



Gender Equity Activities

"As a male elementary teacher I was often given the "tough kids" because they felt a male figure would do better with the kids" - Male Elementary Teacher

Why Learn About Gender Equity?

When individuals choose to enter careers where they are the gender minority, one is apt to experience challenges, barriers, bias and false information. Working outside tradition does require special knowledge and awareness. Breaking new ground is hard for everyone. Learning about gender issues and what creates a sense of fairness and equity, is vital for all workers!

Other workers, who are not a gender minority will often be witness or be invited to participate in discrimination or other non-productive behavior. Everyone must be prepared to understand the dynamics and special challenges of gender equity. This section includes activities for classroom role plays, discussions and brainstorming. Your teacher will select an activity that he/she feels will benefit you the most!

Stretch Your Mind.....as you "Get Off the Hook" with the following documents:

Gender Equity Activity Booklet (p.2)—Retention (p.20) -- Recruitment (p.21)--Scenarios (p.22)

Gender Equity Links:

- Northwest Lab Gender Equity Center: <http://www.nwrel.org/cnorse/index.html>
 - Rich Resources on Gender Equity Issues: <http://equity.edreform.net/resource/503>
 - Video Resources on Gender Equity: <http://www.mediaed.org/videos>
 - Great Source for Gender Research: <http://equity.edreform.net/resource/1298>
 - Links for Gender Equity: <http://www.aherofordaisy.com/genderequity.html>
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Gender Equity Activity Booklet

INTRODUCTION

This **Gender Equity Activity Book** is a student oriented selection of activities that focuses on detailed and easy to use activities for teachers and students. It is a student-focused book of easy to use activities. Included in the activities will be stereotyping, careers, sexual harassment, language, employability, classroom equality, gender and technology. Teachers will find tools for evaluations, and guidelines that will help promote gender equity in the school and work setting.

Goals of Gender Equity Activity Book are to:

- Help students learn about the advantages of "nontraditional" career choices for female and male students.
- Promote responsibility among students regarding prejudice and inequalities in different careers by using positive action and conflict resolution.
- Help in the development of analytical and critical thinking skills of students.
- Assist teachers and students in creating an equitable classroom environment.
- Help students to recognize and challenge harassment in the classroom and work place.

This publication is for teachers and counselors who work with students in regular high schools, alternative high schools and or vocational and technical schools. It is helpful for teachers working with students who are pursuing nontraditional careers. It will also be helpful to community based organizations and after school programs who work with youth to promote nontraditional careers.

This activity book can be used in existing classroom curriculum, taught as separate units in regular classrooms and/or can be used in life skills curriculum.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The activities in this booklet will attempt to demonstrate a multi-media, multidiscipline, student-centered, and equitable curriculum that celebrates the diversity of the classroom while recognizing the rights, responsibilities, and personal history of the individual. "Students learn best in an environment that acknowledges respects and accommodates each learner's background, individuality and gender.

ACTIVITY: 1. THE OTHER GENDER IS...
OPINIONS AND FEELINGS CONCERNING THE "OPPOSITE" SEX

TIME: 100 MINUTES

SUBJECTS: ENGLISH, HEALTH, LIFE SKILLS

DESCRIPTION:

This is a student writing-based activity that explores preconceptions, attitudes, and anxieties concerning the "opposite" gender. Discussion is stimulated by student reading of personal narratives.

OBJECTIVES:

Short Term

- To analyze personal and cultural attitudes toward other gender.
- To clearly and cogently express ideas and emotions in writing.
- To present written work verbally to an audience.
- To improve listening skills.

Long Term

- To develop healthy, equitable, and realistic attitudes toward the other gender.

MATERIALS:

Use student's writing exercise as material for this activity.

PROCEDURE:

It is best if written work is assigned as homework. If written in classroom setting, peer influence may inhibit honest and thorough effort; also, responses may be more self-conscious.

