

GENDER AND WORKSPACES

MOVING TOWARDS A HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

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Session Description and Learning Objectives

Session Description

Gender and Workspaces: moving towards high performing organisations. Complying with regulations such as the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 does not necessarily mean that the organisations have created conducive environments for gender transformation to flourish. Organisations need to realise that gender transformation comes with changing organisational culture, policies and ways of working to increase job performance; reduce stress in the workplace; promote diversity and inclusivity.

Session Learning Objectives

- Participants will learn practical lessons on how to champion gender transformation in the workplace as part of the business model
- Participants will demonstrate practical skills to use the three phases of the value ladder to promote gender transformation in the workplace
- Participants will demonstrate the understanding of the South African Legal frameworks that promote gender transformation and non-discriminative workspaces



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Creating a conducive environment

ILO's 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

- Organisations are expected to comply with laws and policies that are regulated by govern , in most cases these laws and policies come as a result of that particular country signing and ratifying some set of legal frameworks that are guided by the introduction of the Fundamental Human Rights in 1948 (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) this declarations gives directive on the promotion and protection of human rights in all sectors and spheres of life.
- In terms of the workspaces the **ILO's 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work** declares that all Members, even if they have not ratified the Conventions in question, have an obligation arising from the very fact of membership in the Organization to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution.
- The principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of this Convention are namely:
 - ✓ freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
 - ✓ the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;
 - ✓ the effective abolition of child labour; and
 - ✓ the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



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Creating a conducive environment

When looking at South Africa it is not surprising that government has put in place legislative frameworks that seek to promote gender transformation and none discrimination, but research tells us that successful gender transformation in the workplace is partially because of existing policy directives that provide guidance on the gender transformation process.

Employment Act 55 of 1998 whose main purpose is to achieve equality in the work place by:

- ✓ Promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and
- ✓ Implementing positive measures (affirmative action) to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups to ensure equitable representation of black people, women and the disabled at all levels in the work place



Creating a conducive environment

Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000, Act

This Act seeks to further promote a democratic society that is united in its diversity marked by human relations that reflect a caring and compassionate citizenry, and guided by the principles of

- ✓ equality,
- ✓ fairness,
- ✓ equity,
- ✓ social progress,
- ✓ justice,
- ✓ human dignity and
- ✓ freedom and
- ✓ the prevention and prohibition of unfair discrimination and
- ✓ harassment and
- ✓ the promotion of equality and elimination of unfair discrimination including the prohibition of Hate Speech.



Creating a conducive environment

The current status of gender equality in the work place

For decades, the “glass ceiling” was the defining metaphor for the failure of organizations to promote women to top leadership positions. It perfectly captured the frustration of a goal that was within sight but somehow unattainable. But times have changed, write Alice Eagly and Linda Carli, and the glass ceiling metaphor has outlived its usefulness, yet there is still a problem: Only 2% of Fortune 500 CEOs are women

- ✓ But the glass ceiling fails to address the real roots of the issue. Eagly and Carli **explain that a more fitting metaphor is the labyrinth, which acknowledges the complex challenges women face** throughout their careers, such as
 - ✓ Resistance to their leadership styles
 - ✓ The demands of family life, and
 - ✓ The vestiges of prejudice at all levels

This metaphor also implies that there is a viable way to the centre—that goals are attainable. Organizations that adopt this thinking will understand and address the barriers to women’s progress with greater success. “If one has misdiagnosed a problem,” the authors write, “then one is unlikely to prescribe an effective cure.”



Creating a conducive environment

The current status of gender equality in the work place

- ✓ Although issues of gender discrimination and Affirmative Action have attracted considerable attention the gender representation in most organisations is still very low.
- ✓ The essence of gender discrimination that when faced with a choice between equally qualified men and women, employers prefer to hire men and thus missing the opportunity to diversify the workforce.
- ✓ This results in gender discrimination mostly experienced by women and it becomes a barrier set for women only and hence women who can move beyond this barrier would do a better job on average than their male counter parts.
- ✓ On the hand if affirmative action is an important factor in hiring decisions the employer may set a lower barrier for women to promote gender balance



Creating a conducive environment

The value ladder tool

- ✓ The value ladder is a tool developed by The Well Health Company (TWHC), a tool designed to offer organisations that want to create a conducive workspace environment where women lead and excel while contributing to the growth and performance of the organisation.
- ✓ It provides an opportunity for organisations to break “the glass ceiling” through goal setting.

The value ladder has three phases namely:

- 1) One : the charitable phase**, this is when the organisation invests in “the nice to do events” that do not contribute to the **change of culture** and **perceptions of the role of women in the workplace**.
 - ✓ August Women’s Month celebration
 - ✓ Women in leadership events : motivational speakers
 - ✓ 16 Days of Activism Against Violence against women
 - ✓ Lifestyle theme event : high tea etc.



