

**Creating a Workplace Culture that Attracts,  
Retains and Promotes Women**



# WORKPLACES



## THAT WORK

**Prepared for  
The Federal/Provincial/Territorial  
Ministers Responsible for  
the Status of Women**

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This document was developed for the use of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, within their mandates, to encourage private sector employment leaders to create workplaces that will attract, retain and promote women in high-growth industry sectors that are facing serious skills shortages.

*Workplaces that Work* presents a business case with evidence of the bottom-line benefits of workplace cultures that attract women. It also provides examples of success stories from across the country and tips for how employers can effectively promote change. In addition, it includes *A Framework for Assessing Your Workplace* - with 20 questions that will assist employers in identifying opportunities for meaningful change by reviewing current practices and results in their workplaces.

This document is not intended to reflect an official position of any government. It is also acknowledged that high-growth sectors facing skills shortages will vary in different parts of Canada. The material in this report is designed to be adapted to a broad range of sectors and situations.

While sharing essentially the same concerns, the Government of Quebec has not participated in this project since it considers education and skills development to be the responsibility of the provincial government. However, it does exchange information and experience on this matter with the members of the Status of Women Forum and will pursue its own work in this area.

# *Introduction*

There are 'bottom-line' reasons for making sure that workplaces attract women.

A workplace culture that is positive for women is good for all employees and the employer because it helps the business:

- Attract the best people in a time of skills shortages;
- Compete effectively for financial resources, investment, customers and market share;
- Improve decision-making by having more diverse opinions around the table;
- Earn a higher return on investment in employees through lower turnover costs, less absenteeism and better results for training and incentive dollars.

## Today's Economic Context

### Canadian employers are facing skills shortages

- Baby boomers are beginning to retire in large numbers.
- Business competition is high within Canada and beyond its borders.
- New occupations requiring new skills keep emerging.
- Traditional labour pools will not meet current and projected skills shortages.
- Women are 46 per cent of the labour force, but they are still under-represented in many occupations and sectors facing current or future shortages.

**Canada's population is aging. Along with Japan, Canada has the lowest ratio of younger individuals in the workforce (20 to 39) to those aged 40 to 59.**

### Recruiting and retaining women is one obvious solution

- Across the country, there are good initiatives to encourage women to consider training and careers in traditionally male-dominated fields.
- Leading employers are re-assessing their workplaces and making changes to attract and retain skilled women.

**Women represent only seven per cent of the workforce in transportation, trades and construction work and only about one in five professionals in natural sciences, mathematics and engineering.**

### Creating a Spiral of Success Pairing Supply with Demand Initiatives

An individual's career choice is determined by a number of factors, including early socialization, skills and aptitudes, media depiction of specific work environments and industries, role models and personal experiences in the workforce. Despite an increase in the number of women in the labour force, women continue to work in areas where they have traditionally been employed. In 2001, 70 per cent of all women in the work force were found in teaching, nursing and related health occupations, clerical or other administrative positions, or sales and service occupations – traditionally female-dominated fields of work.<sup>1</sup>

The impact of socialization continues to slow women's entry into mathematics, science and technology professions, as well as the skilled trades. In addition, it appears that many young women and men are discouraged from pursuing employment in the skilled trades as parents and teachers often promote professions or occupations that require university qualifications.

Even the most hospitable workplace cultures may not be immediately able to attract large numbers of female workers because the pool of available, qualified women is still relatively small. Supply and demand strategies must be implemented in tandem to increase the number of female workers available to employers and to encourage women to remain in these industries.

## Workplaces that Work for Women

**Workplace culture** includes the beliefs, attitudes, practices, norms and customs ('how things are done around here') that characterize a workplace. They can be both obvious and implied.

For example, a workplace might be characterized by frequent overtime, often unplanned. Rewards are tied to working long hours, additional pay, promotions or being seen as 'part of the team', etc. Although these cultural characteristics might appear to affect men and women equally, they will typically have a different impact on women who could be less able

to work late hours due to additional family responsibilities, safety concerns, etc. And these observable and apparently gender-neutral aspects of the workplace culture, could reflect underlying attitudes or myths in the organization, such as working late is an individual choice, or, women just do not want to do this kind of work.

