



Ontario Network of Women in Engineering

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Understanding Workplace Diversity for Managers

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Recommended Readings

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- † WWEST. (2013). *Unconscious Bias*. Retrieved from: <http://wwest.mech.ubc.ca/diversity/>
- ‡ WWEST. (2013). *Mentoring Works*. Retrieved from: <http://wwest.mech.ubc.ca/diversity/>
- § For more information, please see Engendering Engineering Success: <http://wwest.mech.ubc.ca/ees/>

About ONWiE

The Ontario Network of Women in Engineering (ONWiE) was formed in 2005 between all the schools and faculties of engineering across Ontario. The objective of this network is to work collaboratively to support current female engineers, students, and encourage the next generation of women to pursue careers in engineering.

Find out more at: <http://www.onwie.ca/>

In a blind resume study, male candidates were offered higher salaries, more mentorship, and were rated as more "competent" and "hireable," than women, despite the candidates' resumes being identical.¹⁷

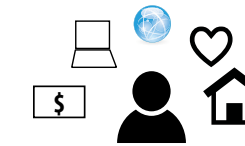
Several issues need to be addressed to **retain a diverse workforce**. The "old white boys' club"³ that excludes others from informal networking, a lack of managerial awareness about diversity issues, poor work-life balance, and discriminatory behaviours against minority employees can dissuade all workers from being loyal to an employer in the long term.^{3,19}

Promoting diversity is not limited to gender; workplaces should be inclusive and welcoming to all.

The benefits of creating an inclusive workplace include low turnover, higher employee engagement, improved client relationships and satisfaction, stronger fiscal performance, and improved governance.^{4,5,6}

This paper highlights eight ways to recruit, support and retain a diverse workforce in organisations.

See work-life balance as an **investment** in your employees⁴



Offer **family-friendly** policies¹⁰



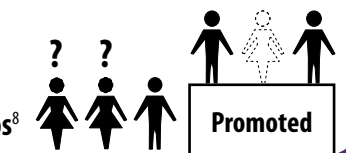
What policies does your organisation have?

Create and maintain clear policies on **promotions, retention, and work/life balance, and communicate** them to all employees



Flexible scheduling is vital for retaining **mid-career women**¹ and valuable to **all employees**¹⁵

Clear, well-documented, and equitable promotion and retention policies reduce **significant gender gaps**⁸



Which ones are priorities for your organisation?



Better management performance^{22,23}

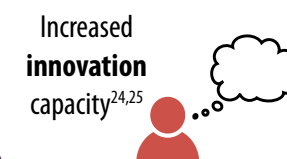
Share priorities with staff, stakeholders & investors



Access to a **broader talent base**²⁶

Understand and communicate the business case for diversity

in your organisation



Increased **innovation capacity**^{24,25}

Stronger **financial performance**^{20,21,22}



16% higher Return on Sales²⁰

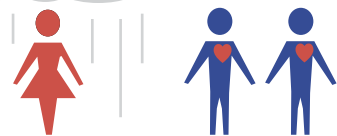
Fortune 500 companies with more women on average perform better²⁰

26% higher Return on Invested Capital²⁰



Negative interpersonal experiences at work predicted **lower organizational commitment** and **life satisfaction** for women⁹

Anxiety Isolation
Poor self-efficacy Stress
Self-conscious



Men in exclusive and stressful workplaces, report having poor physical health, including heart conditions⁹

Monitor the working climate and **foster a positive, inclusive work culture**

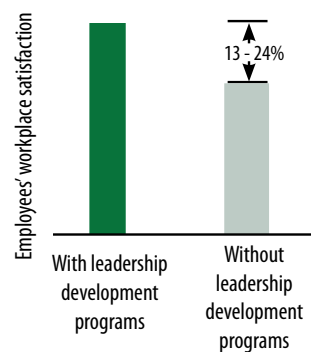
Have a **zero tolerance** policy for derogatory comments or actions³



Safe Space

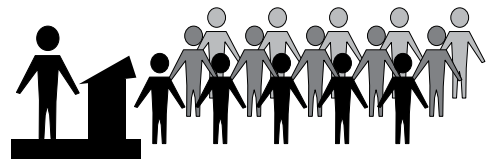
Provide **professional development opportunities** for all employees, on company time

LGBT employees are happier at organisations with **leadership programs**³



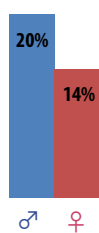
These programs also have positive effects for all employees, including more ownership, engagement, and co-operation²

