

Auditing, Gender, and Diversity

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Key Questions

- Gender, diversity, equity, and inclusivity in shifting organizational cultures and as a research/analytical lens:
 - Why does it matter?
 - Why should I/we care?
 - What's in it for me/us?
 - Will quality and excellence in an organization be compromised?
 - Will these considerations enhance research data?

Organizational Questions

- What do we know about gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace? What are some of the issues?
- What are some of the challenges in implementing gender, diversity, and equity processes and goals within organizations?
- What is the potential value added of pursuing gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizations?
- What are some proposed strategies to achieve these goals?

Organizational Questions

- Is your organization where you want it to be in these areas? Are there barriers and, if so, what are they?
- What is the role of senior leaders/executives in fostering gender and diversity and building a more fair and inclusive working environment for all?
- If there is potential work to be done in these areas in your organization, what would a reasonable starting point be to begin to address some of the issues?
- Is there sufficient common understanding and commitment to identify key strategic priorities and a roadmap for implementation?

What is Gender?

- What is gender?



What is Equality? What is Equity?

equality

equity

Equality = SAMENESS

Equity = FAIRNESS

Equality is about SAMENESS, it promotes fairness and justice by giving everyone the same thing.

EQUITY is about FAIRNESS, it's about making sure people get access to the same opportunities.

BUT it can **only work IF everyone starts from the SAME place**, in this example equality only works if everyone is the same height.

Sometimes our differences and/or history, can create barriers to participation, so we must **FIRST ensure EQUITY** before we can enjoy equality.

