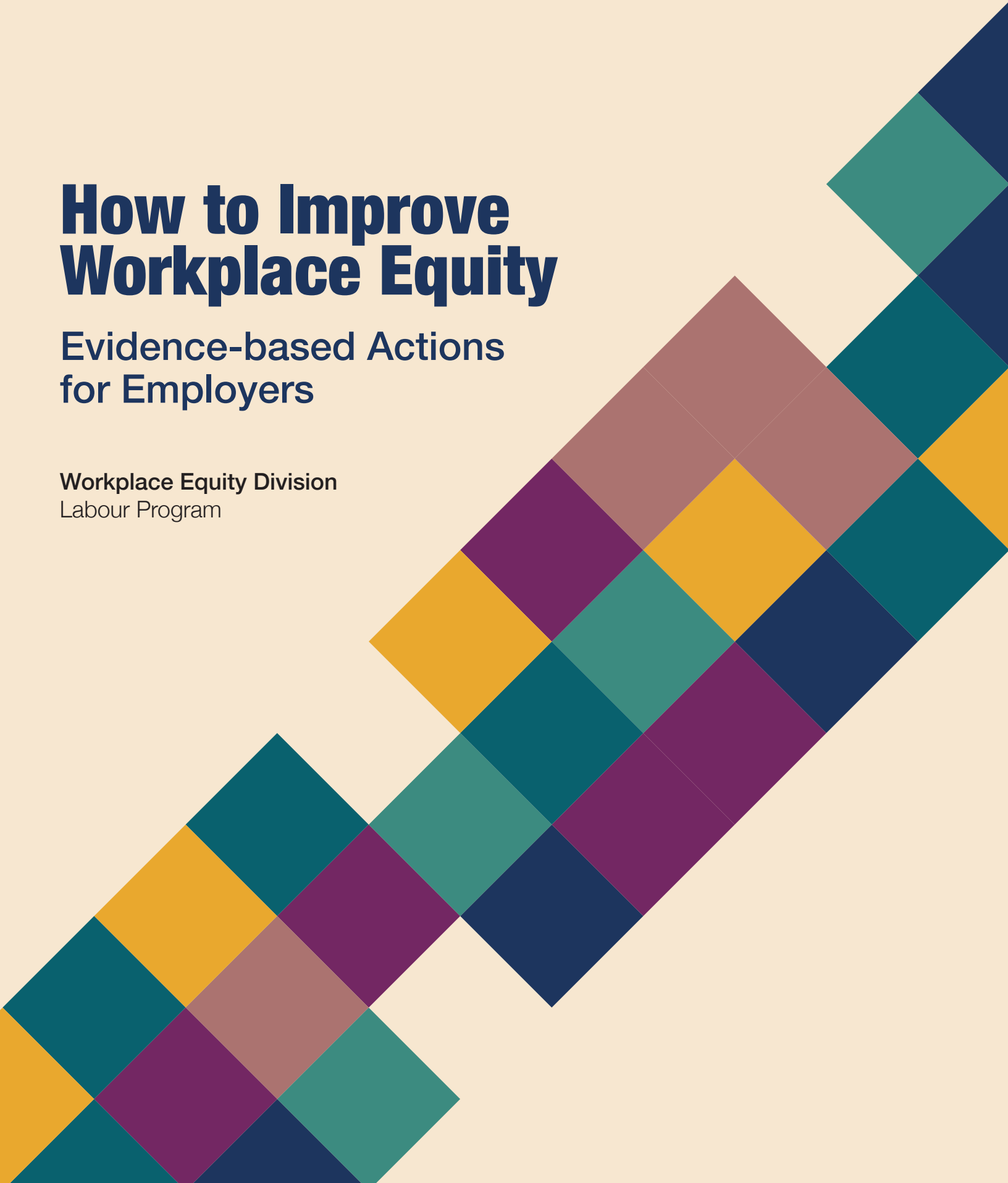




# How to Improve Workplace Equity

## Evidence-based Actions for Employers

Workplace Equity Division  
Labour Program



## **How to Improve Workplace Equity – Evidence-based Actions for Employers**

Large print, Braille, MP3 [audio], e-text and DAISY formats are available on demand by ordering online or calling 1 800 0-Canada [1-800-622-6232]. If you use a teletypewriter [TTY], call 1-800-926-9105.

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, [2022]

For information regarding reproduction rights:  
[droitdauteur.copyright@HRSDC-RHDCC.gc.ca](mailto:droitdauteur.copyright@HRSDC-RHDCC.gc.ca).

### **PDF**

Cat. No.: Em8-76/2022E-PDF  
ISBN: 978-0-660-46422-0



## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Approach to the research</b>	<b>7</b>
Evidence used in this review	7
How the evidence has been categorized	7
How it was decided which actions to include	8
<b>How to improve workplace equity</b>	<b>9</b>
Evidence-based actions for employers	9
Leadership and accountability	13
Recruitment, selection and hiring	16
Development and training	27
Promotion and retention	30
Workplace flexibility	34
<b>Further reading</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Podcasts</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>40</b>

---

This guide is part of a suite of new employment equity tools launched by the Government of Canada to support employers in addressing representation and pay gaps.

**“To improve workplace equity, we need to debias systems, not people.**

Human resource management must be based on rigorous evidence of what works to level the playing field, treat everyone fairly, and benefit from 100 percent of the talent pool. Evidence-based design of hiring practices, promotion procedures and compensation schemes helps our organizations do the right and the smart thing, creating more inclusive and better workplaces.”

**Iris Bohnet**

*Academic Dean, Albert Pratt Professor of Business and Government  
and Co-Director of the Women and Public Policy Program,  
Harvard Kennedy School.*

This guide suggests evidence-based actions to help employers work together to improve workplace equity, with respect to members of designated groups under the *Employment Equity Act*<sup>1</sup> – women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.

Throughout this guide, select additional resources are indicated.

This work was researched and authored by the [Behavioural Insights Team](#) (BIT), working in collaboration with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). The research builds on BIT’s prior work in the United Kingdom for the Government Equalities Office as part of the [Gender & Behavioural Insights Programme](#).

Special acknowledgement to [Dr. Sonia Kang](#), Canada Research Chair in Identity, Diversity, and Inclusion, for her review and contributions to this guide.

---

# Executive Summary

This guide summarizes actions that have been shown to improve workplace outcomes (and those that haven't) for members of the designated groups under the [Employment Equity Act](#)<sup>2</sup> – women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. While the focus is on these four groups, it is recognized that people who do not belong to them, or people with intersecting identities, may also face unequal treatment or specific barriers at work (for example, members of sexual minority groups, non-native official language speakers). It is believed that highly inclusive and equitable workplaces benefit everyone, whether or not they belong to designated groups.

To help employers create more effective employment equity plans, this guide also identifies actions that need more evidence before they can be considered effective, as well as those that should be avoided (or pursued with caution) due to no impact, negative or mixed consequences.

The descriptors below lists the actions and indicates their effectiveness for each group. The evidence is evaluated as follows:

- Effective means there is strong evidence that the action can help achieve workplace equity.
- Promising means that there is some evidence suggesting that the actions are effective, but more research is needed.
- Avoid/take caution means that the actions have generally been shown to have either no impact, negative or mixed consequences.

The descriptors also indicates where evidence specific to a designated group was not found. This does not necessarily mean that the action is ineffective for that group, just that more research is required.

Area of focus/Action	How effective is this action across designated groups?
<b>Leadership and accountability</b>	
Set internal targets for representation and equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective for women</li><li>• Promising for persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities</li></ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.</i></p>
Appoint employee equity leads and/or task forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective for women and members of visible minorities</li></ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
<b>Recruitment, selection and hiring</b>	
Use specialized outreach to increase applications from underrepresented groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective for women and members of visible minorities</li><li>• Promising for Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities</li></ul>

Area of focus/Action	How effective is this action across designated groups?
Remove biased language from job ads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective for women</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>
Offer flexible working arrangements by default in job ads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective for women</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>
Make job requirements clear, specific, and behaviour-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective for women</li> <li>• Promising for persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.</i></p>
Use skill-based assessment tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective for women</li> <li>• Promising for Indigenous peoples and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
Use structured interviews and develop scoring systems and hiring criteria in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective for women and members of visible minorities</li> <li>• Promising for persons with disabilities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.</i></p>
Make expectations around salaries and negotiation clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective for women</li> <li>• Promising for members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
Anonymize applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promising for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
Encourage applicants to list experience in terms of years, not dates in résumés	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promising for women</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>
Include more underrepresented applicants in shortlists for recruitment and promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promising for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>

Area of focus/Action	How effective is this action across designated groups?
<p>Make decisions about applicants in batches rather than individually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promising for women</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>
<p>Offer internships, traineeships and work experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promising for women, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.</i></p>
<p>Organizational diversity statements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
<p>Diverse selection panels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
<p><b>Development and training</b></p>	
<p>Offer mentorship programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promising for women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities</li> </ul>
<p>Diversity or unconscious bias training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
<p>Targeted leadership development training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
<p><b>Promotion and retention</b></p>	
<p>Increase transparency of promotion, pay and reward processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
<p>Default employees into applying for promotion or other competitive opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective for women</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>

Area of focus/Action	How effective is this action across designated groups?
Offer internships, traineeships and work experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promising for women, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.</i></p>
Offer diversity networking programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promising for women, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.</i></p>
Redesign formal grievance procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promising for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
Performance self-assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.</i></p>
<b>Workplace flexibility<sup>a</sup></b>	
Improve workplace flexibility for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective for women and persons with disabilities</li> <li>Promising for Indigenous peoples</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>
Make workplace or role adjustments available to everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective for persons with disabilities</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to women, Indigenous peoples, or members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>
Encourage men to take longer parental leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promising for women</li> </ul> <p><i>Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.</i></p>

<sup>a</sup> Workplace flexibility includes reasonable accommodation of the special needs of members of designated groups, as referenced in the *Employment Equity Act*.



---

# Approach to the research

## Evidence used in this review

The Behavioural Insights Team reviewed over 350 academic and grey literature publications related to reducing bias and improving equity in the workplace, focusing on studies from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe.

Most equity, diversity, and inclusion research focuses more on gender and race, rather than Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities. Research explicitly conducted on intersectional groups is also limited. Despite these limitations, this guide highlights valuable and relevant suggestions for employers in Canada.

## How the evidence has been categorized

Evidence has been grouped into five different HR process areas across the employee lifecycle:<sup>3</sup>

- Leadership and accountability
- Recruitment, selection, and hiring
- Development and training
- Promotion and retention
- Workplace flexibility

Within each area, effective actions, promising actions, and actions to avoid have been identified:

- **Effective actions:** There is strong evidence that these actions work. They are supported by research that shows a cause-and-effect relationship between the action and desired outcome.
- **Promising actions:** These actions are promising, but more research is needed to determine if they are effective and how to best implement them. Employers should evaluate the impact of these actions (for example, using small-scale pilot studies) before applying them widely. Importantly, actions are more likely to be labelled as 'promising' due to a lack of evidence, not necessarily because they are less effective. For example, the study may not show cause-and-effect, or there may be concerns about the sample size or the ability to apply the action successfully outside of the experimental setting.
- **Actions to avoid/take caution:** There is evidence that these actions have no impact, negative or mixed consequences. Employers should consider this evidence, as well as the opportunity costs of investing in actions in this category – particularly as a sole diversity initiative. If employers choose to pursue these actions, it is recommended that they are evaluated for their effectiveness and weighed against other possible investments.