1. **Ask students to discuss in writing their feelings and opinions about the "opposite" gender.** Give a required length to insure some thought and uniformity for reading time when used as a classroom activity. Example: 150 words. Students may want to consider the following questions in their essays:
 - In what ways are you different from other students in your class?
 - How are you the same as other students in your class?
 - Is friendship with the other gender different from same gender friendship? How and why?
 - Do you change your actions and activities when you're in the presence of the other gender? How and why?
2. **Separate students according to gender for presentation of essays. Each student reads his/her paper to the class.**
3. **Have listeners respond in two ways:**
 - A. Write a short response to the reader.
 - B. Offer verbal responses. Ask students to find points they agree with. Explain that responses and viewpoints need to be kept positive.
4. **Bring class back together. Have students volunteer to read their essays. Allow free discussion.** Ask students to consider the following: Was the discussion different with the whole class present? Why or why not?
5. **At the end of the discussion, ask students for positive statements about the other gender and record them on the board under male or female headings.** Point out commonalities. Ask students to list the statements that could be switched to other gender column.

EVALUATION:

Student writing may be assessed in terms of effort, creativity, content, and style. Speaking and listening skills may be noted during oral presentations and subsequent discussions.

ACTIVITY: 2. ARE YOU ACTING LIKE A MAN OR A WOMAN

TIME: 55 to 100 MINUTES

SUBJECTS: LIFE SKILLS, CAREER AWARENESS, HEALTH

DESCRIPTION:

This activity is designed to help students understand gender roles and expectations that are learned in our society. This is a useful introductory activity on gender roles as related to career and class choices.

OBJECTIVES:

Short Term

- To understand and analyze gender role stereotyping and origins.
- To examine the effects of gender role stereotyping on career choices for both males and females.
- To provide encouragement to those students who are contemplating or have chosen "nontraditional" courses or careers.

Long Term

- To challenge and minimize and/or eliminate stereotypical perceptions and actions towards the "other" gender.
- To accept and support those career and life choices made by peers, even if they may challenge gender role stereotypes.

MATERIALS:

1. Newsprint or large sheets of paper divided into three sections.
2. Markers.

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide students into small groups no larger than 6 students. Groups can be gender same or mixed groups.
2. Give each group the piece of newsprint divided into three columns. On the top of the middle column either write "Act Like A Man" or "Act Like A Woman". Ask students to make a list of what it means to act like a man or woman in this column. Each group will have a different heading.
3. On the left column, ask students to write down what people might "say" or "do" if someone does not act like a man or woman as defined in the middle column. This portion of the activity can generate a lively and graphic use of words and discussion. Remind students to be respectful. Some instructors may want to set ground rules around language usage.
4. Divide the right column in half and ask students to list the jobs one would choose if they acted like the descriptions listed in the middle column. For example, the "traditional" female role and career choice might not include welder, construction worker..., a "traditional" male role and career choice might not include elementary teacher, nurse...
5. Hang up the lists for students to view and contemplate. Ask each group to make a few comments about their lists.
6. Assist students with analyzing these lists. Possible questions for discussion include:
 - How and where do we learn our perception of male and female roles?
 - Do these roles and descriptions limit or enhance us in life choices?
 - Have you or someone you know ever acted differently from how your gender is "supposed" to act?
 - Have you or someone you know ever stood up for a person who challenged the gender stereotypes?
 - What other conclusions/statements do you have about this topic?

EVALUATION:

Assess the overall work of the group including: contribution, discussion, and analysis. Use a rubric to evaluate the subjective aspects of this activity.

**ACTIVITY: 3. MEN'S WORK OR WOMEN'S WORK?
IDENTIFYING AND ANALYZING TRADITIONAL GENDER
ROLES IN THE WORKPLACE**

TIME: 100 MINUTES

SUBJECTS: CAREER AWARENESS, ENGLISH, MATH, LIFE SKILLS, HEALTH

DESCRIPTION:

Using the Occupation Checklist at the end of this activity, students will match jobs and careers to gender. The desired outcome from this activity will be, the discovery and discussion of persistent gender stereotyping, with its wage and status implications, in terms of career opportunities.

OBJECTIVES:

Short Term

- To identify traditional career paths.
- To recognize nontraditional career opportunities.
- To analyze career paths.
- To listen attentively and with an open mind to all viewpoints.
- To present ideas and information clearly and concisely.

Long Term

- To develop independent thinking regarding standardized gender roles.
- To develop a strategy for choosing a career.