Equality doesn't mean Justice

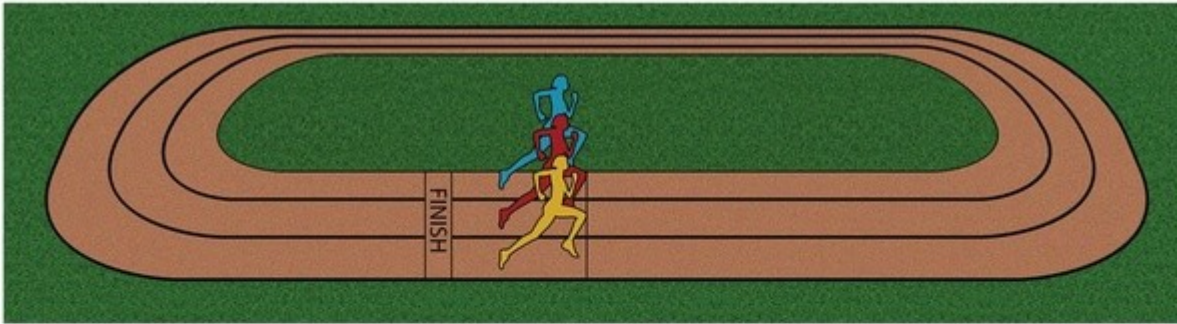


This is Equality

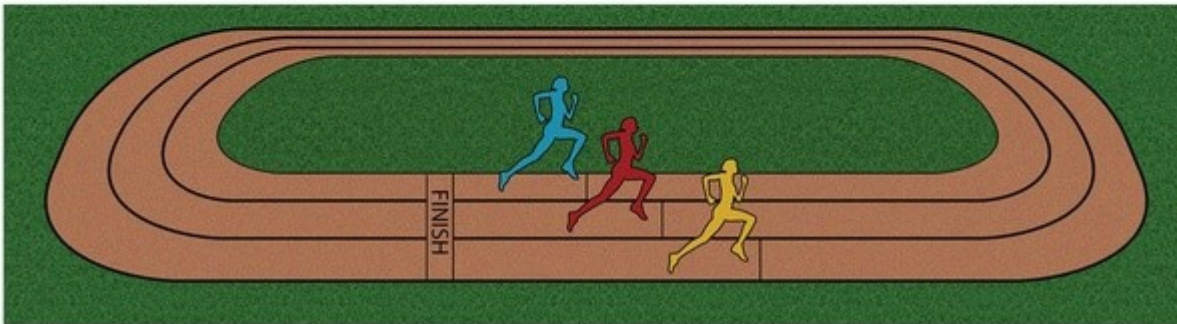


This is Justice





EQUALITY

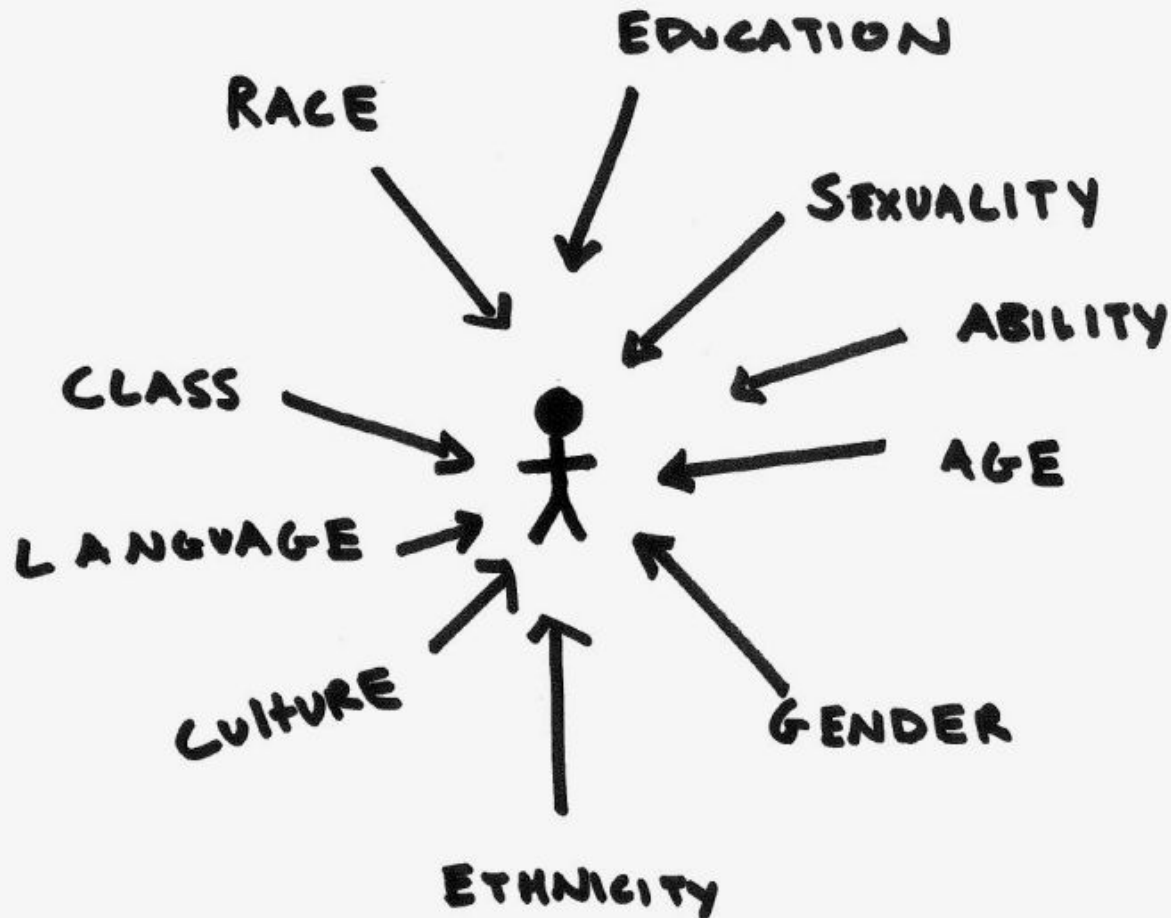


EQUITY

Is Gender Equity Sufficient?

- What is diversity?
- What is inclusion and an inclusive workplace/organizational culture?
- Growing expectation among employees that workplaces and organizations will have concrete strategies to address bullying and harassment, sexualized violence (#MeToo and #TimesUp), and overt/implicit forms of discrimination along the lines of gender, ability, age, racial and ethnic background, Indigenous status, religion, sexual identity, etc.

Intersectionality



Canada's Best Diversity Employers (2018)

- Criteria includes the implementation of diversity and inclusion initiatives, including programs for employees from five groups:
 - Women
 - Racialized persons
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Indigenous peoples
 - LGBT people
- However, some people who work for the employers that made the 2018 list might argue that the organization may have created initiatives to tackle mental health, for example, but have done nothing to address racism, religious discrimination, and transphobia.

Relevant Legal Frameworks (B.C.)

- *Employment Equity Act* (1986 with amendments)
 - Applies to workplaces with 100 or more employees under federal jurisdiction or about 10% of the Canadian workforce
 - Requires employers to engage in proactive employment practices to increase the representation of four designated groups (women, people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and racialized persons)
 - Key principle: “employment equity means more than treating people the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences”

Relevant Legal Frameworks (B.C.)

- *Canadian Human Rights Act* (1977 with amendments)
 - Applies to federally regulated activities across Canada
 - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression, sex, sexual identity, race, marital status, creed, age, colour, disability, political or religious belief.

Relevant Legal Frameworks (B.C.)

- *B.C. Human Rights Code:*
 - Articulates right to be free from discrimination in employment, including in advertising, hiring, firing, wages, hours of work, benefits, and work environment
 - Employment discrimination refers to discriminatory treatment based on a personal characteristic (race, colour, ancestry, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, marital status, age, political belief, etc.)
- WorkSafeBC
 - Expectation that employers will take steps to prevent bullying and harassment as it poses a potential risk to the safety and health of workers

What are Some of the Issues?