Organisations tend to be self-replicating when hiring



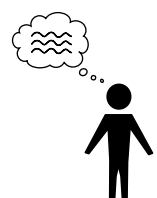
Try the **Implicit Bias test:**
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/>

Identify and invite or sponsor women for **leadership positions**^{6,16}



Male mid-level employees are more likely than women peers to apply for a managerial role despite **only partially** meeting the job description¹³

Become aware of your **organisation's hiring tendencies** and your **subconscious biases**



Subconscious biases⁴ affect **everyday decision-making processes** (hiring processes, assumptions made about others)



Set an example for embracing inclusivity in the workplace³

Non-traditional mentoring includes:¹¹

Speed Mentoring



Virtual Mentoring



Promote and establish **Mentoring Programs**⁴

Provides Access to:^{5, 8, 12}

Knowledge Support Diverse Mentors Networking



Establish structured diversity measures⁷

- ✓ Include diversity as part of all employee's reporting;
- ✓ Track diversity (ethically);¹⁰
- ✓ Reflect your commitment in marketing and communications;
- ✓ Report on progress

Set targets⁵



Do a **Diversity Audit** at your organisation¹⁰

Ensure every employee has an opportunity for advancement³

Assign **accountability for diversity** and track your progress¹⁰

Create a **culture of diversity**¹⁰

Build **Diversity Culture** with diversity shares at meetings



Think **safe**.

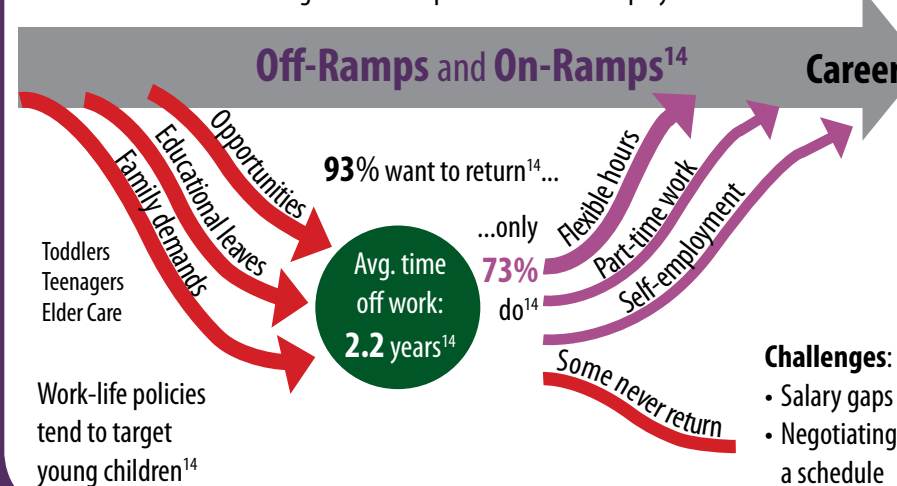
Safety comes from a **safety culture**;
Diversity comes from a **diversity culture**



Think **diverse**.

Why do women leave work?

60% of highly qualified women have **nonlinear** careers¹⁴
Historically, **24%** of highly qualified men also have nonlinear careers¹⁴
75% of the Millennial generation expect to have 2-5 employers in their life¹⁸



The Benefits of Change

Employees are more satisfied and committed when they have **positive work relationships** with managers and colleagues.³ By supporting diversity, managers and organisations can foster positive work cultures for all.

Committing to change can make a difference; UBC's Faculty of Science went from having **no women** in senior leadership positions from 2003-2007 to having **5/13** senior faculty positions held by women from 2007-2010.¹²

Managers should **celebrate their successes** and be open to a wide range of communication styles.¹ While the inequality gap tends to increase over time,⁸ taking direct action such as assigning accountability for diversity can lead to short and long term changes.

Training and feedback can be an effective method for eliminating managerial bias and inequality.⁷ Opportunities for technical and leadership development need to be available to **employees of all ranks**.¹

Allowing workers to off-ramp partially or completely and welcoming them back later **without penalty**, combating stigma and stereotypes by training staff to be self-reflective and deconstruct their own processes, and making organizational decision-making as transparent as possible helps build a **culture of diversity** within organisations.^{10,14} WWEST is currently researching which specific policies best support gender diversity in the workplace.⁴