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Employment Matter Guidelines

Promotion, Transfer and Termination

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Introduction

Recognising and appropriately rewarding the contribution of your female staff will help you attract and retain the best female talent and give your organisation a competitive advantage.

The information provided here aims to assist you to start thinking about:

- How you could analyse your workplace to identify any promotion, transfer and termination issues for women.
- Suggested actions you could take to address the promotion, transfer and termination issues for women you have identified.
- Keep in mind that women are a diverse group and differences such as age, religion, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, disability, sexual orientation, etc, warrant consideration in shaping your practices for recognising and rewarding employees. Organisations that recognise and value the different backgrounds of Australian women stand to benefit from a range of experiences and skills. These skills are a resource for doing business in a diverse society.

Not all issues, actions and examples suggested here are relevant to your organisation. It is up to you to decide what is appropriate and relevant for your organisation to consider when analysing your workplace to identify issues for women, and taking actions to address these.

Analysing Your Workplace

To assist you analyse your workplace to identify promotion, transfer and termination issues for women, we suggest you:

- Revisit your workforce profile to find where your female employees are.
- Consult with your employees.
- Examine your existing promotion, transfer or termination of employment policies and practices.



Questions to Identify Promotion, Transfer and Termination Issues for Women

Remember, your organisation is unique and may have unique issues. However, the following questions may be helpful when analysing your workplace.

Promotion

?	Is your promotion process transparent and does it deliver promotions for both your best female employees and male employees?	?	Are leadership development programs available for both men and women?
?	Would your promotion processes and decisions withstand the rigour of a review by an independent third party?	?	Are women applying for, and gaining places on, leadership and other skills development programs, at a rate similar to men?
?	Are both female and male employees able to access career paths, incremental advancement, increased responsibilities or development opportunities (for example, high profile projects)?	?	Have skills audits been conducted over all levels and all departments of your organisation? If so: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Have high potential female and male employees interested in promotion opportunities been identified? – Have you examined the findings to see whether 'women's' jobs and skills are valued as highly as 'men's'?
?	<p>When you look at the numbers of men and women in your organisation, are women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Promoted in the same proportion as their male colleagues? – Promoted beyond certain critical job grades at a similar rate to men? – Transferred horizontally across your organisation at a similar rate to men? – Provided with opportunities for decision-making at a similar rate to men? <p>If these rates differ between female and male employees, why is this so? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are these women provided with training and development opportunities that will assist them to improve their performance/develop skills required? – How have you identified female employees who are and are not interested in career opportunities, including promotion? 		

Transfer

?	Is there mobility between different departments and sections within your organisation?	?	Are female and male employees gaining both functional and line experience early in their careers?
?	Can men and women transfer to roles in non-traditional areas to get a broad range of experience?		

Termination

?	Are the reasons employment is terminated gender-neutral? Are the same performance standards expected of female and male employees?	?	In times of downsizing, are your female and male staff represented in equivalent rates with respect to redundancies?
?	Would your termination processes and decisions withstand the rigour of a review by an independent third party?	?	Do departing female and male employees have equal access to outplacement seminars and skills workshops?



Suggested Actions to Take to Address Promotion, Transfer and Termination Issues for Women

To comply with the Act, you need to take actions to address the promotion, transfer and termination issues for women you identified. You do not need to do everything all at once and you can aim to achieve equal opportunity over time.

To be waived from reporting in following years, you must demonstrate that you have taken all reasonably practicable measures to address promotion, transfer and termination issues for women you have identified (for example, your issue might be a low level of female representation above a particular level).

The following suggestions will help you start thinking about actions you could take to address any promotion, transfer and termination issues you have identified.

Keep in mind that:

- Not all of these actions may be relevant to your organisation. You will need to decide whether you choose to do all, some, or none of the suggested actions, and whether you wish to tailor suggested actions to suit the needs of your workplace.
- If your workplace analysis demonstrates your organisation has no issues for women in this employment matter, you would not need to take any actions.



Developing Policy and Procedures

- Put in place a policy requiring promotion based on performance.
- Develop a quality, consistent process for promotion.
- Implement a quality, consistent process for providing transfer opportunities.
- Implement non-discriminatory termination policies and procedures.
- Supplement these steps with an organisational commitment to valuing diversity.



Reviewing Promotion, Transfer and Termination Opportunities

- Monitor and compare the promotion and transfer rates of female employees and their male colleagues.
- Identify promotion blockages where women find it very difficult to advance (for example, to supervisor level on the factory floor, or to partnerships in law firms).
- Encourage an organisational culture that accommodates differences in employee needs and workplace practices. For example, challenge the culture of long working hours that disadvantages employees with a different working style.
- Review job descriptions to ensure all skills relevant to the position are properly recognised and rewarded.

