



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network

About This Document

This document was published before 2020 but still contains useful and relevant information about responsible business. Please note that some links, case studies and statistics may be out of date.



Royal Founding Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales
Chairman: Jeremy Darroch
Chief Executive: Amanda Mackenzie OBE

Business in the Community is a registered charity in
England and Wales (297716) and Scotland (SC046226).
Company limited by guarantee No. 1619253.

Registered Office:
137 Shepherdess Walk, London N1 7RQ
www.bitc.org.uk

TACKLING YOUR GENDER PAY GAP: ATTRACTION AND RECRUITMENT

GENDER PAY GAP TOOLKIT
FEBRUARY 2020



Now you know what's causing your gender pay gap, it's time to start action planning. Will your current diversity initiatives work? How can you make this a core business priority? How will you monitor progress?

In the second toolkit in the series on analysing your gender pay gap, we outlined the root causes of the gender pay gap, including occupational segregation, discrimination and unequal family roles, and helped you understand what issues are driving your pay gap.

This toolkit is split into two parts and these are the final toolkits in our gender pay gap series. They outline how you as an employer can develop a holistic and sustainable action plan, tackling the core structural and cultural issues, to ensure both women and men truly have equal opportunities at work.

Business in the Community's gender pay gap toolkit suite:

- Understanding your gender pay gap
- Analysing your gender pay gap
- Communicating your gender pay gap
- Tackling your gender pay gap – Attraction and Recruitment
- Tackling your gender pay gap – Retention and Progression





Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Equal pay	3
Recommendations:	3
Monitoring and Measuring	4
Talk to your employees	5
Recommendations:	6
Attraction	7
Recommendations:	9
Recruitment	10
Recruitment targets	10
Recommendations:	11
Job design	12
Recommendations:	12
Job advertising	13
Recommendations:	13
Shortlists	14
Recommendations:	14
Job interviews	15
Recommendations:	16
Support for managers	16
Recommendations:	16
Intersectionality	17
References	20



Introduction

Many strategies for closing the gender pay gap can be planned and implemented within two years, but the gender pay gap itself may not close quickly. The initiatives in these toolkits are not box-ticking exercises; they are designed to effect long-term, meaningful and sustainable change.

Equal pay

Although we know there is a significant difference between the gender pay gap and equal pay, it is essential to ensure that you are offering equal pay for equal work, in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Business in the Community conducted a survey of more than 1,000 employees which found that over half of respondents were doubtful that women and men are paid equally for work of equal value.ⁱ A gender pay gap can exist without unequal pay, but we strongly recommend undertaking an equal pay audit to be certain.

Equal pay audit: Analysis of the difference in pay between men and women at your organisation to work out if you may be paying unequal wages for equal work.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission cites three main purposes of an equal pay audit:

- to identify any differences in pay between men and women doing equal work
- to investigate the causes of any (differences in pay between men and women doing equal work
- to eliminate instances of unequal pay that cannot be justified.ⁱⁱ

Audits can also help you understand to what extent unequal pay might be driving your gender pay gap. They will enable you to rectify any discrepancies, whilst demonstrating to employees your commitment to fair pay and reducing the likelihood of employment tribunals. Senior level commitment is essential to the success of an equal pay audit, and audits should be carried out every two years to ensure consistency and ongoing fairness.

Our online [Equal Pay toolkit](#) provides comprehensive guidance and checklists for transparency.

Recommendations:

- Conduct regular and rigorous equal pay audits.

Monitoring and Measuring

Before you start your journey on trying to attract and recruit the right talent, ensure you have an effective infrastructure in place to monitor the outcomes of all interventions to enable the progression of women within your workplace.

As an organisation improves its gender diversity and representation across the hierarchy, the gender pay gap should get smaller. However, this may not happen straight away, depending on your own organisation or sector's unique characteristics. For example, attracting female graduates into traditionally male-dominated occupations such as engineering is crucial for achieving gender equality and closing the pay gap over the long-term, but an influx of women at the entry level may temporarily widen the pay gap.

To prevent adverse reaction to a growing gap, it is crucial that you communicate an informative narrative and action plan with your data.

