



Toolkit 7 – Sustain Momentum

This toolkit describes ideas for how to keep the change effort going including applying constructive influence, other ways to work toward change in the workplace, recruiting new members and managing setbacks.

Applying Constructive Influence

Jack Welch, legendary chairman and CEO of GE, was a master change agent. He once said “You’ve got to talk about change every second of the day.” But changing engrained cultural beliefs and institutional practices is complicated. The ShowMe50™ gender equality infographic summarizes the forces at play. See Appendix A.

Compelling change will require strategic and innovative approaches. Businesses do this every day when they try to convince someone to buy a product, approve appropriations or close a deal. Constructive influence is about using practical, productive methods to apply pressure to change behavior.

Company policies generally cite an interest in their employees’ ideas and suggestions. Constructive influence leverages the spirit of that policy. Below are three areas to consider: CEO involvement, social media and your company’s board of directors.

CEO Involvement

Evidence shows that change happens when the CEO gets involved. Through your D&I groups and the company D&I Officer, ask for visible CEO commitment to gender balanced leadership. Some examples:

- Collaborate with your employee resource groups in your corporate office and ask your D&I Officer to arrange a town hall meeting with the CEO to have a candid discussion about the roadblocks to gender balanced leadership and what the CEO can do to help
- Ask the CEO to pledge publically to achieve 50% women in senior leadership roles by a certain time frame. (See *ShowMe50™ Best in Class Snapshots* on the website for examples.)
- Ask the CEO to sign the UN’s Women’s Empowerment Principles and communicate internally and externally that he/she did so.¹
- Ask the CEO to host an internal event where your CEO joins a conversation about how company managers can encourage gender-intelligent behavior
- Write about gender equality issues in internal and external social media.
 - Executives leverage their communication teams to write social media posts on the CEO’s behalf. Ask that gender equality issues be added to the CEO communication strategy.
- Ask the CEO to join CEO groups committed to gender balanced leadership, eg: 30% Club.
- Ask the CEO to commit more financial resources to transparent talent management systems, skill-based gender bias training and culture change efforts.

¹ The UN’s Women’s Empowerment Principles offer businesses guidance on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. They are a collaboration between the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations Global Compact; <http://weprinciples.org/Site/PrincipleOverview/>



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Social Media

Social media is a powerful communication tool that extends the reach of your message exponentially. Use it strategically to influence change. Use it intelligently.

Most companies have an employee social media policy. Read it and follow it.

These guiding principles are adapted from “Employee Use of Social Media” from the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM):

- Activities in or outside of work that affect your job performance, the performance of others, or your company’s business interests are a proper focus for your company. You can be disciplined or even lose your job for violating company policies during your use of social media outside of work.
- Do not disclose confidential or proprietary information.
- The internet is immediate and nothing posted is ever truly private nor does it expire.
- Be respectful, courteous, professional and fair in your communications.
- Be honest and accurate. If you make a mistake, correct it quickly.

Observe how peers write about gender issues. Join LinkedIn groups for ShowMe50™, 30% Club and Catalyst. Also see Womenetics.com where business women write about gender equality themes.

When you have educated yourself about gender bias and corrective measures to level the playing field, and talked with your boss and HR, begin your social media engagement. This means writing short posts and commenting on others’ posts. Be active; comment at least once per week. Write about the positive things your company and other companies are doing and the things companies, including yours, need to change. Approach the issue from a solutions perspective – you have the facts, here is a solution.

Leverage your company’s *internal* social media too. Most S&P 500 companies have employee portals that include numerous forms of communication opportunities including comment sections and blogs. Find out what’s available and how you can participate. Check the D&I page—can you submit a blog?

Be alert to articles or comments employees write. Look for the opportunity to insert your own thoughtful comment to start a conversation on changing individual behavior and company practices to level the playing field for women.

The Board of Directors

When developing your strategic plans for your initiative, consider contacting females on your board. Approach it as an informational communication. Make them aware of ShowMe50™, an innovative organization teaching S&P 500 women how to help their companies optimize their workforce and achieve 50% women in senior leadership positions. See ideas at the ShowMe50™ website. Later in your



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initiative, if you believe progress is too slow, re-engage those women, or if you didn't before, begin the engagement with women board members as well as targeted men.

Using the company's annual proxy filing and the internet, study your board members to gather clues about their connections and interests. Find directors that you believe would be most open to a conversation on gender-intelligence.