A workplace culture that is inclusive of women, and that will attract and retain those with the skills and talents to help the organization succeed, is characterized by:

- Cultural norms and values that support positive relations between men and women;
- A freedom from stereotyping about women's and men's roles and occupations;
- Conditions (work schedules, job titles, physical environment) that are inclusive of both men and women;
- A strong 'critical mass' of women, usually 30 per cent or more throughout the organization;
- Opportunities for advancement;
- An emphasis on reducing sources of unnecessary stress such as harassment and work-family conflict.

## *Success story*

Over 500 women have been successfully trained to enter areas of the economy that are experiencing skill shortages through Ontario's Women in Skilled Trades (WIST) and Information Technology Training for Women (ITTW) pilot programs. These programs provide an average of 30 weeks of classroom instruction based on a curriculum that is specific to female students. This is followed by about 20 weeks of placements with local employers for on-the-job experience. Educational activities are undertaken with employers to assist in developing a positive work environment for the students.

Partnerships are the backbone of both programs, with government, community colleges, employers and community organizations combining forces to deliver the programs. Many of the programs pair graduates with mentors who help to ensure that, once trained, the women remain and succeed in their chosen occupation.

## Success story

Opportunities for Women in Construction is a new initiative in Alberta.

The Construction Owners Association of Alberta (COAA), through its Workforce Development Committee, is committed to securing jobs for women in the construction trades.

The program focuses on awareness and education, both for the women being targeted and for employers in the construction industry. The program is being promoted at employment fairs and through publicity materials. In their brochure, "Building Capacity", the COAA notes, "Women have a lot to offer: a fresh perspective; organization and management skills; a strong work ethic. Companies are looking for ways to diversify the workplace and women are starting to see construction as a viable and satisfying career choice." It also notes, "Employers are demanding the best and the brightest – and Alberta's women are an untapped resource."

### **Workplaces that Work for Women ... also Work for Men and for Employers**

All employees will benefit from workplaces that are known for inclusiveness, physical safety and good management practices. Importantly, in today's competitive economy, research shows that engaged and fully committed employees make a big difference to an organization's success. And the right workplace culture makes a big difference to employee engagement and commitment.

These benefits are reflected in research. Consulting firm Watson Wyatt found that significant financial gains (a 7.8 per cent increase in market value) were associated with collegial, flexible work environments.<sup>2</sup> According to a study by The Conference Board of Canada, employees who rate their managers as 'sensitive' to their personal and family needs report higher levels of

job satisfaction. This leads to lower absenteeism, enhanced retention and the reduction of the hard costs and work disruptions associated with lost time.<sup>3</sup>

### **Creating Workplaces that Work**

The following sections outline key elements of the business case for creating workplaces that work for women and, by extension, all employees. The report examines the types of results that can be achieved by employers, unions and industry sectors who commit to creating work environments that contribute to improved recruitment and retention of skilled women.

However, introducing 'best practices' initiatives is only a starting point. Truly effective workplace change requires adapting successful strategies and approaches to particular occupations and workplace characteristics.

## The Business Case

Improved ability to attract and retain women goes hand-in-hand with better business results.

Externally, become an 'employer of choice' and compete more effectively for:

- The best people;
- Financial resources and investment;
- Customers and market share.

Internally, improve decision-making by leveraging diverse perspectives.

Financially, improve return on investment in people by:

- Reducing costs of turnover, absenteeism and illness;
- Increasing the benefits from training and incentives.

**Small businesses play an important role in the Canadian economy. Among the nearly one million enterprises that maintained payrolls during 2002, 95 per cent were small businesses. Indeed, the very smallest businesses - those with only one to four employees on the payroll - accounted for more than 60 per cent of all enterprises.<sup>4</sup>**

## Compete More Effectively by Being an 'Employer of Choice'

Organizations compete for external resources in at least three marketplaces: the labour market, the financial investment market and the customer market. This section looks at each market to see how better utilization of women in high-growth sectors can contribute to important competitive advantages for employers.

Being recognized as an 'employer of choice'<sup>3</sup>, where all segments of the workforce have the opportunity to thrive and contribute, directly positions an employer to compete for the best talent.

In a competition for skills, workplaces that are welcoming of women significantly increase the size of the talent pool they can draw upon. They will have more applicants and will generally be able to hire more qualified people. Similarly, being known as an 'employer of choice' improves an employer's ability to attract and retain the most capable workers from the labour pool. And, as the illustration shows, this can have a significant bottom-line impact.

