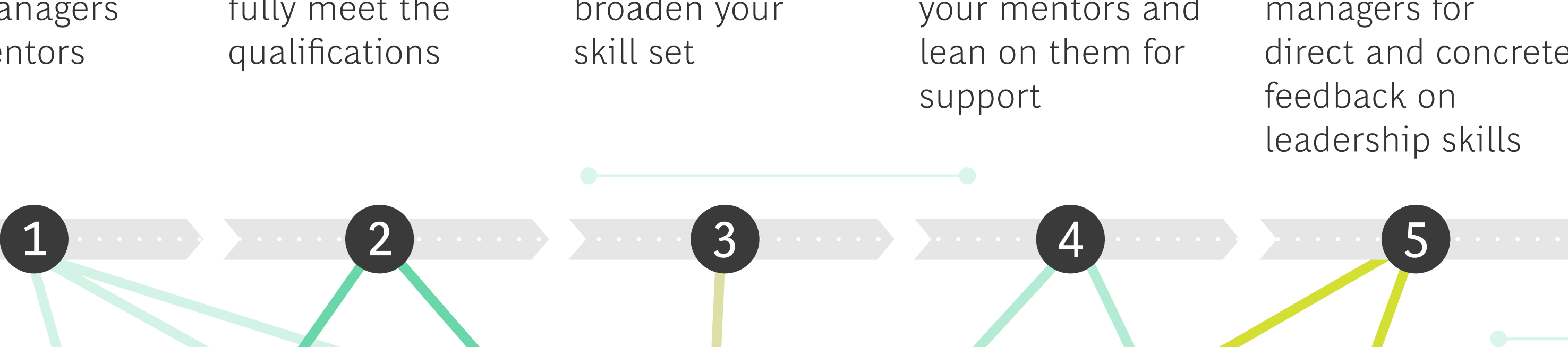
HOW RESPONDENTS RATED THE IMPORTANCE OF CHANGES IN EMPLOYER TO THEIR ADVANCEMENT



5 STEPS FOR WOMEN TO REACH THE TOP IN TECH

No doubt tech companies can do more to promote gender diversity. But there are also actions women in tech can take at every stage in their career to improve the odds of reaching the top.

- 1. Make your ambition known—discuss your goals with your managers and mentors
- 2. Raise your hand for advancement opportunities even if you don't fully meet the qualifications
- 3. Reach out within and outside your organization for opportunities to broaden your skill set
- 4. Ensure that you are maintaining long-term relationships with your mentors and lean on them for support
- 5. Emphasize your accomplishments, technical and otherwise, and ask managers for direct and concrete feedback on leadership skills



Source: This infographic is based on a BCG survey of 457 female and 300 male leaders in technology. Other sources include *Gender Diversity in Senior Positions and Firm Performance: Evidence From Europe*; IMF, *The Tipping Point: Women on Boards and Financial Performance*; MSCI, *Is Gender Diversity Profitable? Evidence from a Global Survey*; Peterson Institute for International Economics; US Bureau of Labor Statistics; Thomson Reuters Eikon database.

