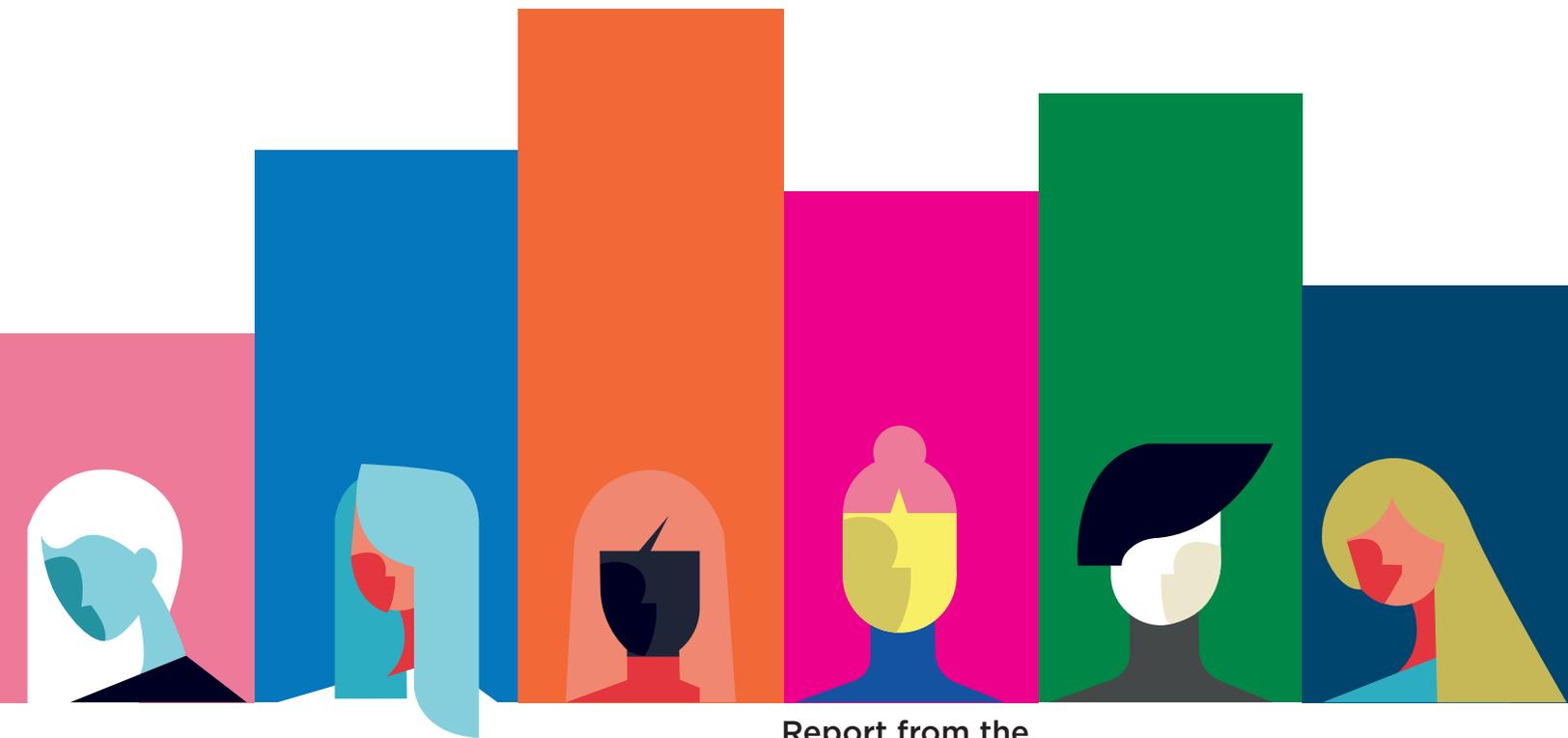


Women *and the* workplace

How employers can
advance equality
and diversity



Report from the
Symposium on Women and the Workplace



Employment and
Social Development Canada

Emploi et
Développement social Canada

Canada



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Women and the Workplace: How employers can advance equality and diversity

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1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides strategies and resources employers can use to advance women's participation in the workplace. It is based on presentations and discussions held during a two-day *Symposium on Women and the Workplace* held at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management in May 2019.



240 Canadian leaders and champions of workplace gender equality and diversity shared best practices to inspire and advance women's participation in the workplace. Presenters and participants came from the public and private sector, unions, academia, industry and human resource associations and civil society organizations.

Although their perspectives varied, there was general agreement on three key components to advancing workplace gender equality and diversity in Canada:

1. Increasing awareness about gender equality and challenging widespread myths.
2. Changing structures instead of people.
3. Adopting an intersectional approach to gender equality in the workplace.

Best practice strategies that emerged during the Symposium centred around three phases of the employment cycle: hiring, retention and career advancement.

Strategies for hiring

- Be more proactive in recruiting diverse candidates and improving accountability (e.g. track the number of accepted resumes and new hires).
- Consider approaches such as “blind” evaluations, skills and knowledge testing, standardized interviews or questions and “de-gendering” job ads.
- Be aware of mixed results related to unconscious bias training and diverse selection panels.

Strategies for employee retention

Focus on changing workplace culture:

- **Be accountable:** Collect data, set targets and establish accountability measures (e.g. financial incentives, collective agreements, etc.).
- **Model change:** Encourage decision-makers to set the tone by modeling work-life balance.
- **Inspire peer-support and allyship:** Offer support groups, online networks and safe spaces for employees to speak about workplace concerns. Promote opportunities for male allyship through sponsorship programs and provide training to individuals to ease difficult conversations about non-inclusive behaviours.
- **Provide diversity training:** Target training for decision-makers (more effective than mandatory workplace training).
- **Prevent gender-based violence and harassment:** Adopt programs and policies that challenge toxic masculinity and patriarchal social norms (e.g. leave and support for employees affected by violence). Engage men to be part of the solution through bystander training and by fostering appropriate behaviours.

Be more flexible to accommodate family responsibilities:

- Discourage “always on, always available” cultures and permit workers to customize work arrangements that fit with their unique life demands.
- Consider short-term contracts, job sharing, reduced hours or longer hours with reduced weeks.

Balance parental leave and domestic responsibilities:

- Deconstruct gendered notions of care through gender-neutral policies (e.g. do not penalize employees for taking time off and encourage men to take parental leave).
- Support employees through “back to work” programs after longer absences.

Support child and elder care:

- Provide subsidized and on-site child / eldercare.
- For non-traditional jobs, consider extended hours and 24/7 on-site or at home care options.

Strategies for career advancement

- Address systemic discrimination caused by the undervaluation of traditional “women’s work” through pay structures that ensure equal pay for work of equal value.
- Be transparent with information on pay practices and reduce wage gaps.
- Encourage women to train as leaders and increase their numbers on management, senior positions and on boards.
- Encourage and support opportunities for sponsorship, mentorship and networking.
- Improve accountability by monitoring the advancement of women through promotion and compensation (e.g. ask managers to justify their hiring and promotion decisions and assign responsibilities for diversity).
- Establish quotas, targets and/or term limits.



2

GENDER EQUALITY IN 2019

The state of gender equality in the Canadian workforce



In her opening keynote address, **Evidence on Workplace Gender Equality**, Dr. Sarah Kaplan stressed that progress toward gender parity in the workforce has stalled in the past twenty years.

This statement was echoed in other sessions. For example, the workshop **Women Matter: Treating Gender Diversity as a Business Priority** (hosted by McKinsey & Company's Sandrine Devillard and

Geneviève Bonin) reported that women remain under-represented in STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) professions (23%), as entrepreneurs (29%) and as political leaders (29%).

In her workshop, **Strategic Leadership on Diversity and Inclusion: Tackling 'Privilege' and 'Unconscious Bias'** Dr. Wendy Cukier noted that only about 20% of corporate board seats are held by women and of these seats, only about 6% are held by racialized women. Participants in the *Women Matter* workshop also heard that women are 30% less likely than men to be promoted to manager from an entry-level position and 60% less likely to be promoted from manager to senior executive. While it's true that many dynamic women have risen to the top of their organizations, relatively few women hold CEO positions; in fact, as Dr. Sarah Kaplan noted, in the United States, there are almost as many male CEOs named "John" as there are women CEOs in total.

In [*Policy Approaches to Address Gender Inequality: What Should you Know for your Workplace?*](#) Gert Zagler and Lori Straznicky (Labour Program, Employment and Social Development Canada) highlighted the ongoing gender wage gap and pointed out that in 2017, Canadian women earned 88.6 cents for every dollar earned by Canadian men. Although it is encouraging to note that [research by McKinsey Global Institute](#) ranked Canada in the top ten of 95 countries, Sandrine Devillard and Geneviève Bonin argue that it would take over 100 years to reach gender parity at the current rate of progress.