The gender pay gap is just one marker of gender inequality in your organisation; you can also monitor changes in your workforce data and results of your employee surveys to find out whether your efforts to close the gap are working. Gender-led monitoring can highlight longitudinal trends in your organisation's diversity journey whilst also quickly flagging up anomalies or weaknesses in performance in a timely fashion that allows early response.

Measuring meaningful workforce data will inform organisational learning and drive insightful, evidence-led change. Four crucial questions should inform companies approach to monitoring their success on women's advancement:

1. What factors will you measure?
2. What metrics will you use?
3. How will you collect your data?
4. How will you use it?

This table outlines which workforce data to measure:

Workforce demographics	Illustrate how women and men are distributed across the employment hierarchy. The data should be collected vertically, horizontally, by cross-cutting diversity strands.
Pay and reward	When analysed in conjunction with pay grade / occupation demographics, this data can highlight any potential discrimination or unequal pay issues.

Paternity and shared parental leave	Tell you whether some of your male employees find it difficult to take leave for the purpose of sharing childcare more equally.
Maternity returners	Tells you if your organisation is struggling to retain women after six months, one year or two years after returning to work.
Flexible working requests and acceptances	Both informal and formal agile working data tell you whether gender bias is informing decisions. Consciously or unconsciously, flexible working can affect an employee's pay, bonus and promotions.
Part-time workers	Highlights whether more women work part time than men. Part time workers are often paid less than the full time equivalent which can have a negative impact on the gender pay gap.
Applications vs hires	Trends in this data could signify whether or not there is gender bias or preference in hiring decisions and processes.
Recruitment vs promotion rates	Comparing the recruitment vs promotion rates for women and men will highlight any differences between women's and men's progression through the organisation.

Here are some areas we recommend measuring through a gender lens:

- Promotion and appraisal
- Learning and development
- Staff turnover
- Exit interviews
- Bullying and harassment
- Change management processes
- Marketing
- Consumer profile and satisfaction
- Procurement and purchasing
- Community investment.

We also recommend adding an intersectional approach to this by including some measures which overlap gender with other characteristics. Communicating women's progression data upwards and sideways within an organisation within a regular cycle will ensure all business areas are thoroughly informed of the impact of their actions.

Quantitative (statistical) data illustrates women's overall position compared to men's, but to truly understand women's experiences, we strongly recommend hearing from employees themselves.

Talk to your employees

Employee surveys

Employee surveys can help you understand the attitudes and experiences of your employees by providing both qualitative and quantitative data. Depending on the specific causes behind your gender pay gap, the survey questions could cover:

- Opportunities for progression
- Skills development
- Feeling included and engaged
- Pay and reward
- Experiences of career breaks or parental leave
- Workplace culture

Diversity questions can often touch on sensitive issues so employees need to understand why they are being asked, what will be done with the information and be assured that their responses will remain anonymous. Our [Employee Surveys toolkit](#) provides practical guidance on how to develop a robust survey.

Employee focus groups

Employee focus groups are effective in providing insight into women's experiences in the workplace. To get the most reliable information from your focus groups, they should be designed and carried out by researchers and subject specialists. They should not involve HR professionals or very senior level staff (unless all participants are senior) since this can prevent an open and honest discussion.

Recommendations:

- Select meaningful performance indicators.
- Communicate information upwards and sideways.
- Conduct employee surveys and focus groups.
- Actively learn from monitoring data and act where necessary.

Attraction

There can be different challenges in ensuring that women are attracted to your organisation, which are sometimes dependent on your sector and your industry. We advise a three-step approach:

Develop your talent pipeline

Widening your talent pool, e.g. returners programmes

Implementing a strong organisational diversity and inclusion strategy

Developing your talent pipeline

Talent pipeline: The pool of candidates who would be able to perform a job or jobs within your organisation.

The pipeline of UK talent still suffers from some very gendered leaks.ⁱⁱⁱ For example, in a report published by the Institute of Public Policy Research, 16 is the critical age at which women are lost to potential careers in engineering.^{iv} It is essential to start young and ensure girls are given the opportunity to consider a variety of careers. Where there are gaps in female talent, organisations can develop initiatives to cultivate their talent pipeline from all ages.

