In a blind resume study, male candidates were offered higher salaries, more mentorship, and were rated as more “competent” and “hireable,” than women, despite the candidates’ resumes being identical.\(^{17}\)

Several issues need to be addressed to retain a diverse workforce. The “old white boys’ club”\(^3\) that excludes others from informal networking, a lack of managerial awareness about diversity issues, poor work-life balance, and discriminatory behaviours against minority employees can dissuade all workers from being loyal to an employer in the long term.\(^{3,19}\)

Promoting diversity is not limited to gender; workplaces should be inclusive and welcoming to all.

The benefits of creating an inclusive workplace include low turnover, higher employee engagement, improved client relationships and satisfaction, stronger fiscal performance, and improved governance.\(^{4,5,6}\)

This paper highlights eight ways to recruit, support and retain a diverse workforce in organisations.

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See work-life balance as an investment in your employees\(^4\)

Offer family-friendly policies\(^10\)

Create and maintain clear policies on promotions, retention, and work/life balance, and communicate them to all employees

Flexible scheduling is vital for retaining mid-career women\(^1\) and valuable to all employees\(^15\)

Clear, well-documented, and equitable promotion and retention policies reduce significant gender gaps\(^8\)

Access to a broader talent base\(^16\)

Better management performance\(^22,23\)

Share priorities with staff, stakeholders & investors

Understand and communicate the business case for diversity in your organisation

16% higher Return on Sales\(^{20}\)

Fortune 500 companies with more women on average perform better\(^{20}\)

26% higher Return on Invested Capital\(^{20}\)

Increased innovation capacity\(^{24,25}\)

Stronger financial performance\(^{20,21,22}\)
Negative interpersonal experiences at work predicted lower organizational commitment and life satisfaction for women.

Men in exclusive and stressful workplaces, reporting having poor physical health, including heart conditions.

Monitor the working climate and foster a positive, inclusive work culture.

LGBT employees are happier at organisations with leadership programs.

The Benefits of Change

Employees are more satisfied and committed when they have positive work relationships with managers and colleagues. By supporting diversity, managers and organisations can foster positive work cultures for all.

Committing to change can make a difference; UBC’s Faculty of Science went from having no women in senior leadership positions from 2003-2007 to having 5/13 senior faculty positions held by women from 2007-2010.

Managers should celebrate their successes and be open to a wide range of communication styles. While the inequality gap tends to increase over time, taking direct action such as assigning accountability for diversity can lead to short and long term changes.

Training and feedback can be an effective method for eliminating managerial bias and inequality.

Opportunities for technical and leadership development need to be available to employees of all ranks.

Allowing workers to off-ramp partially or completely and welcoming them back later without penalty, combating stigma and stereotypes by training staff to be self-reflective and deconstruct their own processes, and making organizational decision-making as transparent as possible helps build a culture of diversity within organisations.

WWEST is currently researching which specific policies best support gender diversity in the workplace.