The moral case

In her *Address to Symposium Participants*, the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, reflected on her personal experience with women's equality when she ran a homeless shelter. When seeking support for the shelter, she often abandoned moral arguments because she believed people would be more likely to listen to fiscal arguments. Inspired by Dr. Sarah Kaplan's [opening remarks](#), she stated the time had come to return to the moral argument to advance gender equality in the workplace. While great strides have been made to make women full and equal participants in the social, political and economic life of Canada, much work remains to ensure we live up to our country's democratic commitments to fairness, equality and justice. Striving for gender equality is simply the morally right thing to do.

“Gender equality is important simply because inequality is unjust. Everyone should have equal opportunities to live, thrive, to care for their families, to be able to retire comfortably, to be able to work in ways they enjoy and that contribute and to feel fully actualized.”

– Participant

The business case: Macroeconomic benefits

Achieving gender equality benefits both national and global economies. According to a recent report, [*Women Matter: Ten Years of Insights on Gender Diversity*](#) by the McKinsey Global Institute, achieving full gender equality in the workforce could add as much as US\$28 trillion to the global annual GDP by 2025. Here at home, closing the wage gap and increasing female workforce participation could add more than \$150 billion to the Canadian economy by 2026.

Dr. Toni Schmader and Dr. Tara Dennehy, from the University of British Columbia's [*Engendering Success in STEM Consortium*](#) suggested that increasing women's participation in the workforce could alleviate labour shortages. Gert Zagler and Lori Straznicky added that there are also macroeconomic benefits to closing the wage gap such as stimulating the economy by improving the income of female workers and retirees.

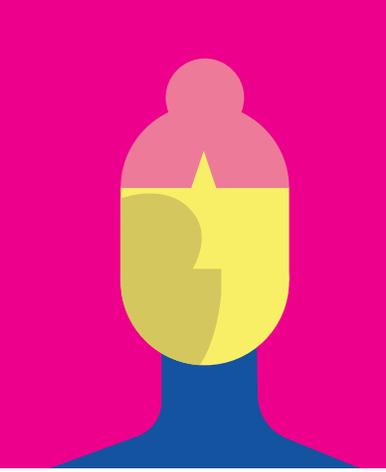
Gender equality is better for businesses

The business world has much to gain by pursuing gender equality. [*Studies*](#) by the McKinsey Global Institute and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce have shown that companies with gender-diverse leadership outperform their competitors. Gender diversity and equality are also key to attracting, developing and retaining talent. For example, companies that focus their search on males unnecessarily shrink their talent pool. In their [*Combating Implicit Bias to Engender Success in STEM*](#) workshop, Dr. Toni Schmader and Dr. Tara Dennehy demonstrated that gender-diverse teams are often more knowledgeable and innovative because they facilitate a variety of perspectives.

Vandana Juneja from [*Catalyst*](#) argued that businesses whose employees reflect the wider population better serve the interests of diverse clients and can potentially expand to new markets. Gert Zagler and Lori Straznicky suggested closing the gender wage gap improves female employees' self-esteem and increases retention rates for women.

There are negative impacts when employers fail to improve workplace gender equality. In her [*closing keynote*](#), Maya Roy from [*YWCA Canada*](#), offered some practical examples of how a lack of gender diversity can negatively impact organizational reputation and Dr. Sarah Kaplan argued that a lack of gender diversity may foster unsafe work environments that lead to costly legal actions.

Achieving gender equality in the workplace will not only benefit the Canadian economy and individual organizations—it is a moral imperative. The next section of this report provides practical ways that Canadian organizations met this goal.



3

BEST PRACTICES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Symposium presenters and participants agreed on three key components of a best practice approach to advance workplace gender equality and diversity in Canada:

1. Increasing awareness of gender equality and challenging widespread myths.
2. Changing structures instead of people.
3. Adopting an intersectional approach to gender equality in the workplace.

Increasing awareness of gender equality and challenging widespread myths

Dr. Sarah Kaplan **opened** the Symposium by highlighting five myths that hinder women's progress in the workforce:

- **Myth 1:** Promoting diversity contravenes meritocracy.
- **Myth 2:** Gender career gaps are a product of "choice."
- **Myth 3:** We must "fix the women."
- **Myth 4:** Controlling bias is about changing individuals.
- **Myth 5:** Focusing on large corporations will change the game.

Apart from the last myth (which overlooks the fact that large corporations provide only about 10% of total employment), each myth obscures the structural and systemic roots of gender inequality. For example, Myth 2, that women "choose" to opt out the career pipeline ignores the reality that most women make this choice within a context where they are expected to carry the bulk of domestic work and elder/childcare and that many workplaces fail to accommodate them to meet these demands.

Changing structures instead of people

The suggestion that we need to change structures rather than people was repeatedly made throughout the Symposium. Though many presenters highlighted the importance of individual behaviour change, it was agreed that structural or systemic changes are also important (e.g. recruitment policies or flexible work arrangements).

“I think that there is still a patriarchal system in place and that we just gotta keep dismantling it. Until the system is gone, we are going to keep having these conversations.”

- Participant

In his workshop, ***Addressing Gender Equity Using the Systemic Discrimination Lens***, Dr. Shaheen Azmi, Director of the **Ontario Human Rights Commission**, stated that systemic discrimination is rooted in policies and procedures as well as in the design of facilities and group patterns of behaviour. Dr. Shaheen Azmi argued that systemic discrimination is difficult to notice because it is widespread and considered to be “the way things are supposed to be.”

Dr. Shaheen Azmi offered a three-part diagnostic model to help organizations recognize systemic discrimination:



1) policies, practices and decision-making processes; 2) organizational culture; and 3) numerical data. Similarly, in the workshop ***Strategic Leadership on Diversity and Inclusion: Tackling ‘Privilege’ and ‘Unconscious’ Bias***,

Dr. Wendy Cukier offered an ecological change model that considers multiple levels of change—individual organizational and societal.

Adopting an intersectional approach to workplace gender equality

“Being an Indigenous women, the driver is changing the narrative; as soon as they find out I am Indigenous I get asked questions as if I represent all Indigenous people; but there are many perspectives beyond my own.”

- Participant

During their workshop, ***How to Think about Gender-based Violence in the Workplace***, Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson explained that intersectional analysis refers to “the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (e.g. racism, sexism and classism) combine, overlap and/or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.” Symposium presenters and participants also stressed the need to consider the varied experiences of women and Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson suggested that an intersectional approach will reveal the disadvantages of various “social identities” (e.g. gender, race, (dis)ability) as well as the privileges enjoyed by dominant groups (e.g. men, white people, affluent people).

Note

The above three areas of focus should be considered when reviewing the subsections below about strategies for hiring, retention and advancement. It should also be noted that Symposium presenters and participants advocated experimentation and innovation and counselled against “one-size-fits-all” solutions.

“We can’t have models where we start with the majority and then trickle down; we must start with the most marginalized so it will trickle up.”

- Participant

Hiring

Hiring practices affect gender equality in the workplace

“We have an implicit tendency to think that people are what we see them do.”

- Participant

Women must overcome many biased processes when applying for jobs. Bias operates implicitly, without our being aware, and it comes in many forms (e.g. affinity bias is our tendency to resonate with people who are like us and confirmation bias is our tendency to favour information that conforms to our pre-existing beliefs).

In their workshop ***Combatting Implicit Bias to Engender Success in STEM***, Dr. Toni Schmader and Tara Dennehy pointed out that employment-related biases develop at a young age when we learn to associate categories of people with specific occupations. Because we see an unequal distribution of women in caregiving roles and occupations, we assume that they are inherently caring and people-oriented and more suited to occupations like nursing. Likewise, because men are overrepresented in leadership roles or in STEM professions, many assume they are predisposed to be leaders, scientists or mechanics.

These biases affect how women are perceived during the hiring process. A 2012 study cited by Dr. Toni Schmader and Dr. Tara Dennehy found that academic faculty members were more likely to judge applicants as competent when their name was male rather than female. Sadly, both men and women share these biases and this further undermines women’s sense that they belong in certain fields. Dr. Toni Schmader and Dr. Tara Dennehy also cited more hopeful findings that today’s children are growing up in a more diverse employment environment and there is growing support for gender-inclusive workplaces.



Workplace equality and diversity are affected by the way organizations hire workers. In ***Battling Bias: How Technology can Level the Playing Field in Hiring***, Kate Glazebrook from **Applied** stated that affinity biases determine which applicants make it through

to the interview stage (e.g. one study showed that applicants whose names or photographs suggested they belong to ethnic or racial minorities were far less likely to receive call backs than applicants with white-sounding names or who appeared to be white). Though most employers rely on resumes to vet applicants, Kate Glazebrook suggested that resumes foster affinity bias and may actually be the least reliable way to screen candidates.

