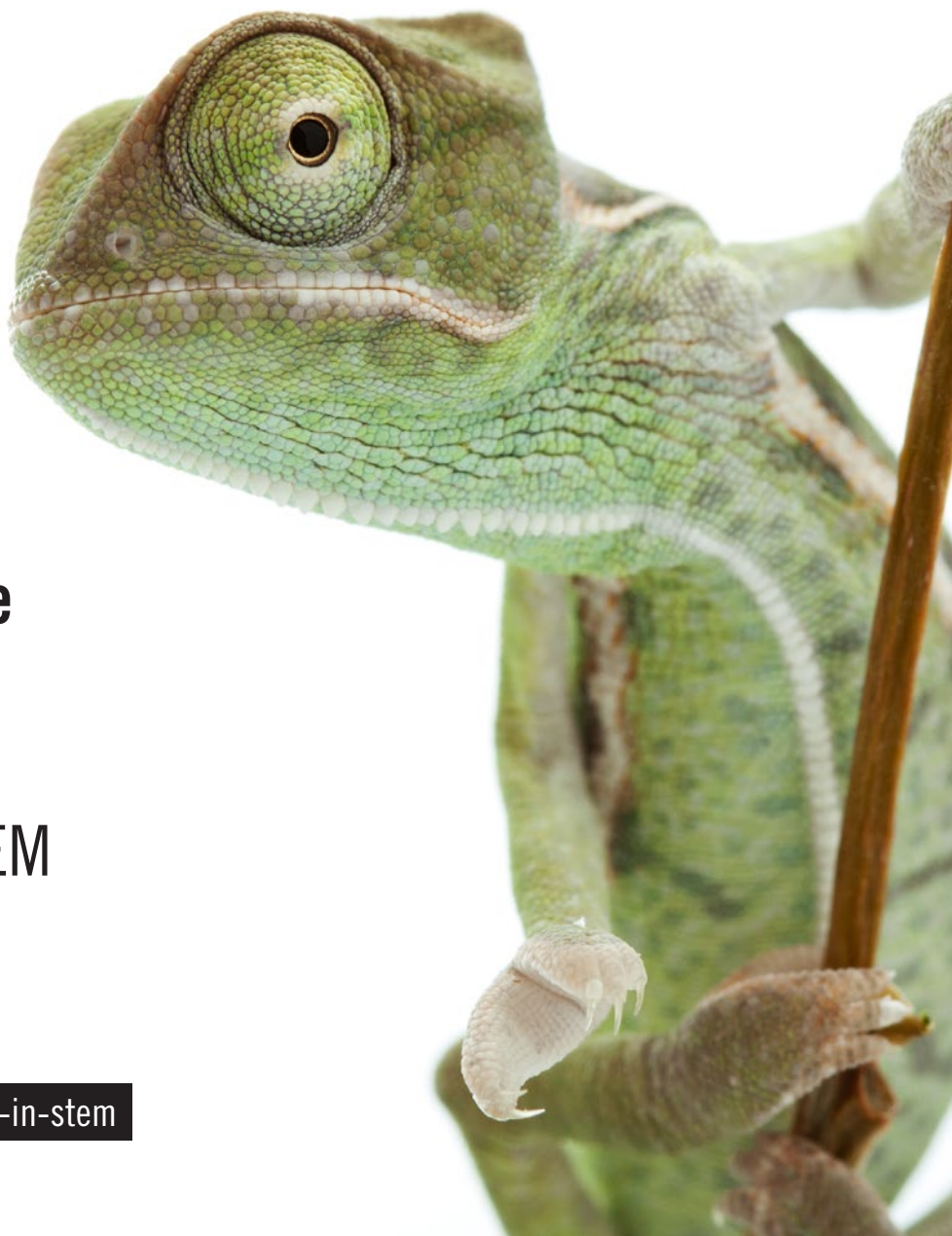


Progressing Women in STEM Roles

**Best practice
guidance** for
employers of
women in STEM

www.theiet.org/women-in-stem



ABOUT THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The IET and Prospect – working together for women in STEM

In early 2015, the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and Prospect, the union for professionals, decided to work together to gain further insight into the recruitment, promotion and retention of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) roles and to champion the career progression of women in STEM.

We have focused predominantly on how to promote best practice, inclusion and diversity as key components of a strategic business agenda.

Driven by a growing body of research-based evidence, highlighting the relatively unchanged climate around the progression of women in STEM roles within the UK, the IET and Prospect hosted a conference: *Progressing Women in STEM Roles*, in March 2015.

In November 2015, the IET published the report, *Progressing Women in STEM Roles: Supporting a diverse, adaptable and talent-rich workforce*¹. This report presented back the findings and recommendations of this collaborative effort to a wide range of representatives from industry, academia and government.

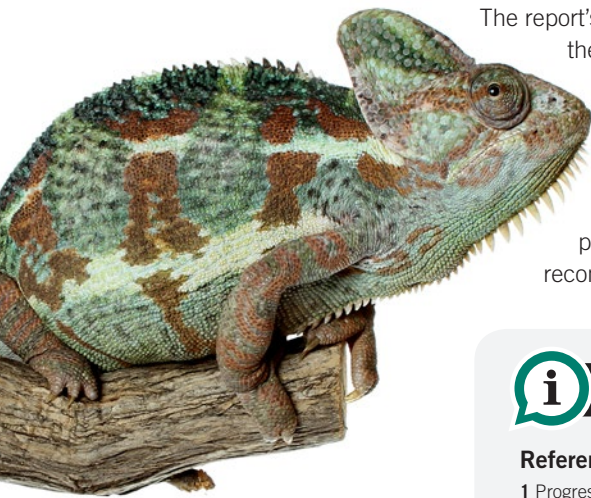
The report's recommendations included the development of guidance for employers, specific to the recruitment, promotion and retention of women in STEM roles. This guidance document has therefore been prepared in accordance with that recommendation.

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)

The IET believes that the difficulty in attracting women into engineering is not solely a diversity issue, but an economic one – as the UK needs to find 1.82 million new engineers between 2012 and 2022. To tackle this, the IET offers a series of awards and scholarships, including the Young Women Engineer of the Year Awards to honour high-achieving female engineers who can also help to inspire the female engineers of the future. The IET also runs the UK's largest online career support network for female engineers – and works in hundreds of schools every year, reaching thousands of girls and young people generally, to promote STEM careers and subjects.