---

It is also noted where evidence specific to a designated group was not found. The action may be effective or promising for these groups (particularly if it has been shown to work for another group), but more research is needed to know with confidence. Above all, employers are encouraged to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any action they implement, with a focus on behaviour change; results may vary in different organizational contexts and for different groups.

## **How it was decided which actions to include**

In the preparation of this document, actions that are grounded in strong evidence, as well as those that are common in the workplace, even though they may not be evidence-based were reviewed. However, this is not an exhaustive list of all of the approaches employers can take to improve equity.

---

# How to improve workplace equity

## Evidence-based actions for employers

### What is the *Employment Equity Act*?

In Canada, the *Employment Equity Act* (the Act) aims to achieve equality in the workplace to ensure that no person be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability. The Act seeks to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by four designated groups of people:

- women;
- Indigenous peoples;<sup>4</sup>
- persons with disabilities; and
- members of visible minorities.

The Act supports the principle that employment equity means more than treating people identically – it also requires special measures to correct underrepresentation and the accommodation of differences.

To achieve its objectives, the Act requires that employers collect workforce data and use this information to determine if any members of designated groups – women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities – are underrepresented. Answering the questions in Box 1 will help you identify where workplace inequity is occurring, and the action that is needed.

Under the Act, employers must then prepare an employment equity plan that specifies the positive policies and practices to correct for the underrepresentation of persons in designated groups, as well as measures to eliminate employment barriers. Positive policies and practices comprise those that the employer will use for:

- hiring, training, promotion and retention of persons in designated groups; and
- making accommodations for those persons

To help employers create more effective employment equity plans, this guide summarizes and assesses actions employers might take to improve outcomes for women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.<sup>5,6</sup>

This document highlights effective actions and makes note of approaches that need more evidence before implemented widely, as well as those that should be avoided or pursued with caution due to strong evidence of no impact, negative or mixed consequences.

Every organization is different and faces unique challenges, so it is recommended that employers take a data-driven approach to prioritize employment equity efforts.

---

That said, while targeted efforts are important, equity will not be achieved by implementing just a few, separate actions. Change is driven by a sustained, systemic approach that reaches every part of an organization.

## “A data-driven approach is recommended”

### Using data to target your actions

Employers who use high-quality data to understand the factors driving inequities will be able to target their actions to achieve the most effective results.

Guidance on how to collect and analyze your workforce data is available [online](#) (see Employment Equity Tasks 1, 2 and 3). Guidance on how to review your employment systems to find out why your organization has significant representation and pay gaps is also available [online](#) (see Employment Equity Task 4).

To identify areas where action is needed, start by answering these questions:

- **Leadership and accountability**
  - Can the people responsible for equity, diversity, and inclusion change structural policies and processes?
  - Do you have targets in place for representation of different groups?  
Do you collect data to inform these targets?
- **Recruitment, selection and hiring**
  - Do you reach underrepresented groups (recruitment), and do your hiring rates reflect application numbers (selection)?
  - Do different groups progress through recruitment stages proportionately?
  - Are designated groups<sup>7</sup> more likely to be recruited into lower paid roles compared to other groups?
  - Do any aspects of starting salaries differ between groups?
- **Development and training**
  - Do different groups take up training and mentorship opportunities proportionately?

---

- **Promotion and retention**

- Are members of designated groups underrepresented among those promoted in your organization?
- Do certain members of underrepresented groups get “stuck” at certain levels within your organization? For example, do they have difficulty reaching management positions?
- Do members of underrepresented groups receive different performance scores on average compared to others?
- Do any aspects of the total compensation package (for example, salaries and bonuses) differ between groups?
- Do people from different groups leave at different rates?

- **Workplace flexibility**

- Do part-time employees progress in your organization?
- Are you supporting everyone in your organization to take on caregiving responsibilities?
- Do you properly implement reasonable accommodations for those who need them (e.g. persons with disabilities)?

---

“It has become imperative for companies to create spaces where diverse groups of employees feel valued, supported and able to do their best work, and where they feel committed to sticking around. This includes redesigning the systems, processes, and procedures that have created and perpetuated workplace inequality for far too long. Without this critical work, much of the investment into diversity is wasted because people leave in search of a more inclusive workplace.

This workplace equity guide will enable readers to become inclusive leaders. Inclusive leaders will raise the stakes on ED&I as it is currently practiced in their organization by implementing: careful evaluation and baseline measurement; precise goal-setting, forecasting, and milestones; concrete actions with explicit targets and plans for accountability. This will require creating the space for failure, re-design, and adaptation, as well as for the mindful and efficient application of a variety of allyship behaviours.”

**Dr. Sonia Kang**

*Canada Research Chair in Identity, Diversity, and Inclusion*

---

## Leadership and accountability

Leaders play a vital role in driving workplace equity, diversity, and inclusion. They can do this more successfully by setting clear targets and by creating strong accountability mechanisms to ensure that every manager feels accountable for their team's equity outcomes.

### “Making a public commitment makes it more likely that the target will be achieved”

#### **ACTION**

#### **Set internal targets for representation and equity**



- **Effective for women**
- **Promising for persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.*

Under the *Employment Equity Act* (the Act), employers must create an employment equity plan that includes short- and long-term goals to close representation gaps (see [Task 5 online](#)). General goals such as “we will change our culture to be more inclusive” are not effective unless they are accompanied by clear targets and milestones. The Act requires employers to set short-term numerical goals for hiring and promoting people in designated groups (for example, “we will increase the proportion of staff with disabilities from 4% to 8% by 2024), and specific measures to be taken to meet these goals. This evidence-based approach, along with well-designed targets, can improve equity and diversity, including leadership diversity.<sup>8,9,10</sup>

#### **What about quotas?**

Whereas targets are organizational goals that are not mandatory to achieve, quotas must be met. Countries that have legislated quotas tend to have more women on company boards<sup>11</sup> and lower employment gaps between persons with disabilities and persons without.<sup>12</sup> In Canada, quotas are not imposed on employers under the *Employment Equity Act*. They can be set voluntarily by organizations internally. For quotas to be effective at improving workplace equity, they should include monitoring mechanisms and sanctions for non-compliance (for example, compensatory levy payment).<sup>13,4</sup>

---

Targets<sup>14</sup> are most successful when they are:

- **Accountable.** A specific, named individual should be responsible for achieving the target.
  - **Specific and clear.** What is the desired change, how big will the change be?
  - **Time-bound.** When will the goal be achieved?
  - **Challenging but realistic.** Targets should shift the dial without being demotivating.<sup>15</sup>
  - **Visible.** Making a public commitment makes it more likely that the target will be achieved.<sup>16</sup>
  - **Monitored and dynamic.** Progress towards goals should be tracked and reviewed regularly, with adjustments made to respond to feedback and data.<sup>17</sup>
- 

## Pay Gap Reporting

Pay gap reporting shows that collecting and making equity data public achieves positive change. Since public reporting was introduced, it is estimated to have reduced the gender pay gap among studied employers by as much as 13% in Denmark, 19% in the UK and 30% in Canada.<sup>18,19,20</sup>

## Action

---

### Appoint employment equity leads and/or task forces<sup>21</sup>

- **Effective for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Equity leads and task forces hold the organization accountable for equity, diversity, and inclusion outcomes. Having an equity lead is associated with better representation of underrepresented groups; one US study of over 800 organizations suggests that appointing equity task forces is one of the most effective actions an employer can take to improve gender and ethnic diversity.<sup>22,23</sup>

To work well, equity leads and task forces need power. They should be able to review hiring and advancement decisions and receive justifications for them. The accountability this power creates can reduce bias.



---

### Case study

In one study, hiring managers rated white applicants higher even when they had the same experience as Black candidates. However, when managers were told that their decisions were going to be reviewed, their racial bias decreased,<sup>24</sup> and they tended to feel more satisfied with their decisions.<sup>25</sup>

Successful equity leads and task forces<sup>26</sup> should:

- Have a senior or executive role with enough influence and ability to:
  - Hold people accountable for making progress on equity and diversity goals.
  - Ask for more information on why decisions were made before they are implemented and to request a review or change of any decision determined to be biased.
  - Review organizational processes and policies (i.e., decision-making contexts) to identify opportunities to reduce disparities and increase inclusion.
  - Develop and implement diversity strategies and policies.
- Care about equity, diversity, and inclusion and continually learn about these topics and proven approaches to advance them (i.e., focus on changing organizational structures, rather than individual minds or attitudes<sup>27</sup>). The organization should support them with time, recognition and funding to this end.
- Have access to data (for example, [workforce analysis](#)) to track progress and outcomes.
- Communicate regularly with employees about equity efforts and progress.
- Consult and collaborate with employee representatives and bargaining agents about how best to implement employment equity.
- Keep a record of *Employment Equity Activities* and review progress while demonstrating compliance with [regulatory requirements](#).

---

Questions about what records to keep and for how long? View these under the Employment Equity Task: Meet your communication, consultation and recordkeeping requirements [here](#).

The Government of Canada's [Employment Equity Tasks](#) recommend that the head of your organization, such as the president or chief executive officer, issue the first communication about employment equity.

---

## “Organizations with equity leads can have better representation of underrepresented groups”

### Recruitment, selection and hiring

To reduce the influence of systemic barriers, unconscious biases, and stereotypes on recruitment, selection and hiring, employers can implement numerous effective or promising actions, including using specialized outreach to increase applications from underrepresented groups, structured interviews and skill-based assessment tasks.

#### Action

##### Use specialized outreach to increase applications from underrepresented groups

- **Effective for women and members of visible minorities**
- **Promising for Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities**

When employees only share vacancies with people they know, it can result in an applicant pool that mirrors an employer’s current demographics. If there are underrepresented groups in the organization to begin with, this can reinforce the lack of diversity. Engaging in specialized outreach and targeted recruitment to connect with candidates from underrepresented groups can help.

Specialized outreach efforts can include:

- Targeted referrals, which can be achieved by explicitly encouraging staff to share vacancies with members of underrepresented groups in their networks.<sup>28</sup> Such referrals have been shown to increase the numbers of applications from, and offers made to, women,<sup>29</sup> and increase the likelihood of hiring persons with disabilities;<sup>30</sup>
- Partnering with external organizations and using alternative channels to distribute postings<sup>31,32,33,18</sup> where they are more likely to be seen by applicants from underrepresented groups;
- Using a diverse group of messengers to share postings, as people tend to pay more attention to information conveyed by someone similar to them;<sup>34</sup>

In general, visual representation of demographic diversity is important during outreach. Pictures of diverse groups of employees in job advertisements attract more diverse candidates without affecting the number of white applicants. However, this could backfire if the images do not reflect the reality of your workforce.<sup>35,36,37</sup>

- 
- Employing trusted messengers to personally connect with underrepresented groups, especially communities with less trust in non-diverse institutions due to current and historical marginalization, such as Indigenous peoples;<sup>38,39,40</sup>
    - Use this approach with caution and sensitivity – solving equity issues should not be the responsibility of underrepresented employees and should not increase workload or burden them disproportionately.
- 

## Action

---

### Remove biased language from job ads



- **Effective for women**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.*

Language used in job ads may discourage members of designated groups from applying. For instance, women assume roles advertised with stereotypically masculine words, such as leader or competitive, are in male-dominated teams and they may not fit in.<sup>41,42,43</sup> More women apply to job ads written with de-biased language (for example, ads that use gender neutral phrases such as, “must be willing to pursue new and creative ideas,” instead of “entrepreneurial”).<sup>44</sup> There are tools available to help use more impartial language – search online for “linguistic gender decoding tools.”