**While small and medium-sized businesses have been the main source of job creation in Canada for the past decade, at the same time, labour shortages have caused an alarmingly high number of these businesses to pass up growth opportunities.<sup>5</sup>**

## Illustration

Consider two construction firms, each hiring approximately 30 electricians annually.

Firm A is characterized as an old-style firm with less-than-exemplary working conditions for women. It receives 60 applications; it makes 50 job offers to all but the least-qualified applicants and 30 offers are accepted.

Firm B is well known as an 'employer of choice' and actively recruits women applicants. It receives an additional 30 applications, from equally skilled women, for 90 in total. It makes 35 job offers to the best applicants and 30 offers are accepted.

Evidently, Firm B can be more selective in hiring. It has a broader talent pool to choose from and its reputation leads more applicants to accept its offer.

The result? The higher performance of the new employees in Firm B can be estimated to bring \$350,000 more value than that of Firm A's employees, over a three-year period.<sup>6</sup>

**Attracting women expands the available talent pool and enables employers to hire the very best workers.**

Businesses also compete for financial resources and investment to support growth. Investors will be more attracted to companies with good people management because published research shows this is linked to better financial performance.

**A company's track record in people management practices, including women's advancement, can affect investors' decisions.**

The November 2001 issue of the Harvard Business Review presented research that tracked financial returns of 215 Fortune 500 firms. Those companies with the highest percentages of female executives delivered earnings far in excess of the median for other large firms in their industries.<sup>7</sup>

An American Management Association study found that firms where women hold the majority of senior executive positions show the largest sales growth. In 1997 these firms averaged 22.9 per cent growth compared with an average of 13 per cent for firms where men were predominant.<sup>8</sup>

A recent study of Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) revealed that the initial share price was higher and shareholder returns greater for those firms that had women represented on the senior executive.<sup>9</sup> The improvement in share price, both at the initial offering and at the three-year mark, reveals a more positive perception within the investment community and greater investor confidence than for similar firms with fewer women.

## Success story

Manitoba's innovative "Trade Up to Your Future" initiative provides a stepping stone to help women enter high-paying and high-demand careers such as welding and machining. Pre-trades training consists of five months of shops (welding and machining), upgrading classes and industrial workplace readiness.

One of the most critical features of the program's success is the provision of two years of post-graduation placement support. The market for small industrial businesses tends to fluctuate and this can result in layoffs. The prospect of layoff can be daunting to the newly-minted trades workers who may lack the confidence to negotiate another job in their newly chosen field. The program's consultant works to find other employment for participants who find themselves in this situation. The consultant is also available to help address issues in the workplace such as a personality conflict or other difficulty that can be resolved. However, if the consultant concludes that the difficulty cannot be resolved or that the workplace climate is not conducive to a women's success, the program will not place any further women graduates with this employer. The employer misses out on a negotiable wage subsidy, as well as access to critical skills that are in short supply.

The success for other employers speaks for itself. Several are now asking when the next graduates will be available and many are hiring women directly into permanent jobs without the wage subsidy.

Businesses that thrive and prosper are those that compete effectively for customers and market share. It makes good business sense to view women as an important market segment in business – their buying power is substantial.

Women influence 80 per cent of purchasing decisions for all products. There are more households headed by women than ever before and single women account for more home purchases than any other single market segment.<sup>10</sup>

For businesses that sell to other businesses it is also important to note that women own and/or lead 34 per cent of all businesses in Canada and the number of women entrepreneurs is growing at twice the rate of men.<sup>12</sup>

Targeting female consumers or clients is increasingly important as women's disposable income and spending power continues to grow. To ensure a successful market focus on women, employers will want women employees to be a critical component of their organization.

**"If you don't have women in senior management, basically you really don't represent the communities in which you do your business."<sup>11</sup>**

## Improve Decision-making by Leveraging Diverse Perspectives

Women and men, working together, will have a wider range of perspectives than either group working alone, which can lead to better decision-making.

However, the mere presence of women in the workplace will not guarantee positive outcomes. Experts suggest that it requires a variety of best practice changes to ensure a work culture in which diversity is valued and effectively leveraged for better performance.

**Having greater diversity in the workforce can lead to better decision-making, if the diversity is valued and properly leveraged.**

It has become common wisdom that businesses need new models of leadership and new organizational structures and processes to succeed in an environment of increased competition and economic globalization. The recommended style of leadership today is more adaptive and participative, emphasizing approaches that are flexible, non-hierarchical, cooperative and holistic.