Elisabeth Costa from the [UK Behavioural Insights Team](#) noted that employment ads also impact workplace diversity and their wording impacts women's decision to apply.

A final barrier to gender-diverse hiring practices is evident in male-dominated industries where bias leads most women to shy away from work traditionally seen as belonging to men (e.g. Angela Splinter from [Trucking HR Canada](#) pointed out that only 3% of truck drivers in Canada are women). Jennifer Wright, from the [Mining Industry Human Resources Council](#) added that women are only 16% of the mining industry workforce and few women (around 5%) actually work in mines. Because of this bias, women avoid training and applying for male-dominated jobs. Women may well desire these jobs but they are deterred because they assume they are not welcome.

Strategies to improve gender equality in hiring practices

There are a wide range of creative strategies to improve workplace gender equality through attraction and hiring.

- **Awareness of bias:** Employers who are aware of their biases recruit more diverse candidates. Jennifer Wright noted that the Mining Industry Human Resources Council's [Gender Equity in Mining Works](#) initiative assists employers to become more self-reflective in recruitment practices using a toolbox that offers a step-by-step approach to apply a gender lens when preparing formal policies, processes and procedures. Diverse hiring panels are another way to improve recruitment of women and minorities, though it was noted this action may have mixed results.
- **Accountability for workplace diversity:** Speakers such as Kate Glazebrook argued that leaders must actively recruit diverse candidates and improve accountability by collecting data and using evidence-based hiring approaches.

- **Blind evaluations, skills and knowledge testing as well as standard interviews or questions and “de-gendered” job ads:** Blind evaluations anonymize applications by removing names or other distinguishing criteria, such as educational background and work experience. This simple technique can produce meaningful results (e.g. Dr. Toni Schmader and Dr. Tara Dennehy described a dramatic increase in the percentage of women musicians in the top orchestras in North America when blind auditions were conducted; simply having musicians play behind a curtain reduced longstanding biases against female performers). Elisabeth Costa also noted that tests can be easily anonymized and bias can be reduced by “chunking” applications by question. Evaluators examine responses to each question and rank them.
- **Structured interviews:** Kate Glazebrook and Elisabeth Costa stressed that interviews using standardized set of questions are less biased than free-form interviews. Standardization is achieved by asking the same questions of all candidates in the same format and order, using clear pre-defined criteria to score responses and performance of candidates prior to discussing with other members of the selection committee.
- **Avoid gendered language in job descriptions:** Certain “masculine” words can prevent women from applying for jobs, but the same is not true of the way men respond to “feminine” words. For instance, Ayman Chowdhury, from the [UN Global Compact Network Canada - Gender Equality Leadership in the Canadian Private Sector](#) initiative, spoke about a company that attracted more female applicants when they changed the job posting title “research technician” to “research analyst.” Kate Glazebrook noted that her company [Applied](#) has developed a software tool to identify gendered language in job applications.
- **The number of prerequisites listed on a posting:** Kate Glazebrook shared evidence that men apply to jobs when they meet 60% of the criteria listed, while women are more likely to apply when they meet all or most of the criteria. It is thought that this outcome has less to do with confidence and is more related to women’s tendency to follow rules. Similarly, Paulette Senior, from the [Canadian Women’s Foundation](#), suggested that workplace gender equality might be improved by avoiding credentialism and focusing on skills assessment and qualifications that are more difficult to summarize on a CV, such as emotional maturity.
- **Improving the representation of women in male-dominated sectors:** Angela Splinter noted [Trucking HR Canada’s](#) national initiative [Women with Drive](#) increased women’s employment in trucking by involving many industry players to promote the number of women employed in the field and including an [Inventory of Resources](#)

for the freight transportation industry. While women remain dramatically underrepresented as truck drivers, the industry offers many other positions for women such as dispatchers, managers, IT workers and data analysts.

- **Promoting new opportunities in traditionally male-dominated industries:** Jennifer Wright reported that the mining industry will be hiring about 70,000 people in the next 10 years because of retirement and Kathy Kimpton, President & CEO of [Women Building Futures](#) pointed out that a quarter of a million workers in the trades industry will retire during the next 10 years. To improve gender diversity, Jennifer Wright's organization, the [Mining Industry Human Resources Council](#), offers the [Gender Equality in Mining Works](#) program for employers, which encourages them to consider policies and procedures through a gender lens. Likewise, [Electricity Human Resources Canada](#) (EHRC) has launched the [Leadership Accord for Gender Diversity](#) which encourages senior leaders to promote women's recruitment, retention and advancement in the workplace. EHRC helps Canadian employers, educators, unions and governments apply a gender lens to their processes and procedures to promote gender equality in the workplace through a review process, benchmarking and self-assessment tool.
- **Job training and preparation in the trades: [Women Building Futures](#)** (WBF) supports unemployed or underemployed women find full-time work in the trades. Kathy Kimpton explained that WBF has developed a [program](#) for training female truck drivers which graduated 13 women drivers in its first year.

Overall, Symposium presenters agreed that attracting women to a greater range of employment opportunities and ensuring fairness in evaluation processes will greatly advance gender equality in the workplace.

Retention

Barriers

Hiring is the first step in advancing workplace gender equality. Unfortunately however, retaining female workers continues to be a challenge. In [Women's Empowerment Principles](#), Stephanie Dei and Kristin Haffert noted the top three reasons women in the US leave the workforce: 1. They feel undervalued, 2. They are poorly compensated, and 3. They are unable to maintain work-life balance. These themes resonated in many Symposium discussions about retention.

Retention is especially challenging in male-dominated industries. Kathy Kimpton, CEO and President of [Women Building Futures](#), noted that on average, women entering the trades drop out after three to five years.

There are many factors that affect retention rates, and the following themes stood out at the Symposium.

Unwelcoming and hostile workplace culture

Symposium presenters and participants frequently discussed the barriers of unwelcoming workplace cultures and sexual harassment. In [***How to Think about Gender-based Violence in the Workplace***](#), Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson explained that sexual harassment and gender discrimination can be placed on a continuum of gender-based violence and that these types of acts can result in low morale, decreased productivity and safety concerns. Like overt forms of violence, harassment is a way of exercising power and control.

The presenters argued that sexist jokes may look harmless but they support a system of gender abuse. More overt forms of violence such as physical and sexual assault, are not merely individual acts of cruelty but are based in a system of gender inequality. For this reason, it is imperative to reduce the seemingly minor occurrences that can lead to future violent events.

Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson pointed out that very few people report workplace sexual harassment. Victims hesitate to report these events because they may think the incident was minor, fear repercussions or believe that employers will fail to respond. According to presenters at *Breaking Down Barriers: Increasing the Representation of Women in Traditionally Male Industries*, many women choose to leave their jobs rather than report or continue to endure harassment.

Despite low reporting rates, workplace harassment is not uncommon. Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson pointed to a [***2018 Angus Reid Institute poll***](#) that found that more than one-in-four (28%) of Canadians have been sexually harassed at work. Of these respondents, women reported being more than three times as likely as men to experience sexual harassment at work (43% versus 12%). Using data from the 2016 General Social Survey on Canadians at Work and Home, Statistics Canada's [***Harassment in Canadian Workplaces Report***](#) found that 19% of women and 13% of men reported they had experienced harassment in their workplace during the past year. Of these respondents, women (4%) were more likely to report sexual harassment than men (1%).

Balancing paid work with domestic and care work

Retention of women in the workforce is also impacted by women's difficulties balancing paid work with their domestic and care obligations. Despite a shift in cultural norms that has seen men shoulder more of the burden of domestic work and childcare than they traditionally have in the past, the majority of these duties continue to be carried out by women. In the workshop *Women Matter*, Symposium participants heard that women do 64% of unpaid

care work including both childcare and eldercare. As Nora Spinks, CEO of [The Vanier Institute of the Family](#) explained in her [keynote](#), elder care is already presenting challenges to many Canadian families and will only be intensified by demographic change. The diverse nature of work these days (e.g. precarious work, work with no fixed location and seasonal work) also add to the difficulties of balancing work and family. As a result, many women are forced to leave the workforce or downgrade their career aspirations.

Pregnancy and childbirth also impact retention. According to presenters at the [Women's Empowerment Principles: Putting Women's Economic Empowerment at the Centre of your Business Model workshop](#), 35% of American women don't go back to work after they give birth. Undoubtedly this is due to the lack of parental leave in that country, but unaffordable and inaccessible childcare also continues to be a problem in Canada. As we will see below, improved childcare options and flexible work arrangements would greatly improve the retention of women.

The following section summarizes a range of innovative strategies to improve retention.