MATERIALS:

1. Occupation checklist
2. Overhead projector if available
3. Library and Internet resources

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduction: Defining the occupations.
 - Hand out copies of "Occupation Checklist" to individual students.
 - Read off the listed occupations.
 - Describe any jobs that students might not be familiar with.
2. Have students fill out checklist, matching jobs and careers to 'Male,' 'Female,' or 'Both' by circling the correct response.
3. Using transparencies and an overhead projector (if not available use a large chart), poll the students on each occupation and write the result on the master checklist.
There are many approaches to conducting the following class survey in a meaningful way.
 - Poll students on how and why they answered the way they did.
 - Have students conduct research of the occupations. You may want to divide students into groups and assign each group several occupations.
 - Another method would be to find out the areas of controversy, assign groups to research those areas.
4. **The class, with instructor's help, answers the following questions.** Ask for a student volunteer who will plot the results of the questions on the board.
 - Which group "male" or "female" had the largest number?
 - Which jobs require working with people? Which group had the larger number?
 - Which jobs have the most "status," and, of those, how many are designated "males" and how many "females?"
 - Which jobs offer the most salary potential, and, of those, how many are designated "males" and how many "females?" This will require research to complete.
 - Which jobs require the most/least amount of education, and, of those, how many are designated "males" and how many "females?" Will also require research.
5. **Class should discuss any issues concerning gender as they arise.** The focus should always be steered to "WHY?" Why are some jobs traditionally gender designated? Why is there an inequity of wage and status along gender lines?

EVALUATION:

Assess students' completion of checklist; assess involvement in survey, group discussion and other assigned work.

RELATED ACTIVITIES:

1. For a math connection, have students create graphs of a variety of occupations to show percentage of male and female employees, wages for each gender, highest level of education for each gender, etc.
2. A research component has been touched on for this activity. While requiring more time and effort, researching specific occupations in terms of opportunity, availability, skills required, etc., would be a valuable and eye opening experience for the students.
3. After research has been completed, have student's choose one occupation to write a short research paper about.

FEMALE/MALE
OCCUPATION CHECKLIST

Check whether you believe it is a male's occupation, female's occupation, or both.

| <u>JOB</u> | <u>GENDER</u> | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---|------|
| Construction Worker | M | F | Both |
| Flight Attendant | M | F | Both |
| Social Worker | M | F | Both |
| Secretary | M | F | Both |
| Elementary Teacher | M | F | Both |
| Hair Stylist | M | F | Both |
| Model | M | F | Both |
| Store Clerk | M | F | Both |
| Veterinarian | M | F | Both |
| Physical Education Teacher | M | F | Both |
| Cook | M | F | Both |
| Photographer | M | F | Both |
| Nurse | M | F | Both |
| Computer Analyst | M | F | Both |
| Machinist | M | F | Both |
| Dental Assistant | M | F | Both |
| Artist | M | F | Both |
| News Reporter | M | F | Both |
| Telephone Operator | M | F | Both |
| NASA Technician | M | F | Both |
| CAD Specialist | M | F | Both |
| Pharmacist | M | F | Both |
| Baby-sitter | M | F | Both |
| Newspaper Editor | M | F | Both |
| Cashier | M | F | Both |
| Mechanical Engineer | M | F | Both |
| FBI Investigator | M | F | Both |
| Plumber | M | F | Both |
| Librarian | M | F | Both |
| Bank Teller | M | F | Both |
| Dietitian | M | F | Both |

FEMALE/MALE
OCCUPATION CHECKLIST (cont.)

| <u>JOB</u> | <u>GENDER</u> | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---|------|
| Licensed Practical Nurse | M | F | Both |
| Security Guard | M | F | Both |
| Day Care Worker | M | F | Both |
| Police Officer | M | F | Both |
| Bookkeeper | M | F | Both |
| Custodian | M | F | Both |
| Graphic Artist | M | F | Both |
| Technical Writer | M | F | Both |
| Lawyer | M | F | Both |
| Gardener Radio Announcer | M | F | Both |
| Forest Ranger | M | F | Both |
| Physical Therapist | M | F | Both |
| Occupational Therapist | M | F | Both |
| Speech Therapist | M | F | Both |
| Homemaker | M | F | Both |
| Accountant | M | F | Both |
| Musician | M | F | Both |
| English Teacher | M | F | Both |
| Auto Body Instructor | M | F | Both |
| Dairy Farmer | M | F | Both |
| Auto Mechanic | M | F | Both |
| Factory Worker | M | F | Both |
| Gas Station Attendant | M | F | Both |
| Pilot | M | F | Both |
| Professional Athlete | M | F | Both |
| Computer Programmer | M | F | Both |
| Truck Driver | M | F | Both |
| Landscaper | M | F | Both |
| Bartender | M | F | Both |
| Clothing Designer | M | F | Both |
| Carpenter | M | F | Both |
| Physician | M | F | Both |
| Architect | M | F | Both |