Creating a conducive environment

The value ladder tool

2) Two : Secondly the compliance phase is when the organisation invest its efforts and resources in ensuring that statutory policy and regulatory requirements that might lead to government penalties and market exclusion are adhered to and **not necessary creating an environment for women to lead and excel** and the thirdly the beyond compliance phase is **when the organisation invests in creating a win -win environment for the women and the organisation**, where leadership excellence, growth and performance merge

- ✓ Employment Equity
- ✓ Employment Equity Plans
- ✓ Affirmative Action Appointments



Creating a conducive environment

The value ladder tool

3) Three : the third phase of the values ladder where the organisation focusses on the beyond compliance phase at this phase the organisation will not only facilitate the creation of a conducive environment but will also help the organisation create an environment where people who are its most valued asset flourish and excel while contributing to the bottom line. Some examples of initiatives include:

- ✓ Recruiting women for purpose (embracing women leadership styles)
- ✓ Creating a pipeline for women ready for promotion
- ✓ Making women's advancement a priority through sponsorship and mentoring programs, goal setting and hiring initiatives.
- ✓ Creating a women specific talent retention program
- ✓ Putting Work -life balance mechanisms in place to support varying parenthood needs
- ✓ Embrace diversity and acknowledge gender diversity
- ✓ Define and champion a new organisational culture to support the changing environment



Leadership, Gender and organisational performance

Eagly and Carli explain that a more fitting metaphor is the labyrinth, which acknowledges the complex challenges women face throughout their careers, such as resistance to their leadership styles this is partly because women do not all subscribe to the traditional autocratic leadership styles where the leader who makes all decisions on their own and expect others to implement the decisions , rather women opt for a combination of leadership styles that are more participatory and consultative in their nature.

- ✓ Participative leadership boosts employee morale because employees make contributions to the decision-making process. It causes them to feel as if their opinions matter. When a company needs to make changes within the organization, the participative leadership style helps employees accept changes easily because they play a role in the process.
- ✓ The transformational leadership style depends on high levels of communication from management to meet goals. Leaders motivate employees and enhance productivity and efficiency through communication and high visibility. This style of leadership requires the involvement of management to meet goals. Leaders focus on the big picture within an organization and delegate smaller tasks to the team to accomplish goals.



Leadership, Gender and organisational performance

- ✓ A [transformational leader](#) inspires people to follow them by gaining their trust and their respect first. They model the appropriate behaviour in the organisation, and they rally everyone to work around a common goal and a purpose. Transformational leaders also empower people to realise their potential and they encourage them to offer input in problem-solving processes. Instead of exercising power and control, a transformational approach to leadership promotes a mutual relationship between superiors and their subordinates in helping each other achieve a worthy purpose .
- ✓ The key seven principles of transformative leadership include :
 - ✓ simplification,
 - ✓ motivation,
 - ✓ determination,
 - ✓ mobilization,
 - ✓ preparation,
 - ✓ facilitation and
 - ✓ innovation
- ✓ *According to a study commissioned by PwC women were found to possess some of the characteristics that make them capable of being transformative leaders in their respective enterprises and are found to enable organisations to achieve change.* If businesses want to stay ahead of their competitors, they need to eliminate [gender inequality at the top](#) and allow women to ascend the corporate ladder

Wellness, stress, motivation and job performance

Employee wellness and the impact of stress are some of the key factors that influence organisational drive and the bottom line. |

This section explores the reasons why wellness matters at the workplace including the impact of employee wellness to job satisfaction and job performance. Employee health has a clear positive influence on job performance. Employee health has a notable positive impact on job satisfaction and job satisfaction has a noticeably positive effect on job performance.

- ✓ According to the Global Wellness Institute's: **The future of wellness 2016 report:** "The world's 3.2 billion workers are increasingly unwell: they are growing old; they suffer more chronic disease; they are stressed, unhappy, and sometimes unsafe at work; and they face significant economic insecurity.
- ✓ The economic burden of unwell workers – in both medical expenses and lost productivity – is enormous, possibly reaching 10-15 percent of global economic output.
- ✓ In the United States, where the most extensive data are available, we estimate that the costs of chronic disease, work-related injuries and illnesses, stress, and employee disengagement amount to more than \$2.2 trillion each year or 12 percent of GDP.
- ✓ Workforce unwellness may be even costlier in the rest of the world, considering the higher rates of employee disengagement and work-related injuries and illnesses reported globally.
- ✓ On top of this economic burden, there is unquantifiable human suffering and an unsustainable burden on healthcare systems around the world"



Wellness, stress, motivation and job performance

Motivation is an embodiment of factors which drive or propel workers to work happily and satisfactorily. Motivation activates and directs behaviour.