IMPACT STORY – PwC

PwC founded Tech She Can as only 27% of females say they'd consider a career in technology, compared to 62% of males. Only 23% of people working in STEM roles are women and only 19% of students say they've learned about career opportunities in technology from their school.

The Firm launched the 'Tech She Can Charter' in February 2018 to tackle the root causes of under-representation of women in



pwc

technology, backed by Digital Minister Margot James. The Charter's signatories focus action on three areas:

- creating female-friendly education materials aligned to the school curriculum
- improving the image of technology careers for females
- influencing policy

Signatories pledge action by: working with schools, supporting social mobility, creating role models, inclusive access and sharing best practice. 78 organisations, covering hundreds of thousands of employees and students, have so far signed up.

PwC's funded Technology degree apprenticeships give young people the opportunity to build a technology career to grow the UK's next generation of technology talent. The programme aims to increase females in tech and data degrees and support social mobility. 30% of the students are female, twice the national average for computer science degrees. 111 school leavers are benefitting from their degrees, giving women the training and work experience they need to thrive. PwC are working with UK BlackTech to encourage greater diversity in the technology sector and to inspire young people from various backgrounds to pursue technology careers.

Widening your talent pool

In order to attract new female talent to your organisation, it can be worth looking at those who might be on the outskirts of your standard talent pool. In many cases, these might be women who are currently economically inactive due to caring responsibilities.

Research conducted by PwC in conjunction with Women Returners and the 30% Club found that 550,000 professional women in UK are on extended career breaks for caring reasons, and 427,000 want to return to the workforce at some point.^v

We advise organisations to develop a returners' programme to widen your search for strong talent. Timewise Jobs highlights two main types of programme^{vi}:

Returnships: Returnships are professional, fixed-term contracts with training and support built in, usually paid and at a relatively senior level. They can last anything from 10 weeks to six months and, if all goes well, they often lead to a permanent role. *Source: What is a returner programme?, Timewise Jobs (2018)*

Supported hire programmes: Supported hire programmes recruit returners into permanent ongoing roles within a team from day one. As with returnships, they usually include training and mentoring as part of the process, *Source: What is a returner programme?, Timewise Jobs (2018)*

Implementing a strong organisational diversity and inclusion strategy

In order to attract women into your organisation, it is essential to develop a strong strategy and action plan on how to tackle your gender pay gap. We advise you to communicate this clearly and publicly. For advice on how to do this, check out our toolkit on **communicating your gender pay gap**.

Business in the Community's research, [*Gender Pay Gap: What Employees Really Think*](#), found that 92% of respondents would use information on an organisations gender pay gap if they were looking for a job. More than half of female respondents would favour the company with the smallest pay gap or the one that is more proactive in closing it when trying to decide between two employers.^{vii}

Recommendations:

- Look for female talent outside your standard talent pool.
- Develop bespoke programmes for different talent groups, such as returner programmes.
- Communicate your diversity and inclusion strategy.

Recruitment

Since we all have gender biases, it is necessary to ensure that the processes we use to make decisions are bias-proofed.

A recent PwC report found that a fifth of women said they have experienced gender discrimination personally when applying or interviewing for a job, compared with just 5% of men.^{viii} Decision-making processes in recruitment must be transparent, inclusive and meritocratic.

We recommend looking at the following areas to de-bias your recruitment process:



Recruitment targets

Establishing gender diversity recruitment targets is the most impactful practice when it comes to increasing female representation in an organisation.^{ix} Targets are most effective when they are specific and time-bound.^x

Recruitment targets show women that your organisation is committed to achieving gender equality. However, it is important to note that positive action is illegal in the UK within employment. This is discrimination, quotas or favouritism due to a protected characteristic.



Following on from the section on monitoring and measuring, knowing your current recruitment situation by gender can help to define how much improvement your organisation needs to make in the future. For example, analysing historical rates of female applicants for specific roles and locations can provide insights around your required action and targets.

These targets should be set across the board and can even be tied in to a reward system. Setting targets for recruitment agencies are instrumental too, to ensure your organisation is seeing a diverse range of candidates.