**ACTIVITY: 4. WHAT DIFFERENCES DOES A NAME MAKE?
ANALYZING GENDER AND RACE LANGUAGE BIAS**

TIME: 100 MINUTES

SUBJECTS: CAREER AWARENESS, ENGLISH, HEALTH, LIFE SKILLS

DESCRIPTION:

This is a fun and creative activity that gives students the job of “**CREATOR OF NEW WORDS.**” In this activity, students will identify language that is gender or race biased. Then they will work to create language that is bias free.

OBJECTIVES:

Short Term--

- Identify gender and/or race-biased language the vocabulary we use in everyday life.
- Understand the exclusive nature of the use of this language.
- Develop a new language that is gender and race neutral.
- Recognize the new power of this new vocabulary.

Long Term--

- Change the gender and race-biased language use in everyday life to a race and gender neutral language.
- Challenge others to use gender and race neutral language.

MATERIALS:

1. "Gender Language" worksheet
2. Make language cards using the attached list of words and phrases. (3”X5” index cards are best.)
3. Note cards and markers.

PROCEDURE:

Cover the bottom of the “Gender Language” worksheet. This will make students to come up with their own examples.

1. Hand out "Gender Language" worksheet to the students and read it aloud. Ask, who agrees and who disagrees with the information provided? Why?
2. Considering gender and race have students divide into pairs and list as many "language mistakes" as they can.
3. After the lists are created, have students think of ways to change the words to make them gender/race fair and neutral. Have groups make their own unbiased vocabulary flash cards.
4. Have each group share their flash cards. See how many groups came up with different and/or the same names. Talk about the difference fair language makes in our judgments of others.
5. Use the Teacher Language Cards and ask students if they know the connotations behind each term. Ask students if they can come up with ideas of where the term originated and how it has changed today.

EVALUATION:

Evaluate students' class participation, small group lists and behavior during group work.

GENDER LANGUAGE

What difference does a name make?

Throughout the years, jobs have been identified by titles that cause us to think in terms of different genders. For many years certain jobs were only performed by one gender, but as times have changed and more women enter the work force jobs once reserved for certain genders have changed. Men's jobs such as policeman, fireman, or fisherman were once male jobs, and women's jobs such as housewife, nurse, and teacher were recognized as female jobs.

As the times have changed, many women and men have entered jobs that were once gender specific. Now we hear job titles such as flight attendant, fisherperson and homemaker. Language has had to change to reflect the change of the workforce.

We still have words to describe careers and jobs that we have found hard to change. On job sites we still use foreman to describe the person in charge of the worksite. When we think of the history of construction sites we remember that at one time only men were employed as construction workers. In hospitals when a nurse is called into a room, we are surprised when it is a male that walks into the room. To this day some occupations are still thought to be gender specific even though males and females alike have crossed the career boundaries for many years.

Although these gender-biased labels reflect our past more accurately than the present, they are still used. Some will try and tell us that some titles are "inclusive" and can be used for both men and women. This is not true. What would happen if a group of males were referred to as "you gals?" Yet females are called "you guys" all the time.

As careers change and more men and women cross over the gender line to work in these jobs, we need to consider the words used to describe new occupations. We need to reinforce positive gender recognition in the workplace, both in traditional and non traditional jobs.

Here are some words and job titles. Can you think of ways you would change these titles to make them more gender fair or neutral?

| | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| foreman | housewife | anchorman | journeyman |
| repairman | weatherman | man made | freshman |
| fisherman | mailman | meter maid | manhole |
| congressman | policeman | cleaning lady | landlord |
| manpower | sportsmanship | men working | tomboy |