Solution: Changing workplace culture

“Corporate culture is the most important driver of women’s confidence and success, twice as important as individual factors.”

- Sandrine Devillard, Senior Partner & Geneviève Bonin, Partner, McKinsey & Company

The importance of inclusive and courageous leadership

Many presenters at the Symposium stressed that cultural change in society and in the workplace fosters diverse and inclusive workplaces and improves retention. Committed and accountable leaders are crucial to bring about cultural change in the workplace. As noted, [Electricity Human Resources Canada](#) (Electricity HR) has created the [Leadership Accord for Gender Diversity](#) that has been signed by leaders from 84 companies. These leaders agreed to conduct a baseline assessment of their organizations' progress on diversity and inclusion and some were surprised at the shortcomings revealed

by the assessment. Electricity HR worked with each organization to act where necessary and leaders agreed to report back to Electricity HR in two years on their progress.

Accountability

“We must stay accountable. If we talk about changing the signs in the bathroom to better represent trans people and nothing happens; we follow up with the bosses and ask them if this has happened yet and when it’s happening. It takes everyone including people from the frontlines, as well as senior management.”

– Participant

The Electricity HR example above illustrates the importance of data collection, target setting and measures that hold leaders accountable. These were key themes heard throughout the Symposium. Ayman Chowdhury stated in [***Driving ‘SDG 5: Gender Equality’ at the Workplace***](#) that a lack of knowledge or misperception of gender balance among leadership is a key progress barrier. Likewise, Sandrine Devillard and Geneviève Bonin from McKinsey & Company argued that “what does not get measured does not get done.”

Presenters frequently advocated for financial incentives for progress



on diversity as a way to ensure accountability. Dr. Sarah Kaplan noted that managers are penalized when they fail to meet financial numbers, but not when they fail to meet diversity targets. Barbara Mason from Scotiabank noted that her organization attaches diversity targets to financial outcomes.

Arlene Dunn, Director of Canadian Affairs for [**Canada’s Building Trades Union**](#),

suggested that collective agreements can be powerful accountability tools. They ensure all employees are treated consistently and provide recourse mechanisms so those who act inappropriately or don’t live up to commitments are taken to task in a transparent way.

Accountability can also involve simply reminding leaders to follow up on their promises. Founder and Managing Director of Toni Marlow Clothing Jalisa Luces-Mendes noted that if a promise is not fulfilled to change the signs on bathrooms to better represent trans people, for example, employees should remind their bosses of their commitment and ask when the change will be made. Jalisa Luces-Mendes added, “We must hold each other accountable.”

Leaders modeling change

Symposium presenters frequently argued that leaders must model change. In *[Engaging Men as Agents of Change](#)*, Andrew Spencer from Hydro One argued that leaders and managers set the tone in workplaces. Male leaders need to model that it is okay to take some downtime or to leave at the end of the day for family obligations. “There is no award,” Andrew Spencer added, “for unused vacation days.”

Brad Black from the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) stated that leaders set the tone by being courageous and calling out non-inclusive behaviours. He clarified that calling out need not be confrontational; people exhibiting such behaviour should be taken aside and informed that it is not acceptable. “This takes real courage,” Brad Black added.

Peer-support and allyship

A more supportive and inclusive workplace culture can be fostered through peer-support and allyship programs. Angela Splinter, CEO of Trucking HR Canada, noted that her organization has developed online networks. *[Women with Drive](#)* provides female truck drivers a way to connect with other female drivers on the road or off work. Drivers have used group chats to share good locations to take showers while on the road, because many facilities do not cater to women. Similarly, in *[Filling the Female Talent Pipeline: How to Support Women in the Advancement of their Careers](#)*, Linda Torry from the Rotman School of Management stressed that retention is aided by providing safe spaces for women to support one another advance their careers and to speak up about concerns.

Dr. Toni Schmader and Dr. Tara Dennehy also spoke about the importance of workplace allyship during the workshop *[Combating Implicit Bias to Engender Success in STEM](#)*. Allyship can take two forms: reactive allyship where allies respond to non-inclusive behaviour (e.g. countering condescending comments) and proactive allyship where allies proactively work to increase inclusion (e.g. sponsoring a woman in your field). Their research shows that male

workplace allies are particularly important because women with more male allies are less likely to feel devalued because of their identity as women and more likely to feel included in a workplace.

Diversity training

Diversity training to change workplace cultures came up frequently however, many presenters were ambivalent about its effectiveness. Elisabeth Costa, Director of the [UK Behavioural Insights Team](#), suggested that training can be effective in raising awareness, but it may not change behaviour. Elisabeth Costa advised organizations to be cautious with mandatory training as it can lead to backlash and resentment. Kate Glazebrook from [Applied](#) agreed, citing research that \$8 billion is spent annually in the US on diversity training, but there's no real evidence that it works.

Targeted training workshops may be more effective. Kathy Kimpton from [Women Building Futures](#), argued that middle managers are the biggest challenge for retention of women. Kathy Kimpton explained that the issue is not that middle managers “don't want to get it,” it's that “no one has explained the issue to them so that they do get it.” Consequently, Women Building Futures offers [various training workshops](#) for middle managers on retention of women in the trades.

Preventing gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace

Many organizations are challenging toxic masculinity and social norms that foster harassment and gender-based violence. Stephanie Dei and Kristin Haffert noted that RioTinto has recently launched a gender-based violence strategy and provides 10 days of leave for employees affected by domestic violence. In [How to Think about Gender-based Violence in the Workplace](#), Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson noted that because men are the main perpetrators of violence and women the main victims, it is crucial to include men as part of the solution. This includes engaging them as leaders and drivers of policies that promote gender equality and prevent discrimination, encouraging them to resist being bystanders and to become proactive in changing gendered norms and advocating that men model appropriate behaviour.

Increasing flexibility to accommodate family responsibilities

In her [*keynote presentation*](#), Nora Spinks from the [*Vanier Institute of the Family*](#) pointed out two key challenges facing working families today: 1. families are made up of diverse structures (e.g. lead parents, co-parents, solo parents) and they need diverse early learning and child care requirements and 2. the diverse nature of modern work challenges the balance of work and family responsibilities. Flexible work arrangements can help meet these demands. While flexibility in the past meant that employees adapted their lives to meet “always on, always available” work demands, modern workers want to customize work arrangements to fit the unique demands of their lives. Today’s workers are also seeking autonomy—the ability to choose how, where and when work is completed.

[*Dr. Sarah Kaplan*](#) advocated that jobs be redesigned, work processes streamlined and the traditional 9-to-5 approach rethought. She also argued that attitudes toward flexibility must be changed. These arrangements should not be seen as a lack of commitment nor as something only women use. Sandrine Devillard and Geneviève Bonin from McKinsey & Company also remarked that men are equally excited about new flexible work arrangements and that women often worry that taking time off will impact upon their career. Scotiabank representative Barbara Mason noted that her organization is looking at ways to create flexible employment through short-term contracts and reduced hours.

In her [*closing keynote*](#), Maya Roy, CEO of [*YWCA Canada*](#), described a job-sharing program her organization has used. The YWCA recruited a team with a range of backgrounds, such as retired professors, women who did not want full-time work and HR professionals. While this practice requires a lot of training, trust and communications, it can combine complementary strengths and facilitate intergenerational learning.

Balancing parental leave and domestic responsibilities

New flexible work arrangements will take some getting used to and so will a culture shift in the home where men take on more domestic responsibilities. As Dr. Sarah Kaplan noted, unfortunately gendered notions of care work persist and many men still forgo parental leave, even when there are top-ups. Jennifer Wright, from the [*Mining Industry Human Resources Council*](#), suggested promoting parental leave for men and changing the language and shaming around parental leave. Leave programs tend to be tailored for women but they should be gender neutral. Linda Torry noted that Natural Resources Canada

is piloting a *Leave Liaison Program* to support women and men on extended leave. She also noted the Rotman School of Management and Initiative for Women in Business, [**Back to Work Program**](#) which prepares women to return to work after an absence of at least 18 months.

Child and elder care

As noted above, the demands of child and elder care are more often met by women and many Symposium presenters and participants spoke of the need for subsidized child and elder care. Several presenters noted small but important initiatives to provide on-site childcare options. Kathy Kimpton stated that her organization, [**Women Building Futures**](#), has been experimenting with establishing a 24/7 daycare facility/resource for non-traditional jobs (i.e. jobs with very flexible schedules). In [**Women's Empowerment Principles: Putting Women's Economic Empowerment at the Centre of your Business Model**](#), Stephanie Dei and Kristin Haffert noted that the company [**Patagonia**](#) implemented on-site childcare services at their distribution site and their headquarters. Patagonia now has a 100% return rate for women following childbirth. Maya Roy said that the Banff YWCA extended morning and evening childcare for kids under eight. This was particularly beneficial for staff working non-traditional hours and helped small employers retain workers.