Diversity Managers

Hiring a Diversity Manager to support target-setting can be crucial, but they will only create change if they have support from their seniors. The Diversity Manager would be responsible for analysing

the data, understanding the causes and setting targets in line with specific Diversity and Inclusion initiatives. A Diversity Manager ensures accountability to the target-setting process which can improve the representation of women within your organisation.^{xi}

The Government Equalities Office^{xii} recommends that Diversity Managers should:

- Have a senior/executive role within the organisation
- Have visibility of internal data
- Be in the position to ask for more information on why decisions were made
- Be empowered to develop and implement diversity strategies and policies

We recommend a multi-step approach:



Recommendations:

- Establish clear, time-bound recruitment targets.
- Hire a Diversity Manager who is responsible for data collection and target-setting.
- Ensure accountability for recruitment targets sits with managers, leaders and agencies.

Job design

In order to make recruitment processes as fair as possible, it is important to ensure the jobs which are on offer are inclusive. When considering how to design a job to attract the best female talent, it is important to consider:

- Flexibility
- Requirements

Flexibility

Business in the Community's Equal Lives research in partnership with Santander UK found that women are more likely to have adapted their way of working with flexible working than men (83% and 70% respectively).^{xiii} We know that 91% of women with caring responsibilities and 84% of men with caring responsibilities feel it is important to be able to work flexibly, however only 73% and 59% feel they are able to respectively.

Both men and women with caring responsibilities are not able to work as flexibly as they'd like to – for men, this gap between what they want and what they get is 25% and for women, this is 18%. Employees said that policy did not always translate into practice – the ability to work flexibly depends on line managers, teams, offices and departments within an organisation.

Find out more about flexible working in our next toolkit, on **tackling your gender pay gap: retention and progression**.

Requirements

If organisations design jobs with only sector-specific skills, you risk limiting yourselves to a much smaller talent pool. However, if you focus on transferable skills and aptitudes, this will open up the application process to a whole variety of candidates which you may not have originally considered. For example, many organisations are achieving success through emphasising transferable skills on their returner programmes.

Recommendations:

- Ensure flexible working is available for all jobs from day one, with a variety of ways to work flexibly.
- Design jobs based around transferable skills rather than technical skills where possible.

Job advertising

Organisations risk excluding talent through how they advertise their jobs, in particular through language, content and channels.

Language

The gender-bias in job advertising is strong, and the language used in job adverts can attract or isolate potential recruits. According to Textio, an augmented writing platform, the bias in your original job post predicts who you're going to hire.^{xiv} Research conducted by Textio found the average job post has almost twice as many masculine-tone phrases as feminine,^{xv} which is a contributing factor to why men were hired into the role.

Organisations can use software such as from Textio, or the Gender Decoder for Job Ads in order to neutralise the vocabulary in job advertising to attract the best candidates. This works by using technology to highlight gender-coded words, which organisations can then eliminate or change.

Content

Are 'essential' skills really essential to do the job?

As discussed earlier, designing jobs to include transferable rather than technical skills can widen your talent pool. It is important to note that this is further reinforced with the way that jobs are advertised: Men apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women apply only if they meet 100% of them.^{xvi} Evidence suggests that the reason for this isn't to do with confidence but because women generally don't think they will be hired if they don't meet all of the criteria.^{xvii}

Channels

Roles should be advertised before recruiting people in order to ensure a transparency. This is so roles are promoted equally to all employees and a broad external audience. If organisations recruit through word of mouth, through industry-only listings or non-transparent channels, this is likely to limit diversity as hiring becomes constrained to a limited talent pool.

What is more, social media can perpetuate this so it is important to have a conversation with who you advertise with as well. ProPublica found that ads were sometimes targeted specifically to one gender, in particular men, when online platforms were used to promote vacancies.^{xviii}

Recommendations:

- Use technical solutions to de-bias the language in your job advertisements.
- Advertise your vacancies on a variety of sourcing channels.

Shortlists

Bias

How you shortlist candidates and what those shortlists look like will ultimately determine who can be hired into the role. In order to choose candidates in the fairest way possible, it is essential for organisations to consider the unconscious, or conscious, bias of their hiring managers.