Prospect, the union for professionals

Prospect champions good work – our aim is for everyone to have the opportunity to do work that is enjoyable, stretching and fulfilling. Yet engineering and technology skills are thin on the ground at a time when Britain needs more good jobs in high-performing workplaces, to rebalance the economy and sustain fairer and stronger growth. These challenges will not be resolved unless we use all of the talent pool. Prospect therefore believes that we need a concerted programme of action to address the under-representation of women at all levels. We are committed to playing our part, in particular through practical action in the workplace.



REFERENCES

References:

- 1 *Progressing Women in STEM Roles: Supporting a diverse, adaptable and talent-rich workforce* (The IET, 2015)

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The guidance in this document aligns to content in the preceding report, *Progressing Women in STEM Roles: Supporting a diverse, adaptable and talent-rich workforce*².

While it makes sense to review the report for its summarising and recommendations, it is possible to use the guidance in the following pages without doing so.

The guidance contained here is for suggested action - in particular, best practice for employers of women in STEM roles, but also for inclusion and diversity across the whole workforce.

There are four sections:

Making the change

Recruitment

Promotion

Retention

Each section follows the same format:



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION



EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE (and not so best practice)

This is a Quick Reference Action Guide – we appreciate that it's a starting point and far from comprehensive.

To help you in your own quest to support women in STEM, therefore, you'll find plenty of references for further reading.

In the spirit of progress, we welcome your feedback and look forward to collaborating further with the business professionals, academics, policy makers and others who can make these important changes happen.

On behalf of the IET-Prospect collaborative alliance

Annmarie Dann
Alliances Development Manager, IET

Denise McGuire
Vice President, Prospect



REFERENCES

References:

² Progressing Women in STEM Roles: Supporting a diverse, adaptable and talent-rich workforce (The IET, 2015)

1. Making the Change



“A Forbes study, *Fostering Innovation Through a Diverse Workforce*, has identified workforce diversity and inclusion as a key driver of internal innovation and business growth³.

”

1.1 CONDUCTING A POLICY AND PROCEDURES REVIEW

Supporting an organisation to question what it is doing with regard to diversity and inclusion establishes a framework for monitoring and evaluation.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Conduct internal investigations of an organisation's status through:

- Regular surveys and audit (*employee satisfaction, culture, inclusion, diversity*).
- Equal pay reviews.
- Employee profile (*gender, age, ethnicity*).
- Strategic KPIs and corporate policies and agreements – *do these integrate diversity/ a balanced scorecard?*



EXAMPLES

League tables for equality and diversity:

- The Sunday Times 100 best companies to work for
- The Times top 50 companies and specialist lists
- Great Place to Work®
- Opportunity Now: Gender and Wellbeing Benchmarking Survey and Awards
- WISE Awards
- Royal Academy of Engineering Diversity Leadership Group
- C2E Equality Standard (by Committed2Equality)⁴
- Athena Swan Charter (by Equality Challenge Unit)⁵
- Project Juno (Institute of Physics)⁶
- Think, Act, Report⁷
- National Equality Standard (by EY)⁸



REFERENCES

Further reading:

Royal Academy of Engineering: *Implementing diversity policies: guiding principles*
<http://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/other/implementing-diversity-policies-guiding-principles>

European Commission: *checklist for diversity management*
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/checklist_diversitymanagement_en.pdf

References:

3 www.forbes.com/forbesinsights/innovation_diversity/index.html **4** www.c2e.co.uk **5** www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan **6** www.iop.org/juno **7** www.gov.uk/think-act-report **8** www.ey.com/UK/en/Home/National-Equality-Standard

1.2 ADDRESSING WORKPLACE CULTURE

Helping the whole organisation understand why including and engaging female candidates and male and female employees is critical to long-term success.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Implement a transparent diversity and inclusion strategy to provide an overarching framework for:

- Support from the top.
- Nurturing talent across the workplace.
- Embedding an agreed strategy into the organisation, ensuring initiatives and processes are adapted to the size and context of the organisation.
- Implementing effective face-to-face training, allowing for interaction and discussion.
- Re-assessing organisational culture, including proactive career management of men and women and succession planning.

“Successful companies are not the ones that build a business, then look at inclusion and diversity as a nice-to-have attribute. Truly successful and innovative companies are those that build diverse teams. Diversity is a mentality, not just a strategic imperative¹⁰.”



EXAMPLES

Prospect Manifesto for Good Work⁹

Network Rail:

Network Rail has a strategic objective to build a more open, diverse and inclusive organisation that aims to reap benefits in terms of innovation, creativity and performance. The company works with a Trade Union Equality Group to improve its approach to diversity and inclusion. Its ‘Everyone’ strategy has three themes:

A: Access and inclusion

The aim is to ensure that Network Rail is an attractive employer and women know how to get a job in the organisation. To this end, Network Rail has reviewed its reward and benefits structure to ensure transparency and equal pay. It has also reviewed recruitment processes to reduce, if not eliminate, bias.

B: Behaviours and culture

This includes a range of initiatives such as coaching, development, promotion and succession planning, mentoring, ensuring facilities are suitable and adequate e.g. toilets and personal protective equipment (PPE), addressing harassment and bullying and pro-active implementation of family-friendly policies.