GENDER LANGUAGE

WORDS AND PHRASES

| | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| DEAR SIR: | CONGRESSMAN |
| "YOU GUYS" | MANKIND |
| BACHELOR'S DEGREE | LANDLORD |
| ILLEGITIMATE CHILD | CHAIRMAN |
| STEWARDESS | BLACK LIE |
| WHITE LIE | SPORTSMANSHIP |
| MANMADE | LADY LUCK |
| WOMAN'S INTUITION | CLEANING LADY |
| LAYMAN | MAN AND WIFE |
| HEROINE | FRESHMAN |
| TOMBOY | WORKMAN'S |
| POLICEMAN | COMPENSATION |
| DRAFTSMAN | WAITRESS |
| MANHOLE | MACHO |
| OLD WIVES' TALE | MALE NURSE |
| HOUSEWIFE | LEGAL ALIEN |
| SUFFRAGETTE | MINORITY |

ACTIVITY: 5. MY OPINION MATTERS
EXPLORING STUDENT OPINIONS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT FACTS AND MYTHS

TIME: 60 MINUTES

SUBJECTS: ALL SUBJECTS AND CLASSES

DESCRIPTION:

This is a student-centered questionnaire exploring student opinions and knowledge about sexual harassment. Have students fill out the worksheet. After they have finished, divide into small groups for discussion of their answers. Bring class back together and go over the worksheet. Ask for opinions and concerns that students may have about the worksheet.

OBJECTIVES:

Short Term--

- Analyze personal attitudes toward issues of sexual harassment.
- Improve reasoning skill to support opinions.
- Educate students about the facts and myths of sexual harassment.

Long Term--

- Have students listen to and consider all points of view.
- Develop strategies to stop sexual harassment.

MATERIALS:

"Worksheet"

PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out worksheet to students. Remind them to work quietly.
2. When they have finished, divide into small groups to discuss their responses to the questions.
3. Have students consider the following questions during their discussion.
 - During your discussion, did anyone in your group try to convince you to change your answer?
 - How did your answers differ from other students in your group?
 - Which questions did your group answer the same?
 - During your group discussion, did anything said by another student surprise you?
4. Once small groups have met, bring the class back together and read through the questionnaire statement by statement in order to stimulate a greater discussion. Allow students to come to their own conclusions by constantly questioning the reasons for their beliefs.
5. Use this opportunity for a writing assignment. Have students write what they learned about sexual harassment, the participants in their small groups and the class as a whole. Was anything said that made them change their way of thinking toward sexual harassment?

EVALUATION:

1. Evaluate students by moving around the classroom and observing their listening and speaking efforts in small groups.
2. Evaluate students by reading their written responses to the exercise. It can be assessed in terms of effort, content, and style.

“WORKSHEET” Sexual Harassment

Directions: Read the following statements and circle the response that best supports your opinion.

1. **Girls sexually harass girls, and boys sexually harass boys.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

2. **Even though they dislike it, friends allow sexual harassment to happen to their friends.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

3. **Teachers and educational staff ignore sexual harassment and allow it to go on in school.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

4. **Girls who dress in sexy clothing are asking for attention and to be harassed.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

5. **Flirting is sexual harassment.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

6. **Sexual harassment does not happen at home.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

7. **Sexual harassment can be prevented.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

8. **A student who files an official complaint against a harasser should expect to be taunted for being a tattletale.**

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

“WORKSHEET” Sexual Harassment (cont.)

9. Younger children are not capable of sexual harassment.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

10. Women sexually harass men and get away with it easier than men sexually harassing women.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

11. Boys cannot be sexually harassed.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

12. In most cases of sexual harassment, males harass females.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

13. Offensive graffiti on the bathroom wall is not sexual harassment.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

14. Little children as young as five or six years old can be harassers.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

15. Reporting sexual harassment gets positive results.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

16. All harassment is intentional.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

17. Harassment can be flattering.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

18. Sexual harassment is a fact of life.

strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

EVALUATION TOOL

"RUBRIC"

Here are sample rubrics that may be modified and applied to any of the lessons. Students should have a copy of the rubric for reference when the assignment is given.