---

## Action

---

### Offer flexible working arrangements by default in job ads



- **Effective for women**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.*

Workplace flexibility promotes work-life balance and can help recruit and retain employees from underrepresented groups (see “Improve workplace flexibility for everyone”). Plus, it may be especially beneficial for recruiting persons with disabilities.<sup>45</sup>

Offering flexible working arrangements by default in job ads makes it easier for applicants who require such flexibility to find suitable employers without having to ask about whether the option is available. In a [randomized controlled trial with John Lewis Partnership](#), the Behavioural

---

---

Insights Team found that simply changing the job-ad default to include part-time options boosted applications by 50%. In a [previous trial with Zurich Insurance](#), a part-time default boosted applications of women to senior roles by 19%.

As an alternative to defaults, prompting hiring managers to list flexible working options when posting a new role is key. A simple prompt asking managers what flexible options they would consider for the role, accompanied by a checklist including flexitime, annualized hours, staggered hours, etc., led to a 20–30% increase in employers advertising flexible jobs on Indeed.<sup>46</sup>

---

## Action

### Make job requirements clear, specific, and behaviour-based



- **Effective for women**
- **Promising for persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.*

Listing requirements as concrete skills helps candidates determine their suitability for a role and helps employers identify a wider range of individuals who meet the requirements. It also makes it easier for underrepresented candidates to know what is expected of them to progress.

It is recommended that job advertisements clearly express requirements in terms of behaviours, skills, and experiences rather than character traits or ‘cultural fit’. Evidence behind this approach suggests that:

- Framing job requirements by providing a behavioural example (for example, “You keep confidential information to yourself”) rather than by listing traits (for example, “You are reliable”) makes it more likely that members of visible minorities will apply.<sup>47</sup>
- Trait-framed requirements may also reduce applications from women,<sup>48</sup> and reinforce negative stereotypes about women and visibly minority groups.<sup>35</sup>
- Women<sup>49</sup> may be more likely to apply for jobs if employers clearly list specific behaviours and skills necessary for the role in the job posting.
- Skill-based descriptions can support women and members of visible minorities once hired, as they provide a rubric for performance assessment and actionable feedback.<sup>50</sup>

Being specific and clear should benefit other underrepresented groups, too (for example, people with autism are disproportionately affected by a lack of clear job requirements).<sup>51</sup>

---

---

## Action

### Use skill-based assessment tasks<sup>52</sup>

- **Effective for women**
- **Promising for Indigenous peoples and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to persons with disabilities was not found.*

Interviews alone may not give candidates equitable opportunities to demonstrate their strengths. During the selection process, ask candidates to complete tasks relevant to the role they are applying for, such as situational judgment tasks, work samples or small assignments. These tasks should be brief and their completion should only provide information pertinent to selection (i.e., candidates should not be asked to spend undue time on free work for the organization).

#### Case study

Because many members of Indigenous cultures value humility rather than self-promotion, they may be hesitant to highlight personal successes, which can hinder them in traditional interview processes.<sup>53,54</sup> Skills-based assessment tasks offer opportunities to demonstrate personal qualifications without the need to talk about one's accomplishments.

While there is little difference between how men and women perform on skill-based tasks, members of visible minorities receive significantly lower scores than their white counterparts.<sup>55,56,57</sup> Using tasks that measure a variety of skills and abilities (for example, numeracy and literacy, if appropriate) may help reduce differences in how candidates are rated overall. It may also ensure that a single task does not disadvantage some groups while advantaging others.<sup>58,43</sup>

Testing candidates on problems encountered on the job may also make it more likely that visible minority candidates perform well and increase the likelihood that selected candidates will succeed when hired.<sup>59,60</sup> For example, for a customer-facing position, candidates could be asked to role play resolving a challenging customer interaction.

#### Case study

Reframing the task can also help members of visible minorities. When UK police force candidates were prompted to reflect on why they valued becoming a constable (i.e., asked to reflect on what being a police constable means to them and their community), compared with a status quo invitation to take the test, it closed the gap between visible minority and white candidates passing a situational judgment test.<sup>61</sup>

---

Skills-based assessments need to be developed carefully to minimize bias. They should:

- Have pre-specified assessment criteria.
  - Include assessment tasks that resemble real-life tasks.
  - Incorporate input from different staff members – on the task and assessment criteria – to ensure that they accurately reflect role expectations.
- 

## Action

### Use structured interviews<sup>62</sup> and develop scoring systems and hiring criteria in advance

- **Effective for women and members of visible minorities**
- **Promising for persons with disabilities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.*

Free-form interviews are more susceptible to bias,<sup>63</sup> while high-quality evidence shows that there are no such differences based on gender or race,<sup>64</sup> in interview scores when structured interviews are used.<sup>65,66,67</sup>

Structured interviews are most effective when they:

- **Involve more than one interviewer:** Multiple perspectives improve decision making. Including multiple interviewers in the same interview leads to fairer and more accurate results than having one interviewer conduct multiple interviews.<sup>68</sup> To ensure that interviewers are not influenced by each other – especially by the most senior interviewer – ensure they do not discuss candidates before assigning scores for all questions.<sup>69</sup>
- **Ask all candidates the same questions in the same order and score their responses using the same criteria:** Pre-defining question order, format and assessment criteria makes responses comparable and decreases the risk of biased decisions.
- **Offer clear feedback after interviews:** Feedback improves accountability for hiring manager decisions. Gender and racial disparities decrease when people know that their decisions will be reviewed, or that they will have to justify their decision to others.<sup>70,16</sup>

### Case study

Using a guide which sets out the assessment criteria and how to score each response increased the likelihood that Black women would be selected for a role by 21%.<sup>71</sup>

---

---

## Action

### Make expectations around salaries and negotiation clear

- **Effective for women**
- **Promising for members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Women and members of visible minorities are less likely to negotiate their pay,<sup>72,73</sup> which can lead to women starting with lower average salaries than men. These differences persist and increase over time. In situations where no salary negotiations are the norm the wage gap disappears.<sup>57</sup>

Women are also more affected than men if no information about negotiation expectations or salary range is provided.<sup>56</sup> In the absence of salary ranges, women and members of visible minorities are not as likely to know people in senior positions who could help them to determine if an offer is reasonable.<sup>74</sup>

To address these inequities, employers should clearly state the salary range available and whether it is negotiable. This will increase the number of women who negotiate and help to close negotiations-related gender pay gaps.<sup>58</sup>

However, women and members of visible minorities also choose not to negotiate their salaries because they are more likely than men to face backlash (for example, be seen as “too demanding”).<sup>75</sup> Therefore, employers must ensure that they are treated fairly when they do negotiate. It is recommended that employers continually monitor negotiation outcomes and starting salaries to see if gaps between groups emerge, as well as experiment with interventions to close these gaps.

---

## Action

### Anonymize applications

- **Promising for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Anonymizing an application entails removing all identifying information – name, international work or study experience, spoken languages, etc. – before sharing it with the hiring team. Anonymizing makes it more difficult to tell if an applicant is a member of an underrepresented group, and can prevent biases from influencing decision-making.

---

While a promising tactic, anonymizing applications should be done carefully. While women applicants are more likely to progress when their gender is obscured,<sup>76,77,78,79</sup> this practice may still have a negative impact for women if it prevents organizations from targeting them in the first place.<sup>80</sup>

Sometimes résumé anonymization makes it more likely visible minority applicants are selected for interviews,<sup>62,81,82</sup> and sometimes it doesn't.<sup>83</sup> The impact of anonymizing résumés likely depends on how anonymous they are, since some cues may still point to an applicant's identity. This is also more difficult (or impossible) to execute when hiring internally, or filling senior or executive roles.

Employers should consider anonymizing all or part of their application process if:

- the proportion of women, Indigenous peoples, or members of visible minorities who successfully make it through the résumé stage is substantially smaller than the proportion who applied;
- they can remove all identifying information, rather than just the applicant's name;<sup>60,61</sup>
- they can use an application form with standardized questions to make it easier (and more cost-effective) to evaluate multiple candidates against one another, without affecting applicants' willingness to apply and;<sup>84</sup>

**Note:** There are software tools on the market to help run cost-effective anonymized application processes, should an employer have the resources and motivation to invest.

- They can monitor the impact of anonymization. The time and resources needed to implement application anonymization should be weighed against the potential impact of shifting other aspects of recruitment, such as structured interviews and skill-based assessments.<sup>85,66</sup>

---

## Action

### Encourage applicants to list experience in terms of years, not dates, in résumés

- **Promising for women**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.*

Reduce bias against people returning to work after a break to care for children, other family members, or themselves by making it possible to list years of experience instead of date ranges. Indicating years of experience may also have a positive impact for persons with disabilities, who are more likely to have employment gaps.<sup>86</sup>



---

### Case study

Positioning experience in terms of years (for example, “four years”) rather than dates (for example, ‘2016–2020’) on a résumé increased call-back rates from employers by 15% for women returning to work after a break to care for children.<sup>87</sup>

Résumés that include years help employers see returners in terms of their skills, rather than negative stereotypes. This may also help reduce age-related bias, as it obscures the applicants’ age. Using a standardized application form makes this easier to implement.

---

### Action

#### **Include more underrepresented applicants in shortlists for recruitment and promotions**



- **Promising for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Having more than one woman or visible minority candidate in a hiring shortlist increases the likelihood that a candidate from that group will be hired.<sup>88,89</sup>

Employers should set ambitious diversity targets for their shortlists. This can mean tasking recruiters with looking for equally well-qualified candidates from underrepresented groups or investigating if there are equally well-qualified internal employees from underrepresented groups who have not applied (see “Default employees into applying for promotion”).

Employee backlash and negative perceptions of candidate competency are risks of shortlist targets.<sup>90</sup> One potential solution might be for Human Resources to take demographic characteristics into consideration as a means of ensuring a representative candidate shortlist, which is then given to hiring managers to select from.

---

**Action****Make decisions about applicants in batches rather than individually**

- **Promising for women**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities or members of visible minorities was not found.*

Rather than evaluating candidates in isolation, reviewing them in batches can help to minimize bias. When hiring teams consider job applicants one at a time, they are more likely to be influenced by stereotypes or demographic cues.<sup>91</sup> For example, a well-qualified woman applying for a job on a predominantly male team may be rejected because she does not fit the image of a talented employee. Comparing the woman to two other new candidates could allow her qualifications to stand out more. In addition to making decisions in batches, making multiple selection and hiring decisions at once (instead of making a single hire) can increase the gender diversity of the group.<sup>92</sup>

Organizations may already engage in this practice if they conduct recruitment or promotion rounds where candidates are compared to each other. For those that practice ongoing recruitment or promotions, look for points in the process where multiple candidates could be assessed together and for opportunities to make multiple hires.

