



Australian Government

Equal Opportunity for
Women in the Workplace Agency

media release

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Generation F: Attract, Engage, Retain Mythbusters

Women are not as ambitious as men because they just want to get married and have children

False. Generation F, like their male counterparts, whether single, married, with or without children, aspire to a role involving either more or equal responsibility. In fact, Generation F are more likely to want to leave their jobs to start their own business than to start a family. (p9)

Offering higher salaries is all that is needed to attract and retain staff

False. A good salary package must be accompanied by a suite of other conditions. Over 80% of women and men consider the prospect of job security, supportive bosses, good relationships with colleagues, job satisfaction and the opportunity to work to their full ability to be important, in addition to satisfactory pay. (p6)

Gender inequality in the workplace is not a big problem, women are just making excuses

False. When commenting specifically on gender equality in the workplace, both women and men acknowledge in similar proportions that more work remains to be done. For example, 25% of women and 21% of men of men say they do not believe that women and men are generally treated equally in their workplace and 43% of women and 46% of men feel their workplace can be a bit of a boys' club.

Furthermore, in several instances, male employees are even more critical than their female counterparts, being remarkably more likely than women to believe that their employers do not appoint women to senior positions (10% more likely); do not provide flexible work conditions (10% more likely) and do not have a good record of promoting and supporting women (6% more likely). (p18)

Women are family-focused while men are career-focused

False. Across the board, employees' priorities are shifting away from their careers and more towards their families. This trend is shared by women and men, single or married, with or without children, from all educational backgrounds and across all income ranges. (p12)



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Women and men are promoted equally on merit

False. Over half of women and men (53% and 56% respectively) believe that promotions and job opportunities in their workplace are not always based on merit, while over a third of women (37%) and 29% of men believe that men often progress and are promoted in their workplace more quickly than women. (p17)

Working mothers are the only employees who seek work/life balance

False. Achieving work/life balance is not just an issue faced by women; it is an issue for all employees of any gender, age, background and situation in life.

For example, 22% of women and 18% of men say their highest current priority is personal relationships; 14% of women and 15% of men consider traveling and other life experiences to be most important. Another 3% of both women and men are most focused on outside interests such as study or sporting activities. (p14)

Quality child-care is readily available and women can easily return to the workforce if they desire

False. Nearly half (45%) of women with children under the age of 13 years who are currently working part-time claim they would work more hours in paid employment if they could better access child-care facilities. 56% of women with young children under the age of five are making this claim.

Furthermore, 54% of women with children under the age of five say that an organisation's active assistance with child-care is one of the factors they consider most important when job seeking. (p8)

Once they have children, women just want to be stay at home mothers

False. 61% of Generation F who have children say their partners do less of the unpaid domestic and caring work than they do. Nearly a third of all Generation F state that if their partners were to carry out a larger share of these responsibilities, they would be more likely to work greater hours in paid employment. (p8)

Other research has also shown that while women would like to spend more time at work, men would like to spend more time with their families but are prevented from doing so by work commitments. (p15).