The International Labour Organization points out that this shift aligns closely with the types of workplaces that encourage women's participation: "Such environments de-emphasize the old rigidities which have been restrictive to women and allow a more positive appreciation of so-called 'feminine' management qualities and styles: being less combative; being more consensus and solution oriented; being more practical and supportive of other staff and so forth."<sup>13</sup> Changing workplace cultures to attract more women will foster the very changes being demanded of successful organizations in today's global economic context.

**Success in the new economy depends on new styles of management – those same styles that create workplace cultures attractive to women. And, many of the behaviours in the new styles are traditionally associated with women.**

## Success story

IBM Canada is well known for best practices in encouraging women's participation in technology occupations. An example is their "Men and Women in Communication" workshop, a one-day event for the company's most senior 100 men and women, with each required to invite someone of the other gender to accompany them. The purpose of the workshop was to highlight gender differences in communication styles and subtle stereotyping that interferes with collectively achieving optimal results. For example, one group observed a tendency in their team meetings for all the administrative tasks to be assigned to the women and the more business-oriented tasks to the men, regardless of role or hierarchical level. Regardless of whether the leader's behaviour reflected stereotyping or an accurate judgment of the individuals' ability to get things done, it was agreed that this had a negative impact on the work culture. Participants report that, after the workshop, the leader's behaviour changed markedly.



Involve women in generating approaches for: interacting with male colleagues in ways that foster acceptance, clarifying mutual expectations for success, creating realistic portrayals of what life on the job will be like for women and providing women with a formal welcome to the organization; and, initiating culture change by providing an orientation guide for all new employees that outlines the organization's norms, values and code of conduct.

## Improve the Return on Investment in People

Workplace practices and cultures that encourage greater participation by women, share many of the same characteristics as those that maximize employee satisfaction and engagement: a workplace where information is shared, promotions and rewards are tied to performance and merit and employees participate in decision-making. Employee satisfaction and engagement is closely related to an

improved 'bottom line' (lower costs of turnover, absenteeism, etc.) as well as to an improved 'top line' – organizational productivity, revenue and customer satisfaction.

**Management practices and workplace cultures that are good for women are also good for men and for the employer's financial results.**

## Illustration

For one Canadian employer in the petrochemical industry, the turnover rate for women was twice the rate of men in comparable positions.

The following assumptions of typical figures are used for this illustration:

- Average salary for an early-career engineer is \$60,000.
- Length of time to fill a vacant engineer position is four months.
- Average length of time until the new hire is fully productive is six months.

Including administrative costs, lost productivity, training costs and others, the estimated turnover cost would be approximately \$30,000 per resignation.

Across the entire organization, the following assumptions were used:

- Turnover rate for women is 30 per cent and for men it is 15 per cent.
- The organization employs 20 young women engineers and 80 young men.

Changing work culture to reduce the women's turnover rate to 15 per cent would save \$90,000 in direct costs, per year, for this one employer.<sup>14</sup>

## Benefits of Reduced Costs

### Understand the costs of turnover

Most employers know that costs related to voluntary turnover can be great. A 1998 study of 225 organizations in the U.S. trucking industry<sup>15</sup> showed that workplace cultures characterized by job stability, training and equitable processes had higher retention rates. Additionally, those firms that could take their pick from larger numbers of applicants per opening, also had higher retention rates. The illustration below shows the potential dollar impact of improving retention, even ignoring indirect benefits such as enhanced company reputation.

### Satisfied employees lose fewer days

Workers who describe their workplaces as having satisfactory pay, benefits, training and job security, in addition to good advancement opportunities, flexible schedules and work-life balance, will lose fewer days due to illness and injury.<sup>16</sup> On average, those who report good job quality on these indicators missed three days and those who reported gaps in five or more job quality indicators missed six days. Lost time due to injuries and illness can cost employers significantly.

### Redesigning work processes to suit a wider range of physical capabilities can reduce costs through new efficiencies and lower injury rates

In many workplaces, direct operational cost savings are achieved when traditional work practices change as a result of women's involvement in the work activities. Organizations that have modified their equipment or work

practices to reflect the physical capabilities of women (and many men) have realized cost benefits and prevented employee injury. For example, when lifting requirements and practices are changed, back injury rates drop dramatically. When maintenance standards are improved to make equipment easier to use, lost time due to equipment failures drops significantly. This is because when work practices are modified to be less physically demanding, they are often simultaneously redesigned to be more efficient.