**Case study**

Encouraging unsuccessful but highly qualified candidates to reapply makes it more likely that women will reapply for a role compared to men.<sup>93</sup>

---

**Action****Offer internships, traineeships and work experience**

- **Promising for women, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.*

Work experience programs can improve equity when they are designed and implemented well. If opportunities are paid fairly and recruited transparently, they can benefit the careers of underrepresented groups, while ad-hoc internships that are poorly paid and recruited through personal contacts usually benefit people with privileged connections more.<sup>94,95,96</sup>

---

Completing an internship carries the same positive effect on starting salaries for men and women.<sup>97</sup> Having internship programs for persons with disabilities increases their likelihood of being hired.<sup>18</sup> However, members of underrepresented groups miss out on these opportunities, as work experience programs often discriminate against these applicants.<sup>98,99,100</sup>

When recruiting for interns, trainees or apprentices, employers should implement the actions from the [Hiring and Selection](#) section to ensure their processes are more equitable.

#### Case study

When female graduates mention internship experience on their résumé, they are more likely to receive a callback for interviews, even compared to their male peers with internship experience.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, studies using a variety of methodologies consistently show that internships and traineeships can support persons with disabilities to gain and retain employment.<sup>102,103</sup>

---

## Action

### Organizational diversity statements

#### • Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

A diversity statement is an expression of an organization's commitment to building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. Employers often place them in job ads and other communication materials. Unfortunately, there is conflicting evidence on these statements – while they might encourage some members of designated groups to apply for jobs in some contexts,<sup>104</sup> they are likely to backfire in others. Diversity statements:

- Are unlikely to be effective<sup>74</sup> unless they are supported by visible evidence, such as having more women or members of visible minorities on staff.<sup>105,106</sup> In general, counterfeit diversity can backfire for organizations.<sup>107,80,108,109,110,111</sup>
- Can give applicants from visible minority groups a false sense of security that they are safe to be transparent with racial cues contained with their names or experiences, making them vulnerable to more discrimination.<sup>112</sup>
- Can be difficult to write in a way that appeals to all groups. For example, statements that emphasize valuing differences may be more attractive to female applicants, whereas elevating equality may be more attractive to visible minority applicants.<sup>113</sup>

- 
- Can have unintended negative consequences among majority group members. For example, these types of initiatives can lead majority group members to believe that bias no longer exists in the organization or, worse, result in them treating their minority colleagues more negatively.<sup>83,84,85</sup> Current employees may also see new hires who are women or members of visible minorities as “diversity hires” or “tokens”.<sup>74,114</sup>

#### Case study

Visible minority applicants who ‘whiten’ their résumés receive more callbacks from companies with and without diversity statements. But they are less likely to ‘whiten’ their résumé and more likely to be transparent about their racial identity if the company has a diversity statement. Therefore, diversity statements may paradoxically result in minority applicants being less likely to get a callback.<sup>86</sup>

Therefore, organizations should not rely on diversity statements to attract a diverse candidate pool, especially if they do not yet have many employees from underrepresented groups. Given how difficult it is to do this well, it is suggested that employers proceed with caution – providing concrete evidence (for example, specific numeric goals)<sup>115</sup> and case studies for the claims they present, and continually monitoring or evaluating for impact. If employers cannot provide explicit goals and evidence of progress, it is suggested that it may be prudent to avoid diversity statements altogether.

---

## Action

### Diverse selection panels



- **Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities.*

Diverse selection panels are a common practice, but have mixed consequences. When more women are on a panel, women are sometimes more likely<sup>116</sup> and other times less likely<sup>117,118,90,119</sup> to be selected for a role. Researchers have found an association between a diverse panel and the likelihood of a visible minority candidate being hired, but it is not clear whether panels cause this outcome.<sup>120</sup>

There is also a risk that requiring underrepresented employees to participate in hiring panels may burden them disproportionately, as this task is unlikely to be rewarded,<sup>121</sup> can detract from other responsibilities and can result in colleagues viewing them more negatively.<sup>122</sup>

---

### Case study

A series of experiments found that Black men and white women who were asked to participate in a work group because of their identity, were seen as less competent, effective, and as having less leadership potential than demographically similar employees who were randomly selected to participate or for whom a different rationale was provided (for example, based on scheduling or merit).<sup>96</sup>

More research is needed to understand when and how diverse selection panels improve hiring equity. Until then, consider using this approach carefully.

---

**“When more women are on a panel, women are sometimes more likely to be selected for a role,<sup>90</sup> but not always.”**

## Development and training

While mentorship programs – which enable employees to learn from one another – show promise for increasing equity, there is little evidence that unconscious bias and diversity training improve representation of or outcomes for members of underrepresented groups.<sup>123</sup> Organizations should avoid the latter as the only approach, or one of their few approaches, to improve equity. If employers continue investing in unconscious bias or diversity training, we recommend tracking their effectiveness in terms of positive behavioural outcomes.

### The potential for growth-mindset

Growth mindset is the belief that one can improve by dedicating time and effort to a goal – and it is powerful. For example, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) faculty with growth mindsets have a narrower racial achievement gap in their classes compared to faculty who see ability as fixed.<sup>124</sup> Growth mindset can be encouraged among managers. Giving them timely reminders about how employees’ skills tend to develop over time, with practice and constructive feedback, can help improve performance assessments and coaching.<sup>125</sup>

---

## Action

### Offer mentorship programs

- **Promising for women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities**

Mentorship programs aim to give employees guidance from their colleagues on specific skills or knowledge that will help them succeed. Mentorship programs are beneficial for the career development of a range of underrepresented groups<sup>126</sup> including women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities.<sup>127,128,129,130,131,132,26,133,13</sup>

#### Case study

A systematic review of mentorship interventions for persons with disabilities found increases in knowledge of employment services, preparation for employment, and employment outcomes.<sup>101</sup>

Indigenous employees might benefit from programs where more experienced employees transfer knowledge to those with less experience.<sup>26,106</sup> One lab experiment found that mentorship increases willingness to compete for men, but not for women.<sup>134</sup> Combined with other approaches, like defaulting employees into applying for promotions, mentorship programs might help improve equity. However, studies to date have explored job satisfaction, confidence and willingness to compete rather than pay, progression or organizational equity.

---

## Action

### Diversity or unconscious bias training

- **Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Unconscious biases influence a person's judgment subconsciously. Diversity or unconscious bias training aims to bring these biases to light and mitigate their impact by promoting positive interactions and reducing prejudice and discrimination. Some trainings have been shown to increase awareness and shift attitudes in the short-term,<sup>135,136</sup> but they do not change behaviour or improve equity in the long-term and can have unintended negative consequences. Therefore, it is suggested that employers avoid using diversity training and unconscious bias training as their only pro-equity intervention because of a lack of evidence that they improve workplace equity.<sup>137</sup> If employers proceed with the training, they should consider it a starting point, supported by a comprehensive, longer-term action plan.<sup>138</sup>

---

Diversity training does not improve career outcomes for members of underrepresented groups nor does it increase the number of women in management positions.<sup>139</sup> In fact, diversity training can sometimes even decrease diversity in management.<sup>140</sup> Training can also be damaging if it focuses on a specific group<sup>141,142</sup> by inadvertently distancing groups from one another and highlighting stereotypes.

These backfires may occur because people resent being forced to do things (in the case of mandatory training), because the training elevates stereotypes that people then act on, or because it suggests that the organization has already solved its diversity problems.<sup>85,143</sup>

While diversity training is unlikely to change behaviour,<sup>144,112</sup> it *can* have learning and attitudinal benefits.<sup>116</sup> Thus, organizations may use select diversity training offerings as a starting point; any positive effects of diversity training are greater when combined with other initiatives, over a significant period of time.<sup>116</sup>

#### Case study

One rigorous study on diversity training found that the effects on knowledge and awareness were short lived, sometimes lasting only 24 hours and that there were no changes in behaviour.<sup>106</sup> Another study showed that participants who completed a training to mitigate their biases related to race, sexual orientation, and weight still showed these biases after training.<sup>145</sup>

---

**“Diversity training does not improve career outcomes for members of underrepresented groups, nor does it increase the number of women in management positions.”**

#### Action

##### Targeted leadership development training

- **Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Leadership development programs aim to improve management competencies and self-confidence. Unfortunately, there is currently no high-quality evidence that designing these programs for underrepresented groups (for example, a “Women in Leadership” program) helps them progress. Women, especially women from visible minority groups and persons with disabilities are stereotyped as less apt for leadership roles.<sup>146,147,148</sup> It is possible,

---

but not proven, that targeted leadership training could support these prejudices by inadvertently signalling that members of these groups need special support to learn how to lead – when in reality, the barriers they face come from others’ biases rather than a lack of competence. Because targeted leadership programs can be expensive, and there is limited evidence that they improve managerial diversity and progression,<sup>149</sup> it is recommended prioritizing other initiatives to build a fairer workplace.

#### Case study

Some very small-scale studies have looked at the effects of leadership training programs for women, particularly in medicine and academia.<sup>150</sup> But the results are not strong enough to recommend targeted leadership training. What’s important is ensuring that everyone has equal access to organizational training opportunities, rather than singling out select groups. To start, you can track invitations or attendance and review the data regularly. You can also set targets, and consider strategies like defaulting all employees into training, or offering flexible scheduling to include part-time employees.

---

## Promotion and retention

More and more employers recognize that transparency increases accountability, which can support equitable decision making. It is recommended that organizations build on this by making promotion, pay, and reward processes clearer to employees at all levels. Organizations should also consider defaulting all eligible employees into promotion processes and competitive opportunities, where possible (for example, for specialized training and development or special projects).

Employers may consider programs like diversity networking initiatives and internships as well. However, they should evaluate the effectiveness of these programs rather than assume they will work.

### Action

#### Increase transparency of promotion, pay and reward processes<sup>151</sup>

- **Effective for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Transparent organizations are open with employees about processes, policies, and criteria for decision making. For instance, with transparency, employees know how pay raises and promotions are decided. Managers also understand that their decisions must be objective and evidence-based because they can be reviewed by others.



---

### Case study

In a longitudinal study, a large US organization made their pay and reward processes more transparent by appointing a committee to monitor reward decisions. The committee members had enough influence to hold others accountable and ensure that the appropriate changes were made to the pay and reward systems to make them more equitable. Overall, the pay gaps between white men, women and visible minority employees decreased.<sup>152</sup> While the precise reason for the change cannot be pinpointed, it may be because transparency creates accountability. When people know that their decisions will be reviewed, or that they will have to justify their decision to others, both gender and racial disparities decrease.<sup>54,14</sup>

Increasing transparency to promotion, pay and reward processes can reduce pay inequalities.<sup>153</sup> Without transparency, it can be hard for underrepresented candidates to know what they need to progress, or to question unfair choices. Compared to white employees, when visible minority employees attempt to negotiate salary or question inconsistent decisions, they are more likely to face backlash.<sup>59</sup> Being open builds trust and advances equity.

