

TOOL 1.12

Set Gender Recruitment Targets

- » **GOAL:** Developing a gender-equitable hiring process to increase gender diversity and inclusion in the workforce
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources, Communications

About Gender Diversity Targets

Gender diversity targets help companies measure progress towards gender equity goals. They increase coordination and strengthen the commitment to meeting these equity goals. Targets can focus teams internally and enable benchmarking with other industry players and provide incentives and accountability for reaching corporate goals.

While targets (and quotas) cannot address the underlying reasons for under-representation of women in particular parts of the workforce, they have been shown to be among the most effective means of addressing gaps in gender diversity.⁹³ “Targets with teeth” can significantly help companies increase gender-equitable representation, especially at entry level. A three-year McKinsey study of 118 companies found that firms with targets were much more successful in recruiting entry-level female candidates than firms without targets.⁹⁴

Targets should be specific and challenging. In addition to quantitative metrics, they should include qualitative indicators of the ways in which people work together—for instance, targets that signal a more respectful workplace, more inclusive meeting practices, and more flexibility in work arrangements. Metrics also might include indicators like decreased absenteeism and turnover, and higher employee satisfaction.⁹⁵

Guide to Developing Gender Recruitment Targets

This step-by-step guide will help you create gender recruitment targets.⁹⁶ For examples of the kinds of targets to set, see Table 1G.

- 1. Secure leadership support:** Is senior management supportive of setting targets and involved in the target-setting process? To build broader support for meeting targets and create momentum for reaching the targets, senior managers must publicly endorse the effort. Including gender diversity gains in senior management performance evaluations can build momentum and buy-in from the top down.

⁹³ Catherine Macdonald, *The Role of Gender in the Extractive Industries*, Helsinki: UNU-Wider, 2017, 19.

⁹⁴ Women in Mining Canada, *Welcoming to Women: Action Plan for Canada's Mining Employers*, 23.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ These steps are based on: Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency, “[How to Set Gender Diversity Targets](#),” Canberra: Commonwealth Government of Australia, 2013.

2. **Develop a gender equity policy and strategy (TOOLS 1.8 and 1.9):** Targets cannot exist in the absence of a policy stating them and a strategy to help achieve them. Targets should be part of a broader gender equity policy, and the related strategy should include the steps that will be taken to develop a gender-diverse work environment and the specific actions to help achieve the recruitment targets.
3. **Establish targets:** Targets should be clearly defined (i.e., target gender ratios for particular positions). They can include immediate goals and longer-term targets, but they must be achievable, with small, incremental steps to enable effective progress. Targets should be discrete and measurable—for instance, retention rates for women following maternity leave, rather than trying to measure vague indicators such as “inclusive culture” or “diverse workforce.” Be sure that targets are:
 - a. **Accountable:** Ensure that managers and staff have the ability to advance progress towards targets and are held accountable for meeting them.
 - b. **Manageable:** Ensure that the targets relate to outcomes, strategies, and tactics that managers can actually control, so that they can realistically be held accountable for meeting goals.
 - c. **Realistic:** Goals should be reasonable and achievable.
 - d. **Specific to the organization:** Targets are a great way for companies to benchmark themselves within an industry and can be a way to demonstrate commitment and distinguish performance. Fundamentally, however, targets should be about the needs and goals of the company itself, so they should be based on the results of the gender assessment. They should incorporate the analysis of recruitment and turnover data and identified bottlenecks for gender-equitable recruitment and retention.
4. **Review and refine targets:** The target-setting process should include representatives from different business units, including staff and managers. After draft targets have been set, review targets with key staff to ensure understanding and buy-in.
5. **Publicly communicate targets:** In addition to external communication through annual and quarterly reports, targets should be shared internally with staff. Communications should include the business case for a gender-diverse workforce, a description of the target-setting process, and details on how they will be achieved.
 - a. **Establish accountability:** Identify the ways in which business units and individual managers will be held accountable for meeting recruitment targets. Specify training for selection teams to counter any bias.
 - b. **Create incentives:** In addition to accountability and incentives for managers, setting team incentives can contribute to organization-wide staff buy-in on the gender diversity front.

- c. Set up reporting systems: Ensure that reporting systems capture progress as well as the impact of changing gender diversity.
- d. Disaggregate reporting to the departmental and/or business unit level, and ensure reporting is publicized within the organization and to all stakeholders.
- e. Establish systems for routine review: Review findings on an annual basis and identify areas for change and improvement.
- f. Follow up with additional gender audits: Survey staff on issues of organizational culture, bias, and ways to increase opportunities for recruitment and retention of women.

TABLE 1G | Setting Targets⁹⁷

TYPE OF TARGET	TARGET
Gender equity in employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Improve ratio of women to men in a given department from X to Y in the next two years » Increase ratio of women to men in senior management in the next two years » Bring retention rates of mid-career male and female staff to parity within the next two years
Review HR policies and physical infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Review all job descriptions and recruitment materials related to positions in all departments for gender-discriminatory or discouraging language with the current fiscal year » Review HR policies regarding ergonomics, PPE, workplace safety, and equipment to ensure that these consider differences in safety needs between women and men » Ensure that all departments on site comply with HR policies on ergonomics, PPE, workplace safety, and equipment » Renovate all toilet (and shower facilities, where applicable) to be code compliant within the current fiscal year
Gender-inclusive work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » In employee engagement surveys, improve employees' perceptions of acceptability of taking parental leave by XX percent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve parity in perceptions on career development opportunities between male and female employees • Reduce perception gap by XX percent

⁹⁷ Women in Mining Canada, [Welcoming to Women: Action Plan for Canada's Mining Employers](#), 76.