- ✓ Motivated workers are much more likely to work harder and happily. Motivation is, therefore, tied to job performance. High job motivation is much more likely to lead to high job performance, which is the target of employers.
- ✓ Establishing the directly proportional relationship between motivation and job performance, Baba Gana and Bababe (2011) explain that lack of motivation could lead to low job performance among workers. Gender seems to play a significant role in employees' job motivation and job performance.
- ✓ Ramilo (2004); Shrum (2007) and Nazrul (2009) are of the view that the gender of employees tends to significantly affect their job motivation and job performance in the workplace. Their argument is that men are more disposed to work harder than women.
- ✓ Similarly, there is the view by Aremu and Adeyoju (2003); Vaskova (2005) and Zhao and Seibert (2006) that gender plays a significant role in job motivation and job performance among employees in some professions, especially in developing countries.



Wellness, stress, motivation and job performance

Job performance is the total job output of the employee. The goal of the employer is to increase productivity at cost effectiveness for profitability.

- ✓ Campbell et al (1993) describe job performance as individual variable, that is, performance is something a single person does. It deals with how the individual performs his task and the level of commitment he attaches to it. In this regard, job performance as behaviour is the behaviour to perform one's task. The result of this behaviour (job performance) is the outcome (productivity).
- ✓ The performance leads to outcome which could be positive or negative. Ubom and Joshua (2004) point out that when the individual performs his job effectively, better result is yielded for the organisation. They note that mere job performance is quite distinct from effective performance.
- ✓ What is required of the employee is effective job performance. Effective performance leads to higher productivity. Campbell (1990) identifies three major determinants of job performance components as:
 - ✓ **declarative knowledge**; refers to knowledge about fact, principles, objects, etc
 - ✓ **procedural knowledge and skill**; refers to cognitive skill, perceptual skills, etc
 - ✓ **motivation; refers to the combined three choice behaviours-**
 - choice to expend effort,
 - choice of level of effort to expend, and
 - choice to persist in the expenditure of that level of effort.

Motivation therefore, is the reflection of the direction, intensity, and persistence of volitional behaviours.



Gender and Workplace stress

- ✓ Stress in the workplace is a major problem for both organisations and employees, and it has been estimated that approximately 13.4 million working days in Britain is lost per year due to stress, depression or anxiety.
- ✓ According to the health and Safety Executive (HSE) stress is defined as **“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them”**.
- ✓ A cognitive definition of stress has been proposed by Palmer, Cooper and Thomas as **‘stress occurs when the perceived pressure exceeds your perceived ability to cope’**.
- ✓ The term stress has been conceptualised in a variety of ways and this can lead to confusion regarding the meaning of the term.
- ✓ Research suggests that working is generally related to positive health for women and men, however workplace stress is a major problem and it has been suggested that **gender may be an important demographic characteristic to consider in the experience of stress.**



Gender and Workplace stress

- ✓ While on the other hand it has been reported that there are no differences between women and men in relation to workplace stress, it has also been noted that there are differences in both stressors and the severity of stress between the sexes
- ✓ It has been reported that although women and men experience and are exposed to the same stressors, women are also facing unique stressors
- ✓ Indeed, Hofball, Geller and Dunahoo suggest that it is important to consider the stressors that are unique to employed women, as this can increase the understanding of the specific needs of working women.
- ✓ research has reported that women are exposed to the following stressors:
 - Multiple roles
 - Lack of career progress
 - Discrimination and stereotyping



Gender and Workplace stress

- ✓ These combined stressors were found to be common for women than men and have been found to have a negative impact upon employed and working women and if these stressors are left unattended they will continue to marginalised women in the workplace.
- ✓ It is of critical importance that organisations champion, design, implement and monitor programmes that address these combined stressors as part of implementing the beyond compliance phase of the value ladder



In closing it is important to note that :

- ✓ Most organisations are starting to recognise the interdependency between wellness and work and more broadly between employee wellness and the organisation's ability to compete and innovate in the markets.
- ✓ Recruiting, retaining, motivating and taking care of employees is the competitive edge and wellspring of innovation in organisations today.
- ✓ The organisational employee wellness programmes must address the multiple aspects of individual wellness needs ranging from physical and mental health, work- life balance, equal pay for equal jobs and the alignment of work with employee's intrinsic motivations.
- ✓ Therefore, the implementation of the phases of the value ladder which is a tool designed to offer practical tools to organisations that want to create a conducive workspace environment where women lead and excel while contributing to the growth and performance of the organisation,
- ✓ It is a useful tool as the pillars of the value ladder provide mechanics of how organisations can address the multiple aspects of individual wellness needs resulting in high performing organisations while embracing gender and diversity at the workplace





