

# IMPLEMENTING WOMEN-FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Development programs support women in building the skills and capabilities to thrive and contribute to a range of roles in mining – including skilled trades, technical occupations and senior management.

## Why implement women-focused development supports?

Development supports can help to achieve a more inclusive workplace by helping to:

- Build a more robust pipeline of women talent – including in roles where they are traditionally underrepresented.
- Address common barriers for women in the workplace.
- Support individuals to build their readiness for future roles.
- Improve retention.
- Attract more – and higher quality – talented women.

## Types of supports

Women-focused development strategies can range from training a group of women to work as heavy equipment operators, to individualized mentoring for women seeking senior leadership positions. Programs can be designed and/or supported in-house or through an external organization. Rather than initiating something new, it can be more effective to collaborate with one or more of the many programs in place throughout the country.<sup>1</sup> Some development approaches to meet your organization's priorities could include:

### SAMPLE ACTIVITIES<sup>2</sup>

#### Career awareness

- GOAL** To build awareness among women job seekers of opportunities. For a work site, the focus would be on women in the local region. For the industry, a focus could be on attracting women to a particular occupation.
- Programs about mining-related occupations for school-aged young women, and their parents and educators
  - Pre-employment readiness training

<sup>1</sup> See the Women in Mining Canada report, *Welcoming to Women: An Action Plan for Canada's Mining Employers*.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2013). *Women in male-dominated industries: A toolkit of strategies*; T.W. Fitzsimmons & V.J. Callan (2015). *Filling the Pool: A landmark report to achieve gender equality in Western Australia*. Perth: The Committee for Perth; Meredith Hellicar (2013). *Increasing the Number of Women in Senior Executive Positions: Improving Recruitment, Selection and Retention Practices*. Business Council of Australia.

<b>Career management</b>	<p><b>GOAL</b> To build skills on-the-job among women looking to get into a new role (including non-traditional) or advance to management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary assignments into (or out of) operations roles, job rotation, stretch assignments, involvement in high-profile projects and international opportunities</li> <li>• Career awareness through mentoring and networking, job shadowing, information sessions or cross-functional projects</li> <li>• Career mapping sessions to broaden the view of what a career is, and provide information on the different paths available and how to get there</li> <li>• Encouraging women to volunteer for programs with community partners to build leadership skills – such as mentoring youth, immigrants or university students</li> </ul>
<b>Skill-building programs</b>	<p><b>GOAL</b> To build skills through a structured program for women looking to advance to management, or re-training for those interested in a non-traditional role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing education for both personal and professional skills – with topics as diverse as mental health, to relationship management to conflict negotiation</li> <li>• Leadership education/management development</li> </ul>
<b>Coaching</b>	<p><b>GOAL</b> To build an individual's capacity to perform in a particular situation, or manage a certain issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted guidance often focused on solving a specific issue, or developing particular soft-skills – e.g. active listening, presentation and communication</li> </ul>
<b>Networking</b>	<p><b>GOAL</b> To provide access to career-related social support to address isolation, build confidence and networking skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With senior leaders, influencers and/or peers in the company – including men</li> <li>• Through cross-functional assignments/multi-departmental projects, events and roundtables</li> <li>• With other women in mining – inside the company or elsewhere in the industry</li> <li>• Online resources and support, such as Facebook, MeetUp or LinkedIn groups within mining and minerals</li> </ul>
<b>Mentorship</b>	<p><b>GOAL</b> To facilitate knowledge-transfer to build skills and productivity, and provide career guidance for individual employees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one mentoring program for a defined period – including mentoring for women, and reverse mentoring for senior men by junior women</li> <li>• Mentoring circles, where one or two senior people mentor a group of junior women</li> <li>• Targeted events with “speed mentoring” or “group mentoring” where women have an opportunity to seek advice from more senior leaders (women and men), more experienced women in their own occupational field, and/or workers in other mining occupations that might interest them</li> </ul>
<b>Sponsorship</b>	<p><b>GOAL</b> To facilitate exposure to high-visibility assignments, promotions or jobs for senior leadership positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging influential senior leaders to actively sponsor high potential women, ensuring the women gain access to stretch assignments or other experience in areas where they have a developmental needTips for implementing supports</li> </ul>

## Tips for implementing supports

To increase the effectiveness and sustainability of development initiatives, consider the following good practices.