C: Collaboration

This applies to cross organisational working and to external relationships, including early engagement with schools and colleges.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

Network Rail: Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2014 – 2019 Page 52 offers insight into Network Rail's approach to managing diversity with a dedicated diversity and inclusion team providing a centre of expertise.

www.networkrail.co.uk/careers/why-choose-us/diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2014-19.pdf

Industry-Led 10 Steps A framework for sustaining and progressing women in STEM. Developed jointly by the Academy, WISE and their employer partners. www.wisecampaign.org.uk/consultancy/industry-led-ten-steps

Implementing a successful inclusion and diversity and inclusion strategy <http://www.charlottesweeney.com/blog/2014/11/21/implementing-a-successful-inclusion%20and%20diversity-and-inclusion-strategy/>

PORTIA: Effective strategies for gender equality in science <http://www.portiaweb.org/>

Forbes: Reaping the benefits of inclusion and diversity for modern business innovation <http://www.forbes.com/sites/ekaterinawalter/2014/01/14/reaping-the-benefits-of-diversity-for-modern-business-innovation/>

Kings College London: Equality Objectives & Action Plan 2012-2016 <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/governancezone/GovernanceLegal/Equality-Objectives-2012-2016.aspx>

References:

⁹ http://www.prospect.org.uk/campaigns_and_events/national_campaigns/goodwork/index?_ts=1

¹⁰ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/ekaterinawalter/2014/01/14/reaping-the-benefits-of-diversity-for-modern-business-innovation/>

1.3 COMBATting UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Ensuring that employees involved in recruitment and promotion processes receive effective equality and unconscious bias training.

“1/3 of working women in the UK feel disadvantaged in the workplace, with women believing men are offered greater opportunities at work. 57% of women surveyed felt that unconscious bias is the greatest barrier facing women in the workplace¹¹.”



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Tackling unconscious bias:

- Offer diversity and inclusion training to all staff.
- Offer an anonymous, third-party complaint channel.
- Support projects that encourage positive images of women.
- Distribute stories and pictures that portray stereotype-busting images – posters, newsletters, annual reports, speaker series, podcasts.
- Embed into managers' appraisal processes the corporate objective to eliminate and mitigate against unconscious bias.



EXAMPLES

Prospect Union: What's holding women back? Tackling bias against women in STEM¹²

Kings College London: Equality and diversity: Unconscious bias¹³

Implicit Association Tests (IATs)¹⁴

Psychologists at Harvard, the University of Virginia and the University of Washington have created a range of Implicit Association Tests (IATs), to measure unconscious bias.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

The Equality Challenge Unit: Unconscious bias <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/employment-and-careers/staff-recruitment/unconscious-bias/>

Marshall ACM: What is unconscious bias training? <http://www.marshallacm.co.uk/news/what-is-unconscious-bias-training/>

CDO Insights: Proven strategies for addressing unconscious bias in the workplace <http://www.cookcross.com/docs/UnconsciousBias.pdf>

References:

¹¹ <http://www.theguardian.com/women-in-leadership/2015/jun/03/third-of-working-women-discriminated-against>

¹² https://library.prospect.org.uk/documents/201500309_unconscious_bias_-_whats_holding_women_back

¹³ <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/aboutkings/governance/diversity/bias.aspx>

¹⁴ <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

“Many people would say employee voice is important to successful corporate engagement. Good employers recognise the value that union workplace representatives bring in resolving day-to-day problems at work and making workplaces fairer and safer¹⁵.”

1.4 INVOLVING TRADE UNIONS

Including workplace representatives, where relevant, in the design and implementation of equality, inclusion and diversity programmes.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Identify the trade union representative to assist with workforce buy-in.
- Ensure the trade union representatives are trained to support diversity and inclusion, as well as tackling unconscious bias.
- Engage workplace representatives in the design and implementation of equality, inclusion and diversity initiatives - to help positively influence policy development, staff satisfaction, resolve problems and disputes.



EXAMPLE

Prospect Manifesto for Good Work¹⁶



REFERENCES

References:

¹⁵ www.prospect.org.uk/goodwork ¹⁶ www.prospect.org.uk/goodwork ¹⁷ Office for National Statistics: Labor Force Survey: Table 3.5b Trade Union density by major occupation group and gender 2011-2013

1.5 ESTABLISHING MEASUREMENTS AND TARGETS

Developing quantitative and qualitative measurements for inclusion and diversity, tied to business goals.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Workforce profile of the organisation:

- Compare with objectives and 'best practice' peers.

Retention:

- Profile employees leaving the organisation.
- Review results from employee satisfaction surveys.
- Analyse the number and profile of employees offered and taking advantage of flexible work hours.
- Monitor the diversity of employees being offered high-risk, high-reward assignments.
- Improve and celebrate success, ensuring consistency with gender-balanced objectives.
- Deliver appropriate communication (frequency, tone) to employees with regard to diversity within all written and verbal contact.

Recruitment:

- Ensure selectors and interviewers have received inclusion and diversity training.
- New recruits - compare the profile:
 - with the applicants
 - with the candidates who received interviews
 - with the range of diversity available in the pipeline
 - of external candidates vs. internal candidates (there may be good reasons for a difference).
- Ensure policies and benefits have been reviewed and improved to attract a wider range of employees.
- Introduce inclusion and diversity templates for recruitment and promotion interviewees/agencies to provide standardised checks and balances to monitor diversity.

Promotion:

- Ensure that selectors and interviewers have received inclusion and diversity training.
- Review all job descriptions to ensure only job-related functions and characteristics are specified.
- Assemble diverse and diversity-aware interviewing panels for all job openings.
- Review and improve policies and benefits to attract a wider range of senior and representative employees.

“The key is not creating a separate report card for diversity, but making your current report card inclusive¹⁸.”



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION - continued

Personal training and development:

- Profile employees who have:
 - attended training classes/courses to enhance their development
 - participated in a formal mentoring relationship or programme.
- Recognise inclusion and diversity champions within your organisation, team or department.

External contact:

- Study the number of partnerships formed with organisations that focus on the needs of diverse professionals and other diverse candidates.
- Query if the organisation solicits customer feedback on diversity programmes or initiatives.
- Analyse the percentage of employees by gender, with global competencies, who are promotion-ready.