Whether it is cultural change in the workplace, new flexible work arrangements to improve work-life balance or innovative programs to assist men and women with domestic care responsibilities, a wide range of initiatives are needed to improve women's retention in the workforce.

Advancement

The gender wage gap is a key indicator of women's advancement in the workplace. In [**Policy Approaches to Address Gender Inequality: What Should you Know for your Workplace?**](#), Gert Zagler and Lori Straznicky from the Labour Program, Employment and Social Development Canada, pointed out that in 2017, Canadian women earned on average 88.6 cents for every dollar earned by Canadian men.

Only about one third of this gap can be explained by measurable differences such as education and experience. The rest is not well understood but could include complex factors such as bias and discrimination or underrepresentation

of women in the highest paying jobs and overrepresentation in lower paying occupations. This, combined with a lack of affordable daycare options discourages women from pursuing these positions.

As stated in Section 2 of this report, these pressures cause women to be dramatically underrepresented in workplace leadership positions in all economic sectors.

Barriers

There are widespread and implicit biases against women that cause barriers that prevent them from advancing in the workplace. In her opening [keynote](#), Dr. Sarah Kaplan cited a Harvard University study which suggested that both sexes associate women with family and men with career. This implicit bias affects who we see as leaders and impacts who is promoted.

“Don’t give up because other people are pushing you out”

- Participant]

In [Gender Stereotypes and their Effect on Achieving Workplace Gender Equality: The Design of Everyday Men: A New Lens for Gender Equality Progress](#) Eric Arthrell from [Deloitte](#) explained that the prevalent “always on, always available” work culture (especially in high-status jobs) is another key barrier to women’s advancement. Eric Arthrell noted that some people believe “always on, always available” is prevalent because it’s the best way to do business, but research suggests this isn’t the case. In fact, key variables such as productivity and employee satisfaction decline when scheduled and predictable time off isn’t available. “Always on, always available” is more associated with workplace advancement than competency and following this ethic often means sacrificing other life commitments. Many men are able to pursue status in this way because they rely on the domestic labour of women.



In a separate workshop on treating gender diversity as a business priority, Geneviève Bonin from McKinsey & Company noted that the tug of war between these pressures and societal expectations frequently results in women opting out of leadership roles in favour of domestic responsibilities.

The systemic undervaluing of feminized labour—that is, work often associated with women—is an important barrier to women’s economic advancement. Gert Zagler and Lori Straznicky noted in their workshop [**Policy approaches to address gender inequality: What should you know for your workplace**](#) that jobs such as nursing and care giving can be emotionally stressful and include risk and abuse. Nevertheless, many feminized jobs are systemically undervalued, and this contributes to the gender wage gap.

Tokenism is another barrier to women’s advancement. Minister Patty Hajdu noted that when organizations try to be more reflective of the communities they operate in, they have a tendency to assume that hiring an individual from a particular minority community means that person will act as the representative of the entire community. As a result, organizations may become complacent in their efforts to become diverse and inclusive. More needs to be done to advance women from minority communities.

Solutions

The advancement of women in the workplace will be served by many of the practices reviewed above. Greater job flexibility and improved access to affordable childcare will assist women advance their careers. Women’s advancement will also be promoted by strategies that address pay gaps and tendencies to undervalue women’s leadership capacities. A range of practices that address these challenges is summarized below.

Pay equity measures

Ensuring equal pay for work of equal value is one way to advance women in the workplace. As Lori Straznicky noted in her [**presentation**](#), the Government of Canada’s 2018 [**Pay Equity Act**](#) addresses systemic discrimination from the undervaluation of work traditionally performed by women. The Act applies to federally regulated workplaces and requires employers with ten or more federally regulated employees to take proactive steps to ensure pay equity. All employers with unionized employees, as well as employers with 100 or more employees, will be required to establish a pay equity committee to develop a pay equity plan which must be completed within three years and identify gaps in pay that must be closed by adjusting compensation. A review and update of the plan must occur at least once every five years.

Legislation can be a powerful tool, but as Stephanie Dei and Kristin Haffert noted in their [workshop](#), individual companies like Intuit and Deloitte have also taken additional voluntary actions to ensure that women and men receive equal salaries for equal work. Stephanie Dei and Kristin Haffert note that the Ontario Pay Commission has [free resources](#) to help small and medium enterprises address gender pay gaps. As Lori Straznicky noted, at the federal level, a Pay Equity Commissioner position will be created within the Canadian Human Rights Commission to administer and enforce the new *Act*, assist individuals to understand their rights and obligations and help resolve disputes about pay equity. With the support of a dedicated pay equity unit, the Commissioner will have a variety of tools and mechanisms to do the job, including educational and support materials.

Pay transparency

Experience in other jurisdictions has shown that pay transparency is an effective tool to raise awareness of wage gaps. Gert Zagler explained that publicly sharing information on wage gaps prompts employers to take action. New pay transparency measures announced in the federal *Budget 2018* will provide accessible, online information on wage gaps that affect women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities in federally regulated private sector workplaces subject to the *Employment Equity Act*. This strategy has been successful in the UK, with almost 50% of regulated employers publishing some form of action plan to tackle their wage gap. Elisabeth Costa, Director of the [UK Behavioural Insights Team](#), added that transparency about promotion practices is also effective.

In addition, Dr. Wendy Cukier noted that [Bill C-25](#), requires that federally regulated companies report on the diversity of their boards and senior management according to gender and other employment equity designations (e.g. persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and visible minorities). Canada will become the first country to require such reporting.

Professional development and leadership training

Several presenters spoke about the importance of role models and increased representation of women in leadership positions. Sandrine Devillard and Geneviève Bonin from McKinsey & Company noted that if they do not see female role models in higher-level positions, women are less likely to believe they can advance. Professional development programs can help women achieve these positions. During [Filling the Female Talent Pipeline - How to Support Women in the Advancement of their Careers](#) Linda Torry, from the Rotman School of Management, noted her organization offers a number of these kinds of programs. She explained that one of Rotman's unique offerings is its [Back](#)

[to Work Program](#) which helps women return to the workforce after taking time off, to have children. Caroline Codsí, President and Founder of [La Gouvernance au Féminin](#), stated in the [Experience of Women in Leadership](#) panel that she founded her organization precisely to encourage women to recognize and develop their leadership potential.

Mentorship, networking and support



Many presenters stressed the importance of mentors and allies within and outside of organizations. Arlene Dunn noted that the Building Trades Union has developed the [Build Together Workforce Development Program](#) which includes opportunities for mentorship and effective ally training. Business Project Manager for the [Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business](#) Brittney Sault, stressed that her career started within her community and her Indigenous mentors were crucial in getting her where she is today.

According to Elisabeth Costa, networking programs may have mixed results. While they have increased the representation of white women as managers, they

have not had any real impact for racialized people. Other presenters spoke about the limits of networking and mentorship. Saadia Muzaffar, founder of [TechGirls Canada](#), noted that it is difficult for many women to find time to network when (for example) reliable and affordable childcare is not available. Sandrine Devillard and Geneviève Bonin argued that “women are over mentored but under sponsored” and there is a need for formal sponsorship programs and opportunities.

Providing ongoing support to women was another recurrent theme. Marie Clarke Walker, Secretary-Treasurer of the [Canadian Labour Congress](#), noted the support of influential women and men was key to her career advancement. She also stressed that white women need to use their privilege and support racialized women in the workplace. One of the best ways to be an ally to women of colour is to speak up against injustices in the workplace, even when it might be risky to do so.

Gathering data and improving accountability

The importance of gathering data to measure women's advancement and ensure accountability was a central theme in two lively panels at the Symposium. In the [***Leading Change in Organizations***](#) panel, Arlene Dunn and Paulette Senior, President and CEO of the Canadian Women's Foundation, spoke about the need for hard data on women's advancement and stressed that change is only made visible through solid, disaggregated data. Barbara Mason, Chief Human Resources Officer at Scotiabank, noted that her organization measures various aspects of diversity (e.g. in external hires and promotions) and during the [***Experience of Women in Leadership***](#) panel, Caroline Codsí noted that her organization, [***La Gouvernance au Féminin***](#), has a tool to monitor the advancement of women's promotion and compensation.

Accountability also means enforcing gender and diversity policies—there needs to be action to address non-inclusive behaviour. In the [***Driving 'SDG 5': Gender Equality at the Workplace***](#) workshop on the Symposium's second day, Ayman Chowdhury added that workplace gender equality can be advanced only when leadership corrects discrepancies revealed through data collection (e.g. in pay).