1. WRITTEN COMPONENT

Style

- Student has strong grasp of grammar, spelling and vocabulary. 10 POINTS
- Student makes occasional mistakes with grammar and vocabulary. 6 POINTS
- Student has poor sense of sentence structure and limited vocabulary. 3 POINTS

Follows Directions:

- Student follows directions completely. 10 POINTS
- Student follows most directions; misses some details. 6 POINTS
- Student follows few directions. 3 POINTS

Thoroughness:

- Student explores many ideas and writes with great detail. 10 POINTS
- Student explores some ideas and leaves out detail. 6 POINTS
- Student shows little concern for ideas or detail. 3 POINTS

Organization:

- Student has well organized ideas, excellent paragraph structure. 10 POINTS
- Student is somewhat organized, but needs to improve. 6 POINTS
- Student is disorganized. Ideas are scattered and confused. 3 POINTS

Willingness to Take Chances:

- Student is willing to state new ideas and use new words. 10 POINTS
- Student takes some writing risks. 6 POINTS
- Student plays it safe, stays with the familiar. 3 POINTS

TOTAL POINTS:

GRADE:

| | |
|-----|--------------|
| "A" | 44-50 POINTS |
| "B" | 37-43 POINTS |
| "C" | 30-36 POINTS |
| "D" | 23-29 POINTS |

EVALUATION TOOL (cont'd)

"RUBRIC"

2. VERBAL COMPONENT

Clarity:

- Student presents information in a clear, confident voice. 10 POINTS
- Student hurries parts of the presentation, stumbles over some details. 6 POINTS
- Student mumbles, is inaudible, and/or races through the presentation. 3 POINTS

Organization:

- Student presents information logically and sequentially. 10 POINTS
- Student is a little scattered, but information is easy to follow. 6 POINTS
- Student is disorganized; presentation is difficult to follow and understand. 3 POINTS

Thoroughness:

- Student presents all the pertinent information and ideas in the project. 10 POINTS
- Student leaves out some information but covers the main points. 6 POINTS
- Student omits important information, uses little detail. 3 POINTS

Response:

- Student answers questions accurately and with detail. 10 POINTS
- Student answers questions with some hesitation and lack of detail. 6 POINTS
- Student has difficulty answering questions and offering details. 3 POINTS

TOTAL POINTS:

GRADE:

| | |
|-----|--------------|
| "A" | 34-40 POINTS |
| "B" | 27-33 POINTS |
| "C" | 20-26 POINTS |
| "D" | 13-19 POINTS |

EVALUATION TOOL (cont'd)

"RUBRIC"

3. VISUAL COMPONENT

Graphic Clarity:

- Graphics are clear, organized and easily understood. 10 POINTS
- Graphics are somewhat disorganized, sloppy and confusing. 6 POINTS
- Graphics are difficult to decipher and understand. 3 POINTS

Creativity:

- Graphics show a high degree of originality and creativity. 10 POINTS
- Graphics are somewhat derivative and original. 6 POINTS
- Graphics show no originality and little creative energy. 3 POINTS

Connection to Subject:

- Graphics specifically and directly relate to the subject of the project. 10 POINTS
- Graphics reference the subject indirectly and incompletely. 6 POINTS
- Graphics make no obvious or logical connection to the subject. 3 POINTS

Scope of Effort:

- Graphics show considerable time and effort on the part of the student. 10 POINTS
- Graphics are the result of some serious work but could have been pushed. 6 POINTS
- Graphics are obviously the result of little effort and time. 3 POINTS

TOTAL POINTS:

GRADE:

| | |
|-----|--------------|
| "A" | 34-40 POINTS |
| "B" | 27-33 POINTS |
| "C" | 20-26 POINTS |
| "D" | 13-19 POINTS |

Retention

Key Elements for Retaining Workers in Nontraditional Jobs:

- Ensure your company or union has strong policy statements that prohibit unlawful discrimination and support workers in nontraditional jobs
- Address key issues that commonly affect workers in nontraditional jobs, such as job assignment and promotion, family care and transportation, and health and safety concerns
- Promote the development of support mechanisms for workers on the job, such as placing more than one gender on a worksite, encouraging support groups, and pairing new workers in nontraditional jobs with an "old pro" or mentor
- Ensure that there are proper facilities and equipment for both genders on the job

Support Services:

There are many support services in place for individuals thinking about going into nontraditional jobs. Most state Department's of Labor or Job Service Centers have assessment tools available at no cost for individuals to use.

Career interest inventories, administered after career exploration, can be useful to help women learn to picture themselves in nontraditional occupations. Career aptitude and assessment tools should be used with great caution, since many have the effect of screening young women out of nontraditional occupations.

<http://www.work4women.org/about/assessmenttool.pdf>

Wider Opportunities for Woman/Career Assessment Survey

<http://tools.monster.com/perfectcareer/>

Monster/Career and Employment Readiness Information

Recruitment & Placement

Finding the Right Women or Men for the Job

Recruiting women for nontraditional jobs can be challenging. A substantial number of women, like men, are interested in trade and technical jobs, but women are not yet equally represented in these jobs.