---

## “Increasing transparency to promotion, pay and reward processes can reduce pay inequalities”

### Action

#### Default employees into applying for promotion or other competitive opportunities



- **Effective for women**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.*

Defaulting employees into applying for promotions means that all eligible employees are automatically considered for promotion, while having the option to opt out. Over three quarters (76%) of the promotion gap between men and women is explained by women being less likely to put themselves forward for promotion.<sup>154</sup> Even when told that they are a group's top performer, women are still less likely to opt into leadership selection than men. When using an opt-out system, this gender gap is significantly reduced and more women are likely to be selected for leadership roles.<sup>155,156</sup>

---

## Action

### Offer diversity networking programs

- **Promising for women, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples was not found.*

Diversity networks (also called “affinity networks” or “employee resource groups”) inform and support employees who share similar identities, with the goal of helping them advance their careers. They can be particularly helpful to increase management opportunities for white women, but have not been shown to be effective for visible minority men.<sup>114</sup> This may be because there are fewer opportunities for members of visible minorities to connect with people similar to themselves via networking. Several studies suggest that diversity networks provide underrepresented employees with psychosocial support, providing a space to share experiences and build interpersonal connections.<sup>157,158,159,160</sup>

#### Case study

A US study found that even though members of visible minorities network as much as white people, their networks did not yield the same outcomes when it came to securing jobs.<sup>161</sup>

More research is needed to understand the impact of network programs, and if they need particular features to work well for all underrepresented groups.

---

## Action

### Redesign formal grievance procedures

- **Promising for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Employees raise concerns to their employer through formal grievance procedures (for example, reporting sexual harassment or discrimination). In practice, formal grievance procedures do not improve organizational diversity and may even worsen managerial diversity.<sup>162,163</sup> The current system seems to be harming those who it should protect. Employees who file complaints often face retaliation (for example, denied promotions) while those accused are rarely penalized.<sup>143,144,164,165,166</sup>

---

### Case study

A US-based study of 800,000 complaints found that half (50%) mentioned retaliation against an initial formal complaint.<sup>167</sup> Women who file complaints have worse career and well-being outcomes than women who also experienced harassment but did not file a complaint.<sup>168</sup> Formal grievance procedures negatively affected the mental health of victims of racial discrimination.<sup>169</sup>

Consider complementing formal procedures with alternative ways of addressing issues, such as mediation and restorative justice. Offering employees resources for peer support networks or expanding the Employee Assistance Plan to include culturally-based support could help, too.<sup>28,170</sup> These methods show promise in solving workplace disputes equitably. However, they have not been thoroughly tested, and there is no evidence that they improve retention and progression of employees from underrepresented groups.

---

## Action

### Performance self-assessments



- **Avoid/take caution for women and members of visible minorities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples or persons with disabilities was not found.*

Women and members of visible minorities are more likely to rate themselves lower than their male or white peers.<sup>171,172,173,174</sup> These self-assessments may then go on to influence managers' judgments. Using peer-evaluations instead of self-evaluations and changing performance scales to 1 to 6 instead of 1 to 10 reduces the gender gap.<sup>89</sup> If a performance evaluation process includes a self-assessment, to minimize the potential bias, do not share assessment scores with managers until they have evaluated the employee's performance themselves. Similar to job requirements, performance evaluation questions should be behaviour-based.<sup>89</sup>

### Case study

A study using data from a US organization found that managers who saw staff self-assessments before making their own judgements penalized visible minority staff. When self-assessments were removed, they no longer penalized visible minority women (although they continued to penalise visible minority men).<sup>155</sup> This can affect performance-related outcomes such as pay raises, bonuses and progression.

---

## Workplace flexibility

Generous parental leave policies and flexible working arrangements are critical for attracting the best talent. Employers must ensure that people across the organization are genuinely encouraged to take up these policies. They are also required to make reasonable accommodations for designated groups, like persons with disabilities, as stated in the *Employment Equity Act*.

### Action

#### Improve workplace flexibility for everyone

- **Effective for women and persons with disabilities**
- **Promising for Indigenous peoples**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to members of visible minorities was not found.*

Flexible working is any alternative to the traditional 9 to 5 in-person work day – employees choose when and where they work, and for how many hours. Improving workplace flexibility for everyone can enable employees to balance their job with other parts of their lives. It increases access to the job market for women with caregiving responsibilities and enables men to contribute more to domestic labour. Flexibility also reduces the burden of travel on employees with disabilities by allowing them to shape their schedules.

#### Case study

A comparative study of five European countries, including the UK, found that flexible work schedules led to longer periods of employment for workers with disabilities.<sup>175</sup> Specifically, offering reduced hours increased the likelihood of workers with disabilities returning to work and reduced their absences.<sup>156</sup> Interviews with Indigenous peoples in Ontario, Quebec, and Nunavut revealed that cultural demands (such as the need to travel to attend ceremonies several times a year) can conflict with traditional, inflexible work arrangements.<sup>26,28,106</sup>

Flexible working is highly attractive and increases the total number of applications to vacancies.<sup>176</sup> To become more supportive of flexible working arrangements, organizations should:

- Advertise and offer flexible working arrangements, such as part-time work, remote working, job sharing, or compressed hours, for all jobs, including senior roles<sup>157</sup> (see “Offer flexible working by default in job advertisements”).
- Encourage senior leaders to champion and model flexible work arrangements.<sup>177,178</sup>
- Encourage and enable men (and fathers) to work flexibly, so it is not seen as only a benefit for women (and mothers) and thereby stigmatized.<sup>179,180</sup>
- Avoid a one-size-fits-all approach for the organization (for example, specifying the number of days employees can work remotely), as this could create a diversity gap.<sup>181</sup>

---

“Flexible working is highly attractive and increases the total number of applications to vacancies.”

## Action

### Make workplace or role adjustments available to everyone

- **Effective for persons with disabilities**

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to women, Indigenous peoples, or members of visible minorities was not found.*

Workplace or role adjustments (or “accommodations”) make a big difference in recruiting and retaining persons with disabilities.<sup>182,183</sup>

#### Case study

A large-scale survey of persons with disabilities shows that 1 in 3 non-working persons with disabilities say that their barriers to work could be resolved with workplace accommodations.<sup>184</sup> Another large-scale survey found that persons with disabilities who worked in offices with accessible facilities (for example, ramps, bathrooms and other adjustments) were more satisfied with their employer and likely to stay there.<sup>185</sup>

Under the *Employment Equity Act*, employers are required to specify their policies and practices that support making reasonable accommodations for designated groups. However, simply offering these accommodations may not be sufficient for employees.<sup>186</sup> Organizations that are open and proactive about offering accommodations can motivate employees to come forward sooner with accommodation requests. Organizations should ensure the accommodation they provide addresses the employees’ barrier(s) at work, fund and implement accommodations properly, and be transparent when a request is denied. These actions often require training for supervisors.<sup>187</sup>

To become more inclusive of people with disabilities, organizations should be proactive in conducting occupational health assessments and provide adjustments during the application process, if appropriate.<sup>18</sup> Having trained professionals conduct these assessments can remove the discomfort employees with disabilities may face when asking for adjustments and give employers the information needed to improve their workplace.

---

## Action

### Encourage men to take longer parental leave

- Promising for women

*Sufficient high-quality evidence specific to Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, or members of visible minorities was not found.*

Childcare that is unequally shared between men and women has a lasting impact on women's earnings. When fathers take longer parental leave, it helps balance expectations around childcare responsibility, can help women return to employment sooner, and increase mothers' earnings.<sup>188</sup> However, many men do not take leave, or keep it short.

#### Case study

Normalizing parental leave for men is vital for workplace equity. At Santander, 99% of male employees supported men working flexibly, but thought only 65% of colleagues supported flexible work for men.<sup>189</sup> When men were informed of their peers' higher support, their intentions to work flexibly rose by 4%. At a second bank, rates of men intending to take 5–8 weeks of parental leave increased by 50% when they were informed about high support levels.

Under the [Government of Canada's Employment Insurance \(EI\) Maternity and Parental Benefits](#), eligible parents can share up to 40 weeks (standard parental) or 69 weeks (extended parental) of leave.

In addition to the [government's guidance](#), employers can encourage men to take longer parental leave by:

- Informing future fathers that it is their legal right to request Parental Leave.
- Providing future parents with guidance and personal support to understand benefits.
- Sharing and promoting examples of senior leaders who have taken Parental Leave.
- Offering parental benefits at the same level as enhanced maternity pay.

---

## How can you help?

The Workplace Equity Division, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) will continue to work with employers to build more evidence about what works and what doesn't. Please submit your own evidence of what works – and what doesn't work – in your own organization as we are interested in learning from your experience. If you are interested in working on this with us, please write to the Workplace Equity Division at [ee-eme@hrsdcc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:ee-eme@hrsdcc-rhdcc.gc.ca).

---

## Further reading

- Bohnet, I. (2016). [What works: Gender equality by design](#). Harvard University Press.
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2015). [A head for hiring: The behavioural science of recruitment and selection](#).
- Deros, E., Buijsrogge, A., Roulin, N., & Duyck, W. (2016). [Why your stigma isn't hired: A dual-process framework of interview bias](#). *Human Resource Management Review*, 26(2), 90-111.
- Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2016). [Why diversity programs fail](#). Harvard Business Review, 94(7/8), 52–60.
- Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2022). *Getting to Diversity – What Works and What Doesn't*. Harvard University Press.
- Government Equalities Office (2019). [Family friendly policies: Actions for employers](#).
- Government Equalities Office (2019). [Women's Progression in the Workplace: Actions for employers](#).
- He, J. C., Agarwal, G., Kang, S. K. (2022). [Applying Behavioral Insights to Cultivate Diversity and Inclusion](#). In N. Mazar & D. Soman (Eds.), [Behavioral Science in the Wild](#). University of Toronto Press.
- Leslie, L. M. (2019). [Diversity initiative effectiveness: A typological theory of unintended consequences](#). *Academy of Management Review*, 44(3), 538-563.
- Research consortium: [Engendering Success in STEM](#).
- Rotman School of Management: [Gender and the Economy](#).
- Schmader, T., Dennehy, T. C., & Baron, A. S. (2021). [Why Antibias Interventions \(Need Not\) Fail](#). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 17456916211057565.
- The Behavioural Insights Team: [Gender & Behavioural Insights Program](#).



---

## Podcasts

For the Love of Work Podcast (hosted by Sonia Kang), Season 1, Episode 2: [Leaning Into Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)

For the Love of Work Podcast (hosted by Sonia Kang), Season 2, Episode 5: [The Power of Belonging](#)

---

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Under the *Employment Equity Act*, employers must eliminate employment barriers experienced by and correct underrepresentation of individuals from four designated groups: women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. The Canadian government strives for workplaces that are free from barriers and that correct conditions of disadvantage in employment.
- <sup>2</sup> Under the *Employment Equity Act*, employers must eliminate employment barriers experienced by and correct underrepresentation of individuals from four designated groups: women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. Actions listed in this guide may also benefit members of other underrepresented groups.
- <sup>3</sup> Areas 2–5 align with requirements under the *Employment Equity Regulations*. Workplace flexibility includes reasonable accommodation of the special needs of members of designated groups, as referenced in the Regulations.
- <sup>4</sup> The EEA refers to Indigenous peoples as Aboriginal peoples.
- <sup>5</sup> Federally regulated private-sector employers covered by the *Employment Equity Act* are required to set, in their employment equity plan, representation goals where these four designated groups are underrepresented, and make all reasonable efforts to implement their employment equity plan.
- <sup>6</sup> It is recognized that these four designated groups are not inclusive of everyone who experiences systemic discrimination at work. Additionally, the term “visible minorities,” used in the *Employment Equity Act* (the Act), can be seen as inappropriate, as it may seem to homogenize the experiences of the many diverse groups living in Canada. Actions listed in this report may also benefit underrepresented groups that are not designated in the Act.
- <sup>7</sup> The *Employment Equity Act* defines designated groups as women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. However, there may be other underrepresented groups in your organization to consider.
- <sup>8</sup> Sojo, V. E., Wood, R. E., Wood, S. A., & Wheeler, M. A. (2016). Reporting requirements, targets, and quotas for women in leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27(3).
- <sup>9</sup> Onyeador, I. N., Hudson, S. K. T., & Lewis Jr., N. A. (2021). Moving beyond implicit bias training: Policy insights for increasing organizational diversity. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 8(1), 19-26.
- <sup>10</sup> McKinsey&Company (2015). [Women in the Workplace – 2015](#).
- <sup>11</sup> European Commission. (2019). [Report on equality between women and men in the EU](#).
- <sup>12</sup> Richard, S., & Hennekam, S. (2021). When Can a Disability Quota System Empower Disabled Individuals in the Workplace? The Case of France. *Work, Employment and Society*, 35(5), 837–855.
- <sup>13</sup> International Labour Organization. (2019). [Promoting Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities: Quotas Schemes, Volume 1](#).