EXAMPLES

Kings College London: Equality Objectives & Action Plan 2012-2016¹⁹

ACAS: Delivering equality and diversity²⁰



REFERENCES

Further reading:

Washington State Human Resources: *Measuring Diversity*
<http://www.hr.wa.gov/DIVERSITY/DIVERSITYMANAGEMENT/Pages/MeasuringDiversity.aspx>

Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion (CIDI): *What gets measured gets done.*
<http://www.ccdi.ca/reports/what-gets-measured-gets-done.pdf>

Australian Government: *How to set gender diversity targets*
<https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/SETTING-GENDER-TARGETS-Online-accessible.pdf>

References:

¹⁸ http://www.workforcediversitynetwork.com/res_articles_DiversityMetricsMeasurementEvaluation.aspx (Liliana Gil, co-founder and Managing Partner of AG and former Worldwide Director of Marketing Services at Johnson & Johnson)

¹⁹ <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/governancezone/GovernanceLegal/Equality-Objectives-2012-2016.aspx>

²⁰ [http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/e/Acas_Delivering_Equality_and_Diversity_\(Nov_11\)-accessible-version-Apr-2012.pdf](http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/e/Acas_Delivering_Equality_and_Diversity_(Nov_11)-accessible-version-Apr-2012.pdf)

2. Recruitment



2.1 MONITORING RECRUITMENT DIVERSITY

Regularly reviewing the workforce make-up to measure the impact of diversity recruitment initiatives.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Ensure accountability is clear for staff responsible for recruitment, where attention to fairness is key.
- Report recruitment metrics across the organisation to act as a motivator.
- Re-define the staff pipeline, e.g. create alternative pathways to certain roles and establish mechanisms that encourage women into them.
- Create a diversity scorecard to help with monitoring and accountability.
- Manage and share a live staff talent pool to encourage internal promotion.
- Introduce a succession job role matrix to simplify a staff pipeline and emphasise where efforts may be best focused.
- Develop a visible and progressive career pathway for senior and executive roles. This could involve grouping together a range of internal job role bands/ grades and developing progressive route options. Agree gender-balanced targets, e.g. women make up 30% of staff in the four upper band/grades.



EXAMPLE

Sodexo: A diversity scorecard to help with monitoring and accountability²¹

The diversity scorecard at Sodexo makes everyone accountable by reporting the performance of managers and executives (compared to the target) each quarter.

It covers both quantitative and qualitative factors in each of the three critical diversity areas of hiring, promotion and retention.

At Sodexo, in order to increase accountability and results, 25% of the executive team's bonus was connected to its performance on the diversity scorecard. 10 to 15% of the management team's bonus was also tied to the scorecard.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

The Ten Steps for sustaining the pipeline of female talent in science, technology, engineering and manufacturing (STEM)
<https://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/consultancy/industry-led-ten-steps/10-steps>

UK Resource Centre for Women: Good practice guide, Recruitment and Selection: Competing in the war for talent
<https://www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/documents/equality/GPGrecruit.pdf>

Looking for bold recruitment approaches: best practices for recruiting women STEM women
<http://www.eremedia.com/ere/looking-for-bold-recruiting-approaches-best-practices-for-recruiting-stem-women-and-diversity-candidates-part-2-of-2/>

References:

²¹ <http://www.eremedia.com/ere/looking-for-bold-recruiting-approaches-best-practices-for-recruiting-stem-women-and-diversity-candidates-part-2-of-2/>

2.2 CONSIDERING CORPORATE REPUTATION

Thinking about how the organisation presents itself to the world in terms of promoting inclusion and diversity and a place where women can succeed.

“Under Network Rail’s theme of ‘Access and inclusion’, the company has tried to ensure it is seen as an attractive employer, an organisation in which women know how to get a job. To this end, Network Rail has reviewed its reward and benefits structure to ensure transparency and equal pay. It has also reviewed recruitment processes to reduce, if not eliminate, bias²².”



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Ensure a consistent approach to the use of inclusive imagery on all company information, not just recruitment literature, as well as on the company’s main website and job adverts.
- Carry out a review of the organisation asking the question: ‘Would a woman feel she would fit in here?’ Think about the physical layout of your organisation as well as the organisational culture and structure. Consider if any aspects of these need to change.
- Do the groundwork through awareness raising and outreach work, e.g. into schools and universities. Ensure the organisation is recognised as an employer that helps women to thrive.
- Consider how family-related activities could improve the organisation’s image and culture to attract candidates.
- Promote the achievement of individual and corporate awards, including those relating to women to recognise participation and success.
- Ensure all opportunities on offer are fair to both sexes.
- When selecting recruitment agencies or head-hunters, ensure they are briefed on best practices for the recruitment of women, according to the organisation’s diversity policies and procedures.



EXAMPLE

BAE Systems²³

Actions taken to support corporate reputation and image:

- looking for bias in the imagery used in recruitment campaigns
- running sessions for men to help them understand the barriers and challenges facing women
- engaging in a comprehensive schools programme
- enabling agile ways of working
- promoting visible role models
- running a diversity inclusion week



REFERENCES

References:

²² <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/careers/why-choose-us/diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2014-19.pdf>

²³ Joint IET and Prospect: Progressing Women In STEM Conference, March 2014

2.3 WIDENING THE POOL OF CANDIDATES

Considering how best to present vacancies and promote opportunities so that the organisation has a more diverse selection pool.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Invite recruitment agencies and head-hunters to present balanced shortlists.
- Advertise broadly – select advertising platforms used by women already, e.g. women's magazines, websites, social media, WISE.
- Consider recruitment opportunities at large technology industry events where qualified and competent women are likely to attend.
- Partner with educational establishments.
- Re-think the meaning of 'cultural fit' to broaden the talent pool under consideration and limit the effect of unconscious bias.
- Encourage and engage women from within the business to act as role models/ ambassadors - serving as speakers at industry events or giving talks at educational establishments to help to build their skills.
- Participate in outreach activities.
- Consider funding targeted projects, scholarships or initiatives that encourage the recruitment and development of women in STEM²⁴.



EXAMPLES

BT - Female-friendly recruitment campaigns²⁵

BT advertise job vacancies in women's magazines to maximise its chances of gaining applications from women. Its adverts give details of policies on childcare and caring, as well as information on maternity and adoptive leave provision.