Tailor a well thought out one page letter using 12 point font. Ask them for their support to drive change. Ask them for specific action, for example:

- Adopt one or more of the items on the CEO involvement list
- Commit male board members to speak publically on behalf of women's advancement
- Visit your corporate office by the end of the year to speak on their support for leveling the playing field in senior leadership positions

When you have a good draft, recruit women and men at your company to sign your letter.

Give your boss a heads up. Show your letter to your boss and ask for his/her suggestions on improving the letter you intend to send.

Other Ways to Work Toward Change at Work and at Home

Follow the spirit of the ShowMe50™ Win-Win Checklist

To the extent you can within the boundaries of your internal HR policies, manage your own team's hiring and employee professional development using the spirit of the ShowMe50™ Win-Win Checklist. Its components are adapted from research studies and best practices that many S&P 500 companies have sponsored.

Model inclusive behavior and others will eventually follow as momentum builds.

Be Visible and Vocal

Talk about the components of the ShowMe50™ Win-Win Checklist whenever the opportunity presents itself. Best in Class companies are implementing these practices, this is not out of the mainstream.

- Challenge biased behavior without apology.
- When anyone (peer, subordinate or higher manager; man or woman) makes a statement that perpetuates gender bias, draw attention to it on the spot. Example:

Susan says, "Mary probably can't travel to that meeting because she has young kids."

You say, "Susan, your concern for Mary's work/life balance is appreciated but we should let Mary decide and offer her this opportunity which can help her grow professionally."

- When you hear that there's a management position open:



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Talk about how innovation thrives with diversity. Ask what steps have been taken to explore a diverse slate of candidates.

Ask who is making the hiring decisions and if a diverse panel of people will be evaluating candidates to avoid biases.

- Look for opportunities to talk to your peers and team members about bias and inclusive behavior.

When you go into a meeting and the attendees are not diverse, talk to the meeting leader afterward in private. Example:

“Innovation thrives when there is diversity of thought. I noticed that our meeting lacked diversity (describe- gender, function, race, etc). I think our (company, project, initiative) could benefit from having more diverse perspectives. Would you be open to expanding the pool of invitees next time? I would be glad to help you find qualified contributors that add diversity to our discussions.”

- When appropriate opportunities present themselves, use the *ShowMe50™ Best in Class Snapshots* or other examples to introduce conversation around inclusive practices.

CONVERSATIONS STARTERS WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES:

- Have you heard of an organization called ShowMe50™? It's a non-profit whose mission is to achieve 50% women in senior leadership positions in corporate America. Apparently women are over 50% of the management workforce in America but only 5% of CEOs and less than 20% of directors on boards for the largest companies². And it's been that way for a really long time. Do those statistics surprise you?
- ShowMe50™ believes there are four areas that are the root causes of unbalanced leadership in corporate America. Lack of:
 1. Objective and transparent performance evaluation and talent management systems
 2. Education of employees and managers about stereotyping and gender bias
 3. Workplace flexibility for today's contemporary workforce
 4. Accountability
- What do you think? Does this hurt women's access to senior leadership positions?
- They have developed what they call a Win-Win checklist of changes to cultural norms and HR policies and practices that they believe would level the playing field for women to advance their careers to senior leadership.
- Stay up to date on current news and articles about gender equity and use those as conversation starters. Did you hear the news story about <current story>. What do you think about that?
- Point people to the ShowMe50™ website... ShowMe50.org.

² Catalyst, 2014, <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/2013-catalyst-census-fortune-500>; in 2015, Catalyst changed their methodology. The percentage of Women on Boards published January 2015 is 19% (Oct 2014 data) using the S&P500 instead of the prior Fortune 500.



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Engage Your Boss in the Gender Dialogue

- Share Toolkit 2, *Learn about Gender Bias*, with your boss.
- Ask your boss if he/she can be on the lookout for gender bias and be a model for others.
- When a senior leader champions gender diversity, it has a profound effect. Applaud these positive examples. Print one of the *ShowMe50™ Best in Class Snapshots* from the website to share and discuss with your boss. Consider discussing it at a team meeting with your boss' support.

Recruiting New Members

Join professional organizations to network and identify allies within and outside your organization.

Participate in social media discussion groups.

Attend your company's internal and external D&I events.

Consider engaging SRI (Socially Responsible Investing) shareholders of your company's stock.

Managing Setbacks

Changing a culture is hard. There will be setbacks. Do not give up! Visit the ShowMe50™ website regularly. Keep talking about gender balanced leadership. Overcome your fear by knowing that the change you are asking for is right and it's long overdue. There is a sense of urgency. Be inspired!