### **Addressing the root causes of turnover and absenteeism improves performance**

Many of the causes of turnover and absenteeism will be similar for men and women and have been briefly addressed in other sections. However, two issues have particular implications for women and deserve special note.

**Workplace violence and gender-related harassment:** The International Labour Organization has pointed out that the negative consequences of workplace violence have a ripple effect well beyond the person who is the focus of the violence. "At the level of the workplace, violence causes immediate – and often long-term – disruption to interpersonal relationships,

the organization of work and the overall working environment."<sup>17</sup> The impact includes direct costs of lost work and improved security measures, as well as indirect costs stemming from reduced efficiency and productivity, quality problems, loss in company image, difficulty in future recruiting and a reduction in customers.

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**Employers under-estimate the incidence of gender-related harassment and its impact on the organization's performance.**

Gender-related harassment can range from insulting jokes about women and workplace display of sexual material, to sexual coercion by hinting job benefits (or loss) in exchange for sex. One study indicates that approximately half of working women have experienced sexual harassment but fewer than one-quarter of them reported the incident to an authority and fewer than one in ten filed a formal complaint.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Success story***

An industrial employer in the Canadian natural resources sector reaped significant cost benefits when women were employed in occupations that were previously male-dominated. As one example, the firm found that as the percentage of women 'in the driver's seat' of heavy equipment increased, maintenance costs significantly decreased. With some investigation, the employer discovered that women were more likely to bring the equipment into the maintenance facility at the first sign of trouble. This led to earlier repairs and preventive maintenance and ultimately to considerable cost savings across the equipment fleet.

## Success story

Raising awareness is the first step required in creating real workplace culture change. The Aboriginal Committee of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour has launched an innovative training course to build understanding of the issues Aboriginal women face in diverse working environments. With funding support from the Government of Saskatchewan's Aboriginal Employment Development Program, Union Women on Turtle Island has been tailored from earlier successful programs to encourage participation in discussions of discrimination in labour movements and in unionized work environments.

One of the strengths of this five-day course is its success in encouraging participants to examine their own attitudes and beliefs about Aboriginal women and men. While the courses have been offered in shorter sessions, the five-day version has had the greatest impact on raising awareness and changing attitudes.

### TIP

**Do not interpret a lack of formal harassment complaints as an absence of problems.** Potential indicators of sexual harassment include a sudden request for a transfer, refusal to work with a certain individual, high absenteeism and sudden changes in the quality of an employee's work. Ensure that workplaces are free from harassment by clearly defining inappropriate behaviours, holding managers accountable for reporting and responding to all potential incidents and providing employees with formal and informal means of redress. Enact a zero tolerance approach to gender-related harassment.

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### Dependant care and family responsibilities:

One of the key causes of stress for many working parents is access to high-quality, affordable childcare, as well as personal leave. Assisting employees to find high-quality dependable childcare can lower costs by improving retention and reducing absenteeism.

Workplaces with cultures that attract women are characterized by flexibility and practices that support work-life balance.

These practices can financially benefit employers in many ways. Research has shown that costs of paid leave can be more than offset by significant savings in turnover costs.<sup>19</sup>

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**Parental leave and flexibility in scheduling can lead to cost savings through improved retention and decreased turnover.**

**TIP**

Be proactive in helping employees find high-quality childcare. Join with other employers to support childcare options by providing subsidies or donating goods to nearby facilities. Talk to local childcare providers and develop partnerships with them to help meet employee needs. Develop and maintain a list of local childcare providers, including caregivers for evening, overtime and illness situations.

## Benefits of Enhanced Performance

### Better people management is associated with increases in sales and market value

Management approaches that some authors label High Performance Work Practices<sup>20</sup> have been shown to reduce turnover, improve employee satisfaction, increase sales per employee and yield higher profits and market value. One study that compared 855 firms showed that a meaningful increase in the use of these work practices was related to an increase of \$40,000 in annual sales per employee and an increase in the firm's market value of over \$27,000 per employee. For two employers with 500 employees, this would mean that the firm with better human resource management practices (fairness and merit, involvement, training, etc.) would be expected to out-perform the other by \$20M in annual sales and by \$13M in market value.