Microsoft - T Party initiative²⁶

Microsoft research found that confidence is key to the career progression of women. So, by bringing all of the components together - role models, inspiration and sponsorship – the company generates interest for women in following a career in IT that they may not have previously considered. This case study shows how Microsoft engaged senior leaders as career sponsors and mentors for female talent.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

Anita Borg Institute: *Solutions to recruit technical women*

http://anitaborg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/AnitaBorgInstitute_SolutionsToRecruitTechnicalWomen_2012.pdf

References:

²⁴ Curtis et al 2009, cited in Anita Borg Institute for Women, *Technology Solutions to Recruit Technical Women*

²⁵ <http://www.eremedial.com/ere/looking-for-bold-recruiting-approaches-best-practices-for-recruiting-stem-women-and-diversity-candidates-part-2-of-2/>

²⁶ <https://royalsociety.org/~media/policy/projects/leading-the-way/case-studies/microsoft-case-study.pdf>

2.4 ADVERTISING ROLES TO ATTRACT FEMALE CANDIDATES

Developing job descriptions and adverts that encourage women to apply for a role.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Company image:

- Create the right impression in corporate documents, annual reports etc. through language and pictures.
- Ensure relevant representation at recruitment fairs and create a good first impression.

Framing the job:

- Use a competency and evidence-based approach to setting selection criteria for a job - only include what is actually needed.
- Think about how to make the job feasible and attractive to job sharers and part-time workers.
- Use clear and precise role specifications without jargon – at all stages of the process.

Advertising the job:

- Use appropriate and straightforward gender-neutral language in job advertisements.
- Use statements that encourage under-represented groups to apply.
- Summarise benefits where relevant, e.g. part-time/job-share/flexible hours.
- Avoid unintentional barriers, e.g. allow relevant experience to substitute for a qualification where appropriate.
- Take care with language, setting out qualification requirements to avoid being exclusive.
- Advertise broadly - consider using women's magazines websites and chat rooms, social media.
- Offer a female company representative to answer questions from (prospective) female applicants, if possible.

“A scientific study of 4,000 job descriptions revealed that a lack of gender-inclusive wording caused significant implications for recruiting professionals tasked to recruit women in hard-to-fill positions under-represented by women²⁷.”



EXAMPLES

Wording the advertisement in a more personal way. If cost allows, including positive images of women in STEM occupations:

Food processing company urgently seeks qualified food hygiene technicians to deliver government-funded research project.

OR:

Do you want to contribute to improving food safety? If you have food hygiene qualifications and want to work in a family-friendly environment, we'd like to hear more from you.

Including Equal Opportunity statements:

Trained computer programmers and troubleshooters required for work in Zanex.

OR:

We have vacancies for posts which will involve helping our clients to deal with hardware/software problems with their Personal Computers. We welcome applications from women, minority ethnic communities, etc.

Same level calls:

Research at Whirlpool demonstrated that the person who makes an initial recruiting call has a significant impact on whether it is answered and successful. The job level, the gender of the caller and the time of the call all have a significant impact on its success. Where calls by someone at an equal or higher job level (same level calls) can get a 100% response rate, standard recruiter calls normally only get a 10% response rate²⁸.

Feminine and masculine-themed words used in an engineering job description:

Engineer company description:

Feminine: We are a community of engineers who have effective relationships with many satisfied clients. We are committed to understanding the engineering sector intimately.

Masculine: We are a dominant engineering firm that boasts many leading clients. We are determined to stand apart from the competition.

Engineer qualifications:

Feminine: Proficient oral and written communications skills. Collaborates well in a team environment. Sensitive to clients' needs, can develop warm client relationships.

Masculine: Strong communication and influencing skills. Ability to perform individually in a competitive environment. Superior ability to satisfy customers and manage company's association with them.

Engineer responsibilities:

Feminine: Provide general support to project team in a manner complimentary to the company. Help clients with construction activities.

Masculine: Direct project groups to manage project progress and ensure accurate task control. Determine compliance with client's objectives²⁹.



REFERENCES

References:

²⁷ <http://www.eremedia.com/ere/you-dont-know-it-but-women-see-gender-bias-in-your-job-postings/>

²⁸ <http://www.eremedia.com/ere/looking-for-bold-recruiting-approaches-best-practices-for-recruiting-stem-women-and-diversity-candidates-part-1-of-2/>

²⁹ <http://www.eremedia.com/ere/you-dont-know-it-but-women-see-gender-bias-in-your-job-postings/>

2.5 SHORTLISTING APPLICATIONS

Ensuring the existence of a robust and fair process for application shortlisting.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Key components for successful application shortlisting:

- Apply a gender-balanced approach to shortlisted applicants.
- Set sift criteria and agree thresholds and weightings ahead of the shortlisting.
- Ensure external recruiters do not filter out relevant technical skills nor introduce unmonitored barriers to female applicants.
- Arrange for applications to be reviewed by at least two different recruiting managers to test consistency in approach.
- Use the person specification systematically to assess each application.
- Complete the shortlisting in one sitting where possible.
- Review every application independently.
- Eliminate information that has the potential to cloud judgement.
- Record why an applicant did or did not make the shortlist.
- Maintain records to enable organisational learning from them. The length of time records should be kept will vary depending upon frequency of recruitment.

Unconscious bias continues
to be present during
the application stage
as fewer BAME* and
women are selected

30



REFERENCES

References:

³⁰ Business in the Community: 2014 Gender and Race Benchmark Trends: Key findings
*Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)

2.6 SELECTION AND INTERVIEW

Ensuring the right person for the role is selected, by checking that everyone involved in interviewing and selection is properly trained and able to make a fair selection.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Avoid all-male interview panels where possible - this presents a more diverse image of an organisation and can be less intimidating. If this is not possible, consider the involvement of female employees elsewhere in the interview process. For example, if a tour is included in the interview, this could be given by a woman working in a similar role to the vacant role.
- Consider using female assessors to make the call, if using initial telephone assessments.
- Let candidates know in advance what the selection process will involve.
- Ask for feedback regarding the organisation's selection process from all candidates, whether successful or not, to find out whether your selection process is helping you make your organisation appealing to both sexes.
- Trial alternative approaches to selection and monitor the impact on diversity outcomes.
- Introduce unconscious bias and gender-specific recruitment training for directors, managers, HR and all involved in the recruitment process.
- Keep a record of interview and selection decisions, including the rationale for selection or rejection to assist with improving future decision making. The length of time records should be kept will vary depending upon frequency of recruitment.



EXAMPLES

IBM (Project View Plus)³¹

Recruiting leaders at IBM realised that simply talking to recruiters wasn't convincing enough to attract the very best experienced women and minority candidates. As a result, the company experimented with a face-to-face approach, which included an expenses-paid, two-day, on-site visit. The programme required managers to interact with the referred, experienced prospects. If both parties were convinced, offers were made before they left.

