

Recruiting and Retaining Women Workers in Non-Traditional Workplaces

In June 2005, *Facing the Economic Imperative: New Brunswick's Five Year Wage Gap Action Plan (2005-2010)* was launched to address New Brunswick's looming labour and skills shortage by better employing a largely under-utilized resource – women.

"A diverse workforce is simply vital to the success of our business."

- Steve Ballmer, CEO Microsoft

Why Should You Hire Women Workers?

- Looming global labour shortages and the ageing of the workforce are key issues for all Canadian businesses.
- Shortages in skilled labour reduce efficiency and productivity in the trades and technology sectors.
- Women not only represent 47% of all Canadian workers but also make up 51% of all other groups identified as emerging potential sources of labour.
- Organizations with a diverse workforce can better understand and meet the needs of its clients.

Workplace diversity is good for business.

Businesses with a diverse workforce are hiring from a larger talent pool, ensuring that management practices are flexible and harassment of any kind is not tolerated. That lowers absenteeism and turnover of both women and men.

Barriers Facing Women in Non-Traditional Workplaces

Some of the barriers women face when entering non-traditional workplaces are:

- Discrimination and stereotyping in hiring practices;
- Traditional societal attitudes;
- Lack of diversity training;
- Harassment in the workplace;
- Lack of union support;
- Lack of supportive workplace policies and practices;
- Lack of opportunities for early work experiences;
- Lack of access to training and apprenticeships.

How to Recruit & Retain Women Workers

Employers need to ask: **"What can I do to make my workplace better for women?"**

Employers should identify potential barriers then commit to eliminating them:

1. **Create an organizational culture that is more inclusive for women.** Actively demonstrate that women are welcome on the job site and that women's full participation in the workplace is supported by key decision-makers.
2. **Identify and eliminate barriers in recruitment and work practices.** Ask women and women's groups how to outreach. Ensure that physical work conditions are appropriate for women and men and that harassment of any sort is not tolerated.
3. **Provide support mechanisms for women workers,** such as: a "buddy" system, mentoring program, support team or diversity networks.
4. **Adopt family-friendly employment practices.**

When and Where to Start?

The time to start is now. Small immediate changes can signal meaningful change to employees.

To learn more about how you can better recruit and retain women workers, visit our website and download "Resource Guide: How to Recruit and Retain Women Workers in Non-Traditional Workplaces".

Want to Know More About the Wage Gap?

Visit the Province of New Brunswick's Wage Gap Reduction Initiative website at: www.gnb.ca (keyword: Wage Gap)

For more information, call 1-888-576-4444, or email us at nbwagegap@gnb.ca and sign up for our eNews.