“I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear; knowing what must be done does away with fear.”

- Rosa Parks

“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

- Harriet Tubman

“The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.”

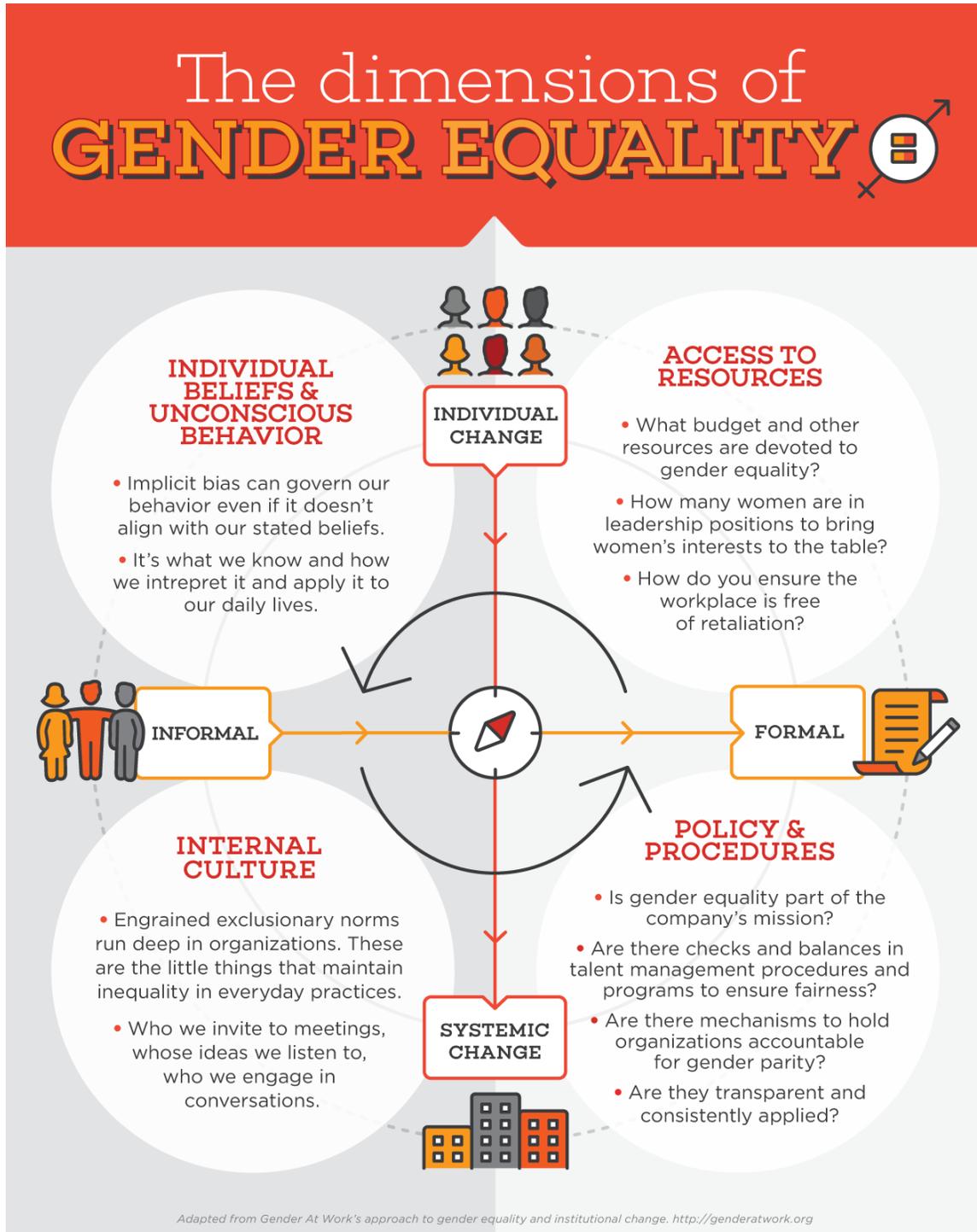
- Amelia Earhart

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Appendix A – ShowMe50™ Infographic



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead



Disclaimer

Show Me 50, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to provide a platform to engage individuals in actions that level the playing field for women. We encourage individuals to actively collaborate with their companies to inform and implement a culture of gender equality that leads to the achievement of 50% women in senior leadership positions.

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