

GENDER CHAMPIONS IN ACTION

A Gender Champion is a woman or man who is committed to achieving gender inclusion in the workplace. He or she leads by example through concrete actions that are designed to create genuine change both in workplace culture and programming in their organizations.¹

Key Roles and Actions

A Champion demonstrates commitment and supports progress towards gender inclusion through constant communication and very visible actions.

ACTIONS ¹	
Advocate for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate often and consistently about gender inclusion and its business benefits in mining. Be a spokesperson both internally and externally. • Create your own compelling – and real – stories that align to your group's strategy and values. Each time a story is told, the case for a gender-inclusive workplace gets stronger and more people commit to it. • Actively apply gender-inclusive staffing practices. Build a top team with a critical mass of women. Challenge industry stakeholders to be inclusive in their leadership teams and boards. Demand inclusive sourcing practices from executive search firms. Challenge key hiring and promotion decisions throughout your organization to ensure women were considered. • Prompt candid and challenging conversations among your leadership team. Discuss topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » How are women progressing through our stages of recruitment and career advancement? » What skills are we helping women build? » Do we provide sponsors to develop talented women? » Are we uncovering and addressing our own unconscious bias? » Are our policies and practices helping with gender inclusion, or are they maintaining unintended barriers? • Ask universities, colleges, trades schools and employment organizations what they are doing to encourage more women in the pipeline for mining occupations. • Work with industry associations to raise the visibility of women leaders in their publications and events.

¹ Mining Industry Human Resources Council (2016). *Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Works Toolbox*. P. 6.

² 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; Elisabeth Kelan (2015). *Linchpin - Men, Middle Managers and Gender Inclusive Leadership*. Cranfield International Centre For Women Leaders. Cranfield University.

Coach and Develop

- Draw attention to unintended bias – for example, in concepts of leadership potential or discussions about promotions – and challenge gendered language and assumptions.
- Sponsor talented individual women. Encourage them to take developmental assignments, move into operational positions, apply for promotion or step into leadership roles in associations.
- Talk candidly with your colleagues about gender inclusion and support them in becoming champions too. Use a well-paced series of initiatives to find opportunities to coach and develop managers who can be champions at other levels of the organization. For example, ask departments or work sites to pilot an activity and discuss their learnings with you and colleagues. Change will not happen overnight – be prepared for a marathon, not a sprint. Be a visible role model for inclusive behaviour. Make a habit of being deliberately inclusive of women in meetings and in decision-making. Celebrate women's performance and give women credit.

Manage any Resistance

- Listen – and respond – to any resistance; consider it as important input. Be prepared with ideas for addressing concerns but without shutting down the dialogue.
- Openly address concerns associated with developing gender-inclusive practices. Understand common myths and misconceptions and be prepared with responses. For example, clarify that gender inclusion supports – and does not undermine – merit in hiring and promotion decisions.
- Be explicit about your expectations. Set clear targets for your initiative – actions to be implemented, practices to be changed, and business results to be achieved. Set and publicize a timeline for reaching your gender inclusion goals.
- Show the value of gender inclusion initiatives by highlighting successes. Encourage the submission of “success stories” of how gender inclusion made a difference, and share them.
- Identify managers and work units who “get it right” and reward them – publicly.
- Clearly communicate behavioural expectations for creating an inclusive workplace – and hold people accountable, in the same way that they are held accountable for other important business results. Hold those accountable who demonstrate unacceptable mindsets, behaviours or outcomes.
- Be prepared to learn from trial and error. Encourage leaders to be candid about their own experiences of challenges. Consistently convey the message that “bumps in the road” are part of the process – but worth addressing and not a reason to give up.
- Focus primarily on those who are neutral or wavering on gender inclusion – work to convince them of the need for the change and the value of getting on board.

Get Involved

- Make a commitment to your board or manager. Establish metrics and follow up. Create a network of champions who can support and extend your efforts.
- Pick one or two key strategic initiatives for your personal involvement. Throw your weight behind it. Continually question, challenge and call for action on a small number of specific issues.
- Demonstrate your own ability to have a fulfilling life outside of your work commitments.

- Hold yourself accountable for championing and driving the issue of gender inclusion in the workplace. Set time apart each day to reflect on how you led and who was included – and excluded – in that process. Seek out feedback from your team, and other senior leaders, on what you've done well and alternatives to use to practice more inclusive leadership.
- Take a long-term strategic perspective on the challenge of culture change, rather than settle for a "quick fix".

Tips for Supporting a Gender Champion

Often a Gender Champion benefits from a trusted advisor – perhaps a senior woman leader, a more junior woman professional, a Human Resources professional, or a line manager – who can provide honest feedback, challenge behaviour in a constructive way, and prompt candid dialogue.

ACTIONS	
The Champion's Trusted Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work hard to create a relationship founded on trust. Clarify expectations about your support and agree on any boundaries. For example, explicitly ask if the Champion is open to receiving feedback about his or her own behaviour before you start to offer it. • Refine your own awareness of subtle biases, systemic barriers and micro-inequities. Become an astute observer of behaviour. • Sharpen your skills at giving feedback that is "totally kind and totally honest". • Prepare the Champion for the possibility that he or she will have to address resistance directly, even with trusted colleagues or direct reports. • Keep "your ear to the ground" – create your own feedback loop in the organization so that you can give the Champion fresh insights. • Be prepared to problem-solve and challenge the Champion if his or her level of involvement slips due to other priorities or flagging enthusiasm. Maintain a focus on the importance of the intended benefits. • Use the self-evaluation questions (above) as a basis for regular check-ins with the Champion.