- 
- <sup>14</sup> A more detailed guide on how to set effective targets for gender representation and equality, developed for the UK government, is available online [here](#).
- <sup>15</sup> Barends, E., Janssen, B., Briner, R. B., & Rousseau, D.M. (2016). Rapid evidence assessment of the research literature on the effect of goal setting on workplace performance.
- <sup>16</sup> Epton, T., Currie, S. & Armitage, C.J. (2017). Unique effects of setting goals on behavior change: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 85(12), 1182.
- <sup>17</sup> Harkin, B., Webb, T. L., Chang, B. P., Prestwich, A., Conner, M., Kellar, I., Benn, Y. and Sheeran, P. (2016). Does monitoring goal progress promote goal attainment? A meta-analysis of the experimental evidence. *Psychological bulletin*, 142(2), 198.
- <sup>18</sup> Bennedsen, M., Simintzi, E., Tsoutsoura, M., & Wolfenzon, D. (2022). Do firms respond to gender pay gap transparency?. *The Journal of Finance*, 77(4), 2051-2091.
- <sup>19</sup> Blundell, J. (2021). Wage responses to gender pay gap reporting requirements. Available at SSRN 3584259.
- <sup>20</sup> Baker, M., Halberstam, Y., Kroft, K., Mas, A., & Messacar, D. (2019). [Pay transparency and the gender gap \(No. w25834\). National Bureau of Economic Research.](#)
- <sup>21</sup> Most commonly referred to as an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion lead or task force.
- <sup>22</sup> Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2015). Why firms need diversity managers and task forces. *How global migration changes the workforce diversity equation*, 170-198.
- <sup>23</sup> Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2016). [Why diversity programs fail](#). Harvard Business Review.
- <sup>24</sup> Ford, T. E., Gambino, F., Lee, H., Mayo, E., & Ferguson, M. A. (2004). The role of accountability in suppressing managers' preinterview bias against African-American sales job applicants. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 24(2), 113-124.
- <sup>25</sup> Voss, N. M., & Lake, C. J. (2021). Let me think about this: Factors associated with deliberative decision making within hiring contexts. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 24(1), 1–22.
- <sup>26</sup> BIT previously developed a guide on “How to establish diversity leads and diversity task forces” for the UK government, available [here](#).
- <sup>27</sup> Payne, B. K., & Vuletich, H. A. (2018). Policy Insights From Advances in Implicit Bias Research. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 5(1), 49–56.
- <sup>28</sup> While targeted referrals are one way to encourage women to apply, there is currently no evidence evaluating the impact on the numbers of applications for characteristics beyond gender.
- <sup>29</sup> The Behavioural Insights Team (2021). [Targeted referrals can improve gender equality in recruitment.](#)
- <sup>30</sup> Erickson, W. A., von Schrader, S., Bruyère, S. M., VanLooy, S. A., & Matteson, D. S. (2014). Disability-inclusive employer practices and hiring of individuals with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education*, 28(4), 309.

- 
- <sup>31</sup> Avery, D.R., Hernandez, M., & Hebl, M.R. (2004). Who's watching the race? Racial salience in recruitment advertising. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 34*, 146-161.
- <sup>32</sup> Centre for State and Local Government Excellence. (2018). [Workforce of the future: Strategies to manage change.](#)
- <sup>33</sup> Behavioral Insights Team. (2019). [Behavioral insights for building the police force of tomorrow.](#)
- <sup>34</sup> Wilson, E.J., & Sherrell, D.L. (1993). Source effects in communication and persuasion research: A meta-analysis of effect size. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 21*, 101.
- <sup>35</sup> Avery, D. R., & McKay, P. F. (2006). Target Practice: An Organizational Impression Management Approach to Attracting Minority and Female Job Applicants. *Personnel Psychology, 59*(1), 157–187.
- <sup>36</sup> Avery, D. R. (2003). Reactions to diversity in recruitment advertising—Are differences black and white? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(4), 672–679.
- <sup>37</sup> Perkins, L. A., Thomas, K. M., & Taylor, G. A. (2000). Advertising and recruitment: Marketing to minorities. *Psychology & Marketing, 17*(3), 235–255.
- <sup>38</sup> Caron, J., Asselin, H., & Beaudoin, J. (2020). Indigenous employees' perceptions of the strategies used by mining employers to promote their recruitment, integration and retention. *Resources Policy, 68*, 101793.
- <sup>39</sup> Caverley, N. (2006). What works: Effective policies and programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada. *Strategic Policy Directorate*.
- <sup>40</sup> Jewell, E., Doucet, A., Falk, J., & Fyke, S. (2020). Social Knowing, Mental Health, and the Importance of Indigenous Resources: A Case Study of Indigenous Employment Engagement in Southwestern Ontario. *Canadian Review of Social Policy / Revue Canadienne De Politique Sociale, 80*, 1-25.
- <sup>41</sup> Gaucher, D., Friesen, J., & Kay, A. C. (2011). Evidence that gendered wording in job advertisements exists and sustains gender inequality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 101*(1), 109.
- <sup>42</sup> Bian, L., Leslie, S. J., Murphy, M. C., & Cimpian, A. (2018). Messages about brilliance undermine women's interest in educational and professional opportunities. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 76*, 404-420.
- <sup>43</sup> Oldford, E., & Fiset, J. (2021). Decoding bias: Gendered language in finance internship job postings. *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Finance, 31*, 100544.
- <sup>44</sup> He, J.C., & Kang, S. K. (under review). Identities between the lines: Re-aligning gender and professional identities by altering job advertisement language attracts more female applicants.
- <sup>45</sup> Clayton, S., Barr, B., Nylén, L., Burström, B., Thielen, K., Diderichsen, F., ... & Whitehead, M. (2012). Effectiveness of return-to-work interventions for disabled people: a systematic review of government initiatives focused on changing the behaviour of employers. *The European Journal of Public Health, 22*(3), 434-439.

- 
- 46 The Behavioural Insights Team (2020). [\*\*'Double nudge' encourages employers to offer flexibility, in turn boosting job application rates.\*\*](#)
- 47 Wille, L., & Derous, E. (2017). Getting the words right: When wording of job ads affects ethnic minorities' application decisions. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 31(4), 533-558.
- 48 Wille, L., & Derous, E. (2018). When job ads turn you down: how requirements in job ads may stop instead of attract highly qualified women. *Sex Roles*, 79(7-8), 464-475.
- 49 Coffman, K. B., Collis, M. R., Kulkarni, L. (2022). "Whether to Apply" Working Paper 1.
- 50 Williams, J. C., Lloyd, D. L., Boginsky, M., & Armas-Edwards, F. (2021). [\*\*How one company worked to root out bias from performance reviews.\*\*](#) Harvard Business Review.
- 51 Dow, M. J., Lund, B. D., & Douthett, W. K. (2020). Investigating the link between unemployment and disability: Lexically ambiguous words and fixed formulaic sequences in job ads for academic reference librarians. *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion*, 4(1), 42-58.
- 52 The [\*\*Behavioural Insights Team\*\*](#) previously developed a guide on "How to use skills-based assessment tasks" for the UK government, available [\*\*here\*\*](#).
- 53 Deloitte (2012). [\*\*Widening the Circle: Increasing Opportunities for Aboriginal People in the Workplace.\*\*](#)
- 54 Morris, M. (2017). [\*\*Indigenous recruitment and retention: Ideas and best practices from a literature review of academic and organizational sources.\*\*](#)
- 55 Whetzel, D. L., McDaniel, M. A., & Nguyen, N. T. (2008). Subgroup differences in situational judgement test performance: A meta-analysis. *Human Performance*, 21(3), 291-309.
- 56 Ployhart, R. E., & Holtz, B. C. (2008). The diversity–validity dilemma: Strategies for reducing racioethnic and sex subgroup differences and adverse impact in selection. *Personnel Psychology*, 61(1), 153-172.
- 57 Dean, M. A., Roth, P. L., & Bobko, P. (2008). Ethnic and gender subgroup differences in assessment center ratings: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(3), 685.
- 58 Ryan, A. M., Ployhart, R. E., & Friedel, L. A. (1998). Using personality testing to reduce adverse impact: A cautionary note. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83(2), 298.
- 59 De Soete, B., Lievens, F., Oostrom, J., & Westerveld, L. (2013). Alternative predictors for dealing with the diversity–validity dilemma in personnel selection: The constructed response multimedia test. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 21(3), 239-250.
- 60 Lievens, F., De Corte, W., & Westerveld, L. (2015). Understanding the building blocks of selection procedures: Effects of response fidelity on performance and validity. *Journal of Management*, 41(6), 1604-1627.
- 61 Linos, E., Reinhard, J., & Ruda, S. (2017). Levelling the playing field in police recruitment: Evidence from a field experiment on test performance. *Public Administration*, 95(4), 943-956.

- 
- 62 The [Behavioural Insights Team](#) previously developed a guide on “How to run structured interviews” for the UK Government, available [here](#).
- 63 Further reading: Derous, E., Buijsrogge, A., Roulin, N., & Duyck, W. (2016). Why your stigma isn’t hired: A dual-process framework of interview bias. *Human Resource Management Review*, 26(2), 90-111.
- 64 While there is a small-scale laboratory study of the effects of structured interviews for persons with disabilities, there is currently no high-quality evidence that structured interviews help persons with disabilities progress in the recruitment process.
- 65 Levashina, J., Hartwell, C. J., Morgeson, F. P., & Campion, M. A. (2014). The structured employment interview: Narrative and quantitative review of the research literature. *Personnel Psychology*, 67(1), 241-293.
- 66 McCarthy, J. M., Van Iddekinge, C. H., & Campion, M. A. (2010). Are highly structured job interviews resistant to demographic similarity effects?. *Personnel Psychology*, 63(2), 325-359.
- 67 Brecher, E., Bragger, J., & Kutcher, E. (2006). The structured interview: Reducing biases toward job applicants with physical disabilities. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 18(3), 155-170.
- 68 Huffcutt, A. I., Culbertson, S. S., & Weyhrauch, W. S. (2013). Employment interview reliability: New meta-analytic estimates by structure and format. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 21(3), 264-276.
- 69 The Behavioural Insights Team (2017). [A review of optimism bias, planning fallacy, sunk cost bias and groupthink in project delivery and organisational decision making](#).
- 70 Self, W. T., Mitchell, G., Mellers, B. A., Tetlock, P. E., & Hildreth, J. A. D. (2015). Balancing fairness and efficiency: the impact of identity-blind and identity-conscious accountability on applicant screening. *PLOS One*, 10(12), e0145208.
- 71 Neogov (2021). [Diversity in public sector hiring report](#).
- 72 Leibbrandt, A., & List, J. A. (2014). Do women avoid salary negotiations? Evidence from a large-scale natural field experiment. *Management Science*, 61(9), 2016–2024.
- 73 Lu, J. G. (2022). Asians don’t ask? Relational concerns, negotiation propensity, and starting salaries. *Journal of Applied Psychology*.
- 74 Ioannides, Y. M., & Datcher Loury, L. (2004). Job information networks, neighborhood effects, and inequality. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 42(4), 1056-1093.
- 75 Hernandez, M., Avery, D. R., Volpone, S. D., & Kaiser, C. R. (2019). Bargaining while Black: The role of race in salary negotiations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104, 581-592.
- 76 Johnson, S. K., & Kirk, J. F. (2020). [To Reduce Gender Bias, Anonymize Job Applications](#).