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- Ensure both female and male employees are recognised when roles and responsibilities expand and positions are reclassified as more senior.
- Monitor career paths to ensure both female and male employees' changing responsibilities and roles are recognised and rewarded (for example, through expanded job title and accompanying remuneration changes).
- Conduct skills audits across your organisation to ensure that the skills of men and women are valued equally – including skills of employees from different cultural backgrounds.
- Monitor attrition rates for both men and women. If rates differ, you could:
 - conduct confidential exit interviews – this is often more effective with an independent third party.
 - analyse the data trends and share them with your senior management team.
- Ensure performance standards are transparent and equitable, and that outcomes for men and women are comparable.
- Survey employees about the equity of promotion, transfer and termination procedures.



Developing High Potential Employees

- Provide both female and male employees with opportunities to 'grow' into newly created, more senior positions. Make sure that different work styles are not impediments to employees accessing opportunities.
- Provide both female and male employees with high profile development assignments/projects.
- Conduct skills audits across your organisation to identify high potential female and male employees who are interested in promotion opportunities.
- Put in place a process to identify talented female and male employees early in their careers and place them in key development roles. For example, you could develop female and male employee talent and improve promotion opportunities through:
 - new project teams.
 - a broad range of rotations in functional and line management roles.
 - preparing staff for rotation into line management positions by giving them the opportunity to gain hands-on experience first (for example, by working for several months attached to the line area before taking on a line position).
- Include both female and male employees in these key development roles.
- When implementing leadership development programs ensure the programs:
 - are inclusive of the needs of female employees, including women of different backgrounds
 - provide relevant experience.
 - provide role models that build confidence and lead to new challenging assignments.

"Once in the organisation, we ensure that women have excellent promotion prospects, with all jobs advertised internally on our company's intranet. It has seen more than 80% of transfers and promotions in the past year go to women.

Tony Touma
Human Resource Manager
Australian National
Credit Union



Supporting High-potential Employees

- Provide leadership coaching to female employees to assist them to succeed in 'pioneering' roles.
- Develop a mentoring program.
- Develop alternative communication networks that enable both men and women to access information available through key informal networks (for example, 'old boy' network).
- Encourage senior management to challenge inappropriate assumptions made by line managers about female employees (for example, the job was done differently rather than the outcome was achieved).
- Secure senior management support for EEO/diversity development and promotion initiatives by making them accountable through performance goals and incentives (see example, [Motorola](#)).



Supporting Terminated Employees

- Assist female and male employees to develop new skills and improve business employability, so they can adapt to changes in business objectives rather than take voluntary redundancy or termination.
- Ensure access to appropriate services and financial information (for example, redeployment or voluntary redundancy) is available to and accessed by both men and women.



Communicating about Promotion, Transfer and Termination

- Advertise jobs or call for expressions of interest for promotion or transfer opportunities as widely as possible within your organisation.
- Publicise your promotion policy widely in the organisation.
- Ensure both female and male employees, and employees on long-term leave have access to the information on promotion, transfer and termination policies and procedures.
- Train managers on promotion, transfer and termination policies and procedures.
- Hold managers accountable for developing female and male employees by including this requirement in managers' workplace and performance agreements.
- Encourage managers to lead by example with respect to providing equal opportunity in promotion, transfer and termination.



Predominantly Male Workplace Issues

An equal opportunity program must deal with the specific needs and issues of your organisation. Such a program identifies and outlines the issues you are addressing and the initiatives you will put in place to achieve results. The most significant issues facing organisations with a majority of male employees may be:

- A lack of applications from female employees.
- A low proportion of women in management.
- A low proportion of women in non-traditional occupational categories eg. trades, labouring, plant and machinery operators.
- Problems retaining female employees.

?	Are all staff given access to career development training?	?	Have you identified a gap in skills/experience of women wanting to progress into management?
?	Do you have paid study leave?	?	Do you have a mentoring scheme for women?
?	Do you encourage women to attend management courses?	?	Have you introduced cross-skilling and job rotation?
?	Can you implement a women in management network?		Are men and women assessed on the same competencies?
?	Is length of service a criteria for promotion?		



Predominantly Female Workplace Issues

EOWA is aware that some organisations have been implementing very good Human Resources policies for a number of years but have under reported on this information because they don't see it as relevant to equal opportunity for women. All HR policies and practices, whether formal or informal, affect all the people in your organisation and, therefore, are relevant to equal opportunity for women.

?	What percentage of the feeder pools for senior of (para) professional positions are women?	?	Do women have the requisite skills and experience to be promoted?
?	Are women promoted at the same proportion as they are represented in the feeder pools?	?	Are women less inclined to apply for promotions?
?	Do women resign because of lack of career prospects? Do men leave for the same reason?		Do women and men resign for the same or different reasons?