Who are suitable nontraditional job candidates?

There is no typical profile of a woman or man interested in nontraditional work. Like workers in any industry, women or men interested in nontraditional work may vary in marital status and sexual orientation, and some may have children. Women of color interested in nontraditional work face barriers of both gender and race when looking for these jobs.

Women and Men Enter Nontraditional Work for Various Reasons:

- A love of learning
- Willingness to take on new challenges
- An interest in working with their hands
- To see concrete products of their work
- To be role models for their children
- To earn higher wages and benefits

Some Key Elements for Recruiting Women or Men for Nontraditional Jobs:

- Dispel myths about gender, race, and sexual orientation for staff or members, and for the person you are recruiting
- Ensure that the employees know the facts about working women and men, and are supportive of them entering nontraditional work
- Provide specific information about the nontraditional jobs, such as job titles and salary ranges
- Assess skills, abilities, and aptitudes for nontraditional work by incorporating information on transferable skills into the hiring process and utilizing aptitude tests that are as bias-free as possible
- Expand your recruitment sources to include job training programs and community-based organizations, pre-apprenticeship programs, and secondary and vocational education systems

Promoting a Supportive Environment from the Start

Beginning a new job is ranked among the top five most stressful life changes. It is important to provide opportunities for newly hired individuals to learn the ins and outs of the job, as well as the ins and outs of your company or union.

Issues that New Female Hires May Face in a Male-Dominated Workplace

In addition to the normal anxiety associated with starting a new job, women may be less likely than male workers to know what to expect on the job. They may be unfamiliar with the industry, jobs, tools, uniforms, clothing, facilities, and safety procedures; they may feel isolated or vulnerable by being one of the few women on the job.

Women need to learn not only the formal rules of their new job, but also the informal "culture" of the workplace. Men often pick up the unwritten rules from the other workers, but women may be excluded from such informal sources of information.

We need to keep in mind that when men are going into a career that is predominately female such as elementary teaching or nursing, they will have the same concerns and misgivings that women would have on a nontraditional worksite.

Scenarios

How to Handle the Situation

Scenario 1

You are the only female on a construction site. The crew has been working hard and is ahead of schedule. Supplies for the next project will not be delivered until the following day so the boss decides he go and pick up the materials that are needed for the crew to continue working for the rest of the day. He gives specific instructions as to what the crew should have done by the time he returns to the worksite. As soon as the boss leaves the other workers decide to sit down and take a break. You know if the crew stops working that when the boss returns the job will not be done.

How do you, the only female, convince the rest of the crew to not take a break and continue to work?

Scenario 2

A female worker smoked marijuana during her lunch break because she said it relaxed her. Other members of the crew knew she had smoked the marijuana. While the boss was giving the crew safety instructions for the next job which was working on the roof, she caught herself humming a song to herself and had not paid attention to his instructions. She climbed up on the roof and didn't place her feet properly and lost her balance and fell from the roof, injuring herself.

How should the workers who observed her smoking marijuana have handled the situation?

Scenario 3

You are one of only two males working at an elementary school, the rest of the staff are female. You try to avoid the teacher's lounge when you are by yourself because sometimes the conversation that the females are having can embarrass you. But today you need to use the copy machine. Sure enough when you enter a group of the younger female teachers are listening to one teacher's graphic description of her date last weekend. You are trying to ignore what is being said, but it is hard with them sitting at the table right next to the copy machine.

How can you let them know that what they are visiting about is making you uncomfortable?

Scenario 4

You are working on the Alaska Pipe Line as a pipe fitter stationed in Barrow. You love work and the pay is great. Most crews work three weeks on and two weeks off. The one concern you have is being female in a male occupation and stationed in a crew of mostly males. There is very little to do away from the company area so most of your time is spent at the company's recreation center and crew quarters. Almost every night at the recreation center there is a group single guys are talking about what they are planning to do on their two weeks off. I like the fact that on the job site I am treated like one of the guys, but at times their comments can get pretty graphic.

How can I left the guys know that I appreciate the fact that they respect the work I am doing but that I don't need to hear what they are planning to do on their dates when they have their time off?