- Many studies that focus on gender and other equity issues in the workplace which highlight the following issues:
 - Underrepresentation of women and women of colour in senior roles
 - Work-family balance
 - Narrow conceptualizations of leadership
 - Performance feedback – gendered experiences
 - Access to senior leadership – gendered differences

What are Some of the Issues?

- Negotiation for raises and promotions
- Uneven playing field
- Gendered and intersectional perceptions of equal opportunities
- Labyrinth of barriers
- Gender (and other) stereotyping
- Inhospitable or hostile organizational culture

Value Added?

- Growing commitment to gender, diversity, and inclusion in the corporate and academic sectors
 - Good for business
 - Critical for building strong organizations
 - Involves changing organizational culture

Value Added?

- Key Arguments
 - Diverse, inclusive, and welcoming workplace environment benefits the entire organization and all employees
 - Equity underlies and is a pre-condition for excellence and excellence is furthered by a diversity of people, perspectives, and experiences
 - Equitable hiring practices open up competitions to a wide range and greater number of people, increasing opportunities for additional candidates with the relevant skills, and the likelihood of selecting the very best person

Value Added?

- Removing barriers for specific groups has unanticipated benefits for many other groups
- A greater range of experiences, perspectives, and strengths on teams increases creativity, intellectual diversity, different ways of framing, approaching, and analyzing an issue/problem, diverse thinking and learning styles – and these ultimately enrich the quality of outcomes
- Equity reduces absenteeism and increase retention rates – people want to work in environments that are respectful, inclusive, and productive

Value Added?

- Equity reduces the possibility that some people are prospering at the expense of others
- Equity creates a reputation for fairness and can enhance the profile of an organization as an employer of choice
- When everyone is treated fairly, it motivates people to be much more engaged, to do their best, to be more productive, and it increases trust
- Equity contributes to the creation of better connections between people and a greater sense of workplace belonging and collaboration. It promotes health and wellbeing for all.

Proposed Strategies

- Develop a statement of commitment to gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion or an employment equity plan
- Conduct an environmental assessment
- Review recruitment and hiring processes and practices
- Review performance review and promotion processes and practices
- Institute executive and employee training and education
- Articulate the critical roles and responsibilities of executive leaders in fostering and promoting a respectful, supportive, equitable, and inclusive work environment

Proposed Strategies

- Establish mentorship and coaching programs and other forms of professional support and succession planning
- Establish benchmarks and accountability measures with timelines
- Address individual, systemic, and climate issues

Research/Analytical Lens

- In all research involving human subjects (whether audit related or not), gender and other axes of difference should guide the questions asked and the information sought
- It is impossible to assess the effectiveness of strategies to end homelessness in Victoria without understanding the gendered, racialized, age-related, and other dimensions of homelessness
- It is impossible to assess why there is a high turnover of employees in a particular organization without probing into organization culture and climate which has gender and other dimensions
- Sources of data may include quantitative (databases, BC Statistics, etc.) and qualitative data (interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc. with full attention to ethical considerations)

Research/Analytical Lens

Case Study

- *An Independent Audit of the Recruitment and Retention of Rural and Remote Nurses in Northern B.C.* (February 2018)
 - Methodology: conducted a literature review; reviewed human resource documents and competition files; conducted site visits and interviews, analyzed relevant Northern Health data; and consulted experts
- Explicate and deepen gender and diversity analysis as a way in which to understand the issues and enhance recruitment and retention efforts
- Gender-based and diversity analysis appears in the appendices

Research/Analytical Lens

- **Appendix B: Recruitment Good Practice Assessment**
 - “tailor marketing to reflect the diversity of candidates (age, gender, career stage, professional discipline, location, culture and language)” (p. 46);
 - “target those who have a rural background” (p. 46);
 - “assistance locating daycare” (p. 49);
 - “assistance finding spousal employment” (p. 49);
 - job posting should include “diversity statement related to equity, encouraging applications from members of groups that have been marginalized” (p. 49);
 - “Identify and monitor community demographics, and develop policies and activities aimed at recruiting a culturally diverse and representative workforce” (p. 51);
 - “Take steps to recruit Indigenous candidates” (p. 51), which includes building community networks and adopting a culturally sensitive hiring processes.

Research/Analytical Lens

- Appendix E: Retention Good Practice Assessment
 - “Build understanding of the multi-generational and cultural values of the workforce” (p. 61);
 - “Take steps to promote a healthy workplace environment” (p. 62) including having strategies to address workplace violence, discrimination, etc.;
 - “Promote cultural competency” (p. 64)

Conclusion

- Gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion are buzzwords that are increasingly becoming mainstream in the corporate and academic world
- To become an 'employer of choice' requires a fundamental rethinking of organizational cultures, climate, and structures
- To achieve nuanced understandings of vital contemporary issues involving human subjects requires gender-based and intersectional investigation and analyses