Cisco: implementing a 'friends program', where employees talk candidly to applicants³²

Cisco demonstrated that, by offering the opportunity to talk to an actual employee (a new friend), you could, in some cases, excite applicants. An updated 'friends program' would include providing highly qualified STEM women interviewees with an opportunity to talk briefly with another woman in a technical position at the firm.



REFERENCES

References:

- ³¹ http://www-03.ibm.com/employment/us/diverse/downloads/ibm_diversity_brochure.pdf
³² <http://www.fastcompany.com/29038/how-cisco-makes-friends>

2.7 APPOINTING AND PROMOTING

Ensuring a policy is in place, in line with the Equality Act, that commits to fairness in the workplace when appointing and promoting.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Company image:

- Create the right impression in corporate documents, annual reports etc, through language and pictures.
- Ensure relevant representation at recruitment fairs and create a good first impression.

Framing the job:

- Use a competency and evidence-based approach to setting selection criteria for a job - only include what is actually needed.
- Think about how to make the job feasible and attractive to job sharers and part-time workers.
- Use clear and precise role specifications without jargon – at all stages of the process.

Advertising the job:

- Use appropriate and straightforward gender-neutral language in job advertisements.
- Use statements that encourage under-represented groups to apply.
- Summarise benefits where relevant, e.g. part-time/job-share/flexible hours.
- Avoid unintentional barriers, e.g. allow relevant experience to substitute for qualification where appropriate.
- Take care with language, setting out qualification requirements to avoid being exclusive.
- Advertise broadly - consider using women's magazines, websites and chat rooms, social media.
- Offer a female company representative to answer questions from (prospective) female applicants, if possible.



EXAMPLE

The Equality Act

The aim of the Equality Act is to improve equal job opportunities and fairness for employees and job applicants. Organisations should have policies in place so these outcomes happen and, just as importantly, to prevent discrimination.

This includes:

- selection processes that take account of varied experiences and personal styles
- contractual terms that are fair and transparent, including pay, leave and hours of work
- pay that is equal to any similar role held by a male; any variations in pay – e.g. for additional experience or relevant achievements - should be based on clear criteria and only paid where demonstrably necessary for the role
- as much flexibility as is reasonable for the role - not just accepting that it must be done in the way that it was previously
- equal access to training and development opportunities
- training for managers to ensure that their decisions are not affected by unconscious bias
- access to in-house networks and mentoring opportunities.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

The Equality Act 2010
<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

Government Equalities Office: guidance for employers on how best to implement positive action:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employers-step-by-step-guide-to-positive-action-in-recruitment-and-promotion>

Book: Making Equality Work, by Shahnas Ali, Christine Burns and Loren Grant Plain Sense Ltd; 1 edition (15 Sept. 2013)

2.8 EVALUATING PROGRESS

Regularly monitoring the workforce diversity and seeking feedback from applicants to gain useful insights for the organisation.

“It is important to measure progress to create better understanding within organisations and reinforce good practice: “What gets measured gets done”³³.”

Peter Cheese, Chief Executive Officer of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Track the numbers of women who make initial enquiries about the role, the number that then apply and the number who get through each stage of the process and reviewing.
- Track the numbers who withdraw and find out why they did so.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

Washington State Human Resources: *Measuring Diversity*
<http://www.hr.wa.gov/DIVERSITY/DIVERSITYMANAGEMENT/Pages/MeasuringDiversity.aspx>

Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion (CIDI): *What gets measured gets done*.
<http://www.cidi.ca/reports/what-gets-measured-gets-done.pdf>

Australian Government: *How to set gender inclusion and diversity targets*
<https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/SETTING-GENDER-TARGETS-Online-accessible.pdf>

References:

³³ At the Joint IET and Prospect: Progressing Women In STEM Conference, 4th March 2015

3. Promotion



3.1 EVOLVING THE ORGANISATION

Helping managers to promote a fairer, more diverse workplace and one that better recognises the talents of women within it.

“81% of women aged 28-40, believed that having children would affect their career progression³⁴.”



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Try 'Reverse Mentoring' to help Senior Managers understand how women perceive the organisation. Through this technique, senior managers can learn from junior women about the difficulties they experience and their ideas for improvements.
- Involve trade unions, when deciding on strategy, setting targets/quotas, formulating actions, implementing initiatives and reviewing progress.
- Implement unconscious bias awareness activity and training.
- Use opportunities such as National Women's Engineering Day and Ada Lovelace Day to hold events celebrating the historical achievements of women in STEM fields.
- Use industry and technical forums to spotlight the accomplishments of women in the industry.
- Highlight examples of men and women in senior roles who work part-time – to help diminish stigma and the assumption that this is career-limiting.
- Adopt gender-neutral language in all company documents.
- Ensure women are visible on posters, in training videos etc.
- Use in-house publications to spotlight good performance by women or teams led by women.
- Support women's staff networks to raise the profile of women in the organisation.
- Evolve the company so that it is ready for women to operate in all posts.
- Ensure facilities are suitable and adequate, e.g. changing rooms, toilets, personal protective equipment stores, uniforms, etc.
- Be alert to behaviours which can make minority staff feel unwelcome or disrespected.
- Challenge assumptions about where the next leaders will come from.
- Spread the message that women do not need to be replicas of the previous incumbent to be accepted and valued in a senior role.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

The Ten Steps for sustaining the pipeline of female talent in science, technology, engineering and manufacturing (STEM)
<https://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/consultancy/industry-led-ten-steps/10-steps>

References:

³⁴ Opportunity Now, Project 28-40: The Report http://www.bitc.org.uk/system/files/project_28-40_the_report.pdf

3.2 ESTABLISHING ROLES AND PROCESSES TO INCLUDE WOMEN

Taking care to adopt gender-neutral roles, by focusing on real need, establishing clear criteria and using the information and technology available.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Roles and job design:

- Define gender-neutral roles.
- Develop the roles you actually need - some organisations unthinkingly reproduce historical roles.
- Consider how you can optimise new technology to make some roles more compatible with family commitments, e.g. videoconferencing.
- Think carefully about what requirements are really necessary, once you have defined the new role - any requirement likely to disproportionately exclude potential women candidates should be justifiable.
- Liaise with the organisation's women's network if there is one.