### Improved retention leads to better return on investments in training and incentives

Canadian organizations devote 41.5 per cent of their training investments on employees in technical and service/production jobs (approximately \$200,000 out of the \$530,000 spent by a typical employer whose overall workforce

is 1000 or more people).<sup>21</sup> Consider an employer where women hold 50 skilled trade jobs and turnover among them is high at 30 per cent annually. For this employer, approximately \$8,000 of annual training investment, or \$530 for each of the 15 women who leave, brings little return to the organization. The answer is not to restrict training but to enhance retention.

Research by The Conference Board of Canada shows that organizations continue to make investments in performance bonuses or variable pay, presumably to reward past performance and more importantly to encourage future good performance. For example, 63 per cent of private sector employers provide some type of annual variable pay plan to non-unionized technical and skilled trades employees, with an average target payout of 6.6 per cent of salary<sup>22</sup>. A high turnover rate among these employees will mean that a considerable compensation investment each year, will bring less than optimal return to the organization.

Add to these figures the costs of indirect investments, such as communication and coaching and it is clear that investment in people's performance must be paired with an investment in improving the ability to retain them.

**TIP**

Support the advancement of talented women within the organization by identifying and tracking those with potential, providing access to new challenges and good developmental assignments, ensuring candid constructive feedback on their performance and on-going support in their success.

## *Success story*

In May of 2000, after 92 years in operation on the Halifax waterfront, Local 269 of the Internal Longshoremen's Association (I.L.A.) made history by accepting Rosanne Weagle as its first female member. Since then, the Halifax Employers Association and Local 269 have successfully attracted and retained a significant number of women workers. This success is the result of hard work, careful preparation and a long-term perspective. For two years prior to introducing women into the longshore industry, consultants, employers and union representatives worked together to ensure that the environment would encourage their success. Workplace practices were reviewed and updated, cultural barriers were identified and addressed and training programs were established. By all reports, the initiative has been a success and well worth the investment. Success was achieved by pairing supply side initiatives that encouraged women to consider and train for longshore occupations, with demand side initiatives that created workplace climates that attracted and retained skilled women.

## **When and where to start?**

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The time to start is now. Small immediate changes can signal meaningful change to employees. Employers can start to identify opportunities for change by reviewing their practices and current results.

# A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING YOUR WORKPLACE

## 20 QUESTIONS

### Ratio of women workers

1. What is the current ratio of women workers?
  - Compute ratios separately for non-traditional, high-growth occupations.
  - Compute ratios separately for senior positions.
  - Look further – what is the impact of age, education and family status?
2. Are the ratios increasing or decreasing over time?
3. How well do the ratios reflect the availability of skilled women in your location?
4. How do turnover rates compare for men and women?
5. Are the ratios approaching critical mass (30 per cent or more)?

### Nature of interpersonal relations

6. Ask employees (individually, in groups or via surveys) questions such as:
  - Do workers feel they have an opportunity to contribute to decisions?
  - Are work group relationships generally positive?
  - What are the formal and informal mechanisms for handling conflict?
  - Do male workers show that they are aware of the challenges that women may face in traditionally male workplace environments?
  - Do women feel they are part of the team?

7. How many co-worker complaints and conflicts arise each month (or each quarter)?
  - What are the sources and causes of conflicts?
  - Is the number decreasing?

### Gender inclusive conditions and freedom from stereotypes

8. Are job titles, job descriptions and job ads inclusive of women?
9. Are the physical working conditions (e.g., equipment, clothing, shower and toilet facilities) appropriate for men and women?
10. Do workplace decisions about people reflect individual differences rather than assuming that all women have the same needs/concerns and so do all men?
11. What processes are in place to ensure that women are not automatically streamed into certain jobs or types and levels of work?

### Opportunities for advancement

12. Are promotion, pay and performance evaluation systems clearly written and based on objective criteria?
  - Are men and women promoted at equal rates?
  - Are the average earnings for women and men the same?
  - Are men and women held to the same performance standards?
13. How is mentoring encouraged? What other supports are available?
14. Do women employees have the opportunity to see women role models in more senior roles?

15. How are formal and informal definitions of 'leadership potential', 'manager material' and 'ideal worker' critically reviewed to ensure the behaviours and assessments are inclusive of women?
16. How are workers chosen for training or special assignments? How many women are given training opportunities or special assignments that build critical skills? Is this number increasing over time?
17. What is the impact of seniority rules on women's career opportunities?
  - How do they affect individuals who might work part-time, who hold temporary jobs or who take leaves for family responsibilities?
  - Do they facilitate the movement of women into high-growth and high-paying occupations?