According to Elisabeth Costa, diversity managers or diversity taskforces are effective at improving equality outcomes. These practices allow senior individuals or groups to monitor diversity outcomes and ensure accountability. Hiring managers are more likely to examine their own biases and rationalizations if they are held accountable for their decisions.

Quotas, targets and term limits

Quotas can be powerful tools. In her [***keynote address***](#), Dr. Sarah Kaplan noted that legislated quotas in Quebec have resulted in gender parity in crown corporations. While many jurisdictions are fearful of quotas, once they are in place, quality of work improves and the fear dissipates. Quotas are also used in the building trades, according to Arlene Dunn. Contracts are structured to ensure a certain number of female employees.



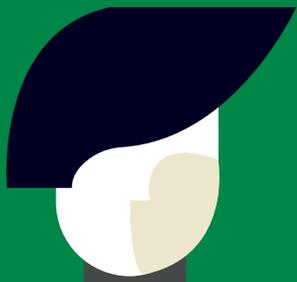
Sandrine Devillard and Geneviève Bonin noted the familiar concern that quotas lead to the hiring of unqualified individuals, but also suggested that some CEOs are strong proponents of quotas. One CEO even said they would not look at applications unless there was an equal number of men and women applicants. Recruiters were told to find more applicants by changing qualifications in job ads if the numbers were not balanced.

Sandrine Devillard and Geneviève Bonin noted the difference between quotas and goals or targets, with the latter being aspirational rather than firm numbers that must be reached. As noted in [***How to Build and Lead Gender-Balanced Organizations: Practical Tools for CEOs and Boards***](#) led by Dr. Beatrix Dart, Ekta Mendhi and Matt Fullbrook, campaigns such as the [***30% Club Canada***](#) asks businesses to voluntarily pledge to increase the number of women in senior roles and on boards. This strategy appears to be working—five years ago, women’s representation on boards in Canada was 15%, today it has risen to 28%.

Presenters also discussed limits on board members’ terms. This strategy is an inversion of quotas in that it seeks to open up positions rather than fill them, and in so doing may diversify an organization’s leadership. There is evidence that the adoption of this policy correlates with an increase in female board members. Presenters also noted that these campaigns are being aided by investor activism and some investors have stated they will not invest in companies that do not have strong gender equality policies.

Concluding remarks on best practices

Participants at the *Women and the Workplace Symposium* heard a wide range of innovative employment gender equity practices. In keeping with the intersectional focus of the Symposium, it is clear that while gender diversity was the principle focus, many of the discussions ranged more widely to consider enhanced workplace diversity in general as both a moral imperative and a necessity for operational success. It is also important to note that many of the practices and tools discussed can improve workplace representation of other designated groups such as persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and members of visible minorities.



4

ENGAGING MEN A KEY STEP IN ADVANCING WOMEN'S EQUALITY

“We need everyone you know... We all have to play our part and so it's just making it comfortable so that the allies can be there working within the whole system.”

- Participant

Throughout the *Symposium on Women and the Workplace*, participants stressed the importance of engaging men to realize workplace gender equality. As Vandana Juneja from [Catalyst](#) noted, because gender equality is often framed as a women's issue, we often overlook the pivotal role men can play as champions of change.

This section examines men's role in creating more gender-diverse and inclusive organizations. It begins by outlining key barriers to change and then summarizes solutions.

Barriers to change

In [Engaging Men as Inclusion Champions](#), Vandana Juneja suggested ignorance, apathy and fear are three primary barriers that inhibit men's participation to promote gender equality.

Ignorance stems from lack of awareness of gender bias and the effects of gender inequality. Less than half of men surveyed by Catalyst thought gender stereotyping was a barrier in the workplace. Moreover, as Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson noted in [How to Think about Gender-based Violence in the Workplace](#), many men don't fully understand what inequality costs them as organizational leaders or as members of families, communities and economies.

Also, as noted above, many men believe that gender equality is a women's issue. Sadly, as Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson echoed, many men think it is not their place to lead gender equality initiatives.

Vandana Juneja stated that fear is a key barrier to engaging men. Many men see change as a zero-sum game and fear that women's advancement will jeopardize their own position or status. Similarly, Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson noted that some men hesitate to act because they are afraid to make mistakes. It is also common for both sexes to feel blamed and shamed when they hear discussions of systemic discrimination and the unearned privilege that men derive. Some men don't act on gender equality because they fear it may meet with disapproval from other men and strain their relationships.

These barriers are the result of individual beliefs that stem from local workplace cultures and wider societal attitudes. Many useful suggestions emerged from the Symposium on how to begin the work of engaging men in cultural change to bring about workplace gender equality.

Solutions

Leadership

Several presenters stressed that organizational change is both a top-down and a bottom-up process and that leaders set the tone in organizations. Since the majority of organizational leaders and managers are men, they play a crucial role in reaffirming or changing workplace norms. Leaders also have the power to set or influence workplace policies that promote diversity and inclusion. However, Vandana Juneja suggested that many male leaders are often unsure how to affect real change.

Defying masculine norms

Masculinity is not a single thing—there are multiple ways to be a man. Unfortunately however, many harmful beliefs, attitudes and behaviours have become the natural expression of maleness. Several presenters spoke about men's tendency to isolate themselves by adopting a rugged individualist posture. Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson noted many men feel they must solve problems on their own and if they reach out, they are weak. In [***Design of Everyday Men***](#), Eric Arthrell noted the "it's all on me" sentiment was a common theme in a recent report by Deloitte on men's relationship to work, family and masculinity entitled: [***The Design of Everyday Men: A New Lens for Gender Equality Progress***](#). The tendency for men to isolate themselves is connected to challenges in creating relationships and reaching out for help.

Eric Arthrell also argued that men often seek status as a means of proving their masculinity. This leads to the adoption of a hypercompetitive, “always on, always available” ethic as a way to climb the corporate ladder and accumulate status. This ultimately creates a work-life imbalance. Eric Arthrell noted that masculinity based on status-seeking is an insecure masculinity—there is always a risk that one can lose status. This may explain why fear of failure was another common theme in the Deloitte research. Because men tend to isolate themselves, many feel they cannot turn to anyone about stress and feelings of being overextended.

The good news is that many men hunger for change. “Show me it’s okay” was a key theme in Deloitte’s research. The men they interviewed look to their leaders to demonstrate how status is achieved and which behaviours are acceptable. Thankfully, there are signs that progressive male leaders are modeling more healthy behaviours. Eric Arthrell related an example of a senior leader who showed vulnerability and tenderness toward his grandchild and signaled to others that it’s okay to be vulnerable in the workplace and to prioritize other areas of your life. In [***Engaging Men as Agents of Change***](#), Brad Black echoed this sentiment saying, “we have to push people to be vulnerable.”

Mentorship and modeling appropriate behaviour

As noted in the section above on retention, men can take effective action by modeling non-sexist and inclusive behaviours. Their actions and speech go a long way to establish welcoming and inclusive workplace cultures. Barb MacQuarrie and Todd Minerson reminded Symposium participants that role modeling is essential to combat gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace. Vandana Juneja said that research suggests role modeling by senior men can create cultural change in organizations. Catalyst research also suggested that the most important factor in determining whether men will be a champion of gender equity in the workplace was an innate sense of fair play. This research also indicates men with women mentors are more aware of gender equity issues and more engaged.

Leadership programs

Leadership programs that engage men on gender equality have also proven effective. Vandana Juneja from Catalyst described her organization’s [***MARC \(Men Advocating Real Change\) Leadership Workshop***](#) which allows both male and female leaders to partner for dialogue about diversity and inclusion.

Participants are encouraged to examine their unconscious biases and their privilege to become more inclusive leaders and promote cultural change in their organization. Brad Black from CIBC and Andrew Spencer from Hydro One noted there have been small, incremental cultural changes in their organizations following participation in MARC.

Discussion throughout the Symposium emphasized that men themselves are not the problem. What needs to change are specific forms of toxic masculinity and the wider system of patriarchy which undermines and undervalues women. The suggestions summarized in this report are important parts of an ongoing movement of cultural change toward gender equality.



5

RESOURCES FOR PROMOTING WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY

“We need to start taking risky steps to make change and I hope that our research can provide us context for understanding what those bold moves could be and how we can make them effective.”

- Participant

Representatives from the public and private sectors, unions, academia, industry and human resources associations and civil society organizations shared many tools and best practices employers can use to advance women’s participation in the workplace.

The following section is an alphabetical list of these organizations, including descriptions and links to resources discussed at the Symposium.

“I have learned about organizations and foundations that are helpful and that I can now introduce into an ecosystem of organizations that can act as allies for one another in the work to make a change in terms of gender equality.”

- Participant



Applied

Applied is a people platform focused on using behavioural and data science to improve hiring decisions. Applied uses (and conducts) research to design products that help teams to hire smarter, fairer and more diversely than ever.

