

LEARNING ABOUT GENDER INCLUSION

This tool will help you identify the rationale, potential content, success factors and useful resources for building organizational awareness and knowledge about gender inclusion.

The Rationale

Why is learning and development a key component of any gender inclusion initiative?

- Education is a centrepiece of building – and sustaining – culture change efforts towards gender inclusion.
- The development of gender-inclusive, flexible teams and organizations requires knowledge, skill and supportive attitudes amongst all employees – particularly managers and leaders.
- Developing competencies relating to gender inclusion contributes to building a more agile learning organizational culture that is open to innovation and adaptation to other, ongoing challenges.

Where to Focus

A variety of targeted learning and development programs can be used to help foster an organizational culture that will support greater gender inclusion. Common topics include:

THE BUSINESS CASE

Learning Objectives

- Explain and apply the organizational business case for gender inclusion
- Explain the overall strategic intent of the gender inclusion initiative in the organisation
- Dispel myths and misconceptions about gender inclusion
- Identify actions to promote gender inclusion
- Apply new policies which have been developed to implement the strategy

Generate buy-in for the business case for gender inclusion among all employees by building awareness of the significant rewards to be gained by focusing on creating a gender-diverse and inclusive organisation – and the costs of exclusion. The focus should be on how gender inclusion connects to the organization's strategic objectives, how it contributes to both the success of the organization and of individual employees, and how everyone has a role to play.

Any specific policies or programs that are being used to address gender barriers should be covered – including recruitment, selection, performance management, promotion, progression, remuneration, and training and development.

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Learning Objectives

- Explain what unconscious bias is and how it works
- Recognize the unconscious biases we hold and their potential impact
- Identify and manage common unintended barriers, such as stereotypes, blind spots, unconscious bias, micro-inequities, systemic impacts and avoidance of difficult conversations

Equip leaders and employees with the skills to recognize, understand and challenge their own biases, take responsibility for the impacts of their biased judgements and develop actions to minimize their own bias. Training should build upon the business case for inclusion and seek to gain personal commitment to fostering a more inclusive workplace; an impactful approach is to highlight real stories (anonymous) of the experiences of exclusion and unconscious bias at work, contrasted with stories of inclusive experiences.

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Learning Objectives

- Explain inclusive leadership and its benefits
- Identify individual strengths and areas of improvement
- Identify behaviours/strategies to promote inclusion – including inclusive communication and handling difficult conversations

As the business case for gender equality becomes better understood and supported, assess and address development needs of managers and leaders to take responsibility and build skills to support and drive inclusion – with competence and confidence.

Promoting Success¹

Implementing a learning and development initiative to promote gender inclusion takes considerable commitment and thoughtful planning. Critical success factors include:

	COMMUNICATIONS
A compelling rationale	Disseminate a multidimensional, clearly, and regularly communicated case for why the initiative benefits everyone—not just women.
Highlight senior leader participation	Research has shown that the top predictor of whether or not managers express interest in attending a diversity training course is their perception of whether other managers will be interested in attending ² . Ensure that senior leaders attend and encourage others to follow their lead to promote wider participation.

¹ Catalyst (2012). Calling All White Men: Can Training Help Create Inclusive Workplaces?; Australian Government (Undated). Gender strategy toolkit. Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

² Catalyst (2009). Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives: Stacking the Deck for Success.

Highlight benefits for participants	Focus on how the training will help employees and managers succeed – do their jobs better, with more understanding and better communication; build skills and capacities within their team, etc.
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APPROACH	
A culture change intervention	Learning and development should be one part of a larger culture change intervention throughout the organization that is linked to organizational goals, rather than a series of standalone or ad hoc training events.
Integrate into existing development programs	Gender-related development interventions and activities are often most effective when they are integrated into existing or future development programs – in particular for leadership. In this way, gender inclusion is positioned as part of broader leadership and management agendas, maximising participant buy-in and content synergies. Maintain a suite of learning methodologies and content to meet ongoing gender inclusion development needs of different stakeholders, as they move or progress internally and externally.
Follow-up and reinforce	As with any culture change effort, there is a risk that, over time, old habits and thinking patterns will resurface. To increase the likelihood that these positive changes will “stick”, there should be an ongoing commitment to provide support for employees to refresh or apply skills they learned. Ensure managers of the employees who are receiving the training are committed to supporting and reinforcing the new knowledge/skills.
Measure	Put formal metrics in place to measure the training's impact

CONTENT	
Customize and link to business goals	Ensure training is tied to corporate objectives all the way through, from design to evaluation. Customize content to your organizational culture and operations – in terms of activities, examples used, etc. to ensure its relevance and usefulness, and to reinforce learning. This can be achieved by consulting potential participants and their managers as part of a needs assessment to inform the design.
Awareness and skills	To be effective, training should be in-depth enough to include both awareness and skills development.
Responsibility and leadership—not blame	Training should aim to increase awareness and build skills, rather than to make participants feel like they are wrong. Participants need to see themselves as part of – and a beneficiary of – the solution; not blamed as part of the problem.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	
Name	About
Facebook – <i>Managing Unconscious Bias</i> https://managingbias.fb.com/	A training course and several informational videos on the realities of bias in the hiring process. The training was previously provided to Facebook employees.
Mining Industry Human Resources Council – <i>Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Works eLearning Suite</i> http://www.mihrc.ca	The <i>Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Works Toolbox</i> helps mining companies update their policies and practices to identify and remove unintended barriers. The accompanying <i>GEM Works – Learn to Make a Difference e-learning program</i> aims to encourage the GEM Works Toolbox's use and support change agents in its successful application.
Mining Industry Human Resources Council – <i>Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Executive Development Sessions</i> http://www.mihrc.ca	The <i>GEM Works Executive Development Sessions</i> are two complementary half-day, interactive programs to provide senior leaders in Canada's mining and minerals sector with the inspiration, knowledge and skills for succeeding as a "Gender Champion" and for driving organizational change towards a more gender-inclusive workplace. They provide a forum for leaders to challenge, craft and crystallize their thinking and approach to gender.
Status of Women Canada – <i>Gender Based Analysis + Course</i> http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/gba-acs/course-cours-en.html	The Status of Women Canada's course: <i>Introduction to Gender-based Analysis Plus</i> provides an overview of the GBA+ approach to uncovering the impact of various diversity characteristics, including gender, on the design and outcomes of policies and programs. Its focus is on public sector organizations but there are transferable concepts and key points.



ALSO SEE

- Getting Started on a Communication and Engagement Plan
- Gender Champions in Action