### **Psychologically healthy environment – harassment-free and work-family balance**

18. What mechanisms signal to employees that harassment of any sort is not tolerated in the workplace?
19. What is the organization's track record on responding to complaints of harassment?
  - Is it clear that they are taken seriously, quickly addressed and resolved without negative consequences for the complainant?
20. How do formal policies and informal norms support individual employees in reconciling their work and personal responsibilities?
  - How predictable are work demands and hours of work?
  - How much flexibility is given to employees regarding when and where they work?.

**TIP**

The most critical element in culture change is the leader's active and consistent support for women's full participation in the workplace.

## END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada,  
*Women in Canada: Work Chapter Update*,  
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<sup>2</sup> Human Capital Index,  
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(New York: Watson Wyatt, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Judith MacBride-King,  
*Managers, Employee Satisfaction and Work-Life Balance*,  
(Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> Bank of Montreal,  
"In Search of Canada's Small Business Hotbeds,"  
*Small Business Research*,  
(Vol. 1, March 2003), 2.

<sup>5</sup> Andrea Dulipovici,  
*Labour Pains: Results of CFIB Surveys on Labour Availability*,  
(Canadian Federation of Independent Business, April 2003), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Notes:  
The calculations in this highly generalized utility analysis rely on conservative assumptions: {1} the hiring procedures have a typical (.3) validity for predicting performance; {2} the dollar value of the productivity difference between an average and an above-average employee is 40% of the annual salary, or \$16,000; and {3} for a given firm, the applicants who accept offers and those who decline offers are equally qualified. For the sake of simplicity, it also assumes there is no turnover in the first three years.

<sup>7</sup> R. Adler,  
"Women and Profits,"  
*Harvard Business Review*,  
(79(10), November 2001), 30.

<sup>8</sup> The American Management Association,  
Senior Management Teams:  
Profile and Performance  
(New York: The American Management Association, 1998).

<sup>9</sup> T. Welborn,  
*Wall Street Likes Its Women: An Examination of Women in top Management Teams of Initial Public Offerings*, (Center for Advanced Human Resources Studies, Cornell University, Working Paper), 99-107.

<sup>10</sup> See Joanne Thomas Yaccato,  
*The 80 % Minority: Reaching the Real World of Women Consumers*,  
(Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in B. Orser,  
*Creating High-Performance Organizations: Leveraging Women's Leadership*,  
(Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Information on and resources for, women entrepreneurs can be found at [www.royalbank.ca/sme/women](http://www.royalbank.ca/sme/women).

<sup>13</sup> L. Wirth,  
*Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management*,  
(Geneva: International Labour Office, 2001).

<sup>14</sup>Notes:

Estimated turnover costs for this illustration include: \$200 termination costs (employee and staff, including exit interview); \$5100 replacement costs (recruiting and selecting; travel and moving expenses); \$10,000 training and coaching costs; \$18,000 additional costs for temporary help and overtime during the vacancy; \$20,000 in saved salary during the vacancy; \$7,500 in lost productivity (25%) during first six months on the job. The individual turnover cost of \$30,000 is multiplied by 3 (15% of 20 women engineers) to yield the organizational total.

<sup>15</sup>J.D. Shaw et al.,

"An organization-level analysis of voluntary and involuntary turnover," *Academy of Management Journal*, (41(5), 1998).

<sup>16</sup>G. Lowe,

*Quality of Work: Why it Matters for Workers and Employers*,  
(October 20, 2000 - Presentation accessed at [www.cprn.org](http://www.cprn.org)).

<sup>17</sup>D. Chappell and V. Di Martino,

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(Geneva: International Labour Office, 2000).

<sup>18</sup>S. Welsh and J. Gruber,

"Not taking it any more: Women who report or file complaints of sexual harassment," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, (36(4), 1999), 558-583.

<sup>19</sup>A. Dube and E. Kaplan,

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This research showed that costs to employers would be approximately \$2.10 per employee per month but the savings overall could be \$89 million because of increased employee retention and decreased turnover.

<sup>20</sup>See, for example,

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<sup>21</sup>S. Harris-Lalonde,

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<sup>22</sup>C. Baarda,

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