- 
- 77 Johnson, S. K., & Kirk, J. F. (2020). Dual-anonymization yields promising results for reducing gender bias: A naturalistic field experiment of applications for Hubble Space Telescope time. *Publications of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific*, 132(1009), 034503.
- 78 Åslund, O., & Skans, O. N. (2012). Do anonymous job application procedures level the playing field? *ILR Review*, 65(1), 82-107.
- 79 Goldin, C., & Rouse, C. (2000). Orchestrating impartiality: The impact of "blind" auditions on female musicians. *American Economic Review*, 90(4), 715-741.
- 80 Krause, A., Rinne, U., & Zimmermann, K. F. (2012). Anonymous job applications of fresh Ph. D. economists. *Economics Letters*, 117(2), 441-444.
- 81 Bøg, M., & Kranendonk, E. (2011). [Labor market discrimination of minorities? yes, but not in job offers.](#)
- 82 Government of Canada (2018). [Anonymized Recruitment Pilot Project – Final report.](#)
- 83 Behaghel, L., Crépon, B., & Le Barbanchon, T. (2015). Unintended effects of anonymous resumes. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 7(3), 1-27.
- 84 Krause-Pilatus, A., Rinne, U., Zimmermann, K. F., Bösch, I., & Alt, R. (2012). *Pilotprojekt "Anonymisierte Bewerbungsverfahren"-Abschlussbericht* (No. 44). Institute of Labor Economics (IZA).
- 85 Public Service Commission of Canada. (2021). [Audit of employment equity representation in recruitment.](#) *Government of Canada*.
- 86 Office for National Statistics (2021). [Outcomes for disabled people in the UK: 2020.](#)
- 87 The Behavioural Insights Team (2021). [Facilitating return to the labour market with a novel CV format intervention.](#)
- 88 Johnson, S. K., Hekman, D. R., & Chan, E. T. (2016). [If There's Only One Woman in Your Candidate Pool, There's Statistically No Chance She'll Be Hired.](#) Harvard Business Review.
- 89 Lucas, B. J., Berry, Z., Giurge, L. M., & Chugh, D. (2021). A longer shortlist increases the consideration of female candidates in male-dominant domains. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 5(6), 736-742.
- 90 Leibbrandt, A., & List, J. A. (2018). Do equal employment opportunity statements backfire? Evidence from a natural field experiment on job-entry decisions (No. w25035). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- 91 Bazerman, M. H., Bohnet, I., & Van Geen, A. V. (2012). When performance trumps gender bias: Joint versus separate evaluation (No. 8506867).
- 92 Chang, E. H., Kirgios, E. L., Rai, A., & Milkman, K. L. (2020). The isolated choice effect and its implications for gender diversity in organizations. *Management Science*, 66(6), 2752-2761.
- 93 NSW Government (2019) [Applying behavioural insights to drive public sector diversity.](#)



- 
- <sup>94</sup> Silva, A. (2021). Unpaid internships and equality of opportunity: a pseudo-panel analysis of UN data. *Applied Economics Letters*, 28(15), 1288-1292.
- <sup>95</sup> Skujina, R., & Loots, E. (2020). The intern economy in the cultural industry: an empirical study of the demand side. *Journal of Education and Work*, 33(5-6), 343-359.
- <sup>96</sup> Zilvinskis, J., Gillis, J., & Smith, K. K. (2020). Unpaid versus paid internships: Group membership makes the difference. *Journal of College Student Development*, 61(4), 510-516.
- <sup>97</sup> Gault, J., Redington, J., & Schlager, T. (2000). Undergraduate business internships and career success: are they related? *Journal of Marketing Education*, 22(1), 45-53.
- <sup>98</sup> Black Training and Enterprise Group (2020). [Ethnic minority young people and apprenticeships in England.](#)
- <sup>99</sup> Newton, B. & Williams, J. (2013). [Under-representation by gender and race in apprenticeships: Research Report.](#)
- <sup>100</sup> House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts (2019). [The apprenticeships programme: progress review.](#)
- <sup>101</sup> Baert, S., Neyt, B., Siedler, T., Tobback, I., & Verhaest, D. (2021). Student internships and employment opportunities after graduation: A field experiment. *Economics of Education Review*, 83.
- <sup>102</sup> McNaughton, D., Light, J., & Arnold, K. (2002). 'Getting your wheel in the door': Successful full-time employment experiences of individuals with cerebral palsy who use augmentative and alternative communication. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 18(2), 59-76.
- <sup>103</sup> Remington, A., & Pellicano, E. (2019). 'Sometimes you just need someone to take a chance on you': An internship programme for autistic graduates at Deutsche Bank, UK. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 25(4), 516-534.
- <sup>104</sup> Flory, J. A., Leibbrandt, A., Rott, C., & Stoddard, O. (2021). Increasing Workplace Diversity Evidence from a Recruiting Experiment at a Fortune 500 Company. *Journal of Human Resources*, 56(1), 73-92.
- <sup>105</sup> Windscheid, L., Bowes-Sperry, L., Kidder, D. L., Cheung, H. K., Morner, M., & Lievens, F. (2016). Actions speak louder than words: Outsiders' perceptions of diversity mixed messages. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 101(9), 1329.
- <sup>106</sup> Wilton, L. S., Bell, A. N., Vahradyan, M., & Kaiser, C. R. (2020). Show don't tell: Diversity dishonesty harms racial/ethnic minorities at work. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 46(8), 1171-1185.
- <sup>107</sup> Kroeper, K. M., Williams, H. E., & Murphy, M. C. (2022). Counterfeit diversity: How strategically misrepresenting gender diversity dampens organizations' perceived sincerity and elevates women's identity threat concerns. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 122(3), 399-426.
- <sup>108</sup> Kang, S., DeCelles, K, Tilcsik, A and Jun, S. (2016). [The Unintended Consequences of Diversity Statements.](#) *Harvard Business Review*.
-



- 
- <sup>109</sup> Dover, T. L., Major, B., & Kaiser, C. R. (2016). Members of high-status groups are threatened by pro-diversity organizational messages. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 62, 58-67.
- <sup>110</sup> Dover, T. L., Major, B., & Kaiser, C. R. (2016). [Diversity policies rarely make companies fairer, and they feel threatening to white men](#). Harvard Business Review.
- <sup>111</sup> Kirby, T. A., Kaiser, C. R., & Major, B. (2015). Insidious procedures: Diversity awards legitimize unfair organizational practices. *Social Justice Research*, 28, 169-186.
- <sup>112</sup> Kang, S. K., DeCelles, K. A., Tilcsik, A., & Jun, S. (2016). Whitened Résumés: Race and Self-Presentation in the Labor Market. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 61(3), 469–502.
- <sup>113</sup> Apfelbaum, E. P., Stephens, N. M., & Reagans, R. E. (2016). Beyond one-size-fits-all: Tailoring diversity approaches to the representation of social groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 111(4), 547.
- <sup>114</sup> Dover, T. L., Kaiser, C. R., & Major, B. (2019). Mixed signals: The unintended effects of diversity initiatives. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 14(12), 152-181.
- <sup>115</sup> He, J.C., Agarwal, G., Kang, S. (2022) “Applying Behavioral Insights to Cultivate Diversity and Inclusion” In N. Mazar & D. Soman (Eds.), Behavioral Science in the Wild.
- <sup>116</sup> De Paola, M., & Scoppa, V. (2015). Gender discrimination and evaluators’ gender: evidence from Italian academia. *Economica*, 82(325), 162–188.
- <sup>117</sup> Bagues, M. F., & Esteve-Volart, B. (2010). Can gender parity break the glass ceiling? Evidence from a repeated randomized experiment? *Review of Economic Studies*, 77, 1301-1328.
- <sup>118</sup> Van Arensbergen, P., van der Weijden, I., & van den Besselaar, P. (2013). Academic talent selection in grant review panels. *Researching Scientific Careers*.
- <sup>119</sup> Bagues, M., Sylos-Labini, M., & Zinovyeva, N. (2017). Does the gender composition of scientific committees matter? *American Economic Review*, 107(4), 1207–38.
- <sup>120</sup> Smith, D. G., Turner, C. S., Osei-Kofi, N., & Richards, S. (2004). Interrupting the usual: Successful strategies for hiring diverse faculty. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 75(2), 133-160.
- <sup>121</sup> Babcock, L., Peyser, B., Vesterlund, L., Weingart, L. (2022). [Are You Taking On Too Many Non-Promotable Tasks?](#) Harvard Business Review.
- <sup>122</sup> Heilman, M. E., & Welle, B. (2006). Disadvantaged by Diversity? The Effects of Diversity Goals on Competence Perceptions. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 36(5), 1291–1319.
- <sup>123</sup> Newkirk, P. (2019). *Diversity, Inc.: The Failed Promise of a Billion-Dollar Business*. Bold Type Books, 272 pages.
- <sup>124</sup> Canning, E. A., Muenks, K., Green, D. J., & Murphy, M. C. (2019). STEM faculty who believe ability is fixed have larger racial achievement gaps and inspire less student motivation in their classes. *Science Advances*, 5(2).