Selection process:

- Advertise the role openly and invite internal applications.
- Avoid relying on senior staff to identify 'preferred' candidates.
- Ensure all staff involved in the selection process receive effective training, including unconscious bias training.
- Ensure the selection process works to a transparent schedule and does not disadvantage part-timers.
- Encourage and respond positively to questions about the role and the process itself.
- Be aware that responses which may seem neutral to some people, can be interpreted negatively.

Selection method:

- Formulate gender-neutral interview questions and aptitude tests.
- Review selection decisions after each stage - for evidence that the process has been fair and that unconscious bias hasn't hindered objective decision-making.



EXAMPLES

An inconsiderate response

If a candidate asks if some of the work could be done from home, a response of “we’ve never done that before” could be interpreted negatively and discouraging - even if it wasn’t meant to be.

Review the qualifications

For some industrial safety roles, an engineering qualification may not be essential. A background in ergonomics or occupational hygiene may be equally or more useful. Considering professionals from these fields may increase the candidate pool and has the potential to increase the number of women candidates.

The benefits of thinking differently

An organisation employs four full-time Senior Control and Instrumentation (C&I) Engineers to support 15 sites. Each site has its own local C&I team and many teams include part-timers. When one senior engineer retires the company prepares to fill the vacancy by promoting someone from within one of the C&I teams. Even though all previous senior engineers have worked full-time, the company communicates directly with every team member, making it clear that options involving part-time working or job-sharing will be welcomed and fairly considered.

Consequently, the company successfully promotes two part-time C&I team members to become part-time senior engineers. Some reallocation of responsibility for different sites is necessary, but is worthwhile to get the best candidates.

The new arrangement provides additional benefits. The reduction in wasted travel time between sites proves to be an extra efficiency for the company. Having three full-time and two part-time senior engineers provides extra flexibility, allowing the company to reduce the hours of another senior engineer approaching retirement, without completely losing all that expertise and experience.

“Written job descriptions and person specifications are very important. Research shows that panels without clear criteria unconsciously make more gender-biased choices³⁵.”

<1/10 (9.8%)

of STEM

Managers are female



36



REFERENCES

References:

³⁵ Uhlmann, E. L., & Cohen, G. L., (2005). Constructed criteria – Redefining merit to justify discrimination. *Psychological Science*, Vol 16, No. 6, 474–480). ³⁶ Office for National Statistics: Labour Force Survey, March 2011- March 2012

“The wider trend is that female STEM participation decreases as the seniority of positions increases³⁷.”

3.3 CULTIVATING COMPETITION FROM WOMEN CANDIDATES

Using appraisals, mentoring and informal discussion groups to develop the ability of male and female candidates to successfully compete in a fair selection process.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Use appraisal processes to develop and encourage women to compete for promotion.
- Guide women towards advice and support, such as staff networks and mentoring schemes.
- Conduct appraisals positively ensuring managers are well-trained, including unconscious bias training.
- Consider introducing a mentoring programme – this can help overcome feelings of exclusion by some employees.
- Introduce women to senior company figures through informal discussion groups and seminar series.
- Help unsuccessful candidates understand what they can do to be successful next time.
- Recognise that a candidate's internalised bias may lead them to exaggerate their deficiencies.
- Be honest and clear about future potential for promotion.
- Guide employees to development initiatives they may not already be undertaking, e.g. further learning, mentoring, women's networks, conferences etc.



EXAMPLE

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC): developing women³⁸

PwC has a three-point strategic approach to developing and advancing women. The company has launched a bias awareness training programme to help understand the nature of bias. It demonstrates techniques to control personal bias in the workplace when, for example, assessing colleagues for promotion or performance. It also developed an actuarial model to uncover underlying patterns, blockages and trends in the way women are promoted. Meanwhile, the data provides insight to support individuals and groups through gender diversity initiatives. For instance, by offering a childcare voucher for the first year after return to work, the number of women returning from maternity leave increased from 40% to 93% in the UK firm.



REFERENCES

References:

³⁷ <http://sciencecampaign.org.uk/CaSEDiversityinSTEMreport2014.pdf>

³⁸ <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=student>

4. Retention



4.1 ENSURING ALL EMPLOYEES FEEL VALUED

Improving retention by implementing a transparent diversity and inclusion plan.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Implement a transparent diversity and inclusion strategy that includes:

- Reward talent and achievement rather than stereotypical indicators of success.
- Foster open communication - give employees structured ways to make their thoughts, feelings and observations regularly known.
- Ensure equal pay for women and men in STEM roles. A small pay gap early in one's career grows over time, leading to significant consequences for lifetime earnings.
- Be proactive about succession planning.
- Value skills achieved outside the workplace, where relevant.
- Support flexible working practices.
- Develop family-friendly policies, where possible.
- Provide support for employees returning from career breaks (men and women).
- Look at how the organisation can be more transparent about its appraisal, development, feedback and promotion processes.
- Encourage and enable development for all - actively encourage leadership and development programmes for women.
- Offer mentoring opportunities to junior and new staff.
- Conduct exit interviews and analyse data for continuous improvement.
- Ensure female-friendly facilities are available.
- Encourage senior female leaders to become role models.
- Develop employee profiles/case studies, external articles about women.
- Encourage senior male leaders to sponsor up-and-coming women.
- Provide training to ensure that unconscious bias does not influence recruitment and promotion decisions or appraisal processes.
- Describe roles in terms of competencies actually required.
- Ensure that the culture is outcome-focused and not based on presenteeism.
- Think about generational differences during appraisal processes to avoid assessments being characterised by values and motivations specific to the appraiser's formative years.
- Recognise transferable skills – avoid automatically excluding candidates who have not worked in specific roles or received specific training.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

The Ten Steps for sustaining the pipeline of female talent in science, technology, engineering and manufacturing (STEM)
<https://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/consultancy/industry-led-ten-steps/10-steps>

4.2 ENABLING FLEXIBLE WORKING

Recognising the value of offering flexible working, enabling staff to fulfil their working commitments, without necessarily attending the workplace.