Since its launch in 2016, 70,000 candidates have applied to jobs through the platform, which involves being tested on job-relevant tasks, rather than CVs or pedigree. In the past year, Applied has expanded to serve over 60 organizations including government departments in the UK and abroad, start-ups and large corporations like Hilton, Penguin Random House and GroupM. Applied has helped these organizations to recruit for an array of jobs ranging from product managers to ministerial speechwriters, interns to Chief Marketing Officers.

In 2018, Applied began offering improved interviewing techniques and tools to improve the inclusivity of the language used in job descriptions, among other things.

Business in the Streets

Business in the Streets (BITS) is a youth-driven non-profit organization in Toronto that provides free, hands-on entrepreneurship training, peer mentorship and access to funding to low-resourced young people (18-34) and unrepresented groups (Indigenous and minority populations). BITS has two programs, *YCEO* and *Boot Camp*, both of which run for nine sessions and end with a pitch competition.

Canada's Building Trades Unions

Canada's Building Trades Unions (CBTU) is the national voice of over half a million Canadian construction workers. Its members come from 14 international unions who work in more than 60 different trades and occupations and generate 14 percent of this country's GDP. The union currently has two initiatives that focus on increasing the representation of women in trades:

- ***Office to Advance Women Apprentices*** will identify barriers, track and measure success and work with tradeswomen in coordination with provincial partners, including Manitoba and Saskatchewan's building trades unions and the Atlantic Canada Regional Council of Carpenters, Millwrights and Allied Workers. The CBTU will create ongoing support services for women seeking or already employed in the skilled construction trades. This includes providing career services, employment supports and networking opportunities for tradeswomen. The program will engage and build partnerships with over 75 key stakeholders including employers, unions and training providers to improve participation and success of women in the trades and also develop and maintain a registry database to track services provided and apprenticeship numbers of tradeswomen.
 - ***Build Together*** is a national CBTU program that promotes, supports and mentors women in the skilled construction trades. Initiated in 2013, the program is now a marquee national initiative for CBTU. It has challenged existing career myths and stereotypes in the trades and provided space for a robust conversation on how to engage women in the sector. In support of the project, *Build Together* has created platforms where tradeswomen and industry can network and support the cause.
-

[The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women](#)

The Federation is a non-sectarian, non-profit and non-partisan organization that improves the economic, political, social and employment conditions of working women in Canada. The organization provides training in professional, business and leadership skills and helps members to create networks and lasting friendships. The Federation has been recognized for many projects over the years, including the *Women's Empowerment Principles*, *Equal Pay* awareness campaigns and their anti-human trafficking campaign. BPW Canada also spearheaded the establishment of the [Canadian Coalition to Empower Women](#) to advance gender equality.

[Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business](#)

The Council builds bridges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, businesses and communities through diverse programming, providing tools, training, network building, major business awards and national events. The CCAB hosts a yearly [Indigenous Women in Leadership Award](#).

[Canadian Gender and Good Governance Alliance](#)

The Alliance is a partnership of non-profit organizations focused on research, advocacy and education in governance and gender diversity. The Alliance amplifies and coordinates efforts to achieve gender balance on boards, in executive positions and throughout Canadian organizations. In addition, the Alliance contributes to public policy as an advisor for governments and regulators. Initiatives to support employers include:

- [The CEO Blueprint](#): A “how to” manual for CEOs who recognize the business imperative of building and leading gender-balanced organizations.
- [Directors Playbook](#): Presents a curation of practical tools that organizations can use to achieve gender balance on boards through deliberate action.

Canadian Labour Congress

The Congress is the largest labour organization in Canada and brings together national and international unions, provincial and territorial federations of labour and community-based labour councils to represent more than three million workers across the country. Two recent initiatives that advance workplace gender equality include:

- ***Research on Domestic Violence***: With support from the Government of Canada, Federally Regulated Employers – Transportation and Communications (FETCO) and the Canadian Labour Congress have partnered with the Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children at Western University to provide practical workplace solutions including policies, tools and training materials that delineate employer responsibilities related to domestic violence in the new harassment and violence regulations.
- ***#DoneWaiting***: A social media campaign, including a petition that seeks the support of Canadians to advance women’s safety, equity and economic justice.

Canadian Women’s Foundation

The Foundation is Canada’s public foundation for women and girls. It funds programs across Canada that address four urgent issues: prevention of gender-based violence, women’s economic development, girls’ empowerment and inclusive leadership. The Foundation works toward systemic change by bringing together community organizations to share knowledge and solutions through its hub of grassroots leaders, issue experts, advocates and donors that are raising awareness and keeping up the momentum toward gender equality.

Catalyst

Catalyst is a non-profit organization that works with companies worldwide to accelerate women's progress in the workplace. It offers several practical tools in this regard, including [MARC \(Men Advocating Real Change\)](#). This program empowers men to engage in workplace inclusion through research-based programming and an online community.

Specific Canadian initiatives include the [Catalyst Accord 2022](#) which calls on Canadian boards and CEOs to pledge to accelerate the advancement of women in business and the [Catalyst Canada Honours](#) event, a celebration that recognizes exceptional role models who are accelerating progress for women in the workplace.

Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children



The Centre is committed to the development and application of knowledge for the prevention of violence against women and children through promoting innovation, collaboration and equality. The Centre facilitates the collaboration of diverse individuals, groups and institutions to pursue research questions and training opportunities to understand and prevent violence and abuse. The Centre also produces information and tools.

The Diversity Institute

The Institute researches diversity in the workplace to improve practices in organizations and works with organizations to develop customized strategies, programming and resources to promote new interdisciplinary knowledge and innovative practices about diversity with respect to gender, race, ethnicity, Indigenous peoples, abilities and sexual orientation. The Institute serves clients in many sectors including government, the non-profit sector, the corporate sector and the research community.

The Institute has developed a diversity self-assessment tool to help individuals and organizations assess improve inclusion in their human resources, procurement and management practices, as well as in their value chain.

The Institute has also developed a portal for women entrepreneurs called the **Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub**. The Hub is a national network and accessible digital platform for sharing research, resources and leading strategies. It addresses the needs of diverse women entrepreneurs across regions and sectors by breaking down silos between organizations who serve women entrepreneurs. The Hub will enhance the capacity of women entrepreneurs and organizations who serve them by linking them to resources and best practices from across the country.

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust



Egale works to improve the lives of LGBTQI2S people in Canada and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues. Egale informs public policy, inspires cultural change and promotes human rights and inclusion through research, education and community engagement. Egale offers ***Corporate Equity Training***, which moves organizations toward equitable LGBTQ inclusion with knowledge, systems and training.

Electricity Human Resources Canada

Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC) is a human resources hub for the electricity industry. EHRC provides HR services and advising for employers in the electricity sector throughout Canada. It has developed the **Leadership Accord for Gender Diversity** which asks senior leaders to commit to promoting women's recruitment, retention and advancement in the workplace. The Accord also includes other Canadian employers, educators, unions and governments. EHRC helps these organizations apply a gender lens to its processes to promote gender equality in the workplace.

EHRC has also developed the **Connected Women Mentorship Program**, a national effort to connect women who are already working in technical and/or trades occupations in the electricity sector or are studying to enter the industry with experienced industry professionals. The Program increases career entry and advancement opportunities for professional women, while helping organizations solve pending labour shortages and diversify their workforce.

The **Empowering Futures Program** is a work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunity to better position students to secure employment in their field of study. Program wage subsidies of up to \$7,000 will be available to employers who create new WIL opportunities such as co-ops, internships, field placements, applied projects, capstone projects or case competitions. The aim is to minimize financial barrier of hiring students by covering up to 50% of a student's salary, to a maximum of \$5,000. The program targets students studying in fields related to science, technology, engineering, mathematics and/or business.

Engendering Success in STEM

Engendering Success in STEM (ESS) is a research consortium that tests the efficacy of interventions that harness the power of positive social interactions to mitigate subtle gender bias. The consortium’s goal is to understand and combat various ways that cultural biases prevent inclusive cultures for women and men in STEM. ESS is a mutually beneficial partnership among social scientists, STEM outreach experts and partners in industry and education.

Fédération des femmes du Québec

The Federation is an independent feminist organization that works with others to transform gender relations in all walks of life, to foster women’s autonomy, and promote recognition of women’s contributions to society. The FFQ has developed ***De la théorie à la pratique***, a tool to help identify the obstacles women face and suggest strategies for fostering equality between women and men and between women themselves.