- 
- <sup>125</sup> Heslin, P.A., & Vande Walle, D. (2008) Managers' Implicit Assumptions About Personnel. *Association for Psychological Science*, 219-223.
- <sup>126</sup> Of course, the design of the program matters. Simply sponsoring employees (for example, advocating for a protégé) may increase willingness to compete for men but not for women.
- <sup>127</sup> Beech, B. M., Calles-Escandon, J., Hairston, K. G., Langdon, M. S. E., Latham-Sadler, B. A., & Bell, R. A. (2013). Mentoring programs for underrepresented minority faculty in academic medical centers: a systematic review of the literature. *Academic medicine: journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges*, 88(4).
- <sup>128</sup> Lindsay, S., R. Hartman, L., & Fellin, M. (2016). A systematic review of mentorship programs to facilitate transition to post-secondary education and employment for youth and young adults with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 38(14), 1329-1349.
- <sup>129</sup> Egan, T. M., & Rosser, M. H. (2004). Do formal mentoring programs matter?: A longitudinal randomized experimental study of women healthcare workers. In *Proceedings of the 2004 Academy of Human Resource Development Conference* (pp. 226-233).
- <sup>130</sup> Kalev, A., Dobbin, F., & Kelly, E. (2006). Best practices or best guesses? Assessing the efficacy of corporate affirmative action and diversity policies. *American Sociological Review*, 71(4), 589-617.
- <sup>131</sup> Gardiner, M., Tiggemann, M., Kearns, H., & Marshall, K. (2007). Show me the money! An empirical analysis of mentoring outcomes for women in academia. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 26(4), 425-442.
- <sup>132</sup> Buckley, E., Pellicano, E., & Remington, A. (2021). "Knowing That I'm Not Necessarily Alone in My Struggles": UK Autistic Performing Arts Professionals' Experiences of a Mentoring Programme. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 1-20.
- <sup>133</sup> Lai, G. C., Taylor, E. V., Haigh, M. M., & Thompson, S. C. (2018). Factors affecting the retention of indigenous Australians in the health workforce: a systematic review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(5), 914.
- <sup>134</sup> Baldiga N. R., Coffman, K. B. (2018) Laboratory Evidence on the Effects of Sponsorship on the Competitive Preferences of Men and Women. *Management Science*, 64(2):888-901.
- <sup>135</sup> Atewologun, D., Cornish, T., & Tresh, F. (2018). Unconscious bias training: An assessment of the evidence for effectiveness. *Equality and human rights commission research report series*.
- <sup>136</sup> Girod, S., Fassiotto, M., Grewal, D., Ku, M. C., Sriram, N., Nosek, B. A., & Valantine, H. (2016). Reducing implicit gender leadership bias in academic medicine with an educational intervention. *Academic Medicine*, 91(8), 1143-1150.
- <sup>137</sup> Further reading: Leslie, L. M. (2019). Diversity initiative effectiveness: A typological theory of unintended consequences. *Academy of Management Review*, 44(3), 538-563.
- <sup>138</sup> Schmader, T., Dennehy, T. C., & Baron, A. S. (2021). Why Antibias Interventions (Need Not) Fail. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 17(5).

- 
- <sup>139</sup> Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2018). Why doesn't diversity training work? The challenge for industry and academia. *Anthropology Now*, 10(2), 48-55.
- <sup>140</sup> Dobbin, F., Kalev, A., Kelly, E. (2007). Diversity management in corporate America. *Contexts*, 6(4), 21-27.
- <sup>141</sup> Chang, E. H., Milkman, K. L., Gromet, D. M., Rebele, R. W., Massey, C., Duckworth, A. L., & Grant, A. M. (2019). The mixed effects of online diversity training. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(16), 7778-7783.
- <sup>142</sup> Stratton, J., Canales, C., Armas, V., & Miller, N. (2006). Positive stereotyping: Influence tactic for prejudice reduction? *Social Influence*, 1(4), 265-287.
- <sup>143</sup> Duguid, M. M., & Thomas-Hunt, M. C. (2015). Condoning stereotyping? How awareness of stereotyping prevalence impacts expression of stereotypes. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100(2), 343-359.
- <sup>144</sup> Bezrukova, K., Spell, C. S., Perry, J. L., & Jehn, K. A. (2016). A meta-analytical integration of over 40 years of research on diversity training evaluation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 142(11), 1227.
- <sup>145</sup> Leslie, K. F., Sawning, S., Shaw, M. A., Martin, L. J., Simpson, R. C., Stephens, J. E., & Jones, V. F. (2018). Changes in medical student implicit attitudes following a health equity curricular intervention. *Medical Teacher*, 40(4), 372-378.
- <sup>146</sup> Colella, A., & Varma, A. (2001). The impact of subordinate disability on leader-member exchange relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(2), 304-315.
- <sup>147</sup> Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573.
- <sup>148</sup> Rosette, A. S., Koval, C. Z., Ma, A., & Livingston, R. (2016). Race matters for women leaders: Intersectional effects on agentic deficiencies and penalties. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27(3), 429-445.
- <sup>149</sup> Lacerenza, C. N., Reyes, D. L., Marlow, S. L., Joseph, D. L., & Salas, E. (2017). Leadership training design, delivery, and implementation: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(12), 1686.
- <sup>150</sup> Dannels, S. A., Yamagata, H., McDade, S. A., Chuang, Y. C., Gleason, K. A., McLaughlin, J. M., ... & Morahan, P. S. (2008). Evaluating a leadership program: a comparative, longitudinal study to assess the impact of the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program for Women. *Academic Medicine*, 83(5), 488-495.
- <sup>151</sup> **The Behavioural Insights Team** previously developed a guide on "How to increase transparency of progression, pay and reward" for the UK government, available [here](#).
- <sup>152</sup> Castilla, E. J. (2015). Accounting for the gap: A firm study manipulating organizational accountability and transparency in pay decisions. *Organization Science*, 26(2), 311-333.
- <sup>153</sup> Gamage, D. D. K., Kavetsos, G., Mallick, S., & Sevilla, A. (2020). Pay Transparency Intervention and the Gender Pay Gap: Evidence from the UK. Available at SSRN 4153192.

- 
- <sup>154</sup> Bosquet, C., Combes, P., & García-Peñalosa, C. (2018). Gender and promotions: Evidence from academic economists in France. *The Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 121(3), 1020-1053.
- <sup>155</sup> Erkal, N., Gangadharan, L., & Xiao, E. (2021). Leadership selection: Can changing the default break the glass ceiling? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 33(2).
- <sup>156</sup> He, J. C., Kang, S. K., & Lacetera, N. (2021). Opt-out choice framing attenuates gender differences in the decision to compete in the laboratory and in the field. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(42).
- <sup>157</sup> Higgins, M. C. (2000). The more, the merrier? Multiple developmental relationships and work satisfaction. *Journal of Management Development*, 19(4), 277-296.
- <sup>158</sup> Dennissen, M., Benschop, Y., & van den Brink, M. (2019). Diversity networks: networking for equality? *British Journal of Management*, 30(4), 966-980.
- <sup>159</sup> Bierema, L. L. (2005). Women's networks: a career development intervention or impediment? *Human Resource Development International*, 8(2), 207-224.
- <sup>160</sup> Pini, B., Brown, K., & Ryan, C. (2004). Women-only networks as a strategy for change? A case study from local government. *Women in Management Review*, 19(6), 286-292.
- <sup>161</sup> Pedulla, D. S., & Pager, D. (2019). Race and networks in the job search process. *American Sociological Review*, 84(6), 983-1012.
- <sup>162</sup> Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2019). The promise and peril of sexual harassment programs. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(25), 12255-12260.
- <sup>163</sup> Dobbin, F., Schrage, D., & Kalev, A. (2015). Rage against the iron cage: The varied effects of bureaucratic personnel reforms on diversity. *American Sociological Review*, 80(5), 1014-1044.
- <sup>164</sup> Berrey, E., Nelson, RL, & Nielsen, LB (2017). *Rights on trial: How workplace discrimination law perpetuates inequality*. University of Chicago Press.
- <sup>165</sup> Elderman, L. B. (2018). *Working law. Courts, corporations, and symbolic civil rights*. University of Chicago Press.
- <sup>166</sup> Roscigno, V. J. (2007). *The face of discrimination: How race and gender impact work and home lives*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- <sup>167</sup> Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2020). [\*\*Making Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Systems Better\*\*](#). Center for Employment Equity.
- <sup>168</sup> McLaughlin, H., Uggen, C., & Blackstone, A. (2017). The economic and career effects of sexual harassment on working women. *Gender & Society*, 31(3), 333-358.
- <sup>169</sup> Aston, J., Hill, D., Tackey, N. D. (2006). [\*\*The experience of claimants in race discrimination. Employment tribunal cases\*\*](#).
-

- 
- <sup>170</sup> Opie, T., & Roberts, L.M. (2017). Do black lives really matter in the workplace? Restorative justice as a means to reclaim humanity. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 36(8), 707-719.
- <sup>171</sup> Beyer, S. (1990). Gender differences in the accuracy of self-evaluations of performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59(5), 960.
- <sup>172</sup> Smith, J. L., & Huntoon, M. (2014). Women's bragging rights: Overcoming modesty norms to facilitate women's self-promotion. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 38(4), 447-459.
- <sup>173</sup> Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., Walker, L. S., & Woehr, D. J. (2014). Gender and perceptions of leadership effectiveness: A meta-analysis of contextual moderators. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99(6), 1129.
- <sup>174</sup> Bohnet, I., Hauser, O. P., & Kristal, A. (2021). *Supply-and Demand-Side Effects in Performance Appraisals: The Role of Gender and Race*. Harvard Kennedy School, John F. Kennedy School of Government.
- <sup>175</sup> Whitehead, M., Clayton, S., Holland, P., Burstrom, B., Nylen, L., Dahl, E., ... & Uppal, S. (2009). [Helping chronically ill or disabled people into work: what can we learn from international comparative analyses?](#)
- <sup>176</sup> The Behavioural Insights Team (2021). [Flexibility by default: Increasing the advertisement of part-time or job-share options.](#)
- <sup>177</sup> Greenwood, K., Ana, J. (2021). It's a New Era for Mental Health at Work. *Harvard Business Review*. [https://hbr.org/2021/10/its-a-new-era-for-mental-health-at-work.](https://hbr.org/2021/10/its-a-new-era-for-mental-health-at-work)
- <sup>178</sup> Syed, N. (2020). Why leaders should take a 'mental health day'. *Human Resources Director*. [https://www.hcamag.com/ca/specialization/mental-health/why-leaders-should-take-a-mental-health-day/235758.](https://www.hcamag.com/ca/specialization/mental-health/why-leaders-should-take-a-mental-health-day/235758)
- <sup>179</sup> Underwood, K. (2022) Is it time to make flexible hours the norm? *The Globe and Mail*. [https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-is-it-time-to-make-flexible-hours-the-norm/.](https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-is-it-time-to-make-flexible-hours-the-norm/)
- <sup>180</sup> He, J. (2019). [Parental leave: Why we need to talk about fatherhood.](#) *Gender and the Economy*.
- <sup>181</sup> The Behavioural Insights Team. (2021). [How many days should we work from home?](#)
- <sup>182</sup> Department of Work and Pensions (2013). [What works for whom in getting disabled people into work?](#)
- <sup>183</sup> Cheshire, L. (2019). [Reimagining the workplace: disability and inclusive employment.](#)
- <sup>184</sup> Anand, P., & Sevak, P. (2017). The role of workplace accommodations in the employment of people with disabilities. *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*, 6(1), 1-20.
- <sup>185</sup> Kim, E. J., Kim, I., & Kim, M. J. (2020). The impact of workplace disability facilities on job retention wishes among people with physical disabilities in South Korea. *Sustainability*, 12(18), 7489.
- <sup>186</sup> Kandola, P. (2022). [Two in five disabled workers not receiving reasonable adjustments.](#)
- <sup>187</sup> Environics Research (2020). [Validation of Key Findings from the 2019 Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Benchmarking Study of Workplace Accommodations in the Federal Public Service.](#)
-

---

<sup>188</sup> Johansson, E-A. (2010). [The effect of own and spousal parental leave on earnings.](#)  
Institute for Labour Market Policy Evaluation.

<sup>189</sup> The Behavioural Insights Team (2021). [Supporting men to take longer parental leave and work flexibly.](#)