Troubleshooting issues³

Concern	Possible action
New manager or executive isn't a supporter	Ensure business case is sound and fact-based; show how it links to the new executive's priorities. Partner with the new executive's trusted advisers to influence him or her.
Lots of talk, no action	Get some "quick wins" Create practical action plans and defined accountabilities to take first steps that will be likely to show positive results quickly.
Too many initiatives, too little benefit	Manage the sequence and pace of activities, set priorities and only start initiatives that can be completed within reasonable time frames.

Content adapted from: Chief Executive Women (CEW) (2013 - third edition); The CEW Gender Diversity Kit: For Attracting and Retaining Female Talent. PP 66; Jeanine Prime and Corinne A. Moss-Racusin (2009). Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives: What Change Agents Need To Know. Catalyst.

Concerns and resistance	Clearly communicate the business case for change – at the level of worksites as well as for the company and the industry. Be prepared with alternative perspectives to common myths and misconceptions. Be willing to engage in a candid dialogue.
Women avoid supporting the initiatives for fear of being “labelled”	Focus on the business case and share facts. Have champions reach out directly to talented women to encourage their participation. Be sure to capture and communicate the benefits achieved from early actions.
“Flavour of the month” program, enthusiasm flags over time or in tough times	Communicate the link between today's actions and future benefits. Have a clear plan, with accountabilities, that shows how results will build over time. Measure progress and celebrate wins. Engage a few influential champions even more actively. Show that other worksites or companies or industries are keeping up the momentum.
Difficult to document the business case because data are not readily available	Choose one issue at a time to explore in depth – and use a variety of information. See the other tools for suggestions of metrics and useful information that might be available.


Walking the Talk¹

The following self-evaluation questions can help a Gender Champion assess how s/he is doing in relation to key aspects of the role, and identify any gaps to be addressed.

		NEED TO ADDRESS (1: LOW; 2: MEDIUM; 3: HIGH PRIORITY)
AWARENESS	#	NOTES
How truly knowledgeable am I about the barriers faced by women within the mining industry, and in my organization?		
How able am I to notice the subtle systemic biases that might exist in our practices or in the day-to-day interactions I have at work?		
How comfortable are the people around me to “call me out” on my own behaviour and biases?		
COMMUNICATION	#	NOTES
How integrated are gender inclusion objectives with our organizational strategy and values? Am I clear enough with others about how gender inclusion supports our success as a company and as an industry?		
How often and how widely do I talk about gender inclusion within mining as a priority – during all phases of the industry's economic cycle?		
How do I talk about what we are learning, our initiatives, actions and outcomes?		
How much time do I spend with senior and emerging women leaders in my organization, in our suppliers, or across the industry? How well do I understand their perspectives and priorities?		

How do I respond when someone points out a subtle barrier to women's full participation in mining?		
How actively involved do I get in initiatives that will attract young women into mining careers?		
ACCOUNTABILITY	#	NOTES
How clear is my team about our gender inclusion expectations and level of priority?		
How transparent is my team (and our search firms) about the selection criteria for senior roles?		
How clear are standards of acceptable and desired behaviours? How consistent are the consequences when standards are not met?		
How do I acknowledge people with a track record of inclusive leadership?		
ROLE MODELING	#	NOTES
How visibly and regularly do I support and role-model being able to balance work and personal life?		
How comfortable am I with addressing my own unconscious biases about men and women and gender roles in mining?		
What signal does the gender composition of my top team send to my organization, to the rest of the industry, and to career seekers?		
MEASUREMENT	#	NOTES
Compared to other business priorities, how robust is our process for monitoring our progress on gender inclusion?		
Have I set clear gender balance targets for my organization and team? What happens when targets are achieved or exceeded? What happens when they are not?		
How integrated are discussions about gender balance into the performance appraisals of my people?		
How am I held to account for gender inclusion objectives?		

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	
Name	About
Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) – <i>Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Works eLearning Suite</i> http://www.mihhr.ca	The <i>Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Works – Learn to Make a Difference</i> e-learning program supports change agents in applying the GEM Works Toolbox to update policies and practices to identify and remove unintended barriers. Mining
Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) workshops – Being a Gender Champion and Building Momentum on your Journey towards Gender Equity http://www.mihhr.ca	The <i>GEM Works Executive Development Sessions</i> are two half-day, interactive programs that enable mining leaders to succeed as a “Gender Champion” driving change towards a more gender-inclusive workplace. The workshops include topics such as addressing questions of common concern, and storytelling, which can be invaluable elements of a communications and engagement plan.
International Women in Mining <i>Male Champions in the Mining Sector</i> recognition program http://internationalwim.org/library/engaging-men/	IWiM is interested in “Engaging Men in the Conversation” because they are the key to change. As part of this, the organization wants to celebrate the men who are promoting women in mining and helping to narrow the existing gap.



- Learning about Gender Inclusion
- Setting "Targets with Teeth"
- Getting Started on a Communication and Engagement Plan
- A Change for the Better: Gender Diversity in Mining (customizable business presentation)