There is a lot of evidence which demonstrates the prominence of this bias. For example, a study conducted by Yale University researchers showed the gender biases within university science faculties. 127 members – both men and women – were asked to review two job applications which were identical except for the candidate's first name. They consistently judged that the male candidate was more talented and experienced; he was also selected for the job more often and at a higher salary.^{xix}

Most people are unaware of their own biases. Try to eliminate bias through training your recruiting managers and evaluating job applications against a person specification.

Diverse shortlists

If your shortlist only includes one woman, this does not increase the chance of a woman being selected for the role.^{xx} According to evidence provided in the Harvard Business Review, the odds of hiring a woman were 79.14 times greater if there were at least two women in the finalist pool.^{xxi} Therefore, it is advised to include multiple women on shortlists in your recruitment processes to maximise opportunities for women.

Recommendations:

- Use detailed person specifications to shortlist candidates.
- Ensure a diverse list of candidates when shortlisting.

Job interviews



Job interviews should be used to determine who the best candidate is for the job; therefore it is important to assess all your candidates in the same way to effectively establish this.

Structured interviews allow you to benchmark your candidates against a formalised person specification. We advise the following:

We support the following recommendations from the Government Equalities Office and Behavioural Insights Team^{xxii}:

- Ask exactly the same questions of all candidates in a predetermined order and format
- Grade the responses using pre-specified, standardised criteria. This makes the responses comparable and reduces the impact of unconscious bias.

It is important to make sure each question is scored and this is done immediately, in order to accurately recollect the responses.

Recruitment panel

Who sits on your recruitment panel can determine who is selected for a role. Although more research is needed in this space,^{xxiii} we recommend trying to ensure variety in gender, race and other characteristics on your panel when interviewing. Diverse recruitment panels is a key recommendation from Business in the Community's Race Equality Campaign as well.^{xxiv}

Money

When interviewing candidates, asking their previous salary can perpetuate the gender pay gap. This is because if you base your salary offers on past salary information, women are more likely to be underpaid if they have been earning below market wages. Encouraging transparency and salary negotiation can even up pay inequalities.



Recommendations:

- Implement structured interviews, which are scored against a formalised person specification.
- Ensure diverse recruitment panels.
- Don't ask candidates about previous salaries in applications, interviews or job offers.

Support for managers

Throughout your whole recruitment process, providing managers with support is key. Our recommendations relate to all of the previous discussed topics.

Recommendations:

Provide your managers with:

- Clear, ongoing communication on the benefits of gender diversity for your business.
- Support on designing jobs appropriately at the initial stage and with re-evaluation.
- Training to support de-biasing stages of the process.
- Support on induction and job allocation.

Intersectionality

We know that women are not in equal positions of power and influence to men. Yet this knowledge is not sufficient for tackling gender inequality in the workplace. We must also know a woman's race, class background, sexual orientation and other characteristics, and society's attitudes towards each of these, to fully understand her experience and the barriers she faces. In order to attract and recruit a diverse group of women, an intersectional approach is instrumental.

Intersectionality: A way of understanding the intersection where different parts of our identity meet and how this can result in different, unique forms of privilege or exclusion.

We believe that taking an intersectional approach to equality and inclusion will enable employers to achieve more change, and faster. This means considering intersectionality in management processes, workplace policies, employee networks, employee feedback, and culture. Business in the Community's other campaigns provide excellent advice and support on a number of other key areas, some of which are listed below.

Race

One in 8 of the working age population is from a BAME background yet only one in 10 is actually in the workplace.^{xxv} Around 1 in 10 adults from a Black, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Mixed background were unemployed compared with 1 in 25 White British people. Women from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds were the least likely to be employed.^{xxvi}

Business in the Community's Race Campaign recommend the following actions to ensure you have considered race within your recruitment processes:

- Employers to reject non-diverse lists of candidates that do not reflect the local working age population and instead, to ensure there is proportional representation on long and shortlists.
- Larger employers should ensure that the selection and interview process is undertaken by more than one person, and should ideally include individuals from different backgrounds to help eliminate bias.
- Employers to monitor each stage of the recruitment process linked to all access routes into the organisation.
- Employers should engage their employee network groups or a diverse group of stakeholders to review performance and identify and design interventions that can be introduced to tackle disparities and implement them during every recruitment exercise.

