Women

Innovation & Design

AMERICA'S MOST INNOVATIVE LEADERS

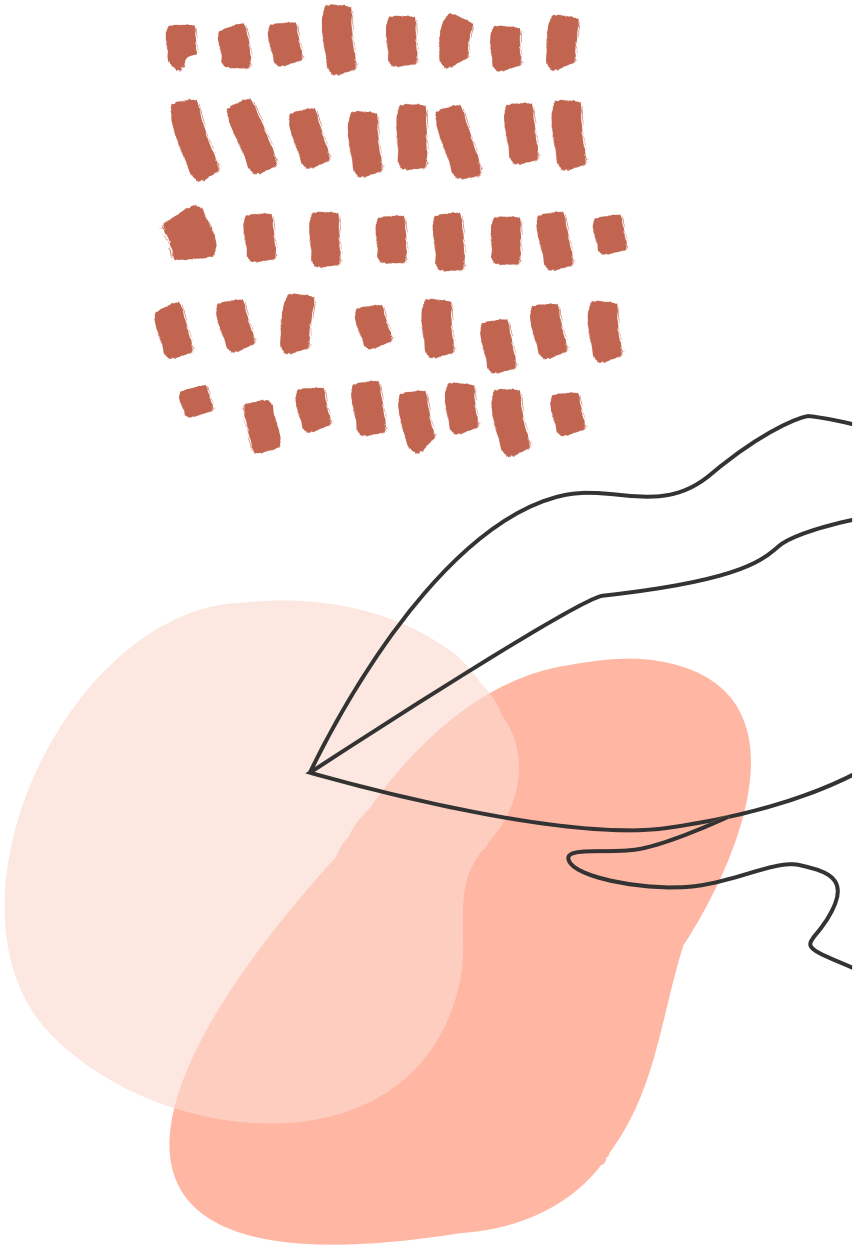
Barbara Rentler

CEO, Ross Stores

Response

Forbes (2019)

- Forbes has always championed the individual leader rather than the faceless corporation… we then **applied that methodology to the CEOs or founders of the largest public companies**—mostly those worth $10 billion or more of those growing quickly, which skews toward healthcare and tech
- This pool ultimately proved the problem: Women, as we all know, are poorly represented at the top of the largest corporations (just 5% of the S&P 500) and fare even worse among growing public tech companies. In other words, for all our carefully calibrated methodology, women never had much of a chance here.
- Our methodology was flawed, as well—at a minimum when it came to being more expansive with who was eligible to be ranked. While each data point individually made logical sense, as did focusing on data-rich public companies, **the entire exercise collapses if the possible ranking pool doesn't correlate at least somewhat with the overall pool of innovative talent.** It would be intellectually dishonest to construct a methodology designed to generate a predetermined result, but in this case the forest got lost in the trees.