“The lack of job mobility and career progression for flexible workers is a major factor in the failure of the female talent pipeline. Employers should be mindful not only of their glass ceilings but their sticky floors³⁹.”



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Introduce a flexible working policy that offers options for all new roles where relevant. This may cover the following:
 - part-time hours
 - compressed working week
 - job sharing
 - mobile working
 - home working
 - term-time working.
- Consult with staff at all levels.
- Consult with relevant trade unions/staff associations.
- Create clear, written procedures for implementation and evaluation, including regular re-assessment.
- Communicate changes to employees and keep them up to date with change.



EXAMPLE

Deloitte: increasing work flexibility in order to attract and retain more women⁴⁰

Many firms have learned that offering increased work flexibility, career scalability and providing choices can all be powerful attraction features for women. Deloitte offers a 'Mass Career Customisation Programme' which provides employees with an opportunity to dial down or dial up their work responsibilities, work hours and travel depending on their current individual priorities.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

ACAS: *Flexible working and work-life balance*

<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/4/n/Flexible-working-and-work-life-balance.pdf>

Catalyst: *High Potentials in Tech-Intensive Industries: The Gender Divide in Business Roles*

<http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/high-potentials-tech-intensive-industries-gender-divide-business-roles>

Race for Opportunity: *Bridging the Value Gap*

http://raceforopportunity.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/kcfinder/files/RaceforOpportunity/bridging_the_value_gap_toolkit.pdf

References:

³⁹ The timewise jobs index: http://timewise.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Timewise_Flexible_Jobs_Index.pdf

⁴⁰ <http://www.nnstoy.org/download/continuuums-of-professional-practice/Deloitte%20Review%20-%20Mass%20Career%20Customization%20-%20Benko.pdf>

“50,000 women with SET qualifications or experience were not working. Of those who returned after a career break, only a minuscule 8,000 SET women re-entered the workplace into jobs that utilised their qualifications and expertise⁴¹.”

4.3 MANAGING CAREER BREAKS EFFECTIVELY

Managing staff as they prepare for a career break and ensuring an effective return to work by keeping in touch with them during career break periods.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

- Consider how a returning employee can return to a position that matches their talents and skills.
- Look at what support can be offered to those who have undertaken a career break - e.g. women's networks, buddy programmes or Keeping-in-Touch (KIT) days – all of which help in providing a smooth transition back into the workplace.

Employers may find the following considerations relevant when creating policies and procedures relating to career breaks:

- How an employee's continuity of service, pension and other terms/conditions of service are managed.
- Backfill during career break period, including legal rights associated with this.
- Organisational restructure and effects on all staff, including employees on a career break.
- Proactive arrangements if an employee decides not to return to work after a career break.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

Institute of Physics: *Managing a career break guidance document*:
<http://www.aps.org/programs/women/resources/upload/CareerBreaksIOP.pdf>

References:

41 Good Practice Guide, Recruitment and Selection: Competing in the war for talent <https://www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/documents/equality/GPGrecruit.pdf>

4.4 SUPPORTING WOMEN RETURNERS

Implementing a returner programme and suitable return to work procedures to help the organisation to re-recruit and women to re-integrate.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Implement a returners programme and suitable return to work procedures that may include:

- Re-induction and retraining.
- Coaching and mentoring.
- Access to a women's network.
- Pre-return self-appraisals.
- Work experience arrangements for women taking career breaks.
- Providing relevant support, e.g. skills, confidence, product training.



70% of women feel anxious about taking a career break

42



REFERENCES

References:

42 <http://www.theguardian.com/women-in-leadership/2014/mar/25/70-of-women-fear-taking-a-career-break> (retrieved Feb 2015) (London Business School survey)

“The cost of lost training and experience if a woman fails to return has been estimated at £200,000 each, so both women and employers lose out⁴³.”

Dawn Bonfield, Women's Engineering Society (WES)



EXAMPLES

Atkins: Returners Programme⁴⁴

This includes a two-day course for returners shortly after returning to work. The company also has a Women's Professional Development Programme - a 4-day course run over 3 months.

Thames Tideway Tunnel: 12 week professional internships⁴⁵

While constructing a 25 kilometre sewer tunnel in London, Thames Tideway Tunnel introduced paid 12-week professional internships (now closed) for professionals returning to the workforce after two or more years. They were given assignments, coaching support and an internal mentor.

Re-recruiting top performing employees⁴⁶

Organisations such as Deloitte and DaVita have found that re-recruiting previously top performing employees is a successful way to increase top quality staff. This type of boomerang approach can be used to target former women STEM professionals back into an organisation.



REFERENCES

Further reading:

Women in STEM: women returners

<http://www.womeninstem.co.uk/recruiting-women-in-stem/how-stem-employers-can-benefit-from-encouraging-women-returners>

Guardian: The five things I want to tell employers about women returning to work

<http://www.theguardian.com/women-in-leadership/2015/mar/23/the-five-things-i-want-to-tell-employers-about-women-returning-to-work>

Women's Business Council: Maximising women's contributions to future economic growth

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204751/DCMS_WBC_Full_Report_v1.0.pdf

Women returners to business Helping experienced professionals get back to work after an extended career break

<http://corp.womenreturners.com/>

MentorSET – a mentoring scheme for women in STEM

<http://www.mentorset.org.uk/>

Wellcome Trust: Getting back in to research after a career break

http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/stellent/groups/corporatesite/@msh_peda/documents/web_document/wtp057274.pdf

The Daphne Jackson Trust: They offer a fellowship scheme aimed at women and men who have taken a break of at least three years from a SET career.

www.DaphneJackson.org

References:

⁴³ <http://www.womeninstem.co.uk/recruiting-women-in-stem/how-stem-employers-can-benefit-from-encouraging-women-returners> ⁴⁴ <http://www.womanthology.co.uk/breaking-down-the-barriers-for-women-if-we-dont-who-will-saphina-sharif-business-planning-manager-for-atkins/> ⁴⁵ <http://www.thejobshareproject.com/Thames-Tideway-Returners-Programme.html> ⁴⁶ <http://www.bersin.com/Blog/post/Best-Practices-in-Re-Recruiting-Top-Talent.aspx>

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