### Design and content

Look to have an initiative that:

- Complements, not duplicates, existing development options
- Helps women bridge some of the gaps in terms of any lack of access to informal mentoring and sponsorship networks
- Equips women with strategies to adapt to be successful in the culture, such as being aware of gender biases and knowing how to address them
- Has goals that are explicitly linked to your business case for gender inclusion
- Goes beyond classroom training to include on-the-job learning, coaching and mentoring
- Align the development program to other management practices such as employee engagement, performance reviews, career and promotion discussions, project team assignments and succession management.
- Actively involve senior leaders – including senior women – as role models and to reinforce the development of women as a priority.
- Give inclusive access by providing development in different ways, in various locations, and at times that accommodate those working outside normal hours or in field locations.
- Be cognizant of the demands that added learning & development activities (stretch assignments, training programs, mentoring, etc.) can place on a participating individual's time, possibly leading to new work-life challenges.

### Identifying participants/opportunities

- Review the nomination processes for all talent development and leadership programs to ensure they are truly gender-inclusive and as free as possible of unintended barriers. Question any lists that do not have a reasonable proportion of women. Encourage talented women to participate. Track the proportions of men and women participants.
- Support the development of not only high potential women or those in management, but women across the organization – this is exemplified through Goldcorp's Creating Choices Program.
- Focus on accelerating women's development early in their career to prepare high-potential individuals, and facilitate succession planning and knowledge-transfer – particularly in operations and line roles<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> McKinsey (2012). *Women Matter 2012: Making the Breakthrough*; McKinsey (2008). *Women Matter 2: Female leadership, a competitive edge for the future*.

## Communications tips for tough questions<sup>4</sup>

- Development strategies for women are investments. Be prepared to address myths and misconceptions that often arise about career development for women. Some of these include:

MYTHS	CHANGING THE CONVERSATION
<b>"Women are not as interested in their careers"</b>	<b>WHAT HAPPENS:</b> Women can appear less proactive than men in managing their career and more reluctant to ask for a role – even when equally or more capable of doing it. <b>WHY:</b> Women often receive a less positive response than men when they adopt the same career advancement strategies. <b>WHAT TO DO:</b> Provide education around biases and how to adapt interview questions and communication styles to get to the information needed.
<b>"Women are not interested in jobs in operations"</b>	<b>WHAT HAPPENS:</b> Women may gravitate early in their career to challenging roles in corporate or administrative functions rather than revenue-generating or operational roles. <b>WHY:</b> Women are often discouraged from pursuing work in traditionally-male occupations. They might under-estimate the importance of gaining experience in the core functions of the business. <b>WHAT TO DO:</b> Women can benefit from mentoring by a more senior colleague to identify possible paths to help reach goals.
<b>"She is not confident enough in her abilities"</b>	<b>WHAT HAPPENS:</b> Women's résumés and interview responses may be more likely than men's to be realistic about abilities, underplay successes, and ascribe successes to their team or luck. <b>WHY:</b> Women often present a balanced picture of themselves, and acknowledge contributions of others. Women also sometimes are conscious of any gaps in their skills, feeling that they need to be over-qualified in order to succeed in a male-dominated environment. <b>WHAT TO DO:</b> Coaching can assist women to prepare for an interview; and training for interviewers can help them be aware of biases.
<b>"She does not have the right style, fit or chemistry for this role"</b>	<b>WHAT HAPPENS:</b> Others in the workplace often have expectations about how women, leaders, and women leaders "should" behave. Women may come across differently, as atypical leaders. <b>WHY:</b> Traditional assumptions about leadership are often gendered – based on experience with male leadership models. Due to gender stereotypes, women often face a "double-bind" which penalizes them for exhibiting leadership behaviours that are both "too masculine" and "too feminine". <b>WHAT TO DO:</b> Challenge implicit assumptions and explore how people might "get results differently". Leaders involved in hiring can gain more comfort with people who have different styles through networking, reverse mentoring and training.
<b>"She lacks the required experience."</b>	<b>WHAT HAPPENS:</b> Women might lack the direct experience that has been specified as required for the role. <b>WHY:</b> Women may have had a non-traditional career path, gaining skills in alternative ways. Interviewers are more likely to judge men on the basis of their potential, and are less comfortable doing so for women – as a result, they might discount women's transferable skills. <b>WHAT TO DO:</b> Review experience requirements and identify alternative ways that the required skills can be acquired.

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Meredith Hellicar (2013). *Increasing the Number of Women in Senior Executive Positions: Improving Recruitment, Selection and Retention Practices*. Business Council of Australia; and KPMG (2014). *Cracking the Code*. KPMG International.