Case Studies

All case studies are available from www.eowa.gov.au

Mixed Gender

John Wiley and Sons, an educational textbook publishing and distribution company, realised that it had great staff and took actions to ensure that staff knew of internal vacancies. The results speak for themselves...[read more...](#)

At **Sea World** (part of Warner Village Theme Parks), management has overcome gender perceptions and stereotypes to promote women into non-traditional roles. How? Management believes that there is a need to provide women with opportunities in traditionally male-dominated areas. [Find out what actions were delivered to achieve this.](#)

At **The Friend's School**, employees felt that family responsibilities and part-time employment hampered promotion opportunities and the need to promote women in non-teaching areas. With the development of new protocols, reviews and administration and other exciting actions, see how The Friend's School has not only achieved Waived status for the maximum three years, but also became an *EOWA Employer of Choice for Women*. [Read on...](#)

Predominantly Male

Kimberly Clark Australia is best known, particularly by working mothers, for its range of disposable nappies. It's a company that is committed to delivering improved outcomes for women within the organisation especially with regard to the low number of women transfers, promotions, and appointments to IT, General Management and Sales. [More on this ...](#)

Predominantly Female

At the **Australian National Credit Union** (ANCU), staff and customers are grouped together and collectively called members. All the members hold equal shares so, as part owners of the company, they all have equal say. They found they had a high turnover in call centre jobs and took an innovative approach to managing this. [More on this ...](#)

Autoliv Australia, a seatbelt and airbag manufacturer outside of Melbourne, makes an effort to curb staff turnover. However, their low turnover resulted in limiting the ability to provide promotional opportunities for women in the workplace. But, through some ingenious ideas Autoliv now promotes equal numbers of men and women. [How? Read on...](#)

Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICA) knew that call centres attract a high level of staff turnover, and unfortunately, this was also the case at ICA. Now, ICA is nominated for a Leadership in Diversity award in Melbourne. How did they go from high turnover to an award nomination? [Easy! Find out here...](#)

Diversity Related

[Motorola](#) secured senior management support for EEO/diversity development and promotion initiatives by making them accountable through performance goals and incentives.



Related Links and Resources

Publications

[Attract, Retain and Motivate: A Toolkit for Diversity Management](#)

Articulates 10 key steps for HR managers to effectively attract, retain and motivate top quality employees via diversity management practices. Steps focus on recruitment, selection, appraisal, promotion and reward functions. (AUST)

[A Business Case for Diversity](#)

Making a strong case for benefits of workplace diversity, this report elaborates on considerations and strategies (related to leading, recruiting, training, etc) for achieving and managing a diverse workforce. (CANADA)

Internet sites

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

www.dewr.gov.au

Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

www.hreoc.gov.au

Council for Equal Opportunity in Employment

<http://www.ceoe.com.au/>

The Council for Equal Opportunity in Employment Limited is Australia's leading diversity organisation. We focus on creating workplaces where differences are respected and valued; and there is no discrimination or harassment.

Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

[Diversity Australia](#)

www.diversityaustralia.gov.au is a newly developed portal for diversity management, directed mainly to business, including business educators. The site is provided by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs and complements another new portal which has a government and community focus. Both sites will be available in April 2002.

[WORKink](#)

This website provides resources, information, success stories, etc, and is designed for employers and others to enhance equitable and meaningful employment of people with disabilities. (CANADA)

Leadership Development

[Leadership and HRM](#)

An address to the National Convention of the Australian Human Resources Institute with suggested questions for organisations regarding leadership and how to support it. (AUST)

[The Leadership Network](#)

A public sector website that provides links to tools and resources on leadership, equity and diversity, and other issues, suited to public and private sector application. (CANADA)



[A Spectrum of Voices on Diversity](#)

From *BusinessWeek Online* ...Three executives wonder why minorities aren't better represented among e-business leaders and suggest how to rectify the imbalance. (USA)

[Catalyst: Research – Women of Color](#)

Reports from a 3-part study of the impact of racial/ethnic background on opportunities and barriers for women in management. Examined issues of organisational cultures, advancement opportunities, etc. faced by African-American, Asian-American and Latina women and explored 'tools' such as mentors, role models, and personal resilience. (USA)

[Mentoring Relationships Through the Lens of Race and Gender](#)

A 4-page 'Briefing Note' from Simmons Graduate School of Management that looks at the mentoring experiences of women and, in particular, looks at how racial/ethnic background impacts on the experiences and challenges of women. Draws on the 'Women of Color' research study from Catalyst. (USA)

[Chief Executive Commitment: The Key to Enhancing Women's Advancement](#)

This study explores the gap in perception between women employees and chief executives concerning women's advances in business world. Part of the Gender Diversity Tool Kit developed by the Conference Board of Canada. (CANADA)

[Effective Leadership: An Assessment Tool](#) (pdf)

How effective is leadership in your organisation? The following two templates (organisational leadership and personal leadership) provide a tool that you can use to assess how you are doing – a 'starter set' to help you take a quick pulse check and map a plan for action. (CANADA)