

# Marissa Mayer: Set up to fail?

Marissa Mayer's fate at Yahoo shows that the C-suite is still chilly for women. Currently, women run only 22 of the companies in the Fortune 500.

For one thing, women CEOs face ridiculous media coverage about their appearance and their babies—something their male counterparts never have to deal with.

For another, their compensation still lags. One study discovered that for every million-dollar increase in business, a male CEO received an extra \$17,000 in incentive compensation; a woman got \$1,670. A 1% increase in the value of the company allowed a male CEO's wealth to soar 44%; his female counterpart's went up 13%. And a 1% decline in the value of a company whacked the incentive compensation of a female CEO by almost two-thirds; a male CEO's dropped by a third.

Finally, there's not only a "glass ceiling" but a "glass cliff." Women seem to be steered toward leadership roles that carry greater risk of failure. Mayer took on Yahoo, a legacy company from the early internet. Similarly, GM chief executive Mary Barra seems to be a Hail Mary pass for the Detroit automaker.

— Adapted from ["Yahoo's Marissa Mayer is a reminder that CEO is still elusive for women,"](#) Suzanne McGee, *The Guardian*.