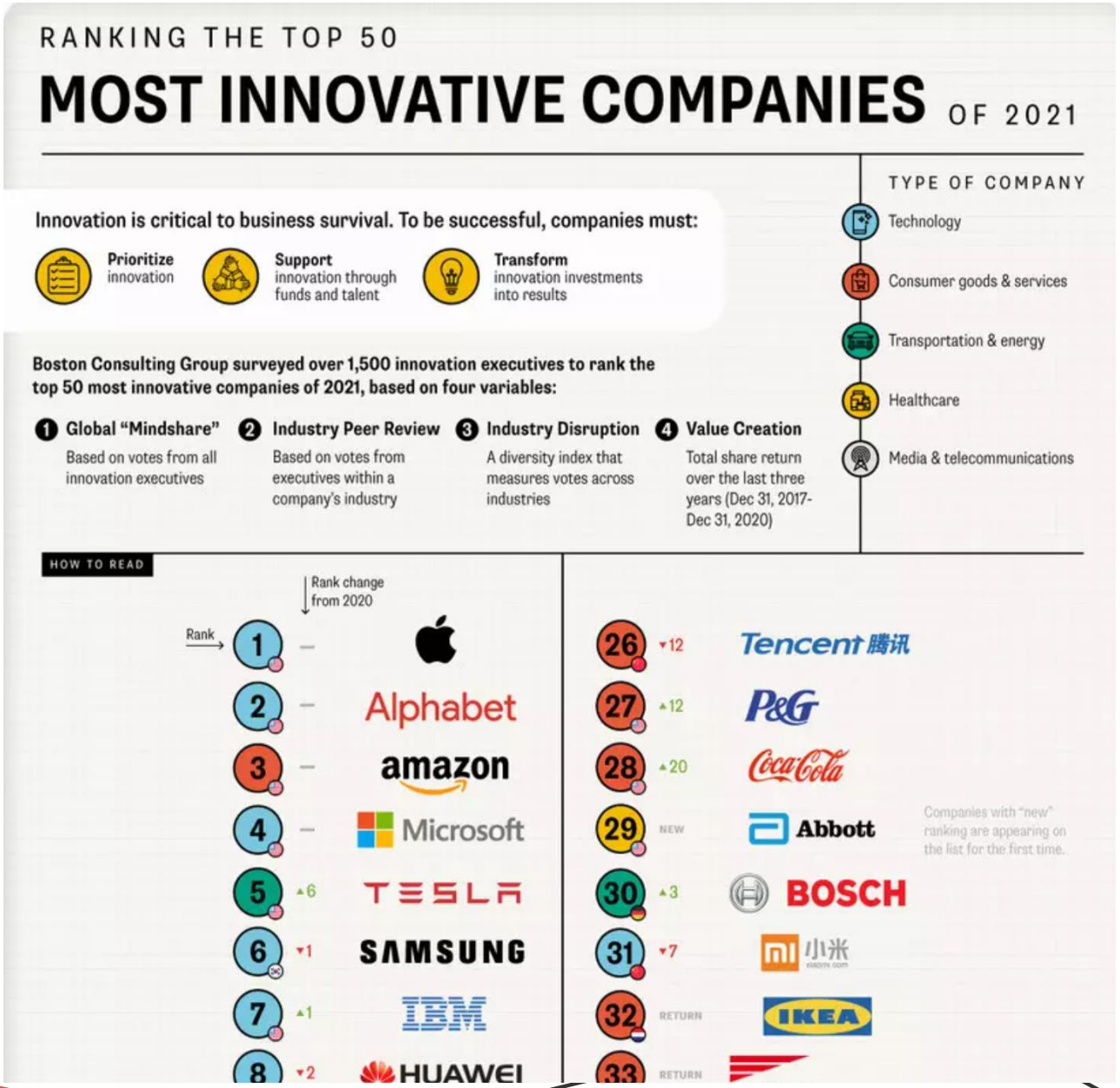


2021

Forbes no longer seem to run their list of most innovative leaders. In 2021 though, the CEO Forum published “10 Leaders in Innovation”, compiled via an unpublished criteria under their banner.