<p><b>“Women are less willing to travel or take on remote or international assignments.”</b></p>	<p><b>WHAT HAPPENS:</b> Women are often assumed to be less willing to undertake roles that require travel or FIFO assignments, and to prefer roles with more work-life balance. <b>WHY:</b> Women are not always judged as individuals; evidence shows that women are no more likely than men to turn down an important assignment. <b>WHAT TO DO:</b> Challenge assumptions. Consider alternative assignments that allow men and women with mobility restrictions to gain valuable experience. Career planning discussions should clarify each individual's career plans.</p>
<p><b>“This is unfair to men.”</b></p>	<p><b>WHAT HAPPENS:</b> People who are not familiar with gender inclusion initiatives sometimes think that women will receive preferential treatment or that unqualified women will be promoted. <b>WHY:</b> Many people are unaware of the subtle systemic biases that have been operating in their organization and in the mining industry. <b>WHAT TO DO:</b> Ensure that the communications about the initiative are clear. Reassure people that there will continue to be career development opportunities for qualified people – men and women – and back it up with data, if possible. Reinforce the business case for having a more inclusive and gender-balanced workplace.</p>

### Support and follow-up

- Create a supportive work environment for women to take on challenging roles and apply their new skills. Gender inclusion awareness is a critical foundation, for managers to be skilled coaches and mentors for women, and for colleagues and other employees to have the skills to create a welcoming and inclusive workplace.
- Create a safe space for learning, by encouraging women to build communities with others in their position to discuss sensitive topics such as bias or challenges faced, and emotionally support one another's learning.
- Hold senior leaders and managers accountable – e.g. in meeting development milestones laid out for their successors/women they sponsor or mentor.
- Monitor advancement and fall-offs of women's participation in development, and take action as needed.

### Funding an investment in women's development

*Development does not have to be costly. Most learning occurs through taking on a challenging job assignment or perhaps a leadership role in the industry. For other types of development such as mentoring and courses, there are many cost-effective approaches available including:*

- Industry and women's business/professional associations – e.g. Women in Engineering (Engineers Canada and other provincial engineering bodies), Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT), Women in Capital Markets
- Women-focused agencies, such as BC's Industry Training Authority's Women in Trades program
- MiHR – Certification and training programs, and many other resources to recognize and build capacities, ranging from technical skills to gender inclusion awareness



- WIM Canada branch initiatives – such as WIM Northern Ontario's Elevate Mentoring Program, and branch monthly lunches
- Local colleges that offer trades programs for women – such as Camosun College's Women in Trades Training initiative

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Name	About
<b>WIM Chapter initiatives</b>	<p><i>Mine Your Potential (Women in Mining/Women in Nuclear SK):</i> An annual event to facilitate networking, and professional development.</p> <p><i>WIM PDAC Networking Reception:</i> A networking reception designed to bring together industry leaders, academia, employers, students and job seekers. This is an opportunity to meet Women in Mining (WIM) Canada and the many WIM branches that serve the global mining community.</p> <p><i>Elevate mentoring program (WIM Northern Ontario):</i> Provides women with the resources, education, networking and the support necessary to make helpful career choices and create industry change.</p>
<b>Other mining association programs</b>	<p><i>MiHR – Mining Essentials:</i> A pre-employment training program for Aboriginal peoples who are interested in exploring their career options in mining.</p> <p><i>Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum (CIM) – Online Mentoring Program:</i> Helps CIM members with their career growth and development by strategically matching those who are looking for additional knowledge or advice with suitable mentors.</p> <p><i>International Women in Mining – Women on Boards:</i> A webinar series that aims to build the capacity of – and access to – women mining executives and female professionals for Board positions.</p> <p><i>Go Eng Girl:</i> An opportunity for girls in grades 7-10 and one parent/guardian to visit their local university campus and learn from women professionals, academics and students about engineering. Runs in various universities across Canada.</p>
<b>Networking opportunities</b>	<p><i>Lean In Circles:</i> Small groups who meet regularly to learn and grow together. <a href="http://leanincircles.org/">http://leanincircles.org/</a></p> <p><i>List of upcoming mining events at mihr.ca for networking and development opportunities:</i> <a href="http://www.mihr.ca/en/news/UpcomingEvents.asp">http://www.mihr.ca/en/news/UpcomingEvents.asp</a></p>

<b>Leadership programs</b>	<i>The Minerva Foundation Leadership programs:</i> For young professional women who are looking for mentorship, support, and making connections.
<b>Trades and technical</b>	<i>Women Building Futures:</i> Goes beyond technical skills for construction or trades to also focus on readiness-building – e.g. what to expect in camp life, how to adapt to shift work and communications skills for various situations. <i>Aboriginal Women in Mining:</i> Helps women to prepare for the lifestyle changes required for working in mining. Includes readiness and on-the-job training. <i>Women in Resource Development Corporation (WRDC):</i> A non-profit organization committed to increasing women's participation in trades and technology. With private and public funding, WRDC offers a variety of programs and services to address challenges surrounding the attraction, recruitment, retention, and advancement of women in STEM and trades.