- Employers should engage their recruitment agencies, head-hunters and other recruitment specialists and insist on non-diverse shortlists for roles.
- Recruitment professionals should pro-actively provide diverse shortlists of clients for employers. The Ethnicity Facts and Figures website provides data on the local unemployed populations that will help to indicate the diversity of jobseekers available by location.

For more information on Business in the Community's Race Campaign, please click [here](#).

Age

Women over 50 are more likely to face the dual discrimination and biases of gender and age, and the gender pay gap is largest amongst those over 50 years old. Business in the Community's Missing Million research shows that older workers are forced out of work and then struggle to re-enter the workforce at the same salary, so closing the gender pay gap in your organisation may require paying special attention to the barriers faced by women over 50.^{xxvii}

To create gender-equal and age-friendly workplaces, employers need to:

- Value the skills, knowledge, diverse perspectives and competencies older women have developed through years' worth of experience, just as much as qualifications
- Understand that skills which have been accomplished through historically traditional 'women's work' such as childcare, are transferable to many other jobs
- Normalise agile working and remove the stigma attached, so that all employees can fulfil their working hours in a way that suits them
- Provide incentives for older women to stay in work and progress, such as opportunities to retrain, reskill and develop

For more information on Business in the Community's Age Campaign, please click [here](#).



For more information, please take a look at Business in the Community's other gender pay gap toolkits:

- Understanding your gender pay gap
- Analysing your gender pay gap
- Communicating your gender pay gap
- Tackling your gender pay gap – Retention and Progression



References

- ⁱ Gender Pay Gap: What Employees Really Think, Business in the Community (2015)
- ⁱⁱ Equal pay audit for larger organisations, Equality and Human Rights Commission (2018)
- ⁱⁱⁱ Changing Gear: Quickening the Pace of Women's Progression, Business in the Community (2012)
- ^{iv} Women in Engineering: Fixing the Talent Pipeline, Institute of Public Policy (2014)
- ^v Women Returners, PwC, the 30% Club, Women Returners (2016)
- ^{vi} What is a returner programme?, Timewise Jobs (2018)
- ^{vii} Gender Pay Gap: What Employees Really Think, Business in the Community (2015)
- ^{viii} Winning the Fight for Female Talent, PwC (2017)
- ^{ix} Ibid.
- ^x Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations: Evidence-based actions for employers, Government Equalities Office and Behavioural Insights Team (2018)
- ^{xi} Why diversity programs fail, Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A., Harvard Business Review, 94(7/8), 52-60 (2016)
- ^{xii} Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations: Evidence-based actions for employers, Government Equalities Office and Behavioural Insights Team (2018)
- ^{xiii} Equal Lives, Business in the Community (2018)
- ^{xiv} Language in your job post predicts the gender of your hire, Textio (2016)
- ^{xv} Ibid.
- ^{xvi} Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified, Tara Sophia Mohr, Harvard Business Review (2014)
- ^{xvii} Ibid.
- ^{xviii} Facebook Is Letting Job Advertisers Target Only Men, ProPublica (2018)
- ^{xix} Science Faculty's Subtle Gender Biases Favor Male Students, Moss-Racusin Corinne A. and others, PNAS (2012)
- ^{xx} Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations: Evidence-based actions for employers, Government Equalities Office and Behavioural Insights Team (2018)
- ^{xxi} If there's only one woman in your candidate pool, there's statistically no chance she'll be hired, Johnson, S. K., Hekman, D. R., & Chan, E. T., Harvard Business Review, 26(04) (2016).
- ^{xxii} Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations: Evidence-based actions for employers, Government Equalities Office and Behavioural Insights Team (2018)
- ^{xxiii} Ibid.
- ^{xxiv} Recruitment, Business in the Community (2017)
- ^{xxv} Labour Force Survey/ Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics (2017)
- ^{xxvi} Race Disparity Audit Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures website, Cabinet Office (2017)
- ^{xxvii} Missing Million, Business in the Community (2014)