Global Compact Network Canada – **Gender Equality - Leadership in the Canadian Private Sector**

Global Compact Network Canada (GCNC) is the Canadian network for the United Nations Global Compact. GCNC assists Canadian organizations advance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact. Goal 5 of the SDG is “Gender Equality”. GCNC assists businesses with implementing SDG 5 in their own organization. This includes assisting businesses to develop and implement tools to achieve gender equality. SDG 5 has nine targets and 14 indicators and GCNC has developed a guide that translates them into practical suggestions for businesses to help achieve these targets. Businesses report back to GCNC on their progress and GCNC includes their methodology for achieving the targets in a guide to assist other organizations.

How She Hustles

How She Hustles is a network with a digital reach of more than 10,000 women that connect through social media and special events in Toronto to network, inspire and share success tips. Examples of initiatives led by How She Hustles include ***HERstory in Black***, a digital photo series of 150 black women (seen on CBC) and the ***Startup & Slay*** series which creates a space for diverse women to connect and learn from each other about how to be successful entrepreneurs in Canada.

Human Resource Professional Association (HRPA)

HRPA is a regulatory association with 27 chapters across Ontario and more than 23,000 members and students. HRPA regulates, governs and educates HR professionals and students by setting and enforcing the standards of professional HR practice. Areas of work include standards of qualification, professional conduct ethics and expertise. HRPA has developed a three-day workplace diversity and human rights training program which provides best practices and legal frameworks about workplace diversity, equity and human rights. The program also provides expertise on establishing and maintaining a harassment/discrimination-free work environment.

Initiative for Women in Business, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

The Initiative has been strengthening the female talent pipeline since 2008. Together with award-winning faculty and corporate partners, the Initiative supports the career development, decision-making and leadership skills of female professionals through a blend of practical knowledge and academic instruction.

Institute for Gender and the Economy, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

The Institute for Gender and the Economy (GATE) promotes an understanding of gender inequalities and how they can be remedied—by people of all genders—in the world of business and in the economy.

GATE is changing the conversation on gender equality by:

- Investigating the hidden mechanisms that propagate gender equality.
- Funding, translating and disseminating innovative academic research.
- Engaging executives, policy makers and students to create new solutions for achieving equality, advancing careers and creating economic prosperity.

Mining Industry Human Resources Council

The Council works with mining industry, educators and government to identify HR issues. The Council provides many resources on diversity and inclusion, including the ***Gender Equity in Mining Works Initiative*** which includes an e-learning program, an executive development session and written tools to guide mining employers to create more gender-inclusive workplaces.

onBoard Canada

onBoard Canada is a national organization that trains volunteers to become leaders in the non-profit and public sectors and resources to strengthen the capacity of non-profit and public boards across Canada. Their mission is to make non-profit and public sector leadership more effective, inclusive and responsive to communities. My onBoard technology matches qualified candidates to non-profit organizations and public boards and onBoard also offers leadership programs: Inclusive Leadership in Governance, Embedding Diversity and Inclusion into an Organization and Unconscious Bias and the Board.

TechGirls Canada



TechGirls Canada is a hub for Canadian women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). TechGirls is a non-profit organization that conducts research and co-designs solutions to diversity and equity barriers in science and technology sectors by championing women of all abilities, women of colour, LGBTTTQ+, immigrant, refugee and Indigenous women. Some initiatives include:

- ***Change Together: A Diversity Guidebook for Startups and Scaleups***: A do-it-yourself on-ramp to help small-to-medium-sized businesses diversify their workplaces. It documents the key successes and lessons learned over a 12-month collaborative period.
- ***Workfinding & Immigrant Women's Prosperity in STEM***: TGC has embarked on a Canada-wide analysis of the unique challenges visible minority and newcomer women face in finding employment in STEM occupations. This participatory engagement and fact-finding project will fill important knowledge gaps about how to achieve greater diversity and inclusion among the high-paying jobs of tomorrow.

Springtide Resources

Springtide Resources is a non-profit organization that provides training and educational resources to eliminate gender-based violence, especially where it impacts women and children. The organization promotes healthy and equal relationships by engaging with diverse communities in education and training, advocacy and social change, leadership and mentorship and accessibility and inclusion.

Trucking HR Canada

Trucking HR Canada promotes collaboration among stakeholders in the Canadian trucking industry. ***Women with Drive*** is a national project to promote women in freight transportation. The initiative is overseen by a national advisory committee comprised of senior representatives from trucking employers across the country. The Committee also developed an employment action plan for women that includes:

- A national employment strategy
 - Identification of best practices
 - Identification of challenges, including existing barriers
 - Promoting the trucking industry as an industry of choice for women.
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The UK Behavioural Insights Team

The Team improves people's lives and communities by partnering with governments, local authorities, businesses and charities, using simple changes to tackle major policy problems by generating and applying behavioural insights to inform policy, improve public services and deliver results for citizens and society. The Team's work includes improving equality and tackling discrimination. In the UK, they have partnered with the Government Equalities Office and a growing number of employers to improve an understanding of what works to **increase gender equality and reduce the pay gap**.

In the USA they have worked with a number of cities to **increase the diversity of new recruits to police forces**. The Team also is working to reduce gender-based violence worldwide. In Australia, live projects are applying behavioural insights to the **challenge of sexual harassment**.

Vanier Institute of the Family

The Vanier Institute of the Family is a national organization dedicated to understanding the diversity and complexity of families and the reality of family life in Canada. Through publications, research initiatives, presentations and social media, the Institute enhances understanding of how families relate to social, economic, environmental and cultural forces. The Institute has embarked on the **Workplace Supports for Canadian Caregivers Project** to collect workplace practices that provide a variety of flexible work arrangements, leave policies and supports to enable employees to manage their paid work and caregiving responsibilities.

**WE EMPOWER
Programme of the
European Union,
UN Women and
International
Labour
Organization**

WE EMPOWER launched in 2018 with UN WOMEN, the European Union and the International Labour Organization. WE EMPOWER advances gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the public and private sectors in G7 countries. WE EMPOWER's main platform for action is the **Women's Empowerment Principles**. The Women's Empowerment Principles were created by UN Women and UN Global Compact in 2010 and offer guidance to businesses on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community. Over 2,000 companies globally have signed onto the Women's Empowerment principles. Signatories are becoming role models for attracting talent, entering new markets, serving their communities, while measurable improving the bottom line.

**Women
Building
Futures (WBF)**

WBF prepares women for prosperous careers in industries where they have been underrepresented. These careers lead to economic freedom, personal confidence and growth that are transformational for women, their families and their communities. WBF has experience recruiting and ensuring career success for women within these industries at a employment rate of 90 per cent. WBF offers training programs to both **employees** and **employers**, including the **Employer of Choice Network**.

YMCA—Greater Toronto

The YMCA delivers childcare, health and fitness, gambling awareness and substance abuse programs and offers immigration services and language assessments for newcomers. The YMCA has social and inclusiveness committees that organize events and work to support YMCA staff. The YMCA also provides staff training to address marginalized groups such LGBTQ and women.

Examples of specific employment programs offered include:

- **Employment Services:** Assessment of skills and experience, information about different occupations, local labour market, employment and training opportunities, referral to other community services and support, support with job search strategies including resume, cover letter and interview preparation, etc.
- **Youth Job Connection:** Serves youth aged 15 to 29 who experience multiple and/or complex barriers to employment by providing more intensive supports beyond traditional job search and placement opportunities.
- **Skills Development for Youth Program:** For youth between 15 and 30 years of age and looking for a job who need assistance with resume writing, practicing interview skills or job searching. Includes FIRST AID/CPR, WHMIS and SMART SERVE certifications. Four weeks of paid workshops and eight weeks of paid job placement.
- **Newcomer Youth leadership Development:** Helps newcomer youth have a positive settlement experience and become engaged members of the community. NYLD offers an environment to meet new people, build new skills and get involved.
- **Career Planning and Development Services:** Offers assessment tools and counselling to help build self-understanding and guidance in life and career change.

YWCA

YWCA Canada includes 32 member associations whose programs and services create change for one million women, girls and their families. Annually, YWCAs invest over \$230 million to support 330,000 women and girls, in 300 communities across Canada. YWCA Canada strives to strengthen women and girls' equality, allowing them to see themselves as empowered and engaged.

YWCA Toronto

Helps women and girls flee violence, secure housing, find jobs, establish their voices, enhance skills and develop confidence. YWCA Toronto helps independent contractors, small and medium sized businesses to hire qualified candidates and train existing employees by:

- Posting job opportunities on a free online job board.
 - Accessing financial incentives to offset staff requirement and on-the-job training.
 - Cutting down on advertising costs for available positions.
 - Matching positions and workplace requirements to candidate's skills, capabilities, interests and experience.
 - Connecting to a large pool of candidates at job fairs.
 - Gaining free exposure with industry tours while informing participants of the job opportunities in your industry.
 - Utilizing YWCA's resource centre to interview candidates.
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