Instead...

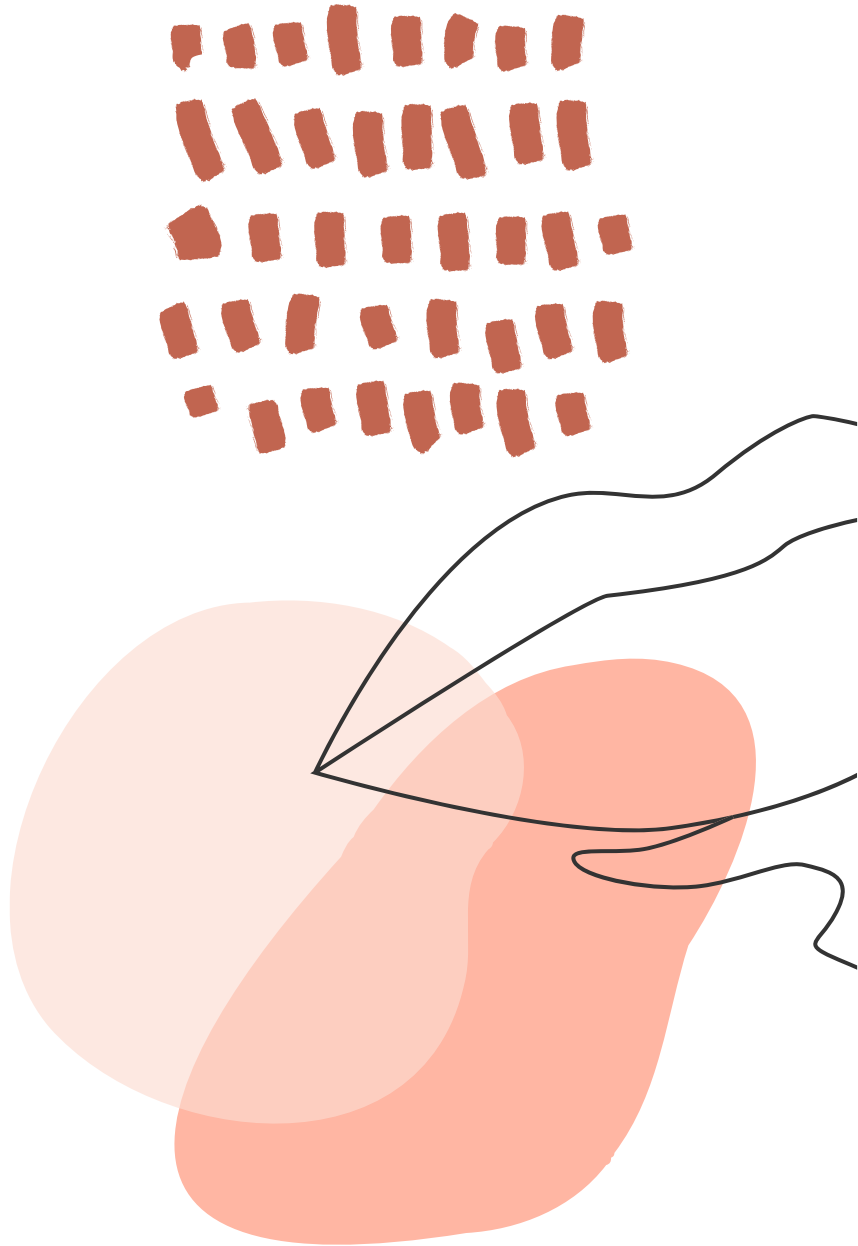
But has anything changed?



Response

McKinsey

- In our work, our innovation practice sees women leading important corporate innovations all the time…
- Building a community that can help set aspirations for us all. Innovation is not a winner-take-all topic; it is an iterative, collaborative undertaking…
- >150 stories as at May 2021



Food For Thought

What would really help to move the needle?

REPOSITORIES

COMMUNITY

TARGETS INTO ACTION