

Recommendations

Understand the systemic barriers that may be preventing the achievement of gender parity goals.

Your organization has started its journey toward gender equity! Sometimes it is important to take a step back and understand the systemic barriers that may be preventing your organization from reaching its objectives. By identifying and understanding these barriers, your organization can start developing effective solutions. Here are some recommendations to help get you started:

- **Audit your organization's recruitment practices:**

Conduct an audit of your organization's recruitment policies, processes, and practices to evaluate systemic institutional barriers that may be resulting in women being hired at your organization at lower proportional rates than men. When conducting the audit, evaluate recruitment data to understand the number of applicants, interviews, and offer rates that are being provided to women when compared to men. This will help you have a benchmark as well as identify potential gaps in different stages of the recruitment process. To further support the audit, review internal recruitment practices that may result in unintentional barriers for women. For example, referral processes and policies, interview questions, and language used in job descriptions.

Recommendation Alignment: Recruitment

- **Train hiring managers:**

To promote gender equity in the recruitment process, consider implementing consistent training for hiring managers on unconscious bias, including how it can manifest in recruitment processes. Ensure the training provides theoretical context on unconscious bias as well as practical strategies to reduce bias. Leverage real-world examples of barriers in the recruitment process, using case studies to make the training more relatable and effective. Use varied methods such as in-person training, webinars, online course, or workshops to regularly reiterate that gender equity is a priority. Implement learning and development metrics to monitor the success of the training program.

Recommendation Alignment: Recruitment, Professional Development

- **Consider implementing an Applicant Tracking System:**

Consider investing in an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to capture candidate demographic data. This will help your organization understand the demographics of applicants and candidates, and proactively identify opportunities to diversify your talent pipeline and recruitment sources.

Recommendation Alignment: Recruitment 2

- **Implement gender equity training for all employees:**

To promote a more inclusive and welcoming workplace, your organization should consider implementing organization-wide gender equity training. This training can focus on empowering employees with knowledge of the issues of gender bias and discrimination. Additionally, it should provide them with resources and tools to effectively apply the lessons to their day-to-day roles and responsibilities. Training should be administered consistently, and gender equity goals should be reiterated through workshops, webinars, course materials, discussion groups, and case studies. Additionally, it is important to establish processes to measure training outcomes and the overall success of the program.

Recommendation Alignment: Recruitment, Onboarding, Retention, Professional Development

- **Ensure new hires have access to leadership:**

It is important that new hires, especially those that identify as women, have access to leadership during their onboarding process. This allows employees to build relationships with leaders early on and discuss concerns and questions or receive feedback during the onboarding process. Additionally, providing new hires with early access to leadership will help them feel more engaged and invested in the organization and could help to improve retention rates.

Recommendation Alignment: Onboarding, Retention

- **Consider implementing a mentorship program:**

Mentorship programs help to create a culture of support and collaboration within a workplace. It allows employees to have access to mentors that can offer valuable guidance and advice and can help encourage a more productive and engaged workforce. Additionally, mentorship programs can help employees that come from diverse backgrounds to connect with mentors with similar experiences and work with them to navigate some of the challenges they may be experiencing. Ultimately mentorship programs can act as a valuable resource for employees to continue to stay engaged and have someone they can go to for professional support.

Recommendation Alignment: Retention, professional development

- **Consider implementing Employee Resource Groups:**

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are voluntary, employee-led groups that help to bring people together based on a common interest. ERGs can help create a safe space for employees and provide a sense of community and belonging within the workplace. Additionally, ERGs help employees make meaningful connections and build relationships which can help them to feel more engaged and empowered. Organizations that aim to support gender equity can consider developing an ERG for women that focuses on advocating for policies and practices that promote gender equity within the organization and the community that it serves.

Recommendation Alignment: Recruitment, Retention, professional development

- **Audit your job evaluation process:**

Consider conducting an audit of your organization's job evaluation process to understand if there are potential institutional barriers in place. Sift through the job evaluation process for any potential bias, including the way employees are reviewed and compensated (e.g., total compensation). Ensure that the job evaluation process promotes transparency and that employees clearly understand how the process works.

Recommendation Alignment: Retention, professional development

- **Conduct engagement surveys and focus groups:**

Consider implementing and conducting consistent organization-wide employee engagement surveys and focus groups to support your understanding of employee needs. This can help provide your organization with valuable insights that may help you understand the experiences and perspectives of your employees. When building your engagement surveys, allow respondents to self-identify their demographics to help you understand how sentiment varies across different demographic groups. Utilize focus groups to help you dive deeper into survey results and better understand employee sentiment. Establish a process to track changes in employee sentiment over time to help understand if progress is being made.

Recommendation Alignment: Retention

- **Diversify your talent pipeline:**

Audit your organization's current recruitment sources to identify opportunities to diversify your talent pipeline. Identify opportunities to expand outreach through partnerships with universities, colleges, professional associations, and non-profits. Introduce metrics to track the success of recruitment sources.

Recommendation Alignment: Recruitment

- **Invest in professional development opportunities for women:**

To support the retention and progression of women into mid-management and senior leadership positions, consider developing and implementing professional development programs that can help support progression. These programs include providing women with the necessary knowledge, network, and support to achieve their next career milestone. Establish internal processes to proactively identify professional development needs across your employee base and consistently measure employees' skills and competencies to identify development needs. Providing robust professional development programs helps to empower employees with knowledge and skills that support getting them to the next level of their careers.

Recommendation Alignment: Professional Development, Retention

- **Implement flexible work arrangements:**

Collaborate with your employees to understand their work arrangement needs and preferences. Establish processes and practices to support the implementation of flexible work arrangements and launch a change management plan to communicate any changes to employees. Support consistent messaging by training leaders on all new processes and practices. Proactively measure and monitor the adoption of new work arrangements to understand their value.

Recommendation Alignment: Retention

- **Conduct consistent pay equity audits and benefits reviews:**

Implementing pay equity audits and benefits reviews may help to reduce employee turnover as it provides employees with more transparency and confidence that their total compensation is calculated equitably. Review your employees' current pay and benefits packages and assess whether there are disparities based on demographic factors such as gender identity and race/ethnicity. Develop a plan of action to make salary and benefits adjustments if a gap exists. Communicate the methodology for evaluating compensation to employees and ensure they understand the reason for any changes. Communicate regularly with employees that your organization prioritizes pay equity